

Implementing Sustainable Development in the Regional Development Context – A Nordic Overview

Implementing Sustainable Development in the Regional Development Context – A Nordic Overview

**Tuija Hilding-Rydevik
Kaisa Lähteenmäki-Smith
Sofie Storbjörk**

NORDREGIO 2005

Nordregio Report 2005:5

ISSN 1403-2503

ISBN 91-89332-56-3

© 2005 Nordregio

Dtp: Bo Heurling AB

Cover photo: Riksantikvarieämbetet; *photographer* Pål-Nils Nilsson

Nordregio

P.O. Box 1658

SE-111 86 Stockholm, Sweden

nordregio@nordregio.se

www.nordregio.se

www.norden.org

Nordic co-operation

takes place among the countries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, as well as the autonomous territories of the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland.

The Nordic Council

is a forum for co-operation between the Nordic parliaments and governments. The Council consists of 87 parliamentarians from the Nordic countries. The Nordic Council takes policy initiatives and monitors Nordic co-operation. Founded in 1952.

The Nordic Council of Ministers

is a forum of co-operation between the Nordic governments. The Nordic Council of Ministers implements Nordic co-operation. The prime ministers have the overall responsibility. Its activities are co-ordinated by the Nordic ministers for co-operation, the Nordic Committee for co-operation and portfolio ministers. Founded in 1971.

Nordregio – Nordic Centre for Spatial Development

works in the field of spatial development, which includes physical planning and regional policies, in particular with a Nordic and European comparative perspective. Nordregio is active in research, education and knowledge dissemination and provides policy-relevant data. Nordregio was established in 1997 by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The centre is owned by the five Nordic countries and builds upon more than 30 years of Nordic cooperation in its field.

Contents

Preface	7
Section 1: Introduction, Background, Aim and Methodology	9
1 Introduction and Background	11
1.1 Institutionalising Sustainable Development in the Regional Development Context	11
1.2 Contemporary Research on Sustainable Development in Policy, Programming and Planning	14
2 Aim, Research Questions and Methodology	17
2.1 Aim	17
2.2 Overall Methodology	17
Section 2: National Level	25
3 The National Cases	27
3.1 The Case of Denmark	27
3.2 The Case of Finland	30
3.3 The Case of Norway	34
3.4 The Case of Sweden	37
4 Sustainable Development in the Context of Regional Growth and Development	41
4.1 Sustainable Development: Conceptual Content and Policy Contexts	41
4.2 Sustainable Development vs. Regional Growth: Towards the Greening of Regional Development?	46
4.3 Sustainable Development at the Regional Level	51
4.4 Summary	56
Section 3: Regional Programming Documents	59
5 The Regional Level in Denmark	61
5.1 The Example of Storstrøms Amt	61
5.2 The Example of Nordjylland	64
6 The Regional Level in Finland	69
6.1 The Example of Keski-Suomi	69
6.2 The Example of Satakunta	73
7 The Regional Level in Norway	79
7.1 The Example of Oppland	79
7.2 The Example of Rogaland	82
8 The Regional Level in Sweden	85
8.1 The Example of Dalarna	85
8.2 The Example of Västra Götaland	89
9 Summarising the Regional Documents	93

Section 4: Final Observations, Questions and Conclusions	97
10 Final Observations, Conclusions and Questions	99
10.1 Over All Observations	99
10.2 Sustainable Development in Terms of National Policy for Regional Growth and Development	100
10.3 Integrating Sustainable Development and Finding Win-Win-Solutions?	100
10.4 The Role and Function of Partnerships?	101
10.5 SD and the Role of Conflicting Values and Interests?	102
10.6 Conclusions and Questions	103
Section 5: References and Appendices	105
References	107
<i>Appendix 1: Questions for Interviews with National Representatives</i>	111
<i>Appendix 2: Questions for Review of the Documents</i>	116

Preface

This volume reports on the results of the first phase of the study entitled *Regional Development Programming Processes and Regional Partnerships in the Nordic Countries and their Potential to Contribute to Sustainable Development*. The ambition in respect of the Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden on the policy-level is to promote and implement sustainable development in regional development and growth programming, and this is the target of the study detailed here, with a specific focus on *partnership* as a useful approach in the attempt to achieve this integration. This first phase of the project is explorative. The main aim is to attain an overview of the basic trends, in respect of what is going on in the Nordic countries in relation to the promotion and implementation of sustainable development in the policy field of regional development. In order for us to form a basic understanding of the currently prevailing Nordic structures, systems and practices necessary for the subsequent regional analysis, which attempts to integrate sustainable development and regional development through partnership methodology, the perspectives of both the national authorities and the existing lessons available from regional cases are analyzed. The first phase is designed to provide the basis for the second, where the main focus is on the partnership format of regional development programming work, and in particular on the possibilities this presents in terms of implementing sustainable development in a regional development and/or 'growth programming' context.

Tuija Hilding-Rydevik, Kaisa Lähteenmäki-Smith, both from Nordregio, in association with Sofie Storbjörk, from Linköping University planned and designed the project. Tuija Hilding-Rydevik acted as the formal project leader. The main empirical work and in particular, the task

of writing up the report was undertaken by Sofie Storbjörk (the parts concerning Denmark, Norway and Sweden) and Kaisa Lähteenmäki-Smith (those parts concerning Finland). Chapters 1–2 and the final analysis were written in co-operation between the three authors.

The main bulk of the empirical work was conducted during 2003/2004 and the report thus necessarily reflects the situation at hand at this point in time, though some subsequent updating also took place in the final editing stages in June 2005. Major reforms have been decided upon since then, such as the structural reform in Denmark, SND in Norway has been replaced by Innovation Norway etc.

Other ongoing or recent Nordregio projects/reports focussing on sustainable development in the regional development context include:

- Regional Development Programming Processes and Regional Partnerships in the Sustainable Development and Economic Growth – A socio-cultural perspective on regional programming processes) (in co-operation with the Royal Institute of Technology and Linköping University, Sweden).
- Hilding-Rydevik, T., Clement, K., Bradley, K., and Hansen, M., (2004) *Tools for Sustainable Regional Development. Experiences and prospects*. Nordregio report R 2004:4.
- Clement, K., Bradley, K., and Hansen, M., (2004) *Environment and Sustainable Development Integration in the Nordic Structural Funds*. Nordregio report R 2004:7.

Stockholm, December 2005

Section 1

Introduction, Background, Aim and Methodology

The rationale behind the project as well as its basic aims and methods are presented in this section.

The study reported here represents the first part of a two-step project with the overall project being presented briefly at the outset.

1 Introduction and Background

1.1 Institutionalising Sustainable Development in the Regional Development Context

The long-term process of institutionalising the political goal of sustainable development (SD) is in many respects in its infancy. The political ambition to promote the concerns of sustainable development, and more specifically the environmental dimension of sustainable development, has moved from traditional environmental arenas to arenas where environmental and social concerns have traditionally been perceived as constraints and not as opportunities. Today the political goal of sustainable development presupposes major possibilities for win-win¹ development situations between economic, social and ecological goals and activities.

In the Nordic countries, the environmental sector has become institutionalized in the sense of being a strong sector in itself, in relation to the knowledge base, the professional competence, and the existence of environmental sector legislation. Environmental issues are today self-evident in the policy formulations relating to general societal and political agendas. This represents a radical change that has effectively taken place over the last 20 years. There are also areas where environmental policy and practical work have achieved good results in the sense of actually contributing to remedying existing environmental problems, diminishing negative environmental pressure (for example in the context of the emissions of acidic and eutrophying substances and the fresh water abstraction – seen from a European perspective²) or preventing the re-occurrence of old or the occurrence of new environmental problems (as in the instances where environmental assessment legislation and processes are effective³).

¹The concept of 'win-win situations' used here was borrowed from the game theory field, though it has perhaps become more familiar through its use in the management literature. It is a concept increasingly used to denote situations where two actors involved in a partnership can, by co-operating, achieve mutual benefits that they would not achieve by competing. In a similar way a certain policy goal can be promoted together with the promotion of another policy goal that is usually seen as its direct opposite. The concept thus denotes the mutual advantages of co-operation, which leads to mutual benefit or learning.

²European Environment Agency (2003) Europe's environment: the third assessment. Environmental Assessment Report No 10. Copenhagen.

³The effectiveness of environmental assessment legislation and processes is a delicate issue to define, and by effectiveness we do not, in this

Even if it may seem then that most of the institutional settings and a number of the instruments and measures for successful environmental work are now in place⁴, a number of difficulties can in practice still be found. The baseline is thus, for several existing environmental problems, that there are huge difficulties in changing the negative environmental trend, for example concerning climate change and the depletion of the ozone layer. It also seems, thus far, that the normal functioning of societies leads to firstly, the reproduction of old environmental mistakes and environmental pressures and secondly, to the creation of new environmental problems – one example here being the constant introduction of new chemical compounds with detrimental environmental and human health impacts.

There is not necessarily a lack of strategies and policies aiming at solving existing environmental problems and preventing new ones. It is in the implementation and institutionalisation of environmental goals and ambitions in policy areas outside the environmental sector and in every day professional practice beyond the environmental sector that professionals in many instances still encounter difficulties. This is evidenced by reference to a number of research studies concerning environmental management practice. The struggle for acceptance becomes particularly evident when environmental, social and economic issues are to be judged and handled in relation to each other in the same context in policy, programming, planning and decision-making. Difficulties and a certain level of inertia as regards change thus appear when efforts are made to

context, refer to the situation where an EA stops development projects. We see effectiveness more in relation to the power of EA to contribute to a decision process that is based on a well developed knowledge base in relation to the nature and possible impacts of the decision, to provide enough 'power' for all relevant sector actors, and to enable them to better participate in a dialogue concerning impacts, solutions etc and additionally, for these processes to be democratic. Thus far, the effectiveness of EA in this sense seems to be related more to the 'preparedness' of the planning arena to manage environmental input than to the design of the EA instrument itself. The 'power' of EA as an instrument to change planning arenas seems then to remain weak.

⁴This view is prominent for example in the Swedish National report for the Johannesburg World Summit in 2002, see Nationalkommittén för Agenda 21 och Habitat (2002), *Från vision till handling*.

integrate and relate different policy areas and practices to each other in order to achieve sustainable development.

1.1.1 Regional development context

In the Nordic countries the regions are traditionally expected to contribute to economic growth through the promotion of different policy measures and project activities. Today they are also expected to implement the broad political goals of sustainable development⁵. At the Rio conference in 1992, and even more so in the following Agenda 21 document published subsequently, the regional level, along with the local level, were stressed as *the* levels where actual implementation had to take place. According to Schleicher-Tappeser et al.⁶ the comprehensive territorial context of these levels seemed to be right in order to effectively integrate the different dimensions of development. Moreover, the new regionalism (regions being the locus for endogenous economic development in their own right), new regional development theories, the 'greening of the market', new legislation and the recent focus on *sustainable growth* have all made the regional development and growth-oriented programming activity, and particularly its contents and administration, an arena of growing importance as regards the implementation of sustainable development. The focus on *regions* and not only on *nations* as crucial entities for economic development, labelled the 'New Regionalism' by for instance Lovering⁷, has gained tremendous support both in terms of research and in politics more generally. Evidence of this can be seen in both the US and Western Europe and particularly in current EU growth policies, reflecting the goals targeting growth and international competitiveness set in the Lisbon Agenda (and the subsequent Gothenburg process). The strong emphasis on regions as an important and natural basis for the practical implementation of sustainable development has in fact triggered the development of an entirely new field of research, namely the field of *sustainable regional development*.

Why has SD become a part of the regional development agenda? One proposed explanation is that SD seems to have, rhetorically at least, untied the hitherto troublesome knot of economic growth/development vs. ecological concerns. There exists today a general belief that economic growth and development without too much conflict can be combined with ecological considerations and that the latter may contribute in the longer term to a 'greener' (e.g. 'better') type of growth. This approach and discourse

⁵This is expressed for example in the directives for the previous round of Regional Growth Agreements in Sweden, for the regional policy area *En politik för tillväxt och livskraft i hela landet* (prop. 2001/02:4), and in the new regional development legislation in Finland that came into force in January 2003, as well as, more generally, in EU political rhetoric.

⁶(1999).

⁷(1999).

has been labelled 'ecological modernisation'.⁸ A number of researchers have however criticised the assumption that ecological modernisation is possible, pointing out that the assumption may in practice serve as a way of allowing current development and growth process to continue under a new and 'greener' label, but without any real change taking place. As such, they argue that SD does not necessarily alleviate the inherent conflicts between the three pillars.⁹ A second explanation argues that regional development does in fact cause unwanted negative environmental and social impacts that need to be avoided. In the regional development arena important policy measures are taken that are in direct conflict with both the environmental and social dimensions of SD. For example, the regional measure to create 'region enlargement' – i.e. through increased transport and infrastructure measures to make larger parts of a regional labour market available to a specific set of regional citizens – is in direct conflict with diminishing green house gas emissions if it increases transport flows and thus vehicle emissions, which have negative impacts on the climate. (Unless, of course, non-emitting modes of transport are used.) In the EU context, the European Parliament and the Court of Auditors noted that potentially environmentally harmful projects were being financed through the EU structural funds and that no systematic environmental appraisal procedures existed to counter this.¹⁰ What happens in the practical process of integrating different dimensions of SD is undoubtedly important. In the regional development arena, the partnership format is an important forum for dealing with SD, and one whose form and function is in need of closer study.

1.1.2 Partnerships

The emergence of the principle of partnership is often associated with the Structural Funds¹¹, and it does indeed have a central role in the regulative and practical aspects of the Structural Funds working methodology. Within the context of the Structural Funds the principle was introduced with the Structural Funds reform of 1988 and defined as the close collaboration between the Commission and all relevant authorities at national, regional or local level appointed by each Member State in the [Structural Funds Operational] Programme. It was extended further with the 1993 reform to include the economic and social partners (the representatives of the tripartite fields of employers, employees and interest groups).

Yet the concept of partnership naturally reaches beyond these points in time, having a much longer history, which connects it to management practice and theoretical debates on governance. For the purposes of our analysis

⁸Spaargarten and Mol 1992, Hajer 1995.

⁹Owens 1997a and 1997 b, Hedrén 1992, Lidskog and Elander 2000.

¹⁰EC 1995 in Valve 1999.

¹¹E.g. Marks 1993, John 2000.

here we thus differentiate between partnership as a more general planning approach associated with public-private partnerships, stemming from public management and being inspired by the difficulties faced by the traditional state apparatus and public authorities in ensuring the governability and welfare of their societies.¹² What is common to all partnerships is the shared responsibility and authority (though there are different degrees of authority, and power is not necessarily evenly divided or distributed, as the role and mandate of various actors within the partnership varies). In most cases there is a formal or informal agreement between the partnership parties, which sets some parameters for their involvement and role in working together for a common goal.

The partnership model is something of a novelty in the Nordic countries as compared to for example Britain and Ireland, where it has been used since the beginning of the 1980s.¹³ Closely related concepts such as policy networks¹⁴ and development/advocacy coalitions must also be noted in this respect.¹⁵

A consensus does not however exist in respect of the best definition of partnerships, though one possible definition is that they are made up of '*people and organizations from some combination of public, business and civil constituencies who engage in voluntary, mutually beneficial, innovative relationships to address common societal aims through combining their resources and competencies*'.¹⁶ The UK Audit Commission has defined a partnership as a *joint working relationship* where the participating actors (= partners) are marked by the following characteristics:

- They are otherwise independent bodies, *who ...*
- agree to co-operate to achieve a common goal, *and by so doing ...*
- create a new organisational structure or process to achieve this goal *and after having done so ...*
- plan and implement a joint programme, *in the process of which they ...*
- share relevant information, risks and rewards.¹⁷

The purpose and final 'success rate' of partnership mobilisation and methodology can now be discussed. Within the Structural Funds for instance this has been done in a thematic evaluation of the partnership principle, which identified the following types of purpose for partnerships:

- More effective implementation (of policies and programmes) achieved by ensuring that the bodies responsible in programme implementation partnerships are better able to secure co-ordinated actions.
- Better targeting of programme actions, achieved as a consequence of knowledge flowing from the local partners, which are by their nature more familiar with the needs of their areas. This ensures in turn the better targeting of programme actions to those areas which will most effectively overcome the barriers to regional development, and finally
- Enhancing local development capacity, as working in partnership often has spillover benefits gained through partners learning from each other.¹⁸

What then, within the regional development field, are the institutional preconditions needed to fulfil national political goals in the context of the desire for sustainable development in the regional programming context? And what is the role and potential of the regional partnerships in this context? In addition to discussing the form and function of partnerships and who defines them (and by extension, who decides upon those who are to be included), the principle of partnership may also require a closer look at the policy consequences of partnership-approaches. This is interesting in general but the partnership 'format' for programming work is also the context in which sustainable development is generally expected to be implemented. The question thus remains, how well suited are these regional partnerships in the Nordic countries to the task of implementing the new policy field of sustainable development?

This project then focuses on the role of the partnership approach in regional development programming work, and its potential to contribute to sustainable development. The possibilities and potential limitations of partnerships in co-ordinating different perspectives, interests and ambitions to achieve a common goal is thus of importance. The next phase of the project will provide us with an opportunity to more closely investigate the actual content, form and effects of the methodology in specific regional partnership-contexts.

¹²E.g. Jouve and Lefevre 2002, p 18.

¹³Westholm 1999 p 16.

¹⁴Jordan, 1990; Conzelmann, 1995 in Östhol, Svensson and Halkier, 2002.

¹⁵Sabatier & Jenkin-Smith, 1993 in Östhol et al., 2002.

¹⁶Nelson and Zadek, 2000 in Östhol et al., 2002.

¹⁷UK Audit Commission 1998, 8.

¹⁸Kelleher, J. Batterbury, S. and Stern, E. 1999, 16–17.

1.2 Contemporary Research on Sustainable Development in Policy, Programming and Planning

What then is the current situation within the regional development field in relation to the national and EU political goals of implementing sustainable development in the regional programming context? The political efforts in respect of promoting sustainable development in regional development and growth seemed to vary considerably between the Nordic countries when the study began in 2003, while at this time, no systematic overviews of the Nordic situation in this respect existed. What did exist however were a number of national and EU evaluations indicating the current situation, as it then existed.

Previous evaluations of the integration of the horizontal goals of ecologically sustainable development and the broader SD goals in different kinds of regional development programmes in the Nordic countries clearly indicate that integration has not yet been achieved to any significant extent.¹⁹ This problematic picture was moreover widely replicated in many of the EU countries in the 1997–1999 round of the Structural Funds.²⁰ Though efforts have been made to remedy this situation in later rounds, a number of obstacles and a certain degree of inertia still exist as regards the aforementioned implementation efforts.²¹ A recent evaluation of the contribution of the EU Structural Funds to SD²² shows that the main identifiable ‘trade-offs’ in regional development are those between increases in manufactured capital²³ with an associated decline in natural capital, and increases in manufactured and human capital with an associated decline in social capital.²⁴ It is thus largely in relation to natural and social capital that trends indicate a decline in capital. This is due to regional policies mainly focussing investments in manufactured and human capital as major drivers for regional development. The negative environmental effects occur mainly as a result of new infrastructural invest-

ments.²⁵ This evaluation also shows that social welfare increases with increases in manufactured capital, even if this is associated with a decline in natural capital. In addition, the use of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)²⁶ in relation to the Structural Funds does not show much progress.

Empirical research in respect of implementing the goals of environmental integration into the EU Structural Funds programming work shows that the prerequisites in terms of EU partnerships differ greatly.²⁷ The EU initiated partnerships may foster changes and introduce new policy horizons such as sustainable development, while at the same time however also enforcing the existing hegemonies and deepening segregation between the regional actors. According to Valve’s research²⁸ the *composition* of the partnership is *the key* to the likely outcome produced.

The lack of integration in respect of environmental issues and SD in the regional development field is hardly surprising, considering that this is the case in most policy fields. It is not surprising either seen from the point of view of the very recent introduction of the SD goals and the integration of the horizontal environmental perspective into the regional development field, at least in the Nordic countries. Clear-cut examples of the inertia, namely, that change takes time, can for example be found in relation to the worldwide experiences of implementing Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), which illustrates the difficulties in moving from rhetoric to action. In spite of over 30 years of implementing the EIA rules in more than a 100 countries, evaluations of the effectiveness of the EIA systems conclude that, ‘in practice, it is still possible for decision-makers effectively to ignore the EIA, ...’.²⁹ The challenge now is to see if and how the implementation of the EU ‘Strategic Environmental Assessment directive’ (2001/42/EC) can be made more effective than EIA. Another field where experience of integrating environmental issues is to be found is within municipal comprehensive planning. A recent research project³⁰ conducted at the Royal Institute of Technology, Division of Urban Studies, clearly illustrates that the sustainability work and land use planning undertaken in many municipalities is characterized by what can be termed as an interrupted institutional

¹⁹Clement 1999, Näringsdepartementet 2000, Hilding-Rydevik, 2000, Näringsdepartementet 2002a, Clement et al 2004.

²⁰Clement 1999.

²¹Nutek 2005.

²²EU Commission 2002.

²³SD was constructed, in the assessment of the Structural Funds (EU commission 2002) with the EU and the Brundtland definition as its basis, though the three-pillared SD concept was turned into a four capitals idea, for the sake of the assessment: *Manufactured (or man made) capital*, broadly synonymous with economic infrastructure; *Natural (or environmental) capital*, covering all forms of eco-systems and natural resources that provide services for social welfare; *Human capital*, relating to the stock of human productivity potential of individual people based on their health, motivation, talents and skills; *Social capital*, relating to the stocks of social trust, norms and formal and informal networks that people can draw upon to access resources, solve common problems and create social cohesion.

²⁴EU Commission (2002).

²⁵Investments (op.cit).

²⁶European Commission 1998.

²⁷Valve 2000.

²⁸2000.

²⁹Wood 1999, for Sweden see Riksrevisionsverket 1996 and Naturvårdsverket 2001.

³⁰The Municipality and the Territory, for example Asplund and Hilding-Rydevik 2001, Håkansson 2001, Dovlén 2001.

learning processes. The overall picture of environmental integration aspirations in Sweden is that even after 30 years of legislative and national political rhetoric support, many environmental actors in the municipal administration are still engaged in a daily struggle to keep the environment on the planning agenda in the context of local spatial planning.³¹

The difficulties at the local level described above have to do in part with the fact that some actors and sectors in society perceive of and thus react to sustainability as a threat against established modes of thinking and acting. Problems also arise in the context of existing barriers and differences in status and power-resources between different professions, competences, and perspectives. Even though legislation and knowledge exist within local governmental, this is in itself no guarantee that the integration of environmental and sustainability perspectives will run smoothly. Hierarchical, sectoral and closed organisations with diffuse routines and roles that marginalize environmental perspectives and lead to territorial disputes have been identified as a hindrance in terms of local sustainability work. The different status and opportunities of the participants bring about unequal terms for genuine interchange. The presence or absence of meeting places for actors and professions with differing interests and perspectives constitute important conditions for learning. If mutual learning processes and communication, rather than clashes and competition, could be created in the organisations responsible for turning the goals of sustainable development into action, the sustainability project could have a larger practical potential.³²

While research has been done on sustainable development policy and practice at the national and local levels, the need remains for us to enhance our knowledge concerning how regions accomplish the task of taking an active part in sustainability work, as well as in respect of how sustainability issues are handled as regards everyday practice at this level. Across the European Union, the concept of addressing SD as a regional concern has received increasing attention in recent years. The associated activity in pursuit of Sustainable Regional Development (SRD) has included a series of cross-national studies in an attempt to identify common understandings, methods of appraisal

and tools for SRD implementation.³³ In parallel, a network of researchers and research institutions has attempted to initiate cross-national co-operation – the European Network for Sustainable Urban and Regional Development Research (ENSURE). Taking its lead from the Graz Charter on Sustainable Regional Development, the network is active in holding regular workshops and occasional symposia, the results of which are disseminated through the publication of conference proceedings.³⁴ The focus of the projected reported here is however on the more specific arena of how SD is interpreted and implemented in the specific context of regional programming work having its basis in the respective Nordic national regional development policy fields. The concept of SRD is thus not applied since this encompasses all kinds of activities taking place or referring to the regional level.

Success-stories have however also been reported. The final report from the Sustainable European Regions Network (2004) including 16 regions (12 representing existing EU members with a further 4 from 3 accession countries) reports both the existence of successful SD implementation as recommendations for successful implementation.

In the regional growth and development programming field formal institutionalization is not yet in place to the same extent as for example in municipal spatial planning. This seems to be the case in both Sweden and Norway. The incentives for learning may however be greater in the regional development planning context because of the seemingly more coherent set of goals outlined for the programming work compared to municipal comprehensive planning. Moreover, the focus on learning as an important prerequisite for the cultivation of a better innovation and industrial cluster climate may also help to open the way for learning in relation to sustainable development. To what extent such leaning occurs is of course an empirical question.

All in all – whilst sustainable development as a policy objective has become more central in recent years, its acceptance, its integration into policy objectives and its institutionalization in regional programming practice all remain at an early stage of development. The role of the partnership mode for programming is of course, as mentioned previously, of high interest in this context.

³¹Skantze and Asplund 2005, Dovlén 2005, Håkansson 2005, Isaksson 2004, Storbjörk 2004, Asplund and Hilding-Rydevik 2001.

³²Skantze and Asplund 2005, Asplund and Hilding-Rydevik 2001.

³³Schleicher-Tappeser R and Faerber A (1998); Schleicher-Tappeser R and Strati F (1999); Schleicher-Tappeser et al. (1999).

³⁴Gabriel I and Narodoslowsky M (1998) , Lafferty and Narodoslowsky (2003).

2 Aim, Research Questions and Methodology

2.1 Aim

The aim of the first phase of the project, presented in this report is to:

- Describe and compare the national political goals, statements and activities in respect of the promotion and inclusion of sustainable development in regional growth and development programming work in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, whilst also
- Describing and analysing how the national goals, as they appear in the bullet point above, have been implemented, interpreted and organized in the regional growth and development programming documents.

The empirical sections, together with literature studies, will form the basis for drawing up conclusions concerning the state of affairs regarding the implementation of sustainable development in the four Nordic countries covered. The expected outcomes are an analysis concerning the existence, amount and nature of national political sustainable development goals concerning regional development programming work. Studies of regional documents form the basis for conclusions on the possible discrepancies between the regulative, legislative, rhetorical and practical results of integrating sustainability and regional growth. The regional document study will also help to give some initial substance to the issue of how sustainable development is interpreted and implemented at the regional level in some regions in the countries to be studied. Issues

of importance concerning the implementation of sustainable development in the regional programming context will be highlighted to the extent that they are revealed in the documents but will mostly be elaborated in the next stage of the project where a more in-depth focus on regional practices is undertaken. The phase 1 project thus forms the basis for the design of the phase 2 project.

Sustainable development will not be covered in all its dimensions – ecological, social and economic – in this study. We will focus here on that part of sustainable development that concerns the integration of ecological and environmental issues in the regional economic growth and development context. The reason for choosing this narrower focus is in the main methodological. The number of studies concerning the integration of environmental issues in other areas will enable us to draw upon these results in the proposed project here. It is also fruitful to be able to compare results from the regional development field with other areas concerning obstacles, reasons for conflict, possibilities etc in relation to the integration of environmental perspectives. This will be done in the second phase of the study.

The results reported here represent the initial step, in effect, a pre-study, for the second phase of the project where special focus will be placed on regional programming work and the role of the partnership model in programming processes and practices.

2.2 Overall Methodology

The rationale of the current pre-project is explorative – addressing the question of what is going in the Nordic countries in relation to the promotion and implementation of sustainable development in the policy field of regional development? In relation to finding out what is going on, there is also a need to attain an overview of the differences in the organization of regional development programming work in the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden are included in the study). The reason for choosing these four countries is provided by the ability to compare countries with roughly similar re-

gional development organizations, countries where partnerships are used, and countries that have regional levels of governance. In addition, time constraints necessitate that finite limits be placed on the scope of the project. Iceland was not included because of its lack of similarity in respect of many of these issues to the other Nordic countries.

As well as following Nordregio's tradition of producing comparative studies, this research-project has its empirical base in qualitative and explorative studies by which we learn more about what happens when sustainable development is integrated into the context of regional growth and

development programming processes. Qualitative studies, as they are understood here, refer to the identification and interpretation of qualities, characteristics, variations, structures, meanings etc within a particular context.¹ Case studies are particularly appropriate when questions such as 'why' and 'how' are asked, and we try to understand complex phenomena, practical problems, processes etc by means of multiple sources of data.² It is not unusual that the focus here is on exploring an issue by focusing on the multiple realities, perceptions and experiences of a number of parties.³ This two-phased research-project is seen as consisting of four case studies, i.e. the four countries of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. The cases are viewed as instrumental, i.e. we study them to learn about an overarching question.⁴ In this first stage we have studied the national agendas for sustainable regional development – how sustainable development as an issue is dealt with and interpreted in the context of regional growth and programming processes – by means of interviews with representatives of the national authorities, and documentary studies. We have also provided eight explorative pilot studies of regional level perspectives by focusing on how integration is portrayed in regional programmes and planning documents, by means of textual analysis. These regional 'cases within the cases' which are vital for understanding these processes will be further developed in phase two of the project, where a more in-depth exploration of the regional practices will be undertaken, through the instrument of focus-group interviews with different partnership actors. We thus see these different parts of the larger study as complementary and that they, when viewed together, will constitute an explorative empirical base for understanding what happens with sustainable development in the arena of regional development programming processes.

2.2.1 Characteristics of National Regional Development Systems and Sustainable Development Aspirations

The main characteristics – legislation, etc. – of the national regional growth and development work in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, was compiled through document studies and interviews. A process of collaboration in the context of this work was undertaken with the Nordregio project, *Tools for Sustainable Regional Development* (Hilding-Rydevik et al. 2004). It is important to identify the outlines of the regional development system in each country, as it constitutes the context into which sustainable development goals are expected to be implemented. The characteristics of national regional development work

in relation to sustainable development will be the parallel target for this part of the project. The main part of the empirical work concerning the national level was done through studying national political and administrative documents from Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. These documents are discussed in the chapters concerning the national level in each of the studied countries.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted in four different national contexts in order to better understand the national agenda and to gauge the attempts to integrate sustainable development in the field of regional development, after which we were able to better understand just what national declarations of sustainable development actually mean in a particular context. Interviews are generally a good way in which to learn about different interpretations in respect of a particular issue, or about the perspectives of the different individuals or groups of individuals that represented the national authorities in this study.⁵

In respect of the selection of national representatives we first undertook an overview of potential national ministries and authorities and then selected those who worked most closely with regional programming processes. For the limited time frame available we chose to focus on two authorities within each country, though other fruitful contacts could easily have been identified. In the process of highlighting the authorities in question we proceeded to identify a number of potential interviewees working closely with regional development programming processes and sustainable development. An e-mail was sent introducing the research-project in outline form, which explained what we wanted to learn from them, containing also the question of whom we should contact further etc. We then used the recommendations made to firm up our interviewee list. In Denmark we interviewed two representatives of the Danish Agency for Trade and Industry (*Erhvervs- og Boligstyrelsen*) and two from The Ministry of the Environment (*Miljøministeriet*). In Finland we interviewed representatives from the two ministries working with regional development, planning and environment, that is the Ministry of the Interior (with responsibility for regional development and Structural Funds) and the Ministry of the Environment (two persons from each department). In Norway we interviewed one representative of the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (*Kommunal- og Regionaldepartementet*) and one from the Norwegian Industrial and Regional Development Fund (*Statens Nærings- og distriktsutviklingsfond*). In Sweden we spoke to one representative at the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications (*Näringsdepartementet*) and three at the Swedish Business and Development Agency (NUTEK). All in all, 14 people were interviewed.

¹Starrin and Svensson 1996.

²Yin 2003, Stake 1995, Merriam 1994.

³Stake 1995, Merriam 1994.

⁴Stake 1995.

⁵Kvale 1997.

In Denmark, Norway and Sweden the interviews were conducted in place, that is to say, in the work-environment of the informants. In Finland the interviews were conducted over the phone. Working with telephone interviews in comparison with meeting eye-to-eye naturally has its disadvantages, however the researcher conducting the interview and the interviewees knew each other from previous occasions, which made the discussion somewhat easier. The interviews lasted for about one to two hours, the shorter interviews being dependent on the changed schedules and time-limitations of the informants. We used a common interview-guide in all national contexts to facilitate comparisons (see appendix 1). The interviews were semi-structured. The guide was seen as cumulative and flexible where new questions and follow up questions were important, which also meant that the actual emphasis on the questions in the guide varied accordingly. The questions were of an open-ended character in order to open up different views and experiences. The intention was to leave room for the informants to give their picture and interpretation of the questions at hand and thus have a greater influence on the agenda of the interview.⁶ We cannot however disregard the fact that the answers were a direct response to the specific interview-situation established and the relationship between interviewee and researcher.⁷ The aim was to strike a balance between asking our questions and finding answers to them whilst remaining open to the stories and perspectives of the interviewees. The interview-guide was sent to the participants beforehand so that they had a chance to think about the questions we were interested in.

In preparing the analysis, all interviews were recorded and transcribed. We did not however use the most detailed level of transcription, as a micro-level linguistic analysis was not intended. Each transcription was dependent upon the aim of the interview and the process of transcription is, unavoidably, a process of selection, interpretation and categorization.⁸ We chose to ignore pauses, disruptions, re-starts of sentences etc, and concentrated on expressing the main content of what was said. We also chose not to transcribe parts that did not sufficiently relate to the aims of this investigation. These parts were instead noted in the transcribed text, for future eventualities. The transcription also meant a transformation to written speech. For the analysis we read and reread the transcript, making notes in the margin of the recurring themes of importance, thus looking both for patterns and for specific replays. The categorization we find in the text (section 4) is a combination of the questions we had beforehand and the themes emerging from the interviews. In presenting the analysis we have chosen to use a number of direct quotes to complement

the analysis, to give a more detailed and direct flavour of the experience for the reader. The quotes are selected carefully, to give examples of how specific issues were discussed or dealt with in the interpretation of the interviewees. The general ambition was to be clear about the differences between the countries and make room for the nuances in interpretation that we believe are important in qualitative research. We chose to keep the analysis focused on one country at a time, to avoid confusion. The analysis presented in the interviews is thus thematic and country-specific. Some questions arising from the interviews are also referred to in section 3, to complement other documentation on the actual form and content of regional policy in the countries concerned. All respondents were sent a preliminary analysis (without our conclusions) giving the informants the opportunity to comment on the use of interviews, quotes etc.

2.2.2 Regional Studies

In this phase the empirical work at the regional level consisted of document studies of the two regions in each country. The document studies included their main growth and regional development documents and analysing for example the inclusion, definition, participating actors, projects etc in relation to sustainable development and particularly in relation to the integration of environmental questions. The regions used for the target of the empirical studies were chosen because of their assumed role as forerunners in the field of developing sustainable growth or the integration of the environment into regional development programme work (the regions concerned were proposed by researchers or officials in each country). The regions studied were:

- *Sweden:* Västra Götaland and Dalarna
- *Finland:* Satakunta and Keski-Suomi
- *Norway:* Rogaland and Oppland
- *Denmark:* Nordjylland and Storstrøm

The instruments analysed included the main national programme instruments in the respective countries: Regional Development Programmes (*regionale utviklingsprogram*) in Norway, Regional Development Programmes (*regionale erhvervsudviklingsprogram*) or Strategies for Regional Growth and Cooperation (*regionale vækststrategi*) in Denmark, Regional Development Programmes (*regionala utvecklingsprogram*) and Regional Growth Programmes (*regionala tillväxtprogram*) in Sweden and Regional Development Programmes (*Maakuntaohjelma*) in Finland.

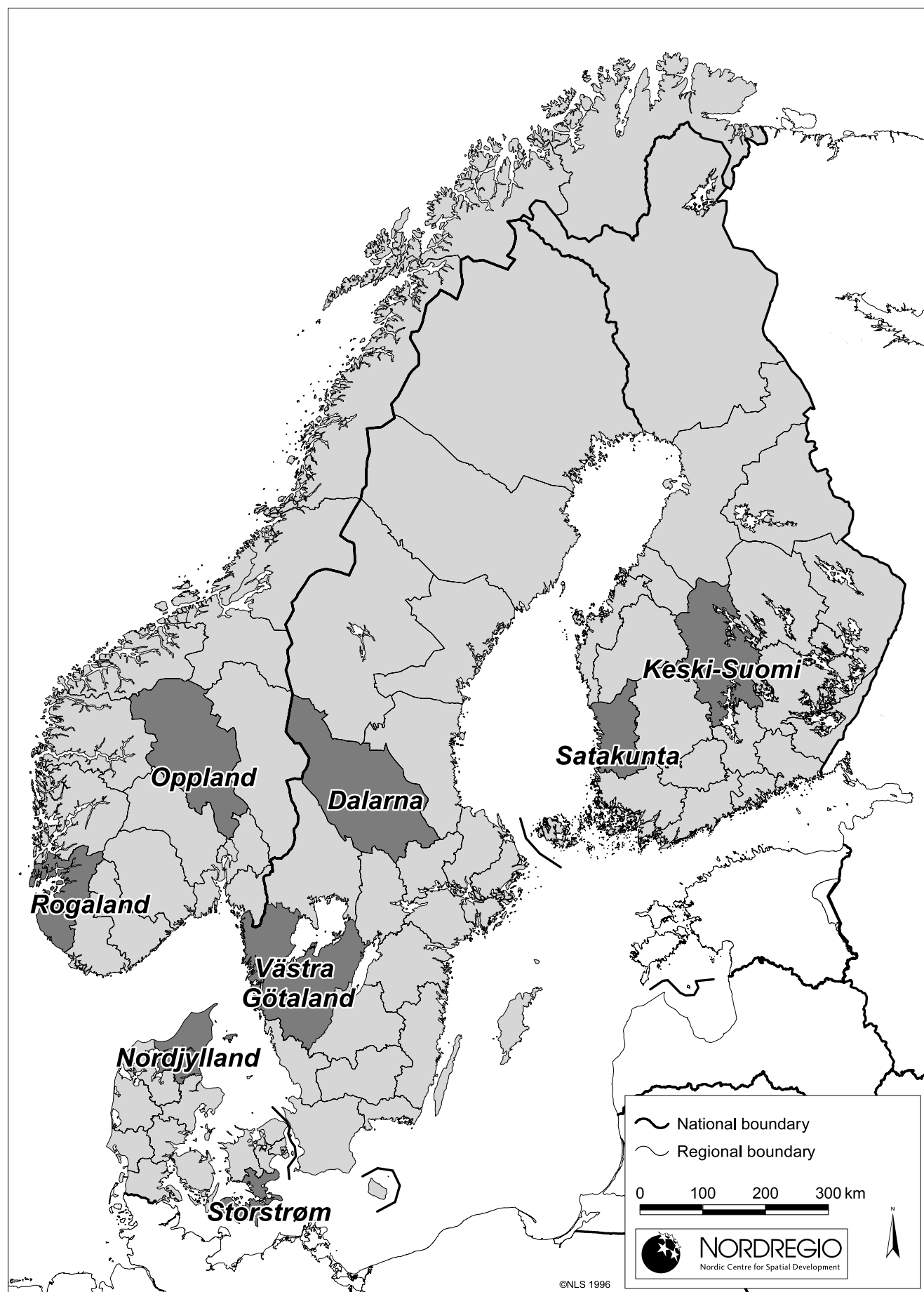
Where necessary, this analysis will be complemented with other regional strategic documents in addition to European development programmes (such as for example Objective 1 and 2 in Sweden and Finland; for an approach integrating regional planning and sustainability in these see for instance Savola 2001) and other national policy instruments, which are to be developed in an integrated

⁶Kvale 1997.

⁷Briggs 1987, Mishler 1987.

⁸Linell 1994.

Figur 1. Regions in the Nordic countries that are included in the project: Denmark: Nordjylland and Storstrøm; Finland: Keski-Suomi and Satakunta; Norway: Oppland and Rogaland; Sweden: Dalarna and Västra Götaland.



fashion with the broader national programmes (e.g. *Aluekeskusohjelma* = *Utvecklingsprogrammet för regioncentra* in Finland).

Document Studies and Textual Analysis

The analysis of texts or written documents is often an important part of qualitative social science research. In this research-project we use the interrogation of such texts to better understand the various national agendas – the governmental goals, ambitions, assumptions and proposed methods – for the integration of sustainable development in the context of regional growth and development. Another important part of the study relates to the desire to get some indication of what happens in regional practices. Here we also use textual interrogation as a way of initially evaluating some regional examples of the practice of this integration, and in particular, just how these issues are dealt with by the regions concerned. The idea is thus that the texts have a message to mediate and that by interpreting texts we can learn about ideas, meanings, ambitions, assumptions, conceptual frameworks and discourses in society as they are expressed by particular actors.⁹

When working with textual analysis the selection of documents is a delicate and important stage of the research-process. For the national agenda we have selected and analysed national documents from the central authorities dealing with issues of sustainable development and regional development. The selection has been limited both in time and place, while the ambition was never to present a complete picture of the issues at hand. Rather, the texts were analysed in order to provide a context to the national interviews and to complement these. The focus here has been on how these issues of sustainable development and regional development are discussed in relation to each other, what goals and definitions are outlined, what assumptions are made concerning the integration and combination of growth and environmental perspectives, how the practice of integration is viewed, and the regional outcomes and the role of partnerships etc. The reading of these documents has been selective. Issues of context are dealt with to some extent, both in sections three and four of the report, while the various texts are related to each other throughout the analysis. In general, it is important to be clear about both the larger cultural context and the inter-textual context, i.e. how the specific text is related to other texts, the specific genre and purpose of the text etc., in the analysis.¹⁰

The analysis of the regional arenas and of the impact of the overarching ambitions of integrating sustainable development within the context of regional growth and development commenced with a textual analysis of regional programmes, plans and strategies. In contact with the na-

tional authorities regarding progressive regions working with these issues, two regions in each country were targeted for analysis. The focus here is thus on regions that are regarded as comparatively progressive where these issues are generally dealt with. The belief is that we can learn most from these regions in this explorative study and we also know beforehand that working with these issues is not a general state of affairs in the countries. No consideration has been given to geographical, political, social, economic and other regional differences. The selection of documents was thereafter undertaken in dialogue with regional representatives where we have presented the project and the questions we are interested in and asked for documents outlining regional strategies, plans and development programmes. In the instances when we got the possibility to attain earlier versions of the documents, these have also been used. The inter-textual context is discussed in the document and such elements are often pinpointed in the analysis while less is said or discussed about the larger regional contexts. This will become more elaborated in phase two where at least some of these regional examples will be chosen for more in-depth-studies. The textual analysis has been guided by a questionnaire (see appendix 2), which we have used as a basis for the analysis. From the textual analysis undertaken at the regional level, we learned about the explicit goal and strategies – as well as the reasoning in outlining them – as they appear in the actual documents. What happens in practice with the different strategies and how they are received and implemented in actual projects and activities however cannot be answered by this analysis. To get an indication of this we have to await the analysis of phase two.

In presenting the analysis we have in some cases chosen to use a number of direct quotes to complement the references to what is said in the documents, to give a more detailed and direct experience for the reader. The quotes are selected carefully, to give examples of how specific issues are discussed or dealt with in the text. The general ambition was – as for the interviews – to be clear about the differences and make room for nuances in interpretation. We have also chosen to keep the analysis focused on one region at a time, to avoid confusion.

2.2.3 The Challenge of Conducting Cross-National Studies

Conducting case studies based on interviews and textual analysis in four countries with different languages has at times proved challenging. This challenge particularly concerns the Norwegian and Danish parts, where neither of us working with this project have the necessary language-skills. In the interviews in these countries the researcher spoke Swedish and the respondents spoke either Danish or Norwegian. We spoke about the issue of language at the beginning of the interviews and made it clear that it was important to be observant of possible misunderstandings

⁹Hellspong and Ledin 1997, Bergström and Boréus 2000.

¹⁰Hellspong and Ledin 1997.

Table 1. Brief overview of the key concepts in the different languages

Concept (in English)	Denmark	Finland
Sustainability	Bæredygtighed	(not used as such, <i>kestävä</i> = sustainable)
Sustainable development	Bæredygtig udvikling	Kestävä kehitys
Sustainable growth	Bæredygtig vækst (seldom used)	Kestävä kasvu (seldom used)
Balanced development	Balanceret udvikling (cf. Landsplanredegørelse 2003: 'Et Danmark i balance', i.e. an integrated part of the government's rhetoric)	Tasapainoinen kasvu
Regional development	Regional udvikling	<i>Aluekehitys</i> or <i>alue(ellinen) kehittäminen</i>
Regional industrial policy	Regional erhvervspolitik (erhverv = industrial, business life)*	Alueellinen elinkeinopolitiikka
Regional growth	Regional vækst	Alueellinen kasvu
Regional Development Programme(s) (in the national case study)	Regional growth co-operations = Regionale vækstsamarbejder and regional plans = regionplaner	Maakunta-ohjelma
Ministry/authority responsible for regional industrial policy	The National Agency for Enterprise and Housing, Department of Regional Policy = Erhvervs- og Boligstyrelsen, EBST, afd. for regionalpolitik	Ministry of the Interior = Sisäasiainministeriö
Ministry/authority responsible for physical spatial planning	The Ministry of the Environment = Miljøministeriet	Ministry of the Environment = Ympäristöministeriö
Ministry/authority responsible for (the co-ordination of) Structural Funds	The National Agency for Enterprise and Housing, Department of Regional Policy = Erhvervs- og Boligstyrelsen, EBST, afd. for regionalpolitik (Regional- and Social Fond)	Ministry of the Interior = Sisäasiainministeriö
Ministry/authority responsible for business subsidies	The National Agency for Enterprise and Housing = Erhvervs- og Boligstyrelsen, EBST	Ministry of Trade and Industry = Kauppa- ja Teollisuusministeriö (KTM)
Main regional level authority	Amtskommune (in the case of Bornholm: regionskommune)	Maakuntaliitto (Regional Council)
Planning law guiding spatial planning	The Planning Act = Planloven (1992, with a number of subsequent changes)	Maankäyttö- ja rakennuslaki (Land Use and Building Act – from 2000)
Law guiding regional development policy	Agt on Industrial Policy = Lov om erhvervsfremme (2003) and act on administration of EU's regional fund = Bekendtgørelse af lov om administration af tilskud fra Den Europæiske Regionalfond og tilhørende statslig medfinansiering (2000, with subsequent changes)	Laki alueiden kehittämisestä (Regional development Act, from 2002)
Other key documents/report on regional policy	(Annual) Regional Policy Report = regionalpolitisk redegørelse. Prepared by The Ministry for Interior and Health = Indenrigsministeriet The Danish Regional Growth Strategy. Prepared by Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs	Valtioneuvoston päätös alueiden kehittämisen tavoitteista = Government decision on regional policy objectives (latest from 2004)
Partnership	Partnerskab	Kumppanuus
Main partnership organization(s)/ body in regional policy field	Amtter og kommuner (counties and municipalities – in co-operation with regional and local stakeholders)	Maakunnan yhteistyöryhmä (MYR) = Regional Management Committee (RMC)

*NB: manufacturing=industri; industry=erhverv el. industri; industrial=erhvervsmæssig.

Norway

Bærekraft

Bærekraftig utvikling

Bærekraftig vekst

Balansert utvikling

Regional utvikling

Regional næringspolitikk

Regional vekst

Regional(e) utviklingsprogram (abbr.: RUP)

Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development
= Kommunal- og regionaldepartementet

Ministry of Environment = Miljøverndepartementet

Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development
= Kommunal- og regionaldepartementet

Ministry of Trade and Industri
= Nærings- og handelsdepartementet

County Municipality = Fylkeskommunen

The Planning and Building Act = Plan og bygningsloven
(under revision)

None

Governmental White Paper on Regional Policy
(latest from 2001 – next to appear: 2005)

Partnerskap

County municipality

Sweden

Hållbarhet

Hållbar utveckling

Hållbar tillväxt

Balanserad utveckling

Regional utveckling

Regional näringspolitik

Regional tillväxt

Regionala tillväxtprogram (RTP)
Regionala utvecklingsprogram (RUP)

Ministry of Industry = Näringsdepartementet

Ministry of the Environment = Miljödepartementet

Ministry of Industry = Näringsdepartementet

Ministry of Industry = Näringsdepartementet;
Swedish Business Development Agency = Nutek

Länsstyrelsen (11) (also 'regionala självstyrelseorgan')

The Planning and Building Act = Plan och bygglagen (PBL) 1987:10,
Miljöbalk (1998:808)

None

Budget-propositionen, utgiftsområde 19: Regional utveckling;
Regeringens proposition 2001/02:4 *En politik för tillväxt och
livskraft i hela landet*

Partnerskap

Länsstyrelsen, Länsarbetsnämnden, kommunerna, kommunala
samverkansorgan, näringslivets organisationer (= counties and
municipalities – in co-operation with regional and local stakeholders)

and that it was essential to put such issues up 'on the table'. It was clarified that it was better to say: 'I am not sure that I understand you correctly' than to keep silent. In these interviews it was even more important for the researcher to sum up discussions and to constantly say 'so this means that you are of the opinion that...' in order to check interpretations and to try to avoid misunderstandings. A lot of time and effort was thus put into such clarifications in the interviews. In Finland and Sweden the interviews were in the native language of the researcher undertaking the analysis. As described above, all respondents were sent a pre-

liminary analysis and they were invited to comment and to clarify potential misunderstandings. Some issues were in fact corrected as a consequence of this.

As the context, utilisation and meaning of the key concepts varied from one national context to another, we also compiled a brief overview of the key concepts in each of the different languages, benefiting from the available language-competences at Nordregio, which provided us with the opportunity to clarify and discuss the key concepts with native speakers of each of the languages used in the documents and interviews (see table 1, pp. 22–23).

Section 2

National Level

In this section the national political goals, statements and activities promoting the inclusion of sustainable development in regional growth and development programming work in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden are addressed. The existence and nature of national level ambitions and efforts in this field are also described and compared.

3 The National Cases

3.1 The Case of Denmark

3.1.1 Regional Policy at the National Level: Actors, Roles and Instruments

Danish regional policy today is characterised by a focus both on keeping a sound regional balance – a balanced Denmark – and on more explicit orientation towards economic growth and development, thus increasing the competitiveness of different regions. Economic growth is seen as an important precondition for a good regional policy.¹

The relationship between the regions and the state is such that national goals cannot be realised without the co-operation of regions and regional efforts and strategies need the collaboration of the state.² At the same time the Danish state has been described as more of a co-ordinator compared for example to the situation in Sweden, where central government has a more central role in enacting regional policy. The strategy in Denmark has instead been to 'leave it up to the regions' to decide upon frameworks for development. The Danish state decides upon overriding legislation for the promotion of regional growth and development, and offers economic support through a number of regional growth and development initiatives. In Denmark the influence of EU Structural Funds policies has also been important.³ A number of national and regional actors have responsibilities relating to the larger field of regional policy, which consists of both regional economic policy and physical planning.⁴

Regional industrial policy (erhverv) is the task of the Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs (*Økonomi- og Erhvervsministeriet*, OEM). The OEM published a document entitled National Strategies for Growth in 2002, which is to be followed up each year.⁵ OEM also administers the Structural Funds (by means of EBST) and traditional business subsidies. In the Regional Strategy for Growth, published in May 2003, the stated ambition of the government was to promote a sensible economic balance and to secure a balanced development in all parts of the country:

'It is the goal of the government that Denmark maintains its rank as one of the European countries with the highest degree of economic balance between its regions. We need a

particular effort for the peripheral regions so that they keep up with the economic growth in the rest of the country. It needs to be continuously attractive to live and work in these areas.'⁶

The governmental regional policy has thus changed its focus to peripheral regions that need assistance in developing conditions for growth and business. Economic support for regional development is directed at the compensation of differences, by means of regional growth partnerships (*vækstsamarbejden*) with the aim of developing strategies for regional growth.⁷ On a national level these efforts demand the co-ordination of different Ministries and a cross-sectoral way of working.⁸

The Danish Agency for Trade and Industry (*Erhvervs- og Boligstyrelsen*, EBST) is one of several boards that belongs to OEM. EBST plays an important role on the regional arena. EBS administer the EU Regional Development and Social Funds and represents OEM in regional development contexts, formerly in the regional development programmes (regionale erhvervsudviklingsprogrammer) and presently in the establishment of regional growth partnerships in peripheral regions. EBST is, together with the Ministry of the Environment, a part of the secretariat where the ambition is to co-ordinate growth-politics, physical planning and environmental considerations.⁹ In the latter, the EBST acts as a 'door opener' between the regions and the relevant Ministries.¹⁰

At the national level TIC, the Technological Information Centres play an important role as partners in dialogue on issues of growth and development in relation to small and medium sized companies. The role of TIC's includes the provision of knowledge and competence, connecting the national and regional level, collecting/formulating needs and experiences etc.¹¹

The Ministry of the Environment (*Miljøministeriet*, MIM) is responsible for regional physical planning and also produces National Planning Reports (*landsplanredokumentation*). The Planning Act (*Planloven*) is important as is

¹Hilding-Rydevik et al. 2004.

²MIM 2003 *Et Danmark i balance. Hvad skal der gøres?*, p 14.

³Mariussen et al. 2000, p 18.

⁴Hilding-Rydevik et al 2004.

⁵*Vækst med vilje* 2002.

⁶OEM 2003, *Den regionale Vækststrategi*.

⁷OEM 2003, *Den regionale Vækststrategi*.

⁸Interview 1, 4.

⁹Interview 1, 2.

¹⁰Interview 1.

¹¹EBST 1998.

the influence physical planning has on different societal sectors. The MIM also has overall responsibility for the national strategy for sustainable development.¹² The current focus on growth within regional policy has meant that the national planning report needs to be closely co-ordinated with the regional growth-strategy. Physical planning is seen as a strategic tool in the production of regional strategies for growth, contributing to the securing of regional balance in the country as a whole and strengthening local areas and competences.¹³ As a result of this, MIM works together with EBST in the development of the regional growth partnerships with the particular mission of observing and analysing sustainability-aspects.¹⁴

The Ministry of Interior Affairs and Health (*Indenrigs- og Sundhedsministeriet*) deals with issues of municipal economy and the annual Regional Policy Report (*regional-politisk redegørelse*), which is focused on municipal economy and historical aspects.¹⁵

3.1.2 The Regional Level: Actors, Roles and Instruments

Regionally, Denmark is divided into 13 *amtskommuner* and the *regionskommune* of Bornholm. Copenhagen and Frederiksberg also function as regions, despite also being municipalities.¹⁶ The Danish regions and municipalities play the role of the concrete formulation of policies in relation to the field of regional growth and development. Their efforts take as their starting-point the different needs, problems and opportunities in a given area. The goal is to contribute to growth and development of different activities. Good conditions in respect of infrastructure, physical planning, environment, education, business etc. are striven for.¹⁷

The *amts* have been described as proactive regional development actors, in comparison with Sweden were regional development – at least traditionally – has been seen as more of a state responsibility.¹⁸ The regions were given regional planning departments' with competence for growth and development during the 1980's, and today the *amts* are the central institutions in the development of regional partnerships. Specific regional policies are thus mainly the concern of the regions themselves even if the government has selected a number of regions, based on functional rather than administrative borders such as the *amts*, as special targets for policies and funding. Danish regional partnerships have been seen to have a strong position and are acknowledged as being advanced, self-conscious and well organised.¹⁹

The Planning Act mandates that all regions develop regional plans (*regionplaner*) every fourth year. For a period of 12 years, the regional plans determine the overarching goals for development and land-use within the region (MIM 2002, *Planloven i praksis*, p 10). As formulated in the context of the coming revision of regional government the various subjects included in the plans are as follows: regional structure, growth, service and settlement, infrastructure and technical construction, protection of open land areas (including nature, culture, tourism and environment). The regional plan functions as a framework for the regional policy context, while other initiatives should not therefore be 'at odds' with the regional plan. It is also stated that the regional plans must be built upon sustainable development as a principal aim, and that they are a strategic means for working with sustainability. The Planning Act moreover states that:

'A regional plan shall lay out the goals for regional development and contribute to a societal development that is effected in a sustainable way'²⁰

The Ministry of the Environment has the task of ensuring that these regional plans correspond with overarching national interests.²¹ There is also a committee working with the question of how to turn the *regional* plan into more of a *strategic* plan for development, which includes regional growth and agriculture.²²

Beginning in the mid 1990's and surviving until recently, the Government contributed a measure of financial support for the production of Regional Development Programmes (*regionale erhvervsudviklingsprogram*) in order to bring the regional actors together to develop a common strategy, which was seen to create important connections and wider efficiency benefits. In an initial phase, this support concerned the creation of co-operative forums between the municipalities where it was enough to bring actors together. The government also supported the key-persons responsible for co-operation.²³

In a second phase support was given via thematic development programmes, which focus on topics of general interest and where different projects relating to the themes in question could be given funding. National actors identified the themes concerned.²⁴ The REUP:s have been a part of the regional plans that the regions (and partnerships within them) develop. It has largely been up to the regions themselves to decide if and how to work with REUP, i.e. this has not been run on a 'top-down' basis. The Danish regional development programmes, formulated by regional *erhvervsamarbejden* in partnerships, have inclu-

¹²Interview 3, 4.

¹³MIM 2003, *Et Danmark i balance. Hvad skal der gøres?*, p 9.

¹⁴Interview 3, 4.

¹⁵Interview 1, 2.

¹⁶<http://www.danmark.dk>

¹⁷EBST 1998, *Fremtidens TIC – en central aktør in national og regional erhvervsfremme*.

¹⁸Mariussen et al. 2000, p 13.

¹⁹Mariussen et al. 2000, p 18.

²⁰MIM 2002, *Overblik over statslige interesser i regionplanrevision 2005*, interview 3.

²¹MIM 2002, *Planloven i praksis*, p 11.

²²*Ibid*, p 12.

²³Interview 1, 2.

²⁴Interview 1, 2. See also Östhol and Svensson 2002.

ded goals, strategies and the means to encourage business development in a region. The programmes have been expected to be developed by thinking in terms of comprehensiveness rather than in strictly sectoral terms. The partnerships have thus, according to a description by ØEM:

‘given shape to regional conditions for growth and co-ordination of different initiatives relating to the field of labour-markets, education, culture, environment, growth and research based on a common strategy for growth and balance’²⁵

EBST have administered the REUP:s and given support for concrete projects as well as strategic co-operations in the form of specific centres.²⁶ Between 2001 and 2004 another Danish initiative was that of ‘regional growth environments’ with the goal here being to promote co-operation between companies, universities and research institutes.²⁷ This was not, however, linked to the regional growth programmes.

The focus of Danish regional policy has changed recently, and since April 2003 the government has offered financial means for developing new regional development initiatives in peripheral regions, as well as suggesting the creation of regional forums for growth (*regionale vækstfora* or *regionale vækstsamarbejder*). The motivation for these initiatives is that through them the relevant ministries (on the initiative of ØEM) can better contribute to regional development, and in so doing, make sure that all regions have access to the fruits of development and growth.²⁸ The offer is however not open to Danish regions in general, but is rather targeted to a group of 15 peripheral regions, who are invited to apply for funding. The regions in question are functional regions, rather than the administrative regions represented by the *amts*. A growth partnership can consist of more than one *amt* but they are smaller than the *amts*.²⁹ Even if the government has selected the regions and offers financial support it is still up to the regions themselves to initiate and operate these processes. To be able to realise the governmental vision, the need for better conditions for entrepreneurs (*iværksættere*) who

can contribute to growth as well as the important role of networks and co-operation across administrative borders has been emphasised.³⁰

The growth partnerships gather together regional, local and national actors. The EBST has the role of administering these initiatives and they have to be clear both how particular areas of achievements and particular projects within these areas contribute to the more overarching goals. It is also important that the projects correspond with the strategies for the broader growth partnerships that the regional growth partnerships are themselves a part of.³¹

The regional growth partnerships (*regionale vækstsamarbejder*) have the task of prioritising and developing concrete project proposals and initiatives that promote development and the conditions for growth at the regional level. As clarified in the interviews conducted within this study, the regions need to formulate a specific regional growth strategy (*regionale vækststrategi*) before they can apply for money. In partnerships the regions chose four strategic priority areas to work with. If concrete projects fall within these areas, support can then be given. It is thus decided upon beforehand who can apply for funding, though it is up to the regions and the partnerships to apply and for such applications to be within areas which they have themselves decided upon as important. EBST does not therefore control the direction the support takes. The means cannot, however, be used to support business production.³² This initiative is in its initial phase, with many of the selected regions working with the formulation of growth-strategies. The first set of 16 applications was delivered to EBST in October 2003.³³

The EU Structural Funds Programmes and Rural Development Programmes (*landdistriktsprogram*) have been, and continue to be, important instruments in the Danish regional development context. Some of the current ‘regional growth partnerships’ can also apply for co-financing through the European Regional Development Fund for example. One ambition here is to co-ordinate a co-financing regime between different sources and funds. Here EBST plays an important role.³⁴

²⁵ØEM 2003, *Den regionale Vækststrategi*, p 59f.

²⁶Interview 1, 2.

²⁷Hilding-Rydevik et al 2004.

²⁸ØEM 2003 *Den regionale Vækststrategi*, p 11. MIM 2003 *Et Danmark i balance. Hvad skal der gøres?*, p 16.

²⁹Interview 1, 2.

³⁰ØEM 2003, *Handlingsplan for iværksættere*, MIM 2003 *Et Danmark i balance. Hvad skal der gøres?*, p 14.

³¹ØEM 2003, *Den regionale Vækststrategi*, *Retningslinier* 2003–08.

³²Interview 1, 2.

³³Interview 1, 2.

³⁴Interview 2.

3.2 The Case of Finland

3.2.1 Regional Policy at the National Level: Actors, Roles and Instruments

On the whole it is the municipalities and the State that are responsible for regional development in the Finnish context, with the regional councils (*maakunta*) as joint municipal boards being responsible for the management functions relating to regional policy.

The Ministry of the Interior is responsible for the formulation of national targets for regional development in cooperation with other ministries and the Regional Councils. In addition, the Ministry of the Interior is responsible for coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the preparation and implementation of regional strategic programmes and other programmes in accordance with the Regional Development Act, in cooperation with other relevant sector ministries and the Regional Councils.

The main policy goal of national regional policy as outlined in the Regional Development Act³⁵ is the creation of preconditions for economic growth, industrial and business development, and a higher employment rate that will guarantee regional competitiveness and wellbeing on a basis of competence and sustainable development. Further purposes include reducing regional differences in terms of their levels of development, improving people's living conditions, and promoting balanced development among the regions.³⁶

The Finnish system and methodology of regional development is often called 'programme-based',³⁷ reflecting the fact that as a response to having lost faith in the ambitious top-down planning systems there was a shift towards more bottom-up and endogenous development ideology which was further encouraged by Finnish EU-accession and the introduction of a new regional administration structure: the (then new) Regional Development Act of 1993 reflected this change and was also more in tune with the subsequent introduction of EU Structural policy in the Finnish context. Therefore it is also quite natural that the national and European regional policy instruments are largely integrated or coincidental in their objectives. This is apparent also in the previously mentioned Regional Development Act, where in relation to the scope of the Act it is argued that:

'This Act applies to the development of the regions, the preparation and implementation of plans and programmes concerning regional development, and the coordination and monitoring of these plans and programmes. What is provided in the Act on the National Management of Structural Fund Programmes (1353/1999), hereinafter

'Structural Fund Act', applies to the implementation of programmes co-financed from Structural Funds of the European Community and the management of corresponding national co-financing' (Section 2)

Thus it can be said that the (national) Regional development Act provides the main template for the whole gamut of regional policy implemented in Finland, whilst the details of the management of SF programmes are then detailed in the Structural Fund Act.³⁸ Both types of regional policies are implemented on a programme-basis.

Finnish regional policy has been largely based on the Structural Fund-model, especially as the main focus and *modus operandi* in both cases is programme work. In terms of the level of programming there are three types of programmes implemented: national, regional and European, which are developed largely in a co-ordinated fashion.

On the national level it is in the final instance the government that defines the goals and targets for regional policy. In the achievement of these one utilises long-term instruments such as the 'special programmes' listed in the national legislation. The government can also draft special programmes if it sees fit. As expressed in the Regional Development Act, 'the government decides on national regional development targets for a fixed period.' Moreover, 'the Government can decide to have special programmes drawn up in order to achieve the targets'.³⁹

In addition there are the so-called 'special programmes', which are outlined in the national legislation and complemented by the government when necessary. Currently the national regional policy programmes in the sense of 'special programmes' include the following:

- *The Regional Centre Programme:* The main aim of the programme is to promote the strengths and specializations of regional centres and co-operation between them so as to reinforce the network covering all the regions. Regional centres comprise functionally homogeneous urban regions in terms of commuting, housing, service provision and demand. The Programme is currently being implemented in 35 regional centres/ functional urban areas.
- *Rural Policy Programme:* The aim of the Rural Policy Programme is to revitalize and diversify economic activity and safeguard and develop services in rural areas by coordinating measures in various administrative sectors that have an impact on these areas.
- *Centre of Expertise Programme:* The main aim of the programme is to improve the preconditions for the establishment and development of internationally competitive business and research operations calling

³⁵Ministry of the Interior 2002.

³⁶Ibid, Section 1.

³⁷E.g. Vartiainen 1998, p 9.

³⁸Ministry of Finance 1999.

³⁹Ibid.

for a high level of expertise. The Programme supports regional specializations and divisions of labour between centres of expertise. The Programme is currently being implemented in 18 regionally based Centres and in 4 network-based national Centres (e.g. in wood products, food industries, metal industry and tourism).

- *The Island Development Programme*: Nationally implemented (current programme 2003–2006). The aim of the programme is to diversify and utilise the vast island areas better, especially in the rural island areas.

As national regional policy instruments are implemented using the partnership-based co-financing method, which means that while the national resources for regional development make up the majority of resources available, the European and national resources are utilised in the programme work largely side by side, thus also reflecting the view that policy efficiency requires the integration of policy priorities and goals between national and European programmes. For instance in the Centre of Expertise programme, between 1999–2002, approximately half of the total funding came from national sources, with approximately 20% from the EU (16% from the Structural Funds and 4% other EU sources, mainly in the form of technology funding, i.e. Framework Programme).⁴⁰

In terms of seeking to integrate and co-ordinate the spatial and regional planning and development spheres in a more efficient way, the Finnish case is quite interesting, as there is an implicit connection between regional and spatial (physical) planning (similarly with Denmark and Norway). The instruments of the regional planning system are comprised of three instruments:

1. Regional Plan (*maakuntasuunnitelma*, a more strategic general plan for physical planning in the region with a long term perspective, i.e. 20–30 years),
2. The Regional Land-Use Plan (*Maakuntakaava*) and
3. The Regional Development Programme/Regional Strategic Programme (*Maakunta-ohjelma*, including an annual implementation plan). (These are elaborated in more detail in the section dealing with the ‘regional level’ below.)

The land-use plan is based on the Land Use and Building Act of 2000; it is drafted for 10–20 years and is a legally binding instrument within land use planning. It also has an integrative effect, as it is a coordinative process between the central and local levels of administration. The Regional Land-use Plan has to be approved by the Ministry of the Environment, while the Regional Development Programme on the other hand is an instrument connected to regional development activities and, as such, is based on the Regional Development Act. Such Programmes are

drafted by individual regional councils for a period of 4 years (i.e. for the electoral term).

3.2.2 The Regional Level: Actors, Roles and Instruments

The municipalities and the State are responsible for regional development in Finland and it is the Regional Councils (19 + Åland, the autonomous region with special status) that act as regional development authorities responsible for the management of functions related to regional development and regional planning. Regional Councils are joint municipal boards of which the municipalities are the members. There are other voluntary co-operation bodies, but overall inter-municipal co-operation takes place, by law, within the 20 regional councils (*landskapsförbunden*). Municipal politicians, elected on a four-year basis are represented in the regional boards of these bodies and therefore there is, to date, no directly elected regional level in Finland, except in the case of Kainuu region, where a regional experiment is on-going. The regional councils are, among other things, responsible for regional development and for the drafting and approval of regional development programmes and regional development plans. Thus the role of the regional council is central in promoting regional development in general and in co-ordinating the different policy initiatives and programmes in particular. As the organisations responsible for regional development the regional councils thus plan, draft and implement the regional development programmes, which were described in the section on policy instruments above.

As argued previously, the governance model of Finnish regional policy has been largely based on the Structural Funds model, particularly as the main focus and *modus operandi* in both cases is programming work and actors are organized and mobilized within regional partnerships. The Regional Councils are responsible for drawing up proposals for regional Structural Fund programmes concerning their area, which are to be financed with European Structural Funds financing. The programme proposals are developed jointly by the relevant stakeholders, i.e. the State authorities, municipalities and the other public and private bodies involved in programme implementation. In the implementation stage the co-ordination between national and European financing becomes particularly important, while the co-financing system was in fact the original driving force behind the new regional administration system with the regional councils, which was introduced when Finland joined the EU.

Other key actors within the Finnish regional administrative structure include the provincial state offices (*lääninhallitus/länsstyrelse*), which are joint regional authorities for seven different ministries within the areas of health- and social services, rescue services, education and culture, consumer- competition and food protection, po-

⁴⁰Ministry of the Interior 2003, 48.

lice, transport services, veterinarian services and animal protection, judicial administration and sport and youth. They have a limited role from the point of view of regional development, though they are relevant in particular in the educational and culture field, where they also allocate funds and monitor Structural Funds projects within their area of competence. Of more relevance for the regional development activities however are the Employment- and Economic Development Centres (*Työvoima- ja elinkeinokeskus* or *TE-keskus*, Arbetskrafts- och näringscentralen in Swedish), of which there are 15 and which represent the state on the regional level in three administrative sectors (economic development = Ministry of Trade and Industry, Agriculture = Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, employment = Ministry of Labour). As these ministries are, together with the Ministry of the Interior, the main sources of funding targeting regional development they have a central strategic role. Also central are the regional environment centres (*ympäristökeskus*, *regional miljöcentral* in Swedish), of which there are 13. The environmental centres have become participants in the (growth-oriented) regional development programming through the introduction of the partnership working methodology. Environmental centres are responsible for a variety of tasks having to do with environmental and nature protection, spatial planning and land use, the management of the cultural environment, building and water management, as specified in environmental legislation. They also undertake tasks relating to the monitoring and research of environmental questions.

The fact that the borders of the different regional authorities are not coterminous has at times been seen as problematic and is undoubtedly one of the key issues in the debate about Finnish regional structure. The two main administrative entities are the Employment- and Economic Development Centres and Regional Councils. Since the legislative reform of 1997, when the number of county councils was reduced from twelve to six, Employment- and Economic Development Centres were introduced in an attempt to promote the co-ordination of economic activities. Within the regions both political and academic discussion has revolved around the question of the democracy and identity aspects of the reform, as well as its' functionality and efficiency. The reform can be seen as a major ontological change, as it has necessitated a reconsideration and redefinition of what regionality means in Finland. Whilst the local level enjoys extensive autonomy and the organizational bodies formed on the basis of municipalities have the major responsibility for regional development activities in the regions, the authorities representing the state on the regional level also have a central position, if only for the strategic centrality of the sector they represent, but also due to their financial power connected to the regional development funding system.

The Regional Management Committees (RMC; in

Finnish: maakunnan *yhteistyöryhmä* or MYR) coordinate the implementation and financing of the regional strategic programme and the special programmes referred to above. These bodies have been set up in all Finnish regions (with the exception of Ahvenanmaa/Åland, which has special status as an autonomous region) with the task of guiding the implementation of the EU Structural Funds programmes and in particular of adjusting the financing between different development measures. Though the committees already existed during the first Programming Period of the Structural Funds (1995–1999), their role being regulated in the national legislation on administering the Structural Funds, their role was further clarified and strengthened in the new regional development legislation (since January 2003). Committees are formed based on the partnership principle, i.e. the actors involved in the committees' work are 1) the Regional Councils and their member municipalities, 2) the State Authorities and 3) the social and economic partners (in Lapland also the Saami Parliament). The maximum size of a Committee is 24 members plus a chairperson. While the committees represent partnership-based management in Finland and are therefore EU inspired, there were also pressing national reasons for the setting up of these bodies, in particular the need to co-ordinate the activities of the different types of actors involved in Structural Funds financing and implementation in Finland. The role and nature of partnerships will be discussed in more detail in the section dealing specifically with the partnership methodology.

The relationship between the different plans and programmes in this regional development complex is outlined in the graph on next page.⁴¹ The regional programmes are those drawn up by the regional councils for a fixed-term (election term, four years) and which form a regional strategic programme, as well as including an implementation plan to be drawn up annually. This implementation plan is based on the regional strategic programme and is developed in cooperation with the State authorities, municipalities and other parties involved in financing the regional strategic programmes.

Regional/spatial planning thus has a longer timeframe than the simple scope of the regional development programme would tend to suggest, and the long-term perspective is intended to permeate through the whole planning system, with the required co-ordination of the different planning instruments. The other planning instruments within the Finnish regional/spatial planning system consist of the regional plan (*maakuntakaava*), the regional strategic plan (*maakuntasuunnitelma*) and the regional programme (or regional strategic programme =

⁴¹Based on the preparatory work of the working group set under the Ministry of the Environment for the clarification of the new Regional Development Programme as a planning instrument; *Ympäristöministeriö* 2001, p 7.

Regional strategic plan Outlining the strategic choices and visions, timeframe 20–30 years	
Regional plan Spatial planning strategy and visions (timeframe 10–20 years)	Regional programme Regional development strategies and planned activities (timeframe 3–5 years, with an annual implementation plan)

maakuntaohjelma. The regional strategic plan ties the more spatially oriented regional plan into the overall strategic planning of the region in question.⁴²

In considering the positive and (potentially) negative aspects of regional partnerships, the main strengths of this working method can be said to include (based on the interviews):

- The partnership method has brought the environmental actors (in particular Regional Environmental Centres) more clearly into the regional development field
- Inclusion and openness, broad-based approach
- Possibilities for committing the actors involved
- Involves and commits new actors (to policy goals), makes it easier to get policy goals accepted.

At the same time there are considerable weaknesses with the partnership model, which include:

- Partnerships can be used as a means of distributing funds and each actor rallying their own cause
- Lack of expertise, knowledge and experience (when it comes to addressing sustainability, especially from an environmental point of view) amongst the civil servants working with regional development
- The expertise and resources of the voluntary sector are not fully utilized (especially in relation to sustainability – a question for further analysis in the next stage of the project) or the voluntary sector and environmental voluntary organizations
- Relating to the previous point, the environmental authorities on the regional level represent the environmental sector in the Partnership, while it is sometimes

argued that voluntary organisations in this field should also be involved in creating new solutions

- Slowness and inefficiency.

In order to avoid the pitfalls of partnerships that relate to these weaknesses one should also pay heed to the main further challenges of partnership working practices, which include for instance:

- Attitudes: still a lot to be done in incorporating environmental sustainability as an asset, rather than as a burden
- Integrated approach: Nationally, Finland could also integrate the two sides of the regional development equation better. Whilst Finland is often branded in international comparisons as one of the most competitive economies, and also one of the leaders in environmental policy issues, these two are still not integrated and marketed as an interdependent whole
- Capacity building: Need for more training and methodological support in the area of environmental sustainability within the regional development authorities.

The best examples of the advantages of the partnership methodology are however only likely to be identifiable through a regional level analysis, as operationalisation and implementation is necessarily dependent on the resources, capacities and attitudes of the regional level. Thus a balance can be drawn here only once the next stage of the project, encompassing regional case studies, has been undertaken

⁴²This is in line with the § 25 of the Land Use and Building Act of 2000: Ministry of the Environment 2000.

3.3 The Case of Norway

3.3.1 Regional Policy at the National Level: Actors, Roles and Instruments

Regional policy and the 'policy for the periphery' have been important in Norway for almost five decades. Tendencies towards the centralisation of settlement structures can also be observed, and policy is today focused on creating robust regions that encourage innovation and flexible in terms of the new demands being placed upon them. Separate efforts are directed to regions with a uni-dimensional economic base, such as agriculture or fisheries.⁴³ In a report dating from 2002 by the Minister of Local Government and Regional Development it is stated that the potential in different parts of the country needs to be developed and that the goal in terms of settlement pattern is a more balanced development structure where all parts of the country grow. Four goals are stated:

- To secure the basis for good living-conditions across the country
- To establish conditions such that business, capital and labour remain in Norway and Norway remains attractive for foreign investors
- To prioritize means that strengthen innovation and establishments innovative engines in all parts of the country and
- To concentrate on regions with the potential for growth.⁴⁴

Regional policy is thus mainly directed towards regional growth and business development.⁴⁵

The decentralisation of policy instruments and responsibilities to the regional level actors has also been a distinctive recent trend in Norway, as in many of the other Nordic countries (Bradley, forthcoming). In general, regional policy has been described as a pendulum swinging between the ideal of the strong region as an active development actor – with the Danish *amts* as a model – and regional development as a national governmental responsibility – according to a traditional Swedish model.⁴⁶ Today the tendency however seems to be in line with decentralisation. The current idea of regional development policies being formed in regional partnerships as an important engine for development was influenced by EU-policies relating to the Structural Funds.⁴⁷

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (*Kommunal- og regionaldepartementet*, KRD) is responsible for governmental regional policy. Every fourth

year a governmental bill (regionalmelding) is sent to the parliament, and once a year a report of the current policy is presented.⁴⁸ Central tasks for KRD include the co-ordination of governmental steering with the regional and local administrations and different sectors, work-environment and security, minority and immigration-issues, regional and rural policies and, finally, housing, living-environments and building. Regional and rural policy seeks to influence the geographical distribution of settlements, business and welfare.⁴⁹ Robust regions are a keyword for the Ministry, following the national trend.⁵⁰ It is thus stated that a 'balanced social and economic development in all parts of the country' is an overall task for national rural and regional development policy. Besides robust regions, the development of 'competitive economic activity with emphasis of innovation and competence' is also called for.⁵¹

Until 2002, KRD approved of the regional development plans and also laid down the general guidelines and directions for these. Since the governmental focus on decentralisation of responsibility and tasks from the first of January 2003, KRD instead keeps updated with the plans but generally plays more of a supportive role as regards the regions. The Ministry also administers economic support in which they have a steering role in respect of the regions, though the main idea is that development comes from below.⁵² Support for peripheral regions takes the form of support for growth and development initiatives, while the means are administered in relation to Regional Development Programmes (see below). None of these supports however have explicit goals related to environmental perspectives or sustainable development.⁵³

One important national (and regional) actor within the field of regional policy in Norway is the Norwegian Industrial and Regional Development Fund (Statens nærings- og distriktsutviklingsfond, SND). The SND was established in the early 1990's and has as its task to further business and socio-economically profitable industrial development in the regions and in the country at large. Initially, the regional work of the SND took place within the fylkeskommuner and controlled from a central level by controlling goals and results. After a while however, the SND was separated from the fylkeskommune and today, the SND has established 18 regional offices and is directed

⁴³Hilding-Rydevik et al 2004.

⁴⁴*Vekst i hele landet*. St. red. 30 April 2002.

⁴⁵Mariussen et al 2000, p 11ff.

⁴⁶Mariussen et al 2000, p 13.

⁴⁷Ibid, p 14.

⁴⁸Hilding-Rydevik et al. 2004.

⁴⁹The concept of *verdiskapning* was also mentioned in this context, referring both to 'value added' in economic terms, as well as, in a much more intangible sense to certain cultural and institutional aspects.

⁵⁰KRD 2000 *Miljøhandlingsplan 2001–2004*.

⁵¹KRD St. meld 34, 2000–2001.

⁵²Interview 6.

⁵³KRD 2000, p 14.

by a central office in Oslo.⁵⁴ The SND is formally owned by the Ministry of Business and Trade (*Nærings- og handelsdepartementet*, NHD), though it also receives financial support from the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (*Kommunal- og regionaldepartementet*, KRD), the Ministry of Agriculture (*Lantbruksdepartementet*, LD) and the Ministry of Fishery (*Fiskeridepartementet*, FD).⁵⁵

The task of the SND is to be an active partner in co-operation with regions, industry and entrepreneurs with a focus on finding, refining, mediating and financing projects that help in the realisation of national business and regional policy goals. Goals particularly mentioned in this respect are innovation and the development of competence. The core-areas relating to these are the development of entrepreneurs and profitable achievements, the development of national and regional business environments and innovation systems, the development of a future-oriented business policy nationally and regionally.⁵⁶ The SND has been working with and financing green business initiatives and environmentally friendly technology through, for example, the National Environmental Fund, from which 250 million kroner has been distributed. Currently however the SND does not have any earmarked means for environmental projects, with the exception of bio-energy, as cutbacks have taken place in recent years relating to these issues. The task now outlined is to integrate environmental considerations within the existing means. The Industrial Development Corporation of Norway (*Selskapet for industrivekst*, SIVA) and the Norwegian Research Council (*Norges forskningsråd*) also deal with issues of innovation and business assistance.⁵⁷

Concerning sustainable development, the Ministry of the Environment (*Miljøverndepartementet*, MD) has a co-ordinating responsibility. The role here is more that of an accountant, i.e. framing goals in dialogue with other ministries such that they in turn have concrete responsibilities for environmental issues. Each ministry, for example, produces its own environmental action-plan. This can be seen as a way of integrating environmental perspectives into other sectors rather than them being dealt with by one actor alone. The Ministry of the Environment is also responsible for physical planning and for supervising the regional plans, in which issues of growth and development are central. The task is to develop and mediate national goals and interests in regional planning and to approve regional plans, as well as to evaluate and develop them.⁵⁸ In relationship with the regions, the Ministry also mediates perspectives in terms of sustainable develop-

ment.⁵⁹ When speaking about current initiatives in terms of sustainable development, the Ministry of Finance (*Finansdepartementet*, FD) also plays a role. A governmental committee, led by a representative of the FD, was appointed in 2002 with the aim of presenting a national action-plan for sustainable development, to be included in the National Budget of 2004.⁶⁰

3.3.2 The Regional Level: Actors, Roles and Instruments

The 19 regions (*fylkeskommuner*) are directly elected public bodies with extensive responsibilities for regional development and planning. This includes preparation of the regional development programmes.⁶¹ The reform of responsibilities from 2003 and its focus on decentralisation means that the regions now have a decisive and leading role in the regional policy processes. The task is to take the regional resources and challenges as a point of departure, and in co-operation with partnership actors try to ensure the sound use of public resources.⁶² The role of the regions as a development-actor has thus increased markedly. As such, the economic support that was once given to the SND for re-distribution now goes directly to the regions themselves.⁶³

In Norway, the regional plans (*fylkesplan*) are strategic plans which co-ordinate governmental, regional and local physical, economic, social and cultural activities. They are designed to be the basis for regional activities and to illuminate directions for the future.⁶⁴ Regional plans are produced in the region, dealt with by the government (the different Ministries) and approved by the 'king in cabinet'.⁶⁵ The aim is to give regional 'surplus value' to national regional policies.⁶⁶

The main instrument used to achieve these goals within regional policy is the Regional Development Programmes, intended to ensure that national and regional measures for regional development are in balance. The focus here is on economic development and the need to identify different challenges, problems and goals for the region in question.⁶⁷ In Norway the work with RUP:s has proceeded since 1995 with the aim of further developing the existing plans at the regional level, i.e. the regional plans (*fylkesplaner*) and the strategic plans for economic development (*strategisk næringsplan*) whilst also making these plans more action-oriented and operational. The RUPs have been, since 2001, an operational section of the Strategic Plan for Economic Development, which outlines activities for economic de-

⁵⁴Mariussen m.fl. 2000, p 20.

⁵⁵Interview 5.

⁵⁶SND Strategi 2002–2005 *SND – aktiv samarbeidspartner fra idé til virkelighet*, p 2.

⁵⁷Hilding-Rydevik et al 2004.

⁵⁸Rundskriv T-3/98B *Arbeidet med fylkesplanene*.

⁵⁹Interview 5, 6.

⁶⁰Interview 5, www.odin.dep.no/fd/

⁶¹Hilding-Rydevik et al. 2004.

⁶²Interview 6.

⁶³Interview 5.

⁶⁴Interview 5, 6.

⁶⁵www.odin.dep.no/md/

⁶⁶Rundskriv T-3/98B *Arbeidet med fylkesplanene*.

⁶⁷Interview 5.

velopment and growth. The aim of the RUPs is also to stimulate new forms of co-operation between the municipalities, governmental authorities, the SND and the business sector at the regional level.⁶⁸ The work is led by the region but is organised by means of a partnership model, thus including participants from the governmental level, the municipalities, the business community, NGO:s etc. The RUP:s are thus not a sole but a joint responsibility of different actors.⁶⁹ The participation of business has been particularly emphasised.⁷⁰ The regions have organised a staff college (*kollegie*) consisting of directors for economic and regional issues, representatives from the regional council (*fylkesrådsmannakollegie*) and from the KRD, which meets twice a year.⁷¹ Until 2002, the KRD approved of the one year action-plans that the regions proposed. Today, the state approves of the regional plans.⁷² From its original role as a one-year action-plan, it is now proposed that the RUP:s will have a longer-term focus, making them valid for a longer time period.⁷³

It has been stated that the fylkeskommune is the most central actor in terms of sustainable regional growth policy. Since 1999 the Regional Development Programmes in Norway have had as their goals the need to promote development towards sustainable regions. This has been one part of the tasks of the RUP.⁷⁴ It is however acknowledged in the interviews conducted within the context of this study that it is the regional level where the actual integration of sustainable development takes place.⁷⁵ Traditional ecological sustainability questions in the region are the responsibility of the state regional authorities (*fylkesmannen*)

who have a sectoral responsibility for environmental issues and for the regional environmental protection agency, while issues of overall regional growth and development – as well as that of general guidance in terms of environmental issues – falls under the responsibility of the regional democratic level (*fylkeskommune*). According to the interviews carried out however, how well these parties actually co-operate regionally varies, while there have also been a number of conflicts between the various actors in the development arena, as the fylkesman is often focused on traditional issues of environmental protection.⁷⁶ National level actors such as the KRD are however of the opinion that there is support for sustainable development in the regions, and as such, they take it seriously in working with regional development programmes. At the same time however it is acknowledged that variations are to be found in this respect among the regions.⁷⁷ What actually happens on the regional level, in particular with regard to the practical integration of sustainable development thus remains to be answered.

In an evaluation of the Norwegian regional development programmes, the main strategic areas from the actual programmes for the period of 1995–2000 were listed. Environmental sustainability was not however one of them. Indeed, in only a few cases, 3 of 18 to be precise, had representatives from environmental protection departments been a part of the RUP-process. Instead it was clear that the main focus is on the development of business and employment in a more traditional sense.⁷⁸ This evaluation was not however made recently.

⁶⁸Mariussen et al 2000, p 11ff.

⁶⁹KRD St.meld. 34, 2000–2001.

⁷⁰*Vekst i hele landet*. St. red. 30 april 2002.

⁷¹Interview 6.

⁷²Interview 6.

⁷³Interview 5.

⁷⁴Mariussen et al 2000, p 11ff. Interview 6.

⁷⁵Interview 6, 5.

⁷⁶Interview 6.

⁷⁷Interview 6.

⁷⁸Mariussen et al. 2000, p 37ff.

3.4 The Case of Sweden

3.4.1 Regional Policy at the National Level: Actors, Roles and Instruments

In a Swedish context regional policy has changed significantly, from historically being directed towards problematic and peripheral regions with the goal of ensuring the general equalisation of living-conditions in all parts of the country, to now being directed to development of all regions. In the process, the focus has also shifted from problems to potentialities and from redistribution to regional competitiveness and growth. Instead of speaking of regional policy, regional development policy is the current terminology.⁷⁹ Compared to some of the other Nordic countries, Swedish regional policy has a history of being centralised. Today much of the emphasis is however on the role of regional development programmes, regional growth programmes and regional partnerships, as well as on initiatives from below, which can be seen as a clear indication that the state of affairs has shifted towards the decentralisation of responsibilities. It is for example stated in the existing regional development policy that growth and vitality comes from the regions and municipalities and that the role of the state is to help create the necessary conditions and structures for regional development. A central instrument in this process is regional growth programme.⁸⁰

In the Swedish context, The Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications (*Näringsdepartementet*, ND) plays a central role in acting as the co-ordinator for regional growth and programming work. This includes ensuring that governmental goals can be followed-up and increasing wider knowledge of these goals. The priorities governing the disbursement of grants to the regions and the formulation of the conditions for such grants are also important. The basis of their work includes the formal processes and letters of regulation from the government.⁸¹ The Ministry has formulated a new policy for growth and vitality for the whole of Sweden.⁸² It is stated herein that regional policy has taken a partly new direction within the context of the EU's structural and regional policies, while this is also in line with the current focus on sustainable growth and long-term perspectives. A central paragraph highlights the goal of:

‘Well functioning and sustainable local labour-market regions with a good level of service in all parts of the country.’⁸³

From the proposal it is clear that the policy concerns all parts of the country, that regional influence and variation are necessary, that policy contributes to equity, integration and competitiveness. As one point of departure, the policy also has the role of contributing to sustainable development. Sustainable development is an overall goal for all sectors in society. ‘Sustainable’ is defined in the sense that current and future generations can be offered sound economic, social and ecological conditions.⁸⁴

The Swedish Business and Development Agency (NUTEK) is a competence centre for, among other things, regional industrial development, and is thus the central authority for questions that concern the development of business and industry and for the establishment and development of small and medium-sized companies. NUTEK also monitors and evaluates regional policy and builds up a competence in respect of these questions. The task is then to:

‘strengthen the competitiveness of business and regions, but also to stimulate renewal and sustainable growth in all the country’⁸⁵

For NUTEK, the regional growth instruments (see below) are strategically important for regional politics and the concept of sustainable growth is seen as a precondition for well-being and full employment. There is thus a need for a long-term politics that stimulates investment, entrepreneurship and strengthens the competitiveness of business and the regions.⁸⁶ NUTEK has co-operated with the Environment Protection Agency (*Naturvårdsverket*, NV) on issues that concern strategies and measures for sustainable industry in Sweden, regional industrial development such as regional growth programmes, the integration of environmental considerations and sustainable development in industry and regional development, as well as the development of methods to follow-up the integration of sustainability through criteria setting, indicators and ratios.⁸⁷

Concerning regional development politics, the Environment Protection Agency (*Naturvårdsverket*, NV) has the task of developing methods and instruments for sustainable regional development. The agency is active in the regions in respect of evaluations and analyses of integrating sustainable development within a regional development context. A number of pilot regions have been appointed

⁷⁹Hilding-Rydevik et al. 2004.

⁸⁰Prop. 2001/02:4, *En politik för tillväxt och livskraft i hela landet*.

⁸¹Interview 7.

⁸²Prop. 2001/02:4.

⁸³Prop. 2001/02:4.

⁸⁴Prop. 2001/02:4.

⁸⁵NUTEK 2001, *Tre näringspolitiska utmaningar – allianser för hållbar tillväxt*.

⁸⁶NUTEK, 2001, *Tre näringspolitiska utmaningar – allianser för hållbar tillväxt*.

⁸⁷Överenskommelse om samarbete mellan NUTEK och Naturvårdsverket, 2001, Dnr 225-4675-01.

for the development of methods and knowledge for integration. The work has resulted in a number of handbooks and material being produced that the regions can use in their practical work, for example: NV 2002, *Bredda perspektiven – miljöintegration i tillvästarbetet*, 2002, *Det nya tillvästarbetet. Förändringsarbete för hållbar regional utveckling*, 2003, *Vägar till hållbar regional utveckling. Processer för hållbarhet i tre län*.

Important tasks for the future of regional development politics concern the development of methods, based on the path set forth by the co-ordinating commission (samordningsuppdraget) that was initiated by the government in 2002. The commission was primarily directed towards six policy-areas: regional development, business development, labour market, transports, education and the development of innovation systems. The task of the commission was to increase efficiency in respect of the efforts conducted, and to strengthen the long-term development of labour market regions, as well as contributing to sustainable growth. All together, 27 authorities have taken part in the work. Sustainable development has become an issue related to the field of regional development, and NV has been an important part of the activity relating to 'sustainable regional development' as well as in respect of how to integrate sustainable development within the field of regional growth politics.⁸⁸

Other important actors include *Almi* who together with NUTEK form a competence centre for business development and entrepreneurship, financing and regional development. The goal of the centre is to make it easier for people to start, administer and develop companies, to support actors working for the development of business, and to provide the government with a good basis for decisions relating to the politics of business and regional development.⁸⁹ The Swedish Institute for Growth and Policy Studies (ITPS) conducts cross-sector analysis and different evaluations.⁹⁰ The research council *Vinnova* is also important in regional growth and development terms. *Vinnova* has taken over the research and development (R&D) tasks from NUTEK, and also has the task of developing innovation systems. Sustainable development is a prioritized area for the authority.⁹¹ All in all, national actors are seen as prompters and as knowledge bearers, as well as financial supports in respect of the goals of economic growth and regional development. The actual task of working with regional development is however delegated to the regional level.

3.4.2 The Regional Level: Actors, Roles and Instruments

The regional development ambitions of each region in Sweden are to be established by the regions themselves, in dialogue with state representatives.⁹² Today there are three ways of organising regional development activities. According to the Swedish national decree of regional development work, the responsibility for regional development lies with county administrative boards (*länsstyrelser*) or with the new regional actors. As new actors we have the regional self-government organs (*regionala självstyrelseorgan*) in Skåne and Västra Götaland who have taken over responsibility from the county administrative boards or the voluntary regional development councils (*kommunala samverkansorgan*) formed by municipalities.⁹³ These actors have the responsibility to co-ordinate local and regional visions and ambitions towards national goals. Instruments for dealing with these issues are today regional development programmes (RUP) and regional growth programmes (RTP).

The overall regional instrument in connection with regional development work is the regional development programme (RUP), which outlines the long-term development of the region. The RUP is drafted by partnerships in all regions and thereafter works as the basis of action-oriented development and planning activities directed at implementation, such as regional growth agreements/programmes and structural funds programmes.⁹⁴ The RUP thus works as an umbrella-document that guides other programmes and agreements. The RUP is also, from a national perspective, seen as a document that belongs to the region, assuming of course that there is a balance with national strategies.⁹⁵

Regional growth programmes (RTP), were formerly known as regional growth agreements (RTA). The RTA was introduced in 1998 and continued until the end of 2003. The growth programmes will be valid for four years and will be financed by partnership members, the state and the EU.⁹⁶ The programme links national growth policy with regional policy and involves a clearer connection to the national level than the RUP does.⁹⁷ RTP builds on the insight that different conditions exist in different regions, and takes advantage of differences and development potentials among people and enterprises. EU Structural Funds are an important means of implementing regional growth programmes.⁹⁸

The overall goal of the growth programmes is to stimulate 'sustainable growth'. The programmes are based on

⁸⁸NUTEK 2003, *Nationell samordning för regional utveckling*, p 5.

⁸⁹www.nutek.se

⁹⁰Hilding Rydevik et al. 2004, interview 7.

⁹¹Interview 7.

⁹²www.nutek.se

⁹³Prop 2001/02:7 *Regional samverkan och statlig länsförvaltning*.

⁹⁴Förordning 2003:595, formerly 1998:1634.

⁹⁵Interview 9, 7.

⁹⁶ND 2002, *Riktlinjer för arbetet med regionala tillväxtprogram*.

⁹⁷Interview 9, 7.

⁹⁸Interview 7.

analysis, goals and regional priorities as well as a plan for the funding, realisation and evaluation of different regional efforts. It is also clearly stated that the efforts realised need to be sustainable from an economic, social and ecological perspective.⁹⁹ The means used to accomplish sustainable growth include for example, stronger regions and municipalities, increased knowledge and competence, strengthening business and entrepreneurship, local development and attractive living-environments and, finally, a good level of service provision across the whole country.¹⁰⁰ The programmes thus focus on sustainable growth from a business-perspective. Sustainable development is – as with equality and gender issues – a horizontal goal for this process, and as such is supposed to work, as emphasised by the government, as an integral part of the programmes. From the formal instructions it is clear that effort needs to be made in response to the demands of companies, and regional and local needs in terms of growth and employment. Sustainability has therefore to be an integral part of the process, right from the outset.¹⁰¹ This has, however, proved to be somewhat challenging in practice.

A further aim of the RTP is to strengthen the role of the regional level. Regional partnerships are of continuing importance but it is suggested that their base be widened in the RTP-process in order that they become more representative of the different groups in the region working with issues of sustainable growth. The issue of competence in respect of environmental issues, equality and integration also needs to be included in the work of the partnerships.¹⁰² The partnerships – consisting of county administrative boards, municipalities, county councils, and local companies, NGO:s etc. – have the task of co-ordinating local and regional visions and ambitions with national goals. The national level and their influence on the partnerships are dependent upon their regional representation.¹⁰³ The whole idea of regional partnerships is rather new and includes a balance between the national and regional level, as expressed by this quote from a representative of the Swedish Business and Development Agency:

‘Now we both have to deliver downwards based on our tasks and at the same time we say that regional development is best tended to by the partnerships. [...] It is a challenge to communicate that there are goals that cannot be compromised with. We cannot just leave a bag of money with the County boundary and say ‘you know best, do it’. Sometimes they don’t know best and sometimes we don’t’¹⁰⁴

There is thus a division of responsibilities between these levels of governance: while the regions run the process, the national level actors set the framework conditions for it. The process has been described in interviews as lying somewhere in between a traditional bureaucratic top-down and a more decentralised bottom-up approach. Dialogues between these levels of governance are seen as vital for the future.¹⁰⁵ The national message is that every region needs to define its own criteria for sustainable development. The overarching goals for the regional growth of the region are to be formulated and the partnerships have to elucidate why a certain goal or priority is important for sustainable growth in the region, and what the values expected are. Furthermore, action-programmes for each priority need to be formulated and need also to contain a sustainability-strategy. It must also be made clear what synergies are expected between economic, social and ecological aspects and how these will be utilized. Another step in this process can be to identify unsustainable structures and trends in the region and thus acknowledge the most urgent future challenges.¹⁰⁶

Other instruments for regional development include Programmes for the Local Development of Business (LNU) as well as national programmes for clusters and innovation systems. LNU, which can be seen as a good illustration of the increasing emphasis of the regional and local level, support projects that strengthen local business, providing the local arena with the conditions that better enable it to be a part of, and contribute to, the regional development programmes. Projects within the LNU must also show how they work with sustainable development. The initiatives come from the local level, though NUTEK evaluates applications and formulates the conditions for their funding.¹⁰⁷

⁹⁹Prop. 2001/02:4.

¹⁰⁰Prop. 2001/02:4.

¹⁰¹Näringsdepartementet, 2002, *Rapport om tillväxtavtalen. Andra året*, p 18.

¹⁰²NV 2002, *Det nya tillväxtarbetet*.

¹⁰³Interview 9.

¹⁰⁴Interview 8.

¹⁰⁵Interview 7, 8, 9.

¹⁰⁶Naturvårdsverket 2002, *Det nya tillväxtarbetet. Förändringsarbete för hållbar regional utveckling*.

¹⁰⁷www.nutek.se, interview 10.

4 Sustainable Development in the Context of Regional Growth and Development

The issue of promoting sustainable development within the context of regional growth and development programming is discussed in this section against the background of national documents and interviews with a number of national actors. The following themes will provide the focus of the analysis:

1. Sustainable development: conceptual content and policy contexts,
2. Sustainable development vs. regional growth: towards the greening of development?
3. Sustainable development at the regional level.

4.1 Sustainable Development: Conceptual Content and Policy Contexts

The questions addressed here include: How is sustainable development defined within the four countries in the central policy documents? What are the national goals relating to sustainable development? How is sustainable development defined and dealt with by the national actors interviewed?

In *Denmark* the government presented a national strategy for sustainable development in June 2002 in which it is claimed that:

‘Denmark shall become one of the countries in the world where it is good to work and live. Everyone shall be given good opportunities through increased welfare and the extension of the welfare society. In addition, Denmark shall be one of the leading societies in terms of environmental policy. /.../ We shall at the same time secure the basis for sound economic growth, socially balanced development while protecting nature, the environment and the health of individuals’¹

The government thus defines sustainable development as a development that is balanced economically, socially and environmentally. It is also stated in the strategy that it is important to change the current connections between growth and negative environmental consequences – there must be room for both economic development and a better environment. The growth spoken of in ‘*Vækst med vilje*’ also needs to be environmentally sustainable.² Another

part of the strategy is that environmental considerations are to be integrated into all sectors in society in order to change the connections between economic growth, increased environmental burdens and the use of resources.³

For the Ministry of the Environment, which is responsible for the national strategy of sustainable development, sustainable development is viewed in a wide sense. According to our interviews it is obvious that the Ministry generally emphasises the environmental aspects of the concept, namely, that sustainable development means a development that does not burden the environment.⁴ The concept is also believed to be connected with environmental issues in the minds of the general public, not least because of the work done with local Agenda 21.⁵ Relating to the field of regional development, sustainable development is mainly dealt with in the regional plan. The Ministry has formulated the following questions for the regions to answer in working with the plan:

‘What considerations have been taken in the choice of solutions? What are the consequences of the current solutions? Can positive effects be furthered and potential negative social, economic and ecological consequences be reduced? Are there alternatives that better correspond to sustainable development?’⁶

¹Government 2002, *Fælles Fremtid – udvikling i balance*.

²Government 2002, p. 2.

³Government 2002, p. 6f.

⁴MIM 2003, *Overblik over statslige interesser i regionplanrevision 2005*, p. 42.

⁵Interview 3.

⁶MIM 2002, *Overblik over statslige interesser i regionplanrevision 2005*, p. 42.

A focus on the consequences of different regional paths to the future is thus expected, in line with the broader concept of sustainable development.

In the national growth strategy from 2002 The Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs (ØEM) states that growth needs to be environmentally sustainable.⁷ In the regional growth strategy produced a year later there is however no particular mention of sustainable development, but instead a lot of talk about 'balance' relating to the peripheral regions.⁸ From our interviews it is clear that EBST, working under ØEM with regional development, does not explicitly work with the larger perspective of sustainable development or with specific issues of environmental or economical sustainability. There are no explicit or specified goals or strategies for this, even though the ideas are seen as being implicit in their work, again according to our interviews:

'For us at EBST it is economic development that needs to be improved and there we find a sustainability-aspect. /.../ There is, in the regional political vision, a desire that the whole country be /.../ attractive for settlement, growth and development but there is no explicit talk about sustainability'⁹

The goal thus seems to be more one of emphasising the attractiveness of regions, which can be interpreted in different ways. Since sustainable development is not an explicit goal for EBST, the Agency instead trusts MIM to press for issues of sustainable development when discussing future-oriented strategic development for regions in the regional growth partnerships. Concerning the growth partnerships in peripheral regions it is however implicit in this work that these regions must become sustainable, balanced and vital. Environmental aspects are not, however, seen as a part of this.¹⁰ There thus seems to be a difference between the ambitions of sustainable development in relationship to different regional plans and instruments.

Even though environmental issues – as a part of the larger concept of sustainable development – are seen as a general part of national politics in Denmark there has been, as expressed in the interviews, a clear shift in terms of environmental politics since the new government assumed power. The two governments agree on the goal but when it comes to concrete measures the posture shifted somewhat with the new government.¹¹ It has also been noted, in research terms, that sustainable development is given a less prominent role in the National Planning Report from 2003, compared with the previous ones.¹² Our interviewees from the Ministry of the Environment were

of the opinion that the government has a definition of sustainable development that very much focuses on economic sustainability – improving the economy – rather than on improving the more ecological aspects of the sustainability *problématique*.¹³ A central impression here is that even though the government has signed up to strategies of sustainable development, which entail certain limitations on development, their actions continue to be built on non-sustainable grounds. This concerns not least the new regional policies where the control and the transfer of people to peripheral regions will entail increased environmental burdens in terms of the growing need for commuter traffic.¹⁴ In many respects then, in the Danish context, the banner of sustainable development thus appears to be flying rather limply overhead.

In Finland the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development established as a consequence of the United Nations initiative for sustainability defined a first 'national' definition of sustainable development in the early 1990s, with the national action programme for sustainability subsequently being adopted in 1995. Thereafter the Finnish Government published the national programme for Sustainable Development in 1998, which was in turn followed by similar strategic statements and programmes from a variety of national authorities, ministries and other organisations. An extensive interactive process of the assessment of the Government's programme for sustainable development took place in the period 2000–2002, while the evaluation report on sustainable development in Finland was published in the spring of 2003. Here the Brundtland definition was referred to explicitly.¹⁵ This remains today the dominant perception of the concept, though in many cases the different dimensions of sustainability can become confused, as sustainable development in most cases continues to be almost automatically equated with ecological sustainability.

There is however also increasing acknowledgement of the need to go beyond the strict ecological interpretation and even a certain degree of belief that this indeed is the direction towards which Finland is currently moving. It is stated in the national programme for sustainability that:

'Reconciling the various dimensions of sustainable development is a difficult challenge because of the ambiguity of the concept and because it can acquire different meanings depending on the time, place and the sphere of activity to which it refers. The concept of sustainable development as it is interpreted here marks one step forward in efforts to formulate a precise definition of ecological sustainability and the economic, social and cultural preconditions for achieving this end'¹⁶

⁷Hilding-Rydevik et al. 2004.

⁸ØEM 2003.

⁹Interview 1.

¹⁰Interview 1, 2.

¹¹Interview 1, 3.

¹²Bjarnadóttir and Bradley 2003.

¹³Interview 3, 4.

¹⁴Interview 4, 3.

¹⁵Council of the State 1998, 14.

¹⁶Ibid.

In the sustainability programme the interdependence of different types of policies within the regional development field is also addressed. Within the programme's strategic goal-setting, it is argued that changes in regional structure should evolve in an ecologically, economically and socially manageable manner, and that urban and rural policies are to support the balanced development of human settlements, with urban structures providing an efficient, healthy and pleasant environment in which to live and one which fosters the social well-being of the community.

Within the lines of action the following issues are referred to in this context:

- Regionally balanced development will be promoted through national and EU-funded programmes, and related environmental impact assessment will be upgraded.
- Integration of the urban fabric and business structures supporting this will be promoted through legislation and by intensifying cooperation between local authorities in the spheres of master planning and land-use policy.
- The rising volume of traffic will be stemmed by means of efficient land-use planning, taxes and other charges, and by offering new alternatives to replace motorized commuting. Competitive commuting alternatives will be offered by raising the standard of public transport and by providing improved opportunities for non-motorized traffic.
- Dialogue on urban planning will be strengthened between the public and the administrative authorities and local initiatives for sustainable development will be supported.
- An effort will be made to create an efficient, varied and healthy urban structure that caters for all population groups.¹⁷

Whilst large projects have been the subject of environmental assessment for a number of years, attention should also be drawn to new legislation dealing with the environmental assessment of projects and programmes (which came into force in June 2005), which is of relevance to regional development. The responsibility for EIA lies with the authority in charge of planning for the plan or programme in question. The concrete repercussions within regional development will be assessed more closely in the second phase of this project, starting in the autumn of 2005.

In *Norway*, the goal of sustainable development was concretized in St.meld.nr.58 (1996–97) 'Miljøvernpolitikk for en bærekraftig utvikling'.¹⁸ Since 1998 sustainable development has been seen as an overriding goal for all gov-

ernmental policies.¹⁹ In interviews conducted with various national representatives it was confirmed that environmental issues are important in Norwegian politics but that critics have also claimed that there is too much talk and not enough action in this field.

A national strategy for sustainable development in Norway was set out in August 2002. It is clearly stated here that such a policy has human welfare as its starting point and that important challenges concern the environment and international poverty. It is also pointed out that sustainable development in general is to be built upon three pillars: economic, social and ecological and that the latter two now deserve increased recognition. The strategy claims that:

'The overriding goal for the Norwegian community, and the rest of the world, is an economic, social and ecologically sustainable development. The basis for the present use of natural resources needs to be preserved. Within these frames of reference we will further develop a stable and sound basis for economic development and for a society with a high standard of living, while contributing to the possibility of welfare and an increasing quality of life for the poor in the world'²⁰

The need to have a broad approach to the concept is thus indicated. In interviews conducted with national actors relating to the field of regional development, the broader concept of sustainable development, with the three pillars equally prominent, is also emphasized as the one mostly generally referred to in national documents. At the same time the interviewees noted that many in society still see sustainable development as being mainly an environmental issue, which can become problematic in the context of regional development. In the sketch for the new national action plan for sustainable development, the risk that environmental sustainability could ultimately lead a policy life of its own becoming increasingly unrelated to other important societal processes was identified, as indeed as indicated by the following quote:

'It is an advantage if the work on sustainable development is connected with central political and economic documents and decisions in order to avoid that sustainability or environmental politics lead a life of its own to one side of these processes'.²¹

It is thus concluded that sustainable development demands a larger grip where it is integrated into the works of different sectoral and other activities. This also concerns the field of regional policy, and is the view most often reflected by the KRD.

The ambition at the Ministry of Local Government

¹⁷Ibid, p 7.

¹⁸MD 1998 *Nasjonale mål og interesser i fylkes- og kommuneplanleggingen*.

¹⁹Hilding-Rydevik et al. 2004.

²⁰*Skisse til Nasjonal handlingsplan for bærekraftig utvikling 2003*, p 4.

²¹*Skisse till Nasjonal handlingsplan for bærekraftig utvikling 2003*, p 4.

and Regional Development (KRD) is to have a broad definition of sustainable development, including all dimensions of the concept and thus not just classic environmental protection. A broad concept moreover can be seen to be more in line with the different goals at the Ministry.²² In other respects, the term 'sustainable development' seems to have been interpreted more in terms of demographic and economic rather than environmental sustainability by KRD.²³ Responsibility for environmental issues is currently distributed among the different Ministries, while KRD has formulated an environmental action-plan, in line with governmental directives. In the plan it is stated that environmental considerations will frame the design and formulation of KRD:s responsibilities of which economic growth, high employment, business development and settlement are central. In all activities and errands, environmental perspectives are to form a part of the evaluation of policy consequences.²⁴

In terms of what environmental sustainability actually we learn from the environmental action plan that environmental politics within the field of regional policies is mainly about preserving and using cultural environments and cultural heritage as a factor in the identity-politics and economic development of peripheral regions. Natural environments are also highlighted as important for future regional development.²⁵ This is also an interpretation of environmental perspectives in regional policy that the regions themselves acknowledge as being important, according to the interview undertaken at KRD.

In the action plan it is noted that one of the goals for KRD is to help regions to develop and to both use their own and the environmental competence of others in respect of their existing support for economic development.²⁶ Even though the Ministry deals with issues of sustainable development in some respects it was at the same time stated, in the interview conducted, that KRD does not build up particular arenas for pushing these issues. The interviewee clearly indicated that sustainable development is not an explicit goal for the Ministry, and that it was not made a part of their guidelines to the regions. Instead, sustainable development is seen as an 'overriding principle' that affects all governmental activities, as indicated by the following quote:

'Sustainable development is not explicit in the guidelines of KRD. It is a general perspective in our work but is not something that we report results on.'²⁷

The idea expressed is that sustainable development is implicit in the activities conducted and that the people at

KRD automatically evaluate environmental perspectives when discussing particular projects.²⁸ It is however, not something that is explicit or spoken of in daily practice.

SND has chosen not to speak about sustainable development at all as a concept since this – including also social and cultural dimensions – is thought to be too wide a step for their clients, who are small and medium-sized companies. For large companies there are a number of organisations and forums such as the Business School for Sustainable Development (including social and environmental dimensions) in which these issues can be discussed. For SND, work focuses on the environmental side of sustainable development. Concerning this they have a number of activities directed towards facilitating more environmental friendly technologies and 'the greening' of business (see section 4.2).

In Sweden the role of sustainable development as a central principle for national, regional and local politics has increased during the 1990's. The current government has, in governmental declarations since 1996, stated that Sweden is to be a fore-runner regarding sustainable development. From the National Strategy for Sustainable Development, produced in relation to the UN-meeting in Johannesburg 2002, we learn that:

'In the sustainable society high growth, full employment, social justice, solidarity and security will be joined with a pure and human-worthy environment. /.../ The future society will be formed within the frame of what nature, the environment and human health can withstand'²⁹

On a national level, sustainable development is thus based on a wide definition, including ecological, social and economic aspects that are seen as dependent upon each other and in need of integration. Concerning the environmental aspects of this issue, the protection of natural resources, sustainable husbanding of resources and the efficient use of resources are particularly mentioned as being important to the National Strategy.³⁰

The ambition here is that sustainable development is integrated across all fields of politics, of which, sustainable regional development is but one. A mission to on a national level co-ordinate ambitions and efforts for sustainable regional development was launched by the Government in 2002 resulting in a report being produced by the Environmental Protection Agency. In this report it is stated that Swedish growth policy today has sustainable development as an overarching goal, which means that:

'Economic growth cannot be realised at the cost of a divided and unequal society or a destroyed environment, social systems cannot undermine the economy and environmental politics has to be cost-efficient'.³¹

²²Interview 6.

²³Hilding Rydevik et al. 2004.

²⁴KRD 2000 *Miljöhandlingsplan 2001–2004*, 10 and 14.

²⁵KRD 2000 *Miljöhandlingsplan 2001–2004*, 14.

²⁶KRD 2000, s 15.

²⁷Interview 6.

²⁸Interview 6.

²⁹R.Skr. 2001/02:172 *Nationell strategi för hållbar utveckling*.

³⁰R.Skr. 2001/02:172.

³¹Naturvårdsverket, 2002, *Det nya tillväxtarbetet. Förändringsarbete för hållbar regional utveckling*, s 5.

From an environmental perspective, the wise use of natural resources, to preserve open landscapes and our cultural heritage, as well as the need to pursue a long-term ecologically sustainable agriculture are the examples highlighted as being important for regional development.³² The need to make the most of the resources relating to social and environmental perspectives is continuously emphasised in the report, and by focusing on the synergies between the economic, social and ecological aspects of the issue, the belief is that many of the current goal-conflicts can be avoided.³³ This statement is clearly based on the potential of combining the social, economic and ecological aspects of sustainable development, emanating from the Brundtland report.

In interviews conducted with national level actors within the field of regional development, the practice of the different aspects of sustainable development was discussed. It was stated that the Ministry of the Environment tends to emphasise the ecological aspects of the concept, while other actors such as the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications in addition to NUTEK focus more on the economic dimensions of the concept of sustainable growth. The latter have experience in working with the economic and growth aspects while they lack competence in its environmental (and social) aspects, while the former have competence in terms of environmental aspects but lack experience of economic (and social) aspects. That the main responsibility for sustainable development today lies with the Ministry of Environment is thus seen as a problem because of its concentration on the environmental aspects of the issue. The interviewees felt that the environmental aspects of sustainable development, by tradition, dominate writings on sustainable development. The need for cross-sectoral methods of working is therefore called for instead of these issues being 'locked within the respective departments and sectors'.³⁴ The questions we are left with thus boil down to, who in society has the competence to work with sustainable development in across its full breadth? In this interpretation, the practice of actually integrating the different aspects of sustainable development across different sectors with competence relating to just one of the dimensions seems to be problematic. The need for a co-ordinating office for sustainable development was also emphasised in all of the Swedish interviews. A Coordination Unit for Sustainable Development has recently been established at The Swedish Cabinet Office (*Statsrådsberedningen*) with personnel from different departments, led by a former chief of planning at the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communica-

tions. The task of the department is to coordinate and further develop the national strategy for sustainable development and the international activities and actions in terms of environmental and sustainable development issues within the EU and the UN.

The interpretation of sustainable development that NUTEK is working with in the field of regional development policy is, according to the interviewees, similar to that of the governmental bill on regional development:

'We work with environmental issues because they are beneficial for the economic dimension, not because of the environmental aspects *per se*. /.../ We have our main mission within the economic dimension'³⁵

According to this interpretation the mission of the agency is on the one hand related to one of the dimensions but on the other hand that dimension has to be related to the other dimensions. A distinction is thus made between speaking of sustainable development from the perspective of the economic dimension – which is the case here – and speaking of an overall sustainable development perspective, for which spokespersons are still lacking according to the interviewees. In the interviews undertaken an expression of confusion over what in practice is meant by the concept of sustainable development and how the different aspects are and can be related to each other quickly also emerged. Different interpretations are at work in different contexts.³⁶ This was further elaborated in one interview at the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications:

'We have not experienced problems in writing the words but many times there is a problem /.../ communicating what we mean by them. We may interpret it one way but don't have the competence for all dimensions which makes it difficult for us to be clear enough, /.../ not least when contacted by the regions and they say that 'we want you to inform us about the growth programmes and particularly focus on the perspective of sustainable development and how you want us to work with it'. This is difficult'³⁷

Again the lack of an overall perspective on the broad concept of sustainable development is emphasized in the interviews. Sustainable development thus seems to be something that the national actors working with regional growth and development are in the process of interpreting and writing into their own context, which means combining it with their own goals and tasks. This process of integration seems to be a struggle to find a good way of working with these issues.

³²Ibid, p 19.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Interviews 7, 8, 9, 10.

³⁵Interview 8, 9.

³⁶Interview 7, 8, 9.

³⁷Interview 7.

4.2 Sustainable Development vs. Regional Growth: Towards the Greening of Regional Development?

A central part of national politics within the four countries investigated here has been the practical integration of the different pillars of sustainable development. Concerning the economic and ecological aspects, the possibility of combining these perspectives in day-to-day politics and policy measures has been discussed in terms of the general concept of ecological modernization. A central part of the concept lies in the possibility of creating win-win-solutions between the perspectives rather than them contradicting and restraining each other. The possibility of arriving at such solutions has, however, also met with scepticism. How are economic sustainability and regional growth perspectives viewed and discussed in relation to environmental sustainability within the context of the interviews conducted and in the central national documents of each country? Are the perspectives seen as restricting each other or are gains and win-win-situations assumed? These are some of the questions addressed in the next section.

In *Denmark* the National Planning Report from 2003 states that regional growth and development needs to be in line with the national strategy for sustainable development. For example, the Minister of Environment Hans Christer Schmidt states in the foreword that:

‘We need to make sure that the country develops in a balanced way and in accordance with our national strategy for sustainable development. /.../ Comprehensive efforts are decisive conditions for regional development and balance. Industrial growth, institutions for education, transport, the restructuring of cities and environmental efforts are important’³⁸

It is thus indicated by the quote that environmental efforts are decisive for regional development and balance. It is however not clear how environmental issues concretely and in a positive sense are seen to contribute to regional growth and development besides this statement. The practical combination of the different elements of sustainable development seems to be more of a goal. More concrete connections between environment and development are made, for example, in discussions of the need for sustainable cities and sustainable transport systems, but here the environmental and sustainability aspects appear more as challenges, as something that calls for new solutions and sound balance between economic, social and environmental considerations so that development does not, by necessity, entail new and larger environmental burdens.³⁹ The discussion on how to work with these challenges and the

dilemmas of such efforts are however completely absent. One can however find reference to how clean technologies, research and technological development may lead to better environmental effects, for example in relation to agriculture, but this is not explicitly related to gains for growth and development.⁴⁰

Gains by combining different sustainability dimensions are not discussed in the regional strategy for growth either. In the strategy, the ambition of the government to secure balanced development across all parts of the country is emphasized.⁴¹ Sustainable growth, or the need for an environmentally sustainable development, is not however mentioned at all. These documents seem to indicate that the two spheres of environmental sustainability and regional growth and development are not seen as clearly linked to, or to be in fruitful relation with each other. The assumption that regional growth can be combined with environmental considerations has also met with significant criticism from *Kommunernes Landsforening*. In discussing an older version of the National Planning Report, they stated that it was not clear ‘how to concretely balance the regard for a responsible environmental politics on the one hand with the desire to preserve the regions as living and dynamic communities on the other’.⁴² The text reveals a view of the incompatible nature of the two concerns, or at least that the possibilities in this combination need to be further clarified.

Combining different aspects of sustainable development is however discussed in the national strategy for sustainable development from 2002. The need to decouple the link between growth and negative environmental effects and that there is no intrinsic tension between sustainable development and economic progress is emphasised in the strategy. Working with environmental issues can also, the strategy claims, lead to competitive advantages for industries and business. It is stated that it has to ‘pay off’ to work with environmental aspects. Sustainable technologies are, among other things, seen as a great advantage and thus the incentives for working with these issues must be stimulated.⁴³ At least on this rhetorical level particular gains for growth and development are discussed. Examples, where this has been successful mentioned in the strategy concern, for example, the field of energy politics. It is also stated that in many areas this decoupling still needs to be worked out and that it is vital that ‘we get the most pos-

³⁸MIM 2003, *Et Danmark i balance – hvad skal der gøres?*

³⁹MIM 2003, p 43ff.

⁴⁰MIM 2003, p 74.

⁴¹ØEM 2003.

⁴²KL 2000, ‘Blinde vinkler’ i den statslige regionalpolitik, p 7.

⁴³Regeringen 2002, p 7.

sible environment for our money'.⁴⁴ The overall assumption seems to be that gains can be made even if they demand more efforts in some fields. This is also stated in our interviews. Growth and development are, through the focus on tourism, connected with green perspectives.⁴⁵

Another concrete example of ambitions that combine efforts to promote regional growth and development with broader environmental concerns is the 'Green City Denmark'-initiative, which was launched by the Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs in co-operation with the Ministry of Environment. Green City Denmark takes the notion of ecological modernisation as a starting-point and works towards the creation of model environments for Danish environmental technology and 'know-how', within the areas of environment and energy. The idea is to use the municipalities of Århus, Silkeborg, Ikast, Herning and Videbæk (The Green Belt) and the counties of Ringkøbing and Århus as showcases.⁴⁶ These projects however take the development of business as their starting point, not the wider perspective of sustainable development.

It seems justified to argue (on the basis of the national document analysis and interviews with the national level civil servants working with the integration of regional policy and sustainability) that in *Finland* the area of regional development is largely dominated by the concerns of economic growth, while sustainability tends to start from the ecological perspective, even though it is now increasingly acknowledging that the potential exists to create win-win situations in the interface between regional growth and sustainability. As was seen previously, the regional development legislation makes this clear, though at the same time also making the objective of sustainability equally central (at least formally) in setting the policy goals. Neither concept is defined in the legislative text, which may not be as unusual as it seems. In the Objective Decision of the government that specifies the goals of regional development further the three main objectives of regional development activities are said to include:

- The promotion of regional competitiveness
- Ensuring the provision of services across the whole country
- The development of a balanced regional/spatial structure.⁴⁷

Moreover, neither 'growth' nor 'regional growth' are defined in this document, though in the document text 'growth' is most often preceded by the word 'economic', which in itself is indicative of a certain normative bias. Sustainability is not explicitly referred to in this document, though one of the priority areas is defined as 'the mainte-

nance and promotion of the quality of the living environment, as well as of the natural environment', and it is further argued that 'the good quality of the environment supports the national and international competitiveness of the regions, as it promotes their attractiveness both from the point of view of citizens' needs and of business development'.⁴⁸ Thus (environmental) sustainability is implicitly defined as a key factor in regional competitiveness.

We can argue that there has been a move from traditional regional policy addressing the needs of identified 'problem regions' to growth-oriented regional policy (for all regions), but also at the same time a move from regional policy where the environment is seen as a hindrance to regional development, to a policy where sustainability is now better integrated (at least on a discursive level). Win-win situations can be created (and are created), though here much depends on the awareness, ability and willingness of the regional level (to be addressed in more detail in the interview section and in the regional document analysis), as also emphasized in the interviews undertaken during this project. The national level can use a 'stick and carrot'-approach here, but it is in the final instance up to the regional level as to how implementation is actually carried out. There is also a potential problem or contradiction here, as it can be argued that win-win situations are best promoted by individual projects and good examples. These projects are in most cases short-term however, while sustainable regional development can only be viewed as a long-term issue. We will return to these aspects relating to the regional implementation dimensions of sustainability later in this report.

Nationally, sustainability is prioritized and a number of policy documents and strategies have been drafted to ensure the inclusion of sustainability in policy making across the board. Examples of sustainability work on the national level include the national committee for sustainable development, established in 1993, which in 2001 put in place a broad partnership-based process for the promotion of sustainability in different sectors of the economy. There is also a national programme for sustainability, which was set up in 1998. This programme was evaluated in 2001–2002 and as a result sector-specific approaches and measures within sustainability were assessed (Ympäristöministeriö/Ministry of the Environment 2003). In this context it seemed that regional development as a whole was not seen as being particularly central to the efforts made within the sustainability realm, as relatively few examples of best practice were identified in this context, and sustainability was assessed in a more traditional setting, i.e. within the development of the spatial structure. Some references were made to the potential impact of the new regional development act,⁴⁹ though naturally at the

⁴⁴Ibid, p 3.

⁴⁵Interview 1, 2, 3, 4.

⁴⁶<http://www.greencity.dk>

⁴⁷Council of the State 2004, 3.

⁴⁸Ibid, 5.

⁴⁹Ibid, p 47 and 110.

time of the evaluation it was too early to assess what the impact of this would in the end actually be.

The outlook of the Ministry of the Interior on sustainability, as expressed in the evaluation report referred to above, is indicative of the prevailing regional policy ideology (including regional balance), as well as being surprisingly 'sustainability-friendly', not seemingly prioritizing regional growth. Between the lines one can however also sense the tension between concentration and de-concentration in the spatial structure that was also referred to in some cases in the national level interviews undertaken within our project (i.e. concentration in largest units and prioritizing urban development at the expense of a more polycentric model *could* in fact be more in line with sustainability in ecological terms). It is argued that:

'The balanced and endogenous regional development of different parts of the country is a goal that is in line with sustainability, especially its social aspects. In order to promote this goal a number of measures have been implemented, which seek to promote stable and substantially and qualitatively balanced development and promote economic activity that contributes to the further accumulation of economic and knowledge capital. One of the central goals of these measures is the creation and re-location of jobs in all parts of the country. Central instruments for the promotion of sustainability are on the one hand the national 'special programmes' (Regional centre Programme, Centre of Expertise Programme etc.) and the regional development programmes, as well as the EU-co-financed programmes within the Structural Funds (Objective 1 and 2, Interreg Community initiatives). In recent years there has been a concerted effort to make these programmes more effective and in connection to this the national legislation for regional development has been reformed'⁵⁰

Yet there seems to be grounds to believe that the interpretation and inclusion of sustainability on the national level still often remains mainly within the ecological sphere. The most inclusive and comprehensive approach to sustainability is written in the governmental strategy on sustainability, drafted in 1998, where the ecological, social and economic aspects of sustainability are all referred to. There is also reference made to the need to achieve and maintain a sustainable spatial structure in this document, under the sub-heading 'spatial structure, communities and traffic', where the main strategic goal is defined as 'ensuring controllable changes in spatial structure in ecological, social and economic terms' with urban and rural policy being specifically referred to here. The measures where sustainability can, in concrete terms, be promoted range from the promotion of sustainable development within national and EU regional development programmes (the development of methodologies for EIA are specifically referred to here) to local and regional physical/ spatial planning and

co-operation between municipalities in this area. The main objective here is to achieve 'healthy and varied communities that are sustainable for all population and age groups'.⁵¹ It is also worth noting that already in the 1998 sustainability programme, the possibility of win-win situations was acknowledged, as it was argued for instance that:

'There are many opportunities yet to be tapped in the development of eco-friendly products and services. Production based on energy-saving technology, waste prevention, reuse and recycling could be used as a means of promoting employment, while also supporting the attainment of environmental objectives. The use of natural resources could be reduced and new job opportunities could be created by, for example, renting consumer commodities instead of selling them outright, and by promoting the consumption of locally produced goods and services. At the same time, this would promote the regional creation of new jobs in small enterprises'⁵²

In the late 1990's a number of specific initiatives addressing the creation and promotion of potential win-win situations on the regional level were also launched, including a research programme that aimed at advancing environmentally sound technology and strengthening the Finnish environmental cluster.⁵³ These have subsequently also been of relevance to programme-based regional development, as for instance the Centres of Expertise programme has included environmental technology clusters (e.g. Lahti, Oulu and Jyväskylä) in the national programme and its regional implementation.

In *Norway* it is stated that:

'Industrial politics will contribute to the creation of the values needed to implement the overriding goals of welfare and employment within the framework of sustainable development. Employment for all is seen as the most important goal and a forward looking politics creating good conditions for industry is seen as furthering a growth-oriented, competitive and profitable economy'.⁵⁴

From this statement there is no indication of any problematic relationship between sustainable development and the goals of industrial development. Instead these are seen as being possible to combine. The same assumptions are made in the sketch for a national action-plan for sustainable development, with the condition that compatibility is dependent on the greening of business:

'An economic development built on sustainable patterns of production and consumption appears as the overarching strategic goal in the work for sustainable development. The close connection between economic development and serious environmental problems needs to be reduced /by/

⁵⁰Ibid, p 72.

⁵¹Valtioneuvosto 1998, 4.

⁵²Council of the State 1998, p 25.

⁵³Ibid, p 33.

⁵⁴Vedtak HNK 18.06.2001.

changes in business towards less environmentally burdened ones, increased resource and energy efficiency, less damaging energy sources and the use of more environmentally friendly technologies'⁵⁵

With a greener industrial development, the conflicts between economic growth and environmental sustainability are assumed to vanish. The action-plan also stresses the need for support and subsidies to business and industry that are seen to have a central role in the push for sustainable development. This is also indicated by the following quote:

'The ability of business to innovate in the direction of more sustainable processes of innovation, and a willingness to take social responsibility will in the end be decisive for the realisation of central political goals'⁵⁶

In order to accomplish this, SND is seen as a positive supportive means that makes environmental improvements possible and encourages industry and business to use this as marketing profits, at the regional level. Other governing and supportive means include environmental management systems, environmental reports, and environmental labelling and certification. The need for environmentally sound technologies, eco-design, green product-development, industrial ecology and the possibilities to export environmental technology and environmentally sound solutions is also emphasised. Good examples are also mentioned where industry and business have made considerable improvements in respect of environmental efficiency.⁵⁷ SND has as its task in respect of all of its activities, to:

'Stimulate Norwegian attempts to take advantage of its international potential, encourage women and young people to participate in industrial development and entrepreneurship, stimulate Norwegian attempts to use and develop more environmentally efficient technology'⁵⁸

The development of environmental friendly technology is thus one of three corner-stones of the fund. The role of sustainable development relating to issues of growth and development is further discussed by SND:

'Knowledge and ideas flows faster between countries, and sharpened environmental demands are asserted both from authorities and the market. Innovation and competence must therefore be developed in an international perspective and within the framework of sustainable development'⁵⁹

⁵⁵Skisse til Nasjonal handlingsplan for bærekraftig utvikling 2003, p. 32.

⁵⁶Skisse for Nasjonal handlingsplan for bærekraftig utvikling 2003, p. 32.

⁵⁷Skisse til Nasjonal handlingsplan for bærekraftig utvikling 2003, p. 32f.

⁵⁸St. medling nr.36,2000–2001, SND: Ny giv, ny vekst, nytt næringsliv in SND Strategi 2002–2005 SND – aktiv samarbeidspartner fra idé til virkelighet, p. 2.

⁵⁹SND Strategi 2002–2005 SND – aktiv samarbeidspartner fra idé til virkelighet, p. 3.

The quote indicates that sustainable development is seen as a demand both from the authorities and the market, and that business and industry therefore need to adjust to it. When discussing the focus on innovation and the development of competence in the strategy, there is no particular mention of environmental sustainability as an important means.⁶⁰

In the brochure 'Your environmental venture – not only for the sake of the environment but also for competitiveness', which is directed towards industry and business, it is emphasised that the environmental profile of business is steadily becoming more important for market possibilities and for the future of the economy more generally:

'National and international development increasingly acknowledge environmental conditions. /.../ To be early with environmentally friendly solutions ensures that business is more prepared to meet the new environmental demands. We will see new markets opening up where the environment is an important factor and where users will demand environmentally sound products. To be at the forefront is increasingly a competitive advantage'⁶¹

It is also stated in the brochure that SND will, in the future, have greater expectations in respect of the ability of business to consider the environment factor, 'because we know that it pays off' and that the different development and investment projects funded by SND may be used to finance the development of new environmental technology or other environmental business initiatives.⁶² But when discussing challenges for 'sustainable regional development' one representative from the fund claims that the actual demands from authorities and the market are currently seen as being too weak from the perspective of small and medium-sized businesses. Even if SND talks about the gains that can be made, many however still believe that the level of market demand remains ambiguous in this respect. The buyers of goods and services and their choices are important here and the incentives for the greening of business are in practice seen as somewhat restricted in terms of competitive advantages.⁶³ The possibility of creating actual win-win-situations where environmental considerations and efforts pay off and lead to improved positions on the market thus seems to be somewhat less obvious in practice, at least for medium-sized businesses, at least in terms of the Norwegian experience. In practice it is also acknowledged that there is a significant conflict between regional growth and development and environmental issues, for example relating to fisheries, golf courses, the clearing of trees etc.⁶⁴

⁶⁰SND Strategi 2002–2005.

⁶¹SND, *Din miljøatsning – Ikke bare for miljøets skyld, men også et konkurransefortrinn.*

⁶²SND, *Din miljøatsning – Ikke bare for miljøets skyld, men også et konkurransefortrinn.*

⁶³Interview 5.

⁶⁴Interview 5.

Our general impression is however that such goal-conflicts are often ignored or assumed to vanish in discussions of sustainable growth and regional sustainable development.

The assumptions of SND, in particular over the possibility of combining environmental consideration with development, were also found to exist at KRD, as indicated previously. It is stated that different regions use sustainability and environmental values in marketing themselves as 'good and attractive regions to work and live in'. The notion of the preservation of cultural heritage and recreational areas through active use, contributing to employment and increased economic and other values, was a clear ambition at the Ministry. At the same time they acknowledge that this is not a perspective that they share with the environmental authorities, who instead tend to see a greater conflict between these issues.⁶⁵ In the environmental action plan for KRD, we also learn that the aim of regional policy and the policy for peripheral regions is to increase the competitiveness and profitability of business. The extension of the infrastructure is taken as one example where regional politics may collide with environmental considerations in this respect. At the same time it is stated in the document that offensive strategies focusing on environmental standards on behalf of business can provide long-term advantages in respect of markets with increasing environmental demands.⁶⁶ At a national level there thus seems to be a strong overall focus on the possibilities of combining the different dimensions of sustainable development in practical regional policy.

In Sweden it is clear from our interviews that NUTEK is of the opinion that the economic and environmental aspects can be combined in actual projects, and that it is possible to work with the ecological dimension from an economic perspective. Examples mentioned here include, environmentally driven business-development, where both aims are believed to be attainable.⁶⁷ The concept of sustainable growth is thus seen as a precondition for well-being and full employment, which according to NUTEK calls for:

'A long-term politics that stimulates investments, entrepreneurship and strengthens the competitiveness of business and regions'⁶⁸

NUTEK particularly emphasise the fact that sustainable growth is important because it is profitable and it helps to develop business in particular and the regions more generally. Actions for the environment do not only lessen the strains on the environment but also entail new opportunities for business and a strengthening of general competitiveness levels. For example, it is stated that:

⁶⁵Interview 6.

⁶⁶KRD 2000, p 14.

⁶⁷Interview 8, 9.

⁶⁸NUTEK, 2001, *Tre näringspolitiska utmaningar – allianser för hållbar tillväxt*.

'Environmentally driven businesses can be a lever for growth and innovation. The OECD calculates that the environmental sector is growing by five percent each year. Swedish environmental technology companies, due to the early adoption of environmental laws and investments in infrastructure, had a clear competitive advantage in relation to other countries. /.../ Companies that consider the environment and thus develop environmentally sound products gain great opportunities in terms of their future business. Sweden has to take advantage of its environmental benefits.'⁶⁹

Environmental efforts are seen as a strong driving-force for economic growth and future competitiveness and thus as a reason for action. Also in line with this reasoning, the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications states that:

'Environmental investments create competitiveness, a positive image, and are thus transformed from being a defensive to an offensive part of the economy. An effective use of resources will lower costs and further increase the ability to compete.'⁷⁰

This also corresponds with statements made by the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise (*Svenskt Näringsliv*), who stated that companies today needed to consider the environment based on purely business factors alone, rather than for ideological reasons, and that a proactive attitude stems from demands from clients and from the market.⁷¹

A threat-related image is visible in the argumentation, for the companies that do not take this recommendation seriously ultimately risk:

'higher costs and poorer product-development than their competitors. They also risk negative publicity and a bad reputation, which can lead to a weakened trademark'⁷²

Examples of activities where the environment and business development are in focus concern environmentally driven business development, Baltic 21 for business, Life Environment – the environmental fund of the EU, the environmental control of small companies, environmentally adjusted product development and a database with projects related to environmental control and product development.⁷³ It is thus clear, at least on the rhetorical level, that and an environmental or a green profile for regions and the businesses within them is seen as an important goal for the future. The discourse on ecological modernisation seems then to be flourishing according to these documents.

⁶⁹NUTEK, 2001, *Tre näringspolitiska utmaningar – allianser för hållbar tillväxt*. The same line of reasoning can be found in NUTEK 2002, *Starka regioner. För nationell tillväxt i en global ekonomi*.

⁷⁰(ND, 2001, *Näringsdepartementets arbete för hållbar utveckling*, p 5.

⁷¹*Svenskt Näringsliv, Från defensiva till proaktiva – Företag och hållbar tillväxt*.

⁷²<http://www.nutek.se>

⁷³<http://www.nutek.se>

In the interviews the possibility of combining environmental considerations and regional growth and development is seen as a matter of attitude. At the same time, it is clear that the win-win-situations discussed above are rather elusive in practice:

'I believe that environmental issues are generally seen as an expansive market but it is elusive when it comes to concrete projects, though all agree on the potential. When national funding exists, a larger incentive to work with this emerges. /.../ We have an important function to make good examples known and to increase the awareness of win-win-situations.'⁷⁴

From this and other quotes we learn that even if these win-win-situations are assumed to exist by national authorities, the gains are not always clear in practice among regions and companies.

The argumentation takes little or no notice of potential conflicts between environmental aspects and regional

growth and development. Documents produced by the Environmental Protection Agency to facilitate the process of working with sustainable development within a regional growth and development context however acknowledge that the process of achieving sustainable regional growth and development is challenging. A number of negative trends are discerned that are directly related to the difficulties in combining environmental perspectives with increased growth, such as climate change, the greenhouse effect, transport and energy production, the use of chemicals, agricultural and coastal-zone development and resource use, regional expansion etc. Furthermore, it is stated that not all goal-conflicts can be resolved within the process of growth agreements.⁷⁵ As such, the overall feeling in the document is one of the supporting existing potential to handle such conflicts, and thus to look for win-win-solutions. This is however, undoubtedly, an optimistic stance.

4.3 Sustainable Development at the Regional Level

Discussion has thus far concerned the understanding and interpretation of sustainable development in a context of regional growth and development on the national level. A further important part of this research project is however the connection to regional practices and thus what actually happens 'on the ground'. In this part of the report we learn about these regional practices from national actors and (in sections 5–8) from an analysis of regional documents. How are the issues of sustainable development and regional growth and development handled at the regional level? What is the practice and experience of previous and current partnership initiatives in this respect? What are the challenges of integrating sustainable development in a regional growth and development context? Here we rely mostly on the interviews undertaken with the national experts, as well as on the documentary material.

In *Denmark* differing experiences exist in terms of the regional partnerships in respect of current governmental policy relating to peripheral regions and regional growth partnerships. According to our interviewees, it is easier if regional actors have previous experience of such co-operation, as often the risk is that they see each other as competitors, for example in co-operation between municipalities focused on fishing. Previous experience of the REUP's for example showed that no real tradition of working together existed in these areas. Over time, such co-operation

has however increased.⁷⁶ In addition, the actual size of these partnerships varies, which creates different conditions. Many small municipalities have few resources available for working with growth and development, and some have the municipal director as the only participant, while others have whole departments working with these issues.⁷⁷

Concerning issues of sustainable development in the regional growth-strategies, a partnership for business and environment in the Jynsk-fynske co-operation network is mentioned as a good example of such a process.⁷⁸ There is however, as stated previously, no articulation in the documents from EBST about the need or desire for activities combining environmental sustainability with growth and development. Among the national actors it is MIM who has the task of pushing for issues of sustainable development, while EBST works for the improvement of economic growth and development (see section 3.1 and 4.1).

Environmental issues and sustainable development are believed to be important for the regions themselves, but it is also acknowledged in interviews that it varies how much work is done in this context. Much work is however related to tourism.⁷⁹ Peripheral regions are believed to be afraid of

⁷⁴Interview 8. Similar reasoning is found by 9.

⁷⁵Naturvårdsverket 2002, *Det nya tillväxtarbetet. Förändringsarbete för hållbar regional utveckling*, p 24ff.

⁷⁶Interview 1, 2.

⁷⁷ØEM 2003, *Den regionale Vækststrategi*.

⁷⁸ØEM 2003, *Den regionale Vækststrategi*.

⁷⁹Interview 3, 4, 1, 2.

being over-exposed and at the same time have a decrease in population. Sustainability is believed to be a strategic matter relating to tourism and settlement. Quality-tourism is a key-word and the nature and environment of a region must be attractive in order to tempt visitors and settlers, so the argument goes.

Environmental aspects are not seen as restricting regional growth, according to EBST. As examples of regional initiatives where green perspectives are important for development some regions also work with ecological food and farming, green energy-solutions etc. The projects dealt with by EBST are generally seen as balanced where conflicts between development and environmental perspectives are rare. EBST however sees it as a challenge to persuade municipalities and regions that they can have development without a motorway and that they do not have to build everything anew, as existing areas can be used. In the eyes of MIM this is seen as a real challenge in terms of integrating sustainable development into a regional growth and development context (see below). It is also clearly stated that environmental issues are not explicit or visible in the growth partnerships, but rather that they are implicitly addressed by the regions.⁸⁰

Representatives from MIM agree that sustainable development does not form a part of their formal instructions in terms of the regional growth partnerships, and that the latter are contrary to sustainable development in some respects. Examples of this include the way in which settlement is viewed, i.e. that people need to move out to the peripheral regions, which means that the system of infrastructure and commuting needs to be expanded, which does not correspond with environmental sustainability. In addition, state politics are believed to benefit those who drive long distances, through particular transport-related deductions for private motorists instead of providing incentives for using public transport-systems.⁸¹ The interviewees thus see a conflict in the current regional growth policies particularly over how different aspects of sustainable development are handled. The representatives have also been told by their Minister not to attempt to steer the regions or tell them what to do in this respect, which creates difficulties in itself:

'A lot of the regional development work is delegating tasks to the regional and local level. It is difficult for the state to say 'now do this and that' since the policy is that the regions decide for themselves. Here the Danish and the Swedish models are different from each other. It is typical for Denmark that we speak a lot about what *ought* to happen but we don't have the power to implement it because it is very un-Danish to force the regions into anything'⁸²

The means for actually pressing for sustainable solutions thus seem to be somewhat diminished in relation to the growth partnerships.

The same cannot be said for the regional plans, where demands are instead increasing and activities and strategies for sustainable development need to be accounted for in a more specific way than before.⁸³ According to our interviewees the goals are quite clear in the regional plans, though the connection to concrete action leaves much to be desired. As expressed in one interview:

'The civil servants in the regions feel that politicians want to write nice words but when it comes to action, less happens'⁸⁴

Again the problem is, according to our interviewees, one of, in practice, working with an overall perspective that attempts to combine environmental and developmental perspectives in the field of infrastructure. Copenhagen is mentioned as one example where an integrated localisation and transport plan have been discussed in order to reduce traffic and its environmental consequences. Ultimately however the conclusion was that more highways and detours were actually needed rather than greater investment in public transport. Overarching goals are thus not followed in practice.⁸⁵ The future challenge, as viewed by our interviewees, is to make the environmental and sustainability consequences visible and to mediate these perspectives in different settings, such as the regional growth partnerships. Ministry-representatives however have to rely on the good will of the regions and to argue for their cause, as they do not have executive power in this respect.⁸⁶

In *Finland* the integration of sustainability concerns into regional development programming is most specifically an issue for the regional level. It was argued in the interviews that whilst it is up to the national level to create the preconditions for this integration, the actual ways in which this integration takes place, as well as the degree of success depends upon those at the regional level.

It is another issue however that within regional development the notion of 'sustainability' for the most part remains within the ecological sphere and more specifically is generally included as a horizontal theme in project allocation. In this sense the inclusion of sustainability in regional development work is, for all practical purposes, often equated with the inclusion of 'environmentally friendly' or 'environmentally beneficial' projects in the selection criteria and indicator work, in many cases thus relating to the requirement of the inclusion of EIA within the decision-making process on the allocation of project funding. Ac-

⁸⁰Interview 1, 2.

⁸¹Interview 3, 4.

⁸²Interview 3.

⁸³Interview 3, 4.

⁸⁴Interview 4.

⁸⁵Interview 3, 4.

⁸⁶Interview 3.

according to national legislation the responsibility for ensuring that EIA is included in Structural Funds decision-making lies with the Regional Management Committees (RMC). For the attainment of sustainability the RMCs are of relevance in two ways: first, they have overall responsibility for making sure that EIA is undertaken in project decision-making and second, they have a 'gatekeeper' position as to the attainment of commitment and awareness on sustainability.

The practices as to evaluating and promoting sustainability vary greatly from region to region. Therefore there has been quite a lot of work done nationally (by the Ministry of the Environment) to develop good working methods and practices for the promotion of sustainability. Some examples of the criteria for 'environmentally beneficial projects' are given below.⁸⁷

Even though the regional level has significant autonomy as to the types of projects implemented through regional programmes (both national and SF), it is naturally also important to ensure that the national level provides the necessary guidance and methodological support to ensure both the inclusion of sustainability relevant projects and indicators, as well as integrating (growth-oriented) regional development and sustainability. Here issues such as monitoring systems are relevant. In the current national monitoring system (FIMOS) for regional development, 13 project types are identified as having potentially beneficial environmental impacts. These include:

- Projects introducing new environmental systems into companies
- Projects generating environmentally friendly products or production methods
- Projects promoting the use of renewable energy sources
- Water supply projects
- Sewage projects
- Projects for the restoration of polluted sites
- Projects for environmental or regional planning (including town planning, land use planning, green belt planning)
- Projects for the restoration of watercourses or drainage areas
- Projects for town or urban development
- Projects for the restoration of culturally valuable buildings or environments
- Projects related to recreation in the wild and to nature conservation
- Nature tourism projects
- Projects supporting *Natura* 2000 sites.⁸⁸

In the case of the EIA there are considerable differences between the regions as to the principles, practices and methodology implemented. In some regions all project

decisions are taken by the RMC, in some cases by its secretariat, which is reflected in the power that the partnership and its different actors and organizations have, e.g. what is the role of the environmental authorities (i.e. are they basically left with the full responsibility for EIA and even sustainability or is the partnership constellation in fact responsible and mobilized in a broader sense). The fact that the RMCs have responsibility for EIA was seen as problematic by some interviewees, whilst at the same time others saw this as the only way to commit the whole partnership and to achieve an integrated approach, rather than just leaving it up to the environmental authorities to deal with (and hence maintain the predominance of sustainability as an environmental concern).

In terms of guidance, Finland has set the aim of having 20–30 percent of funding within the regional development programmes financed in 2000–2006 under the European Union Structural Funds allocated to projects with a positive environmental impact (or, as it is described in Finnish, to 'environmentally beneficial' projects). (30% for Objective 2, 20% for others) It has however proved difficult to define the concept of environmentally beneficial, and the interpretation used has varied from region to region, as has the terminology.⁸⁹ One of the main conclusions of the study referred to above has thus been that it is necessary to achieve a better common understanding of what is meant by 'environmentally beneficial', which is a prerequisite for assessing whether the goal achievement can be assessed in the first place. The same can also be said to apply to the notion of 'sustainability'.

Similarly in *Norway*, what actually happens at the regional level seems to be a pressing issue. Indeed, this was something that became rather apparent in the context of our interviews, i.e. from the point of view of national authorities. From the perspective of KRD it is assumed that sustainable development plays an important role for the regional actors, according to the planning documents that come to the attention of the Ministry. It is also acknowledged that there are variations between the regions in this respect and thus that it is difficult to judge, from a national perspective, what 'actually happens' with issues of sustainable development and environmental aspects in practice. Here the regions themselves and SND are assumed to have a better picture of the matter since they deal with the concrete project applications.⁹⁰ The issue of how the organisation at the regional level makes it difficult to work with all dimensions of sustainable development was also discussed. The large number of actors with different responsibilities relating to these processes result in conflicts and territorial disputes. For example it was argued in one of the interviews that the governor (*fylkesman*) thinks very much in terms of traditional environmental protec-

⁸⁷Source: Berninger 2003, 8–9.

⁸⁸Ibid, p 12.

⁸⁹Berninger 2003, 4–5.

⁹⁰Interview 6.

tion while the active use of natural and cultural resources is proposed by other actors.⁹¹

SND has, in their administration of financial support to the regions, the task of integrating environmental considerations with the various means of action and support at their disposal. The integration process has three dimensions:

1. To finance projects that do not damage the environment
2. To as large an extent as possible finance environmental technology projects and
3. To support broad integration through environmental certificates such as the *Miljöfyrårn*.

In practice this means that businesses, when applying for money, indicate in the application whether the proposed project leads to environmental improvements or not. It is thus the judgement of the applicants themselves that is important rather than the judgement of SND. Between 10–15 percent of the projects (about 5–6000 per year approximately) are connected with the second dimension, thus accounting for 2–300 Mkr per year. SND has, as was noted in our interviews, the task of looking for good environmental projects, though it does not see the point in taking larger risks with these than with other projects.⁹² The question of how much the regional offices of SND press for environmental questions is also an important matter. From our interviews we learned that it is important to acknowledge the fact that when discussing the different projects that SND finance, environmental issues are but one of the many considerations being reviewed, and that often those attending to these issues are not experts in all areas, including the environment. Even if SND is a part of the regional partnerships they are not particularly focussed on environmental and sustainability issues but rather on the development of business and increased economic and social values (*verdskapning*), except perhaps in those cases where a region has great potential relating to environmental values.⁹³

In general it is believed that the potential to find win-win-situations for environmental sustainability in relation to growth and development makes it easier to gain support for environmental activities. If it appears to be only a cost, it is more difficult and then the regions often expect the state to contribute. Environmental initiatives that fall under the umbrella of tourism are another issue however, as they are believed to be important for the image of Norway.⁹⁴

In Sweden partnerships are the most important forum for co-operation and anchorage in both the Structural

Fund Programmes and generally the interviewees saw the Regional Growth Programmes as a good method to work with.⁹⁵ The regions are today working with the question of how to get the most out of these partnership forums. The partnerships have different degrees of maturity and their size also varies. In some instances partnerships consist of over a hundred participants while in others, they consist of as few as ten.⁹⁶ Some also distinguish between formal/representative partnerships, and active partnerships. Formal partnerships have been seen as rather blunt instruments, where it is difficult to maintain focus and to attract actors such as representatives from the business world for example. Often there is a need for active partnerships working in a more concrete fashion, operatively and efficiently with implementation.⁹⁷ There are thus at times not one but several arenas within the partnerships. Concerning the outline of these partnerships it is important to consider who has the competence and necessary width to represent the region in these processes. Can, for example, business representatives play such a role this was an issue that was hotly debated by the interviewees.⁹⁸

The strategic factors making a good programming process possible have been discerned by the national actors, based on current experience. The strategic factors outlined are, for example, the need for:

- A common vision, strategy and participation
- Support, leadership and anchorage
- A proactive attitude (that the social and environmental conditions are considered at the outset, making it possible to turn them into driving-forces for growth instead of hindrances),
- Good methods of work and organisation and, finally,
- A learning-oriented work with growth.⁹⁹

In addition to these, the need to find people with the right competence and who are able to identify the key-processes that are likely to be successful is also important according to the interviewees.¹⁰⁰

Early evaluations of the regional growth agreements have shown that environmental issues were seldom a part of the agreements and that when they were they were treated in a distinct section where the need for environmental considerations was simply stated. At first it was also unclear how the integration of environmental perspectives could actually be achieved.¹⁰¹ Evaluations made of the written growth agreements in 2001 also revealed a need to deepen knowledge of sustainable growth processes. The

⁹¹Interview 6.

⁹²Interview 5.

⁹³Interview 5.

⁹⁴Interview 5, 6.

⁹⁵Interview 7, 8, 9, 10.

⁹⁶Interview 10, 8, 9.

⁹⁷Interview 7, 8.

⁹⁸Interview 9.

⁹⁹Naturvårdsverket 2002.

¹⁰⁰Interview 10.

¹⁰¹ND, 2001, Näringsdepartementets arbete för hållbar utveckling, p 21.

evaluations showed that roughly half of the regions state particular efforts to further environmentally driven growth and product development and tourism. At the same time these efforts, seen in total, amount to only 8.4 percent of the total distribution of resources, of which 8 percent was spent on measures relating to living-environments and local development and 0.4 percent on measures relating particularly to the environment. In the evaluations it was also stated that there is generally a lack of analysis of how economic resources can contribute to sustainable development in the regions and that efforts relating to environmental issues mainly concern the development of indicators and check-lists, to increase knowledge of the environment and improve the co-operation between the regional economy and the environment within the county administrative boards and the regional self-government organs.¹⁰²

Concerning sustainable development it is believed by the national actors that even if the formal directives have existed for some time there is a larger acceptance, understanding and willingness to work with these issues in the context of regional growth programming work today.¹⁰³ National declarations claim that partnerships shall include knowledge about the horizontal goals of which environmental sustainability is one. It appears, from our national level interviews, that there are different interpretations of the concept of sustainable development in use in different regions. For example we learn that some regions emphasize only an ecological and healthy environment when speaking of sustainable development, while others discuss the concept more in terms of the long-term profitable development of business.¹⁰⁴ According to our sources, the perspectives and interpretations of sustainable development at the regional level thus vary markedly.

The practical organisation of this however varies and is decided upon by the regional level. In some cases this knowledge is seen as being integrated among the actors involved in the partnerships at large rather than being the knowledge of specific representatives. In general the partnership-model is seen as facilitating the participation of environmental representatives as the processes have been opened up and the national directives and regulations press for these matters in a clearer sense. Environmental actors can, it is assumed, use the governmental directives as a lever.¹⁰⁵ Pure participation is not, however, seen as a guarantee. There are other power-aspects at play where actors with the best financial backup play an important role, not least in the active partnerships of which environmen-

tal actors are seldom a part.¹⁰⁶ There is thus the matter then of gaining entrance to the inner circles of the partnerships and also of being able to gain support for the issues among the stronger segments of the partnerships.

There is also the view that even if the perspectives of sustainable development were made prominent in terms of 'high-profile' declarations, a lot of work remains to be done in relation to discussions at partnership-meetings.¹⁰⁷ There is, according to the interviews conducted, a lot to learn about how to implement and work with sustainable regional development and the different dimensions of growth and environment in practice.¹⁰⁸ The quality varies in this respect, as indicated from one of our interviews:

'Some region's economic position means that growth has to be at the centre and thus that sustainability is an awkward topic, but there are exceptions where regions really try to make the most of this and handle it as wisely and ambitiously as possible'¹⁰⁹

Some regions are also, according to one of our interviewees, very good at finding consultants to write their programmes for them, but when it comes to action we see that there is little in the way of practical substance behind these words.¹¹⁰

In their *ex ante* evaluation of regional growth programmes ITPS has stated that regions in general do not succeed particularly well in integrating these perspectives. Our interviewee from the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications believes that the reasons for this may be that some regions lack a belief in working with these issues. If regions themselves do not see the benefits of working with sustainable development it is difficult to proceed at all. Some regions also seem to view sustainable development as 'a duty' mandated from above, and imposed on the regional practice, which may also affect efforts in a negative sense. The general lack of knowledge and experience also seems to be a hindrance here, even if acceptance of these perspectives has grown.¹¹¹ The coming governmental decision on the implementation of the regional growth programmes is expected to include reservations that the regions must complement their programmes by further explaining how they plan to work with goals and actual efforts in this respect. A certain 'closing of the ranks' is thus expected even if real sanctions are not that great compared to those in terms of the EU structural funds, where money is not delivered until requirements are met.¹¹²

¹⁰²Näringsdepartementet, 2002, Rapport om tillväxtavtalen. Andra året, p 21ff.

¹⁰³Interview 8.

¹⁰⁴Interview 9 vs. 7.

¹⁰⁵Interview 7, 8.

¹⁰⁶Interview 7.

¹⁰⁷Interview 9.

¹⁰⁸Interview 7, 10.

¹⁰⁹Interview 7.

¹¹⁰Interview 9.

¹¹¹Interview 7.

¹¹²Interview 7.

4.4 Summary

Regarding the *conceptual content and policy contexts of sustainable development* we learn from the study that all four countries have national strategies for sustainable development, which emphasise the three pillars of economic, social and environmental sustainability as being mutually interdependent. The need to overcome the often negative connection between environmental considerations and economic progress is also mentioned, as is the need to integrate the ideas and practice of sustainable development in different sectors and societal contexts instead of them leading a life of their own, or being the responsibility of a single (environmental) authority. At the same time as a broad definition of sustainable development is used and referred to, often explicitly related to the report 'Our Common Future' by the Brundtland-commission, there is a general acknowledgement in interviews that sustainable development is often seen as being synonymous with the *ecological aspects* of the concept rather than addressing all of the three pillars referred to above. In some national strategies, the ambiguous nature of the concept of sustainable development is discussed more explicitly and it is acknowledged here that different authorities and actors use different interpretations, which in some cases creates confusion over what is actually meant by the concept. The environmental actors tend to emphasise the ecological aspects – ecological sustainability – while the economic actors naturally emphasise the economic aspects – for example the focus on sustainable growth – when discussing sustainable development. In the Swedish interviews the question of who, in the final instance, speaks for sustainable development in its totality was referred to a number of times, as different authorities follow their respective missions and have different mandates to involve themselves in the broader sustainability context. The lack of a clear governmental strategy concerning the overall concept was also discussed on a number of occasions, both in the Swedish and in the other interviews.

Questions over the status and integration of *sustainable development within the context of regional growth* reveal a number of interesting observations and tensions when viewed in the light of the interviews and the national document reviews. For example, the extent to which sustainable development is actually used clearly varies from one case to the next, though on a rhetorical level it is integrated into the policy documents and strategic statements related to the field of regional development in all four countries studied. In the Danish national growth-strategy we find explicit reference to sustainable development while such statements are lacking from national policy-documents for regional development. This might be seen as an indication that national ambitions in terms of integrating sustainable development differ from one sector to the next, at

least on the policy-level. The same can also be said for Norwegian policy documents concerning regional development, where the focus is more on the need for a balanced economic and social development rather than focussing on the overall concept of sustainable development. It is also clear from interviews with the national authorities working in the field of regional development in both of these countries that sustainable development and in particular the issue of environmental sustainability is not an explicit goal for regional development, rather the focus is more traditionally on economic development and prosperity. The national actors do not, for example, push for these issues in relation to the regions, though for instance in Finland there have been guidelines developed for the inclusion of sustainability in the regional documents (e.g. Structural Funds and regional development programmes within the national policy context). In Sweden, where sustainable development appears as an overriding goal for regional development and growth, it is clear that sustainable growth deal first and foremost with the economic dimensions of the broader theme, though these economic dimensions are also dependent upon both social and environmental dimensions. NUTEK for example works with environmental issues that are beneficial to the economic dimension, and not simply environmental aspects in themselves. The same applies to Finland, where regionally balanced development is referred to explicitly in the sustainability documents, while the governmental decision on the objectives of regional development for instance sets the goals as the promotion of regional competitiveness, ensuring the provision of services across the whole country, as well as the development of a balanced regional/spatial structure, without addressing sustainability directly.

Concerning the greening of business and the need to decouple the link between environmental burdens and economic prosperity we learned that at least in some contexts in the four countries, the possibility of combining further growth and development with environmental considerations is not only seen as being possible to achieve but also as a potential trigger for regional development and future innovations. Environmental technology is, for example, presented as a competitive advantage for regions and business. The argument here is that 'it pays off' to invest in 'green' products, not only in economic terms but also in relation to a general level of goodwill, the need to present a 'green' image and the avoidance of negative publicity. On the rhetorical level at least, optimism remains high. At the same time it is largely seen as being up to the regions as to how, and to what extent this happens, even though national examples of good practice are often specified. Some countries try to speed up this process by offering national support for 'green' initiatives. Where these

assumed gains of combining growth, development and environmental consideration are forwarded however there is seldom any discussion of the potential conflicts between further growth and development and environmental considerations. The conflicts that we often witness in daily planning are, it seems, simply assumed to vanish. Neither the practical difficulties in creating win-win solutions, nor the overall concept of 'sustainable growth' – which at least in some interpretations is seen as a contradiction in terms – is discussed or problematized. These issues are however discussed in other contexts, while also becoming more pronounced in some of the interviews.

The relationship between national policy documents and actual practice is thus of some significance, i.e. *sustainable development at the regional level*. This is particularly relevant as the national level strategies and policies are implemented on the regional level with a considerable degree of autonomy. This view on 'endogenous development' and 'regionally adjusted implementation' was particularly apparent in the interviews, where it was emphasized that the role of the national level is more one of enabling and providing support for creating the preconditions for successful programmes and their implementation, rather than steering the process directly. The degree of national steering and decentralisation however differs somewhat between the four countries with – at the two extremes – Denmark and Sweden.

We also learn that regional practices vary greatly from region to region within the four countries and it is sometimes difficult for the national actors to evaluate what actually happens. In some regions sustainable development may not be used as a concept even though the different aspects are dealt with in some respect. In Sweden, where it was decided that regions must integrate sustainable development within their programming processes there is, for example, a difference in claiming to work *with sustainable development as an overriding goal* and whether the goal *is actually operationalized and integrated* into concrete activities. The connection between word and action must therefore be looked at carefully. In addition, different regions have different ways of viewing sustainable development, and often emphasize different aspects of the concept, which also makes evaluation difficult.

Evaluations made in a Swedish context indicate that despite the overall national policies and statements, environmental and sustainable development perspectives have seldom been a conspicuous part of the regional growth agreements. Moreover, even where they do play a part, they are often treated separately and the need for environmental considerations is simply stated without any further operationalisation of the concept taking place. Roughly half of the regions claim that they undertake efforts to further environmentally driven development, although this amounts to only 8.4% of the total distribution of resources. The conclusion is that the regions in general have not suc-

ceeded in integrating these perspectives. In practice little happens even though some good examples are mentioned. Similarly in the Finnish context it was argued that particular recommendations and goals are set in order to promote environmentally positive projects (20–30% of the Structural Funds projects are intended to be such), though the manner in which this is to be achieved is often left open to the regions themselves. The mid-term evaluations of the current SF programmes show that programmes have largely been followed, though at the same time it is argued that in many cases there is much room for interpretation as to what actually constitutes for a 'positive' project from a sustainability point of view, while the monitoring data is not for this reason always entirely reliable. Another interesting point here is thus how 'green' or environmentally friendly is defined, or what role such projects and activities in general play in relation to 'non-green' projects or activities. In some instances – for example the case of SND-projects in Norway – what is to count as an environmental project seems to be defined by the companies or the regions themselves, simply by putting a mark in the square on the application form next to the question 'deals with environmental perspectives'.

The regional variations seem to be dependent, among other things, on the existence or power of representatives pushing for these issues. In some countries the national authorities working within the field of regional development do not see it as their task to push for issues of sustainable development in relation to the regions. In decentralised systems it is difficult for the state to control and demand in this respect even if they are represented in regional programming processes. The overall task of these national actors then is to make the consequences of proposals visible and mediate them in regional settings. In other countries, where the emphasis on sustainable development in relation to regional programming processes is more explicit, questions of who has the competence to work with the wider concept is fundamental as are the power-aspects in partnerships, i.e. whose voice gets heard, who holds the pen, and who belongs to the active rather than the more 'representative' section of the partnership? In general, it can be argued that the role of the environmental actors within regional partnerships is in most cases limited to official environmental authorities on the regional level, and questions as to how one could better incorporate the voluntary sector here were raised in the interviews. There is however a clear need to study these questions of partnership representation and influence more closely in phase two of the research-project, as information on the practical organization of these partnerships is often missing (see chapter 5–8).

Another issue that was frequently discussed in interviews is that of the gains expected from working with 'green' solutions such as competitiveness and market advantages, issues that are not always acknowledged by the

regions or by business. Instead we learn that small and medium sized enterprises, for example, do not experience the increasing demand from the market in these areas that would otherwise increase their incentive to work with environmentally beneficial solutions. Rather, they want more unambiguous and quantitative proof of the competitive advantages of sustainable and environmentally friendly solutions before embarking on such initiatives. Weak market-demands thus appear as a restriction in this respect. The same also applies to some of the regions that experience difficulties in finding and implementing the win-win solutions related to sustainable development. Those regions that have included sustainability or the environment explicitly in their strategic industries are naturally best placed to provide good examples of the promotion of the integration of economic growth-related and sustainability concerns. The conditions and practice of these integrative efforts however needs to be further studied.

We are also left with a rather un-problematised picture of the possibilities of identifying and promoting the above mentioned win-win situations, combined with an overall picture of sustainable growth that implies to some extent an implicit avoidance of goal-conflicts. It is however clear

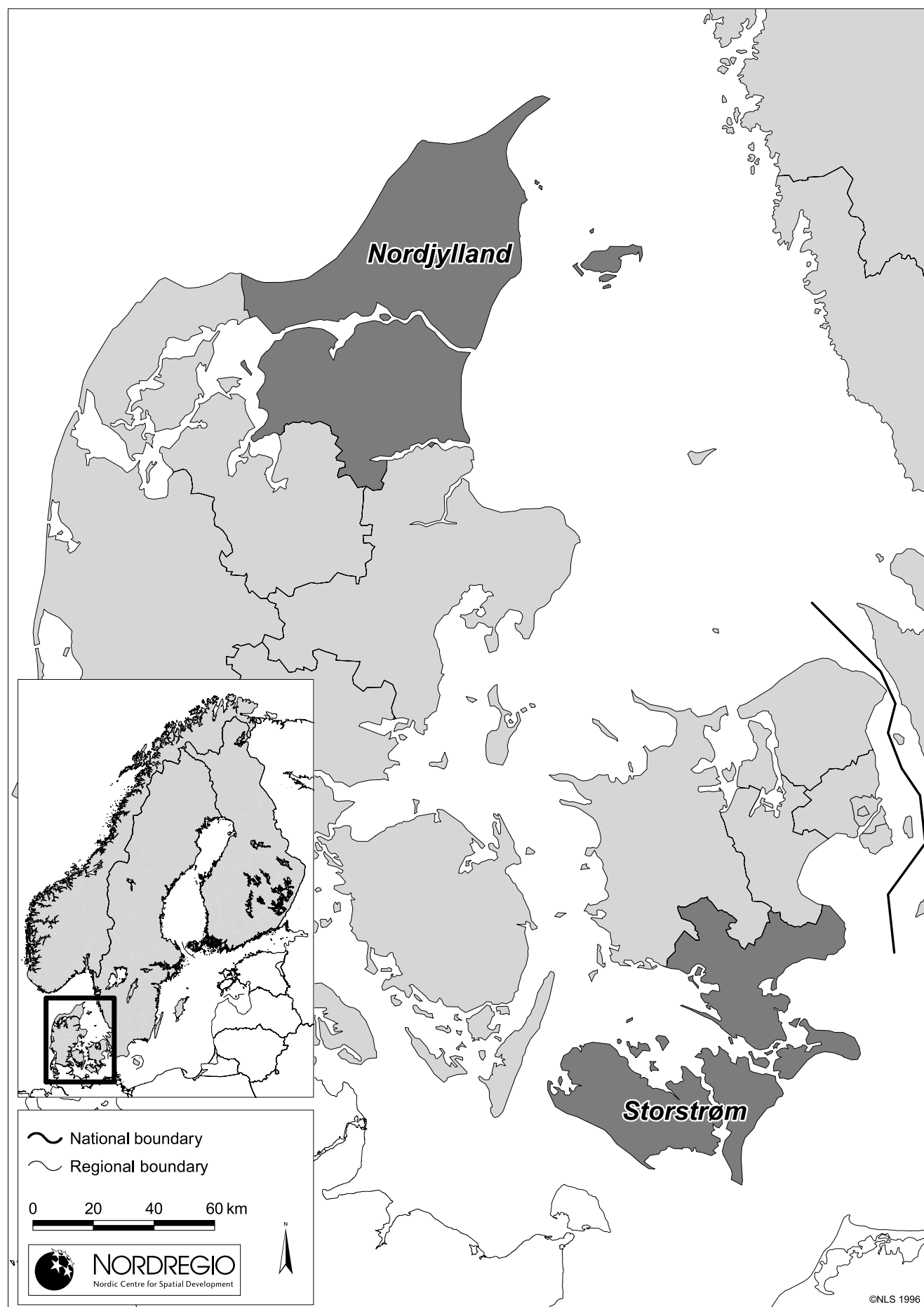
from the interviews and document analysis conducted that negative trends and conflicts in the regional development and growth sector relating to environmental perspectives such as climate change, transport, communications and energy production, the use of chemicals, agricultural and coastal zone development, as well as resource use and regional expansion etc. are found in daily practice. Many regions seem for example to associate economic growth and development strongly with the development of transport infrastructure such as motorways, and thus feel that without such large-scale infrastructure projects development is clearly hampered. Not all aspects of regional development are possible to combine with sustainable development however, as we learned from a number of historical examples and also from the interviews conducted. Regional actors are sometimes faced with conflicts related to the question of 'environmental consideration versus growth', which indicate that the relationship between these issues is far from uncomplicated. These complications are seldom acknowledged or dealt with explicitly in the studied documents. In reality, the extent to which they are dealt with or even acknowledged in the regional arenas remains to be seen.

Section 3

Regional Programming Documents

Here the results of the analysis of regional programmes from two regions each in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden are presented. The various national Sustainable Development goals, previously described in chapters 3 and 4, and in particular, how they have been implemented, interpreted and organized in the regional growth and development programming documents are presented in section 3. This section gives substance to the issue of how sustainable development is interpreted and implemented at the regional level in various national and regional contexts.

Figure 2. Danish regions included in the study: Nordjylland and Storstrøm.



5 The Regional Level in Denmark

Every fourth year all Danish regions have to develop regional plans that determine the overarching goals for development and land-use for the following twelve years. Sustainable development is a principal issue for these regional plans. Until recently, financial support was given for the production of regional development programmes (REUP), which constituted a part of the regional plans. Since April 2003 however the government instead decided to support regional growth strategies for peripheral regions. The organisation of activities relating to regional

growth and development, and what kind of documents as such are produced, varies quite considerably among the Danish regions.

What happens with sustainable development (SD) within concrete growth and development processes and programmes at the regional level in Denmark? In an attempt to discover how to answer this question we will use Storstrøm and Nordjylland as examples of regional practices.

5.1 The Example of Storstrøms Amt

Storstrøm, located in south-eastern Denmark, has 24 municipalities, with a total population of 259 691 (end of 2000 figures). The regional development programme (DRUP) started in 1994 in Storstrøm and has the goal of financing development projects. Reports from these projects were produced in 2000 and 2001. A committee for growth and development (*erhvervspolitisk udvalg*) was established in 1997 with responsibility for formulating and implementing the action plan for growth and development (*erhvervspolitisk handlingsplan*) of which the regional development programmes are a part. The latest action-plan dates from 2003. The current regional plan concerns the period of 2001–2013. A report for the coming regional plan 2005–2017 was also published in April 2003. Together, these different plans and programmes tell us something about SD in the regional development arena.

5.1.1 The Goals of Regional Development and Growth

From the current regional plan for 2001–2013 we learn that specific regional goals in Storstrøm are as follows:

- To improve conditions for residents and activities in the region
- To create an attractive region from the point of view of living, regional growth and business development
- That all institutions in the region work towards ecologically sustainable development and, finally
- That the region takes advantage of its potentials and strengths.¹ The following goals for regional growth and

development were formulated in January 2000 and are still referred to as being valid:

‘a prominent improvement of income-level and employment, a good and healthy environment, a varied supply of public and private service’²

At the same time it is stated in the action plan for growth and development from 2003, that a flourishing growth and business development is a condition for the achievement of these targets.³ One interpretation of this additional statement is that growth is seen as an overarching goal or basis for regional development. Important tasks for the coming years include, according to the plan, improved conditions for transport, the development of IT, necessary knowledge, the marketing of the region and strengthening connections to national and international research environments.⁴ In the listing of these tasks there is no specification relating explicitly to SD.

5.1.2 The Concept of Sustainable Development

Looking at the regional plan of 2001–2013, sustainable ecological development seems to be at the forefront of the regional agenda in Storstrøm. We find within it the goal of ‘sustainable societal development with respect for the living-conditions of humans and for the preservation of the lives of animals and plants’, while the perspective of Local

¹Regionplan 2001–2013, p 2.

²Regionplan 2001–2013, p 17, Erhvervspolitisk handlingsplan 2003, Beretning Regionplan 2005–2017, p 3.

³Erhvervspolitisk handlingsplan 2003.

⁴Regionplan 2001–2013, p 17.

Agenda 21 is also articulated at the beginning of the document. Necessary targets highlighted in the plan as part of a regional strategy for development include:

‘Protection of open land and the environment, the inter-relationships of cities, the use of resources in the development of business and growth in the region’⁵

SD is thus discussed as an overriding principle for regional planning, indicating the need for a sound use of natural resources. When discussing the concept of SD the more explicit emphasis is placed on the ecological aspects of SD, which is also recognised as being a somewhat narrow definition:

‘In a narrow sense, sustainable development is about taking care of the environment – through less pollution and use of resources. But sustainable development is something more than this. It is also about creating good living-conditions, involving citizens, developing co-operation and strengthening democracy’⁶

Some of the social aspects of SD are thus indicated as being important. Any mention of economic sustainability or sustainable growth is however absent. In another section of the plan, it is noted that societal assessments in regional planning processes need to be made from a ‘total’ perspective, although the meaning of this is not specified further. Moreover, relating to the strategy of Local Agenda 21, it is noted that greater co-ordination is needed between decisions on conditions relating to the environment, traffic, business, social issues, health, education, culture and the economy as a way of working with SD.⁷ There is thus a somewhat wider definition of SD discussed in the document. Environmental sustainability is further discussed in the context of growth and development, with SD discussed in the context of the SD of coastal zones and tourism. It is not actually referred to at the beginning of the planning document but instead manifests itself throughout the remainder of the document in a number of contexts. When specified, the environmental aspects and the ‘greening’ of different regional activities is emphasised rather than the three pillars of SD.

5.1.3 The Status and Integration of Sustainable Development

Since 1991, Storstrøm has worked with SD relating to regional development in a number of respects such as Grønt Råd, Project Grønt Amt, Local Agenda 21 and Sustainable Agriculture.⁸ Grønt Råd consists of a number of organisations and representatives from various authorities that give advice to the region in matters of SD, specified in the re-

port as environmental sustainability. The goal of Grønt Amt is to further SD in Storstrøm. This includes the provision of information and guidance, help to get things started and to co-ordinate initiatives such as Local Agenda 21. Sustainable Agriculture was a demonstration-project that concerned the environmental control of agriculture.⁹

Concerning the relationship between growth, development and environmental sustainability it is emphasised that:

‘Growth and employment in the region is in balance with natural and environmental interests and that the use of clean technologies are strengthened, green work-places, educational access and green activities in tourism are created’¹⁰

Green growth and business development is also mentioned as one of several efforts of SD in the regional plan and these efforts are exemplified by cleaner technology, environmental management systems, sustainable agriculture and green tourism.¹¹ The view that environmental issues do not simply work as restrictions but also as a potential for growth and development thus seems to have gained acceptance in strategic planning documents.

In the action plan for growth and development for 2003 there is, besides the overriding goal of ‘a good and healthy environment’, no concrete mention of ecologically sustainable development and its relationship to regional growth and development. Some concrete activities relating to environmental aspects, such as *Grønt Center*, are however referred to. The programme for regional development (*det regionale udviklingsprogram*, DRUP) was initiated in 1994 to strengthen growth and business development in the region through the financing of different development projects. Other sources for financing different growth and development activities in the region include the EU (e.g. Goals 2 and 3, Interreg IIIa, EU Leader+ and Article 33). The various EU-related programmes for growth and development have been focused on creating development through a focus on regional potentials.¹²

The concrete projects funded in DRUP are meant to support the overall growth and development politics of the region.¹³ There is no particular reference to environmental sustainability or announcements of the importance of sustainable regional growth and development in the introduction of the DRUP-report, or in the general guidelines for DRUP.¹⁴ Of the 50 projects funded by the DRUP in 2000 and 2001, it is clear that 13 had some connection to environmental issues and environmental sustainability. Of

⁵Regionplan 2001–2013, p 1.

⁶Regionplan 2001–2013, p 6f.

⁷Regionplan 2000–2003, p7.

⁸Beretning Regionplan 2005–2017, p.

⁹Beretning regionplan 2005–2017, p 14f.

¹⁰Regionplan 2001–2012, p 3 and 33.

¹¹Regionplan 2001–2013, p 6f. and 10.

¹²Regionplan 2001–2013, p 15ff.

¹³Årsrapport DRUP 2000–2001.

¹⁴Årsrapport DRUP 2000–2001, DRUP-programmet 2002: formål og vejledning.

these 13 projects, four were related to green product innovation, three to preservation and the marketing of nature, cultural heritage, environment and tourism, three to energy and the environment (wind-mills and biogas etc), two to communications and information, and one to green building technology.¹⁵ This indicates that regional actors, at least in some respects, have identified environmental sustainability as a means to strengthen regional growth and development.

In addition to the activities outlined above, there is also the Network for Green Industrial Development (*Netværk for Grøn Erhvervsudvikling*) in Storstrøm, a voluntary co-operation arrangement consisting of seven municipalities and 67 companies. The network has as its goal the need to further green industrial development in the region by offering aid, projects and courses on environmental issues and environmental control systems such as ISO 14001 and EMAS, environmental/green accounts, clean technology and introductory environmental expositions. The network also distributes an environmental award to support and acknowledge environmental efforts made in production activities. The criteria used are the environmental advantages of production such as the saving of resources; limiting the effect of pollution; innovation; usefulness for other activities; clean technologies and economic advantages.¹⁶

Additionally, Storstrøm together with Fyn and Vestsjælland, formulated a strategy for the development of nature, the environment and tourism, entitled, 'Det Syd-danske Øhav' including, among other things, the strengthening of traditional growth and business opportunities through specialisation on the environmental aspects of development as a means to attain a more SD. The aim here is to evaluate SD continuously in the light of the realisation of the project and by means of different development indi-

cators.¹⁷ LEADER+ has also, for the period of 2000–2006 decided upon efforts within the field of 'sustainable use of cultural and natural resources'.¹⁸ In 2002, a number of projects were funded through co-operation in respect of growth and business, not least relating to regional competence clusters, of which, two out of five had a green profile: co-operation between the environmental centres of Kalundborg, Korsør and Nakskov, as well as environmentally sound building and health.¹⁹

We thus find a number of practical examples where green perspectives have – at least in some respect – infiltrated the field of regional growth and development.

5.1.4 The Role of Partnerships

The role of partnerships in these regional growth and development contexts is not specified in the documents. It is said, for example, that the regional plan for 2001–2013 that the plan has been produced in dialogue with citizens and across sectoral borders. The plan is a result of a co-operation between municipalities, concerned state-authorities and interest-organisations. The nature and form of this co-operation is however not specified in the document. Neither in the 2000–2001 report for the regional development programmes, nor in the report for the coming 2005–2017 regional plan is there any mention of organisational aspects or partnerships. In the action plan for growth and development we find a number of examples of co-operation and strategic alliances though they are not discussed in terms of partnerships. Four growth centres have been developed in Storstrøm, as a local initiative, with the task of implementing the regional policies for growth and development. Initiatives for development and consultation are carried out, often in connection with a larger circle of activities and companies.²⁰

¹⁵Årsrapport DRUP 2000–2001.

¹⁶www.n-ge.dk

¹⁷Regionplan 2001–2013, Regionplan 2005–2017).

¹⁸Erhvervspolitisk handlingsplan 2003, p 14.

¹⁹Erhvervspolitisk handlingsplan 2003, p 12).

²⁰Erhvervspolitisk handlingsplan 2003, p 6).

5.2 The Example of Nordjylland

Nordjylland is the northernmost region of Denmark and as such plays the role of a peripheral region. The region has 27 municipalities, with a total population of 494 833 (end of 2000 figures). The region contains some of the most important nature areas and has a strong focus on tourism. Agricultural products, fishery and telecommunication are the three most important products for export.²¹

A regional *erhvervsudviklingsprogram* (REUP) was accepted in Nordjylland for the period 1999–2003 as an attempt to formulate a coherent base for a regional growth and development policy in the region. Previously efforts relating to growth and development had mainly taken place within the context of the implementation of the EU Structural Funds Programme.²² The work on the Regional plan of 2001 started in 1999 and resulted in a strategic plan for regional development, indicating how development ought to proceed in the areas of:

- Cities and rural areas
- Infrastructure, transport and the environment
- Tourism
- Landscape, natural and cultural values
- Water resources.²³

In November 2003, a Nordjysk report on growth and development (*Erhvervsredøgørelse*) was published with the aim of presenting a good picture of the strengths and weaknesses of regional development and current policy in the area.²⁴ Due to the recent change in the government's regional development policy, a jynsk-fynske strategy for growth and development was developed (co-operation for the period of 2003–2005 was produced in February 2003). Co-operation was based on a partnership between 173 municipalities, 8 regions and ØEM.²⁵

5.2.1 The Goals of Regional Development and Growth

In the regional plan of 2001 it is stated, regarding the potential of the region of Nordjylland, that:

'Nordjylland has the ability to secure a continuously good development with strong cities, new possibilities for growth and industrial development and a continuously good infrastructure. The residents of Nordjylland also have access to a generous nature, local environments and cities with many spare-time and educational offers'.²⁶

²¹Regionplan 2001, Nordjysk erhvervsredøgørelse 2003, p 20.

²²REUP Nordjylland 1999–2003.

²³Regionplan 2001.

²⁴Nordjysk Erhvervsredøgørelse 2003.

²⁵Strategi for det jynsk-fynske erhvervssamarbejde 2003–2005, from now on referred to as, Erhvervsstrategi 2003–2005.

²⁶Regionplan 2001, p 8.

The regional goals expressed in the same plan are to:

'Secure good conditions for living for the inhabitants and strengthen growth and development within the region, to secure a development in balance with nature and environment, so that future possibilities for development and living is not minimized, to secure and develop sub-regional positions of strength, to secure the admission to service, spare-time and cultural services, possibilities for education and work-places, to secure good infrastructure and to protect and improve the natural and cultural values of Nordjylland'.²⁷

This would indicate that ecological sustainable development is seen as a prioritised issue in a regional context in Nordjylland, and that concern for future generations is one of the reasons for this. It is also stated that particular priorities concern: growth and development such as tourism and infrastructure, research and educational activities, environment and SD, IT, and culture.²⁸ Again SD is presented as being somewhat at the centre of regional policies.

Regarding regional growth and development it is stated in the regional plan that it is the wish of the region:

'to support a dynamic development in the region based on innovative business, strengthened high-technology positions and a solid basis for transport'.²⁹

In addition, good living-conditions, the development of infrastructure (roads and collective traffic) and to develop living, growth-oriented and sustainable local areas is emphasised in this respect (ibid). The goals for regional growth and development as further expressed and elaborated in the regional development programme 1999–2003 are:

'to create good possibilities for growth, development and employment in Nordjylland, both for the gains of citizens and business. This will happen from working with initiatives that will improve the competitiveness of business and increase income levels for citizens'.³⁰

Particular effort areas discussed in the programme concern:

- Knowledge and innovation
- Tourism
- Rural areas
- Fishery
- Human resources

²⁷Regionplan 2001, p 8.

²⁸Regionplan 2001, p 9.

²⁹Regionplan 2001, p 15.

³⁰REUP Nordjylland 1999–2003, p 7.

- Transports
- Agriculture and
- Internationalisation.³¹

From the report on regional growth and development we learn that the policies of growth and development in Nordjylland has had a predominant focus on the economy and employment growth.³² Three overall areas of effort have been the development of business/products, the development of competence and infrastructure.³³ We also learn that the region acknowledged the following driving-forces for regional growth and development as being important:

- Research and development
- Patents
- Product-development
- Exports
- Entrepreneurs
- Co-operation at all levels
- A high level of education
- The employment of graduates from Aalborg University
- The development of competence of employees and, finally
- Better use of IT-technology.³⁴

When we look at the current strategy for Jysk-fynsk regional growth the co-operation keywords in the document include, the desire to follow previous statements, knowledge, competence and renewal. The goals for development discussed in the strategy, which are followed by a number of quantitative and qualitative indicators, concern the areas of:

- Education and competence
- Entrepreneurs
- Innovation and research, and
- IT.³⁵

In these discussions, the need and potential gains of working with SD within the context of regional growth and development are missing. It is however more pronounced in other respects of regional policy.

5.2.2 The Concept of Sustainable Development

In the regional development programme of 1999–2003, Nordjylland refers to the national goal for regional growth and development policies, expressed in the national report on growth and development (Erhvervsredegørelse) of 1998 to:

‘contribute to the development of welfare that both secures an economic and social balance and environmental sustainability’³⁶

³¹Ibid, p 3.

³²Nordjysk erhvervsredegørelse 2003, p 50.

³³Nordjysk erhvervsredegørelse 2003, p 52.

³⁴Nordjysk erhvervsredegørelse 2003, p 25.

³⁵Erhvervsstrategi 2003–2005, p 6ff.

³⁶REUP 1999–2003, p 5.

We do not get any guidance as to the definition of the concept, if it is a larger discussion of SD and the three pillars of ecological, economic and social sustainability that is referred to. Only the national goals for growth and development, in which issues of SD are relevant, are referred to in the programme. When outlining the effort areas in the programme there is also little mention of SD or environmental sustainability, except in relation to tourism, rural areas and agriculture (see below). From the regional plan of 2001 we however find the explicit goal of the plan to secure a:

‘balanced development, where initiatives and the thirst for activity can be combined with the protection of existing values within the region’³⁷

It is also clearly stated that the regional level:

‘wish to support a sustainable development in Nordjylland through the regional plan and that it secures good living-conditions for the population and a future-oriented growth and industrial development at the same time as natural and cultural values are protected and environmental problems are prevented’³⁸

In the regional plan, the Brundtland-report is referred to and includes the statement that:

‘the element of sustainability lies in the choices we make today can result in future environmental, social and economic unacceptable problems. This concerns both local and global consequences’³⁹

The overall regional goal is however to combine continued development with environmental and other considerations. In the plan we also find references to the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) and the focus on a ‘balanced, sustainable, physically functional development’ with a focus on the strengthening of partnerships between cities and sub-regions, further integrated solutions for transport and communication, and the development and protection of cultural and natural values.⁴⁰ No conflict is seen in combining these different goals of development and environmental considerations, for example between protecting natural and cultural values and working with issues of transport and communications in the plan. In the development programme we do however find mention of the transport-sector subscribe to an increased share of the total environmental burdens, but this is not discussed in terms of conflicts either but instead as something leading to a focus on the ability to reduce the environmental burdens of the transport sector as a sort of future challenge.⁴¹

³⁷Regionplan 2001, foreword.

³⁸Regionplan 2001, p 14.

³⁹Regionplan 2001, p 14.

⁴⁰Regionplan 2001, p 10.

⁴¹REUP 1999–2003, p 34.

Also in the discussion of the *jynsk-fynske erhvervssamarbejde* it is clearly stated that the form of co-operation has a 'long-term and sustainable effect'.⁴² We do not however find any specification of what this sustainability consists of, or any other mention of SD in the Brundtland-sense that we found in the regional plan. SD is also used in the context of the need for:

'a long-term strategy and accompanying actions to secure that Jylland-Fyn will be a dynamic centre for growth in the global economy in the future'⁴³

Here it is mostly future dynamic growth that seems to be at the forefront in defining the concept of SD.

5.2.3 The Status and Integration of Sustainable Development

From the text above we learn that SD and ecological sustainability are referred to in some general statements and in some documents relating to the overall goals of regional policy. According to regional Agenda 21, a green policy was accepted in 1995 with the goal of:

'Ensuring that the region actively contributes to furthering sustainable development and reduces the use of resources limiting pollution. Consideration of the environment is to be an integral part of all regional activities'⁴⁴

We do not however learn much about how, and in what respect, this integration is actually taking place, from the regional documents studied. In the regional development programme we find some mention of environmental sustainability in discussing tourism, rural areas and agriculture. Concerning tourism, for example, it is stated that tourism needs to increase in a way that entails a respect for local populations and for the natural and cultural heritage. Moreover, the fundamentals for tourism – clean beaches, clean bathing water, unspoilt nature and well-preserved country environments – must be maintained. Here the demands on sustainable and environmentally sound tourist products are also emphasised as being important, while the structure needed to maintain this has to be sustainable and effective.⁴⁵ We thus learn of a few examples where SD is presented as a competitive advantage and as a promoter of regional growth and development. In the regional development programme this however does not concern the field of innovation where environmental competitiveness, in terms of working with greening of technologies etc. is not emphasised at all. The same can be said for the content of the report on growth and development from 2003 (*erhvervsredegørelse*), where there is no mention of SD or 'green products' as a part of, or contributing to, regional

development. Here we get the impression that SD, in the sense that it is actually mentioned in relation to the context of regional growth and development, is undertaken in the main at the beginning of the documents, as general policy-statements, while no real integration takes place in the outlining of different strategies and priorities.

It is however stated in the regional plan that the regional level continuously works with projects for inspiration and development relating to cleaner technologies and environmental control.⁴⁶ In relation to the *jynsk-fynske erhvervssamarbejde* and the list of ongoing projects we find a partnership for environment and industrial growth relating to the Centre for competitiveness and sustainability, as well as a Centre for biotechnological bio-refinement, one for bio-energy, resources and waste and a Competence centre for the marketing of environmental technology for export.⁴⁷ Without any national directives on the need for sustainable growth and development-initiatives or on the role that environmental or green perspectives can play for business, growth and development, only four of the 45 projects seem to have such a focus. The gains in terms of regional development and growth in respect of working with environmental issues are thus to some extent acknowledged in practice, even if particular invitations or requests relating to this are absent.

5.2.4 The Role of Partnerships

The current jynsk-fynsk regional growth co-operation is based on a partnership between 173 municipalities, 8 regions and the ØEM. It is stated in the document that such initiatives would not been possible without broad co-operation across administrative borders or between the private and public sectors.⁴⁸ There is however no mention of whom the actual parties were, and whether environmental representatives were admitted. We also learn nothing about the roles of the partnership and what tasks and formal requirements these have worked under, neither generally nor in relation to SD.

The role of networks in creating growth and development has also, in other contexts, been emphasised strongly, i.e. private, public-private and purely public networks. Co-operation across borders, combined with the mobilisation of regional resources in the form of new initiatives and money is, in the report of regional growth and development, said to be used to a higher degree as a tool for development. It is also stated that such networks have proven able to mobilise resources such as EU-support, co-operation between business rather than competitiveness and attempts to co-ordinate public activities concerning, for example, policies for regional development and growth.⁴⁹ It

⁴²Ervervsstrategi 2003–2005, p 10.

⁴³Erhvervsstrategi 2003–2005, p 6.

⁴⁴Regionplan 2001, p 14.

⁴⁵REUP 1999–2003, p 31ff.

⁴⁶Ibid, p 7.

⁴⁷Ervervsstrategi 2003–2005, p 32f.

⁴⁸Erhvervsstrategi 2003–2005, p 6.

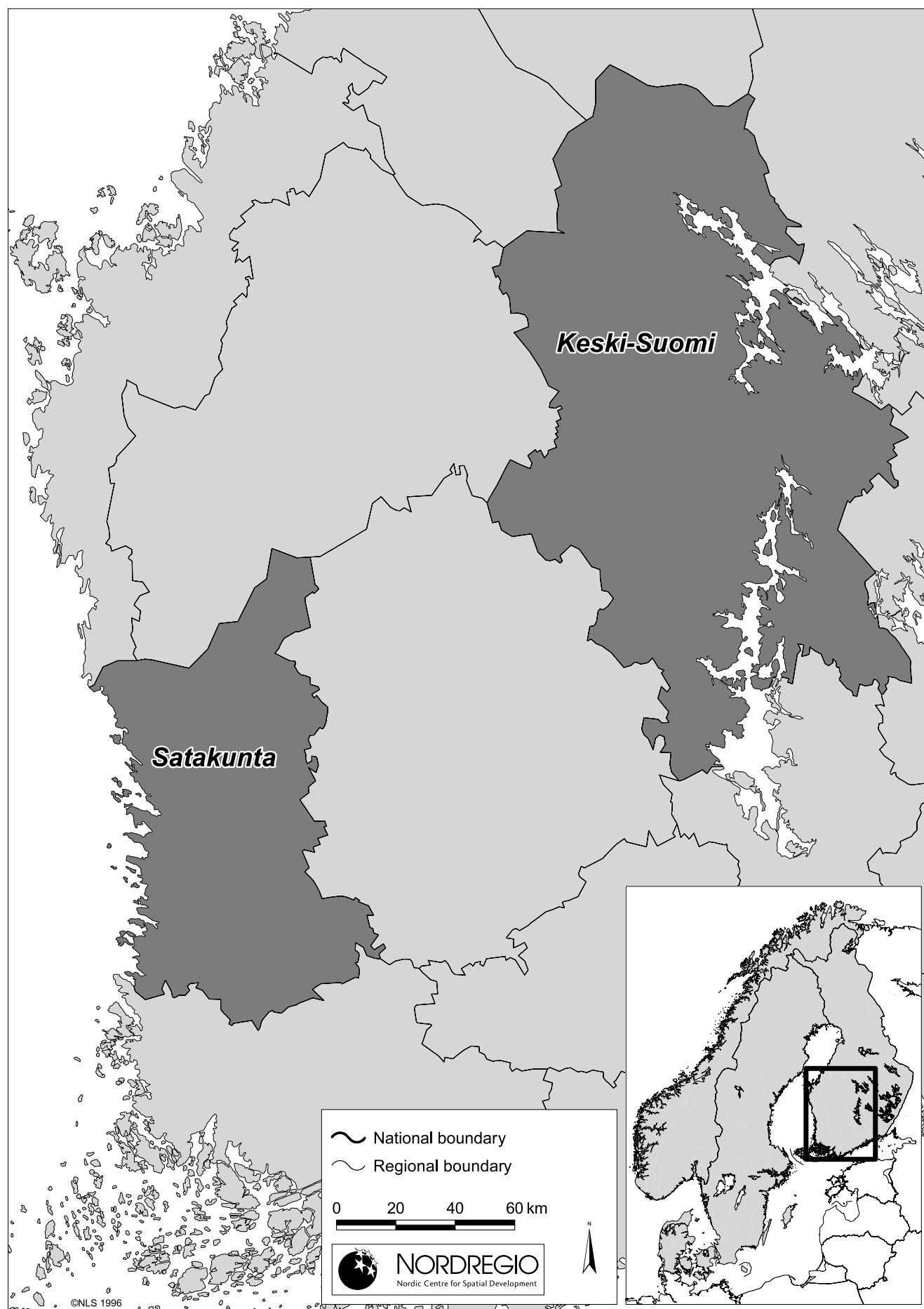
⁴⁹Nordjysk erhvervsredegørelse 2003, p 42f.

is also stated in the report that relevant political actors, representatives from the business sector and the state/EU have been involved in the policies for growth and development in the role of approving programmes, granting sup-

port, creating ideas that new programmes could be built upon etc.⁵⁰ Again however we were unable to discern much about the nature of the actual participants and what their guidelines have been.

⁵⁰Ibid, p 50.

Figure 3. Finnish regions included in the study: Keski-Suomi and Satakunta.



6 The Regional Level in Finland

As indicated in the national descriptions above, the Finnish regions draft Regional Development Programmes/Regional Strategic Programmes for a four-year period, which are developed in line with the more long-term Regional Plans. The two case studies selected for analysis in the documentary analysis section reported here are relatively similar in their outlook in terms of demography, as they are both medium-sized regions with an ageing population. As was indicated previously, the selection criteria for the case studies was largely based on the view of national interviews and previous studies which seemed to suggest these regions as progressive in terms of seeking to integrate SD concerns with regional economic growth. Some basic figures and context indicators on the regions are outlined below.

The region of Satakunta is located on the south-west coast of Finland. It consists of 27 municipalities, with a total population of 237 661 (end of 2000 figures). The capital of Satakunta (Pori) has a population of 75 895 (2002). The region of Keski-Suomi is located (as the name indicates) in central Finland and has 28 municipalities with a total population of 263 886 (end of 2000), with the capital Jyväskylä, having a population of 81 110 in 2002. While Satakunta has been a region suffering from out-migration

in recent years, Keski-Suomi has been the opposite. Both have had higher than the national average unemployment (in 1998: Satakunta 19.08% in 1998 and Keski-Suomi 20.19%). In terms of the industrial structure of the capital region and the surrounding area, Jyväskylä has a strong predominance in the paper industry, as well as a growing ICT cluster, whilst in the case of Pori the clusters are divided more evenly, with welfare, health care and the social sector being important, though also industrial sectors such as the metal industry, shipbuilding and the chemical industry also playing important roles. In Jyväskylä municipality the share of the university educated share of the total population (over 15-years old) is higher than the national average (30%), while the corresponding figure for Pori is considerably lower (21%). Both regions have large nature areas, though at the same time also intensive farming (22.31 farms per 1000 inhabitants in Keski-Suomi region and 31.09 in Satakunta). Thus the challenges of balancing industrial development, farming and nature protection are acutely felt in these regions, while the development of the population structure poses challenges for the welfare provision and social dimensions of regional development.

6.1 The Example of Keski-Suomi

The key document to be analysed here is the regional development programme ('maakunta-ohjelma') for Keski-Suomi (Central Finland) region, which was drafted in 2003 and is valid for the current electoral period (until 2006). The document is based on the strategic goals and vision as outlined in the regional development plan, drafted in 2003 as a more long-term and visionary planning statement.¹

The legal background to the document is the regulative framework guiding spatial planning (Land Use and Building Act, which came into force on 1 January 2000) and regional development (the Regional Development Act, came into force on 1 January 2003). As the document sets the concrete implementation plans for regional development, it also seeks to address both regional development (as a growth-oriented policy goal) and SD (as an integrative

whole consisting of economic, ecological and social dimensions). The relationship of these dimensions is largely left to the regional authorities themselves to work out, as the planning is in essence regionally based, though naturally also expected to balance the regulative requirement and more endogenous visions and strategies. Thus the regional development – SD axis only becomes pronounced through the analysis of the programme content.

6.1.1 The Concept of Sustainable Development

Within the current Regional Development Programme for the Keski-Suomi region, sustainable development (SD) is referred to on a number of occasions and in a variety of contexts, including:

- Analysis section: SD referred to as one of the elements of the normative base of the programme.
- Strategy section: implementing SD as a key principle for the development of whole region and basing the

¹Until 2030; see Keski-Suomen liitto 2002, *Keski-Suomen maakuntasuunnitelma*; A 15/2002.

regional development and spatial planning on the principles of economic efficiency, SD, saving on natural resources and energy, parliamentarianism and citizens' participation, quality of environment, protection of natural and cultural heritage, as well as awareness of globalism.

- Goals: The promotion of ecologically, socially, culturally and economically sustainable and attractive regions and spatial structure.
- Instruments: Financing is to be allocated and targeted in a way that supports sustainable competitiveness (in relation to rural development the sustainable utilization of natural resources is also referred to). On the level of the priorities the 'environment' is most relevant here and prioritized measures include the improvement of water quality, *Natura 2000*-network, nature projects within rural development, and the promotion of environmental competences.²
- Indicators: Education, Labour market situation, Migration and population and GRP and production are mentioned as indicators, thus implying the exclusion of specific SD indicators. Reference is however made to the possibility of utilizing the indicators developed for the monitoring of the regional environmental programme co-ordinated by the regional environment centre.

Though the concept of SD as used in the document is not explicitly defined, it is implicitly addressed as an economic, social, or environmental concept in different contexts. Examples of these approaches include:

- Economic: Regional development in the rural areas is to be based on the sustainable utilization and endogenous development of the regions.
- Ecological: Horizontal perspective into SD emerges for instance in relation to ecological sustainability, when it is argued that 'responsibility for the environment and sustainability is to be included as a part of everyday life'.³
- Social: Sustainable structure for the provision of welfare services, basic health-care and specialized care.

The impact assessment of the programme (in terms of the environment and equal opportunities aspects of the programme, though not separately for SD) included as the final chapter of the programme sheds further light on the ways in which environmental concerns and SD are considered in the programme. There are 8 sub-sections in the impact assessment and these are quite relevant for the different dimensions of SD. Potential impacts of the programme are considered in the dimensions outlined below. Although SD is not explicitly addressed within these themes (with

the exception of the natural environment and public transport), substantively they are highly relevant here (as indicated in the examples in parenthesis below). Impacts relevant for SD include the impacts on:

- Regional and spatial structure (the expected concentration tendencies within the population poses challenges for both rural and urban areas and both of these should be addressed more specifically).
- Energy maintenance and traffic (development within the utilization of bio-energy are seen as positive; public transport which is seen as 'highly relevant for sustainable development' is not addressed separately).
- Built environment and landscape(s) (Living environment and landscape values should also be seen as welfare-creative values).
- Regional balance (provision of basic services will be highly problematic, while the impact of converting holiday homes into permanent homes will have to take into account the comments from the rural development working group addressing the basis on which these conversions are made).
- Living conditions and the social environment (regions are to be developed as 'quality of life' regions, though this concept is not defined; neither is the central concept of welfare defined).
- Living environment, ecology, diversity and natural resources (these themes promote SD).
- Culture and cultural heritage (need for a separate programme for the cultural environment is mentioned here, as the cultural environment is seen solely in terms of commercialized competitive advantage).
- Equality of opportunity.

Despite the lack of explicit definition, the description and utilization of the concept of SD is consistent throughout the programme. Potential inherent conflict between the starting points of the programme and the set goals is identified in the section on the 'evaluation of the potential impacts on the environment and equal opportunities' (the prevailing economic, labour market and population trends and the set goals). It is also argued that whilst the ecological impact of the planned large-scale infrastructure projects is taken into account, the (other) SD aspects of public transport are largely overlooked.

6.1.2 The Status and Integration of Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is an overarching strategic goal, and the connected goals set in the regional plan are referred to, including the vision of Central Finland as a 'quality of life region', whose development is based on knowledge, expertise and enterprise. During the programming period in question (2003–2006) this vision is implemented by focusing on business-led and expertise-strengthening activities that are supported by a

²Ibid, 26.

³Ibid, 34.

balanced spatial structure and good accessibility of services.⁴

The ecological aspects of SD are relevant as the environment is referred to on a number of occasions and in a variety of contexts, as exemplified above, but also included as a priority of its own ('management, protection and development of the environment', p. 33–34), which addressed both the natural and the cultural environment. The environment is referred to as a resource in the promotion of regional competitiveness, as well as in relation to thematic sections on rural development, energy and the business sector (the latter two are seen as an interdependent whole, with important investments in energy expertise and the utilization of this expertise for business development and research and development).

Even though our data does not allow us to draw conclusions on the actual motivation for the incorporation of SD into the various parts of the programme, – either on whether the inclusion takes place as a result of following national guidelines or as a result of more endogenous processes. There are however connections to other regional endogenous processes relevant for SD, which would seem to suggest that there is a certain awareness and indeed willingness within the region to address SD issues as an inherent part of regional development.⁵ The horizontal inclusion of SD is most pronounced in the discussion on 'promoting awareness of environmental responsibility in everyday life'⁶, where it is argued that SD needs to be incorporated into the everyday practice of different sectors on different levels (from local, e.g. Local Agenda 21 to national via the drive for ecological efficiency that should be promoted by the government level). It is also argued in this context that better solutions for the environment, the social sector and culture are sought through spatial planning and the related EIA processes.⁷ Service accessibility is also promoted (e.g. through networking between private and public services and the 'third' sector, though the main provision of services is still retained in the public sector), which is related to social sustainability.

The social and economic dimensions of SD appear as implicitly intertwined, as the welfare sector is seen as an important regional area of expertise and special emphasis is given for instance to the business application of welfare innovations.⁸

6.1.3 The Goals of Regional Development and Growth

As argued in the national descriptions in chapter 3, the objective of regional policy in the Finnish context is to create the preconditions for economic growth and industrial and business development, as well as improving employment prospect, which could then ensure regional competitiveness and welfare on the basis of SD. This enabling role for regional policy is also reflected in the way in which regional growth is addressed in the Regional Development Programmes. Moreover, in the case of Keski-Suomi the regional growth aspects are clearly pronounced, though what exactly is meant by regional growth (or sustainable growth for that matter) is not explicitly elaborated upon. Examples of the regional growth aspects in the programme include:

- Goals: 'Sustainable growth' one of the strategic priorities (of the regional plan) referred to. Growth is in most cases discussed in terms of economic growth within the business development and R&D sector.
- Strategy: In the discussion on development after 2006 (i.e. after the end of the current EU programming period) it is argued that 'Regional economic development policy is expected to promote the competitiveness of the region' and '...will also in the future have an important role to play in promoting economic growth and efficiency'.⁹
- Instruments: The regional programme and strategies, as well as the EU programmes and sub-regional and municipal strategies in which in most cases regional growth is a central theme. Growth-oriented goals are in particular linked to the key strategic branches, where growth potential is to be utilized and promoted (e.g. IT, automation and electronics, and also food production, the TV and film industry, as well as cultural and nature tourism referred to under the business development priority).
- Indicators: Education, the Labour market situation, migration and population, and GRP and production were mentioned as indicators.

Growth is also related to the issue of concentration and centralization, which is seen to exhibit both negative and positive aspects (necessarily understood in the context of Jyväskylä having been one of the 5 growth centres of Finland from the late 1990s). Of the negative aspects the imbalance in migration patterns and population trends are also referred to, as well as are the sharp regional income differences and the fact that while Jyväskylä needs to expand investment in service provision, the surrounding areas have rather different problems.

The main indicators outlined in the programme document are closely connected to growth aspects and do not

⁴Ibid, p. 15.

⁵The motivational aspects will be addressed more specifically in the next stage of the project, when the regional interviews will be undertaken.

⁶Ibid, 34.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid, 35.

⁹Ibid, p. 15.

Table 2. Programme Indicators – Keski-Soumi

	Year 1995	Current status	Target for 2006
Total population	258 078	265 078	266 500
Number of businesses	9 868	11 591	12 000
Jobs	88 470	102 431	106 800
Unemployment level (%)	19.2	11.3	10.0
Employment (%)	57.0	62.2	65.0

address SD¹⁰. Quantitative goals are outlined in the table above¹¹:

While there is no explicit discussion of the connection between SD and regional growth, implicitly this connection is included in the discussion of ‘sustainable competitiveness’ referred to in connection to the utilisation of R&D and industrial renewal.¹² The focus shifting from more traditional smokestack industries to IT and other lighter, knowledge-intensive, industries can be seen as a reflection of the inclusion of SD here.

6.1.4 The Role of Partnerships

The way in which partnership as an organising principle is included in the programme is mostly discussed as a formal requirement for regional development programming. In the beginning of the document the wider perspective for programme participation and partnership is addressed and regional development is defined as a field of broad co-operation. In the preface to the document is said that:

‘The starting point for regional development is an expression of a shared will, co-operation and result-oriented interaction between the different sub-regions and actors within the region. The achievement of the goals can only be ensured by co-operation where regional businesses, public service sector actors, educational establishments, financing organizations, media, representatives of the third sector and all citizens interested in regional development are engaged. Everyone can be a participant in regional development’¹³

The partnership principle is referred to explicitly as a EU requirement and therefore one of the context requirements for regional development. As the different programming documents and processes and their co-ordination and integration is an underlying theme of regional development as a whole, the partnership between the regional state authorities and the regional council is addressed as an umbrella concept, whereby activities are based on ‘negotia-

tions based on the existing well-functioning forms of co-operation’.¹⁴ Within the sector and priority specific sections partnership is referred to in connection to the development of the regional innovation system, i.e. developing the region as a ‘learning region’, based on a partnership that creates networking between the business community, the public sector authorities and educational institutions as well as individuals as well as ‘maintaining the willingness to learn’.¹⁵

In the section describing the processes and working practices that the programme process entails, partnerships are specified in connection to the thematic working groups involved in programme preparation.¹⁶ These groups included:

- Business development
- Strengthening of expertise (a more concise group with 15 experts mainly representing the state authorities, reporting to the wider forum (see below) with 35 members representing a wider spectrum of relevant actors from educational establishment and research to labour market organizations)
- Forum for regional expertise
- Agriculture and rural areas of the economy (sub-groups agriculture, rural renewal and forestry and bio-energy)
- Promotion of employment and combating exclusion
- Welfare services
- Environmental and equal opportunities (mainly representing the regional council and regional environment centre, also 2 representatives from the university and 2 from regional Forestry Centre, 1 from Museum of Central Finland).

As far as the motivation and working practices connected to the partnership methodology are concerned, the thematic working groups developed as part of the programming work are of relevance and can be seen as a potential resource here, though the fact that the two horizontal themes are under one and the same grouping could also

¹⁰As will be argued below, the regional plan addresses sustainability in a more explicit fashion, also including sustainability indicators.

¹¹Ibid, p. 14, based on Statistics Finland and Ministry of Labour data.

¹²Ibid, p. 17.

¹³Ibid, p 4.

¹⁴Ibid, p 41.

¹⁵Ibid, p. 17.

¹⁶Ibid, p. 43–44.

imply that these are covered more as a 'regulative exercise' than anything else. It is also argued (and correctly so, if the regulative context is considered), that each project will in the final instance (through the concrete implementation plan) be responsible for the inclusion of horizontal themes.

As there is a close relationship between the regional programme and the regional plan, some comments and observations regarding the inclusion of SD themes in the regional plan are made and the integration between the two documents when it comes to SD addressed. The basic starting points are the same for the two documents and the description of the context and its challenges are taken from the earlier drafted regional plan (from 2002) into the regional programme (2003). The 'quality of life' which is so central to the vision and goal of the programme is (different from the regional programme) defined in the regional plan, as a 'positive feeling of the opportunities offered by the living environment. It also refers to the social and physical infrastructure that offers the citizens a sense of security, as well as accessibility to private and public services and living and natural environment'. Thus while SD is not addressed here, its environmental aspects are included implicitly. SD is on the other hand explicitly included if the description of the international and national mega trends ('the values of sustainability become embedded in all areas of life'¹⁷) In terms of goal setting it is also argued that 'social cohesion, sustainable solutions and regional competitiveness' are the main principles of the welfare strategy.¹⁸ In the section on the environment it is further argued that 'ensuring human welfare requires that all activities are based on the principle of SD'.¹⁹ In the section on monitoring the plan the indicators used include:

- Population
- Migration
- Available income
- Gross Regional Product (GRP, regionally and for the sub-regions)
- The share of R&D of GRP
- Value added (regionally and for the sub-regions)
- Unemployment
- Jobs in branches
- Education level
- Change in the number of businesses
- Building
- Share of renewable energy sources out of the total energy used
- Emission levels
- Water quality.²⁰

Thus it can be argued that the economic and ecological aspects seem to be most central in the monitoring and there are few indicators for the assessment of the social dimensions of SD (e.g. equality of opportunity seems to have been entirely over-looked). In terms of the actual monitoring, a comparative methodology is applied, setting the developed of Central Finland against some benchmarked regions, i.e. Northern Savo (Pohjois-Savo, Finland), Northern Ostrobothnia (Pohjois-Karjala, Finland), Västerbotten (Sweden) and South Trondelag (Sør-Trøndelag, Norway). This seems to be a useful approach and also enables us to see the development of the region in a broader perspective, as well as using the comparative regions as partners in bench-learning exercises (though the author does not know whether this has indeed been the case).

6.2 The Example of Satakunta

The key document to be analysed here is the regional development programme ('maakunta-ohjelma') of Satakunta region, which was drafted in 2003, and is valid for the current electoral period (until 2006). The document is based on the strategic goals and vision as outlined in the regional development plan, drafted in 2003, which is a longer-term and visionary planning statement (for the period up to 2030; see Satakuntaliitto 2003, *Karhun Kämmen Lyö: Satakunta, Osaava ja energinen alue vesien sylissä.*)

As with the Keski-Suomi case presented above, the legal background to the document is the regulative frame-

work guiding spatial planning (Land Use and Building Act, which came into force on 1 January 2000) and regional development (Regional Development Act, which came into force 1 January 2003). As the document sets out the concrete implementation plans for regional development, it also seeks to address both regional development (as a growth-oriented policy goal) and SD (as an integrative whole consisting of economic, ecological and social dimensions). The relationship between these dimensions is largely left to the regional authorities themselves to work out, as planning is in essence regionally based, though they are of course expected to balance the regulative requirements with their own visions and strategies. Thus the regional development – SD axis only be-

¹⁷Ibid, 9.

¹⁸Ibid, 20.

¹⁹Ibid, 25.

²⁰Ibid, 34.

comes pronounced through the analysis of the programme content.

6.2.1 The Concept of Sustainable Development

SD is referred to as one of the main pillars of development planning, i.e. the region of Satakunta is to be developed based on an *ecologically, socially, economically and culturally sustainable and attractive regional structure*.²¹ SD is addressed on the strategic level (as one of the 10 strategic goals outlined in the regional plan), as well as on the level of the measures themselves (e.g. energy, environment). It is also addressed in the monitoring phase as one of the main focus areas for impact assessment, thus reflecting a horizontal approach to regional development.

One needs to bear in mind here that the different policy programmes and instruments are expected to be co-ordinated and integrated both in terms of their substance and in terms of financing. Thus SD is also addressed on the sub-programme level, though less explicitly than in the strategic and monitoring sections. In relation to other programmes, the social aspects of SD have at times also become more pronounced, as for instance with the goal of socially sustainable communities, which are referred to for example in the Regional Centre Programme for Rauma region.

An integrated approach to SD thus seems to have been implemented, which is well in line with the nature of the region and some of the main developments relevant for the different aspects of SD. As Satakunta can be seen as a 'typical' Finnish region (Finland in miniature²²), it also exhibits both the typical strengths and weaknesses apparent in Finland more generally. While traditional smokestack industries have been (and are) essential to the economic growth of the region, the region also has a higher than average share of farming and agricultural industries. The vast water areas of Satakunta are a resource for both the economy and recreation, and there are a number of *Natura* protected areas in the region, which accentuates the need to address the environmental aspects of SD. The decision by the Finnish parliament in 2002 to build another unit in the Olkiluoto nuclear power station, located in Eurajoki is in the years to come going to be of regional and national relevance both economically and ecologically.

The environmental aspects of regional development are included in the programme both as strategic resources and as aspects of importance for future regional competitiveness. It is argued moreover that the environment is to be used as an instrument of regional competitiveness and therefore it is taken for granted that EIA be included in all regional planning. The development and utilization of environmental systems by the business sector further encourages the development of sustainable solutions in the form

of ecological efficiency methodologies and systems. Here the interdependence between the regional and global levels is also referred to, as the Johannesburg strategy is seen as a useful instrument in solidifying SD on different levels.²³

The social dimensions of SD are addressed mostly on the level of priorities and measures, with one of the priorities being 'increased welfare and combating exclusion'. Reference is also made to a 'regional welfare strategy', which was drafted simultaneously with the regional programme in 2002. This priority outlines the goal of 'working together in a way that allows everyone to participate according to their own needs and potentials in order to develop and maintain a good living environment' and 'decisions made on the local, regional and sub-regional levels support the preconditions for achieving the 'good life' for all citizens'.²⁴ This priority outlines measures for the maintenance and development of welfare services, as well as addressing the needs of special groups (e.g. children and the young, the elderly, people with handicaps and the long-term unemployed).

Again, as with the example of Keski-Suomi, the programme document does not include an explicit definition of SD. SD is predominately described in relation to ecological aspects and to the SD of natural and living environment. In the section dealing with the evaluation of programme impacts it is argued that the assessment of impacts is predominately a concern for the project level. In the drafting stages the different dimensions of SD have however been addressed, as the projects proposed for implementation were asked to assess the potential economic, ecological and environmental impacts of the planned intervention / activity. Thus already in the planning stages a clear ambition emerged to address SD in all its dimensions. (Though it is also argued that not all projects included this assessment or assessed all these aspects.) It is perhaps worth noting here that among the 'comparative advantages' of the region identified, there is *no reference* to SD or related issues.

The comparative advantages identified in the document (section on 'analysis of regional competitiveness') are outlined in table 3.²⁵

6.2.2 The Status and Integration of Sustainable Development

SD is included in the programme document as an integrated approach (as outlined above), both in the analysis and strategy section and in respect of concrete measures and projects. As the SD themes are in most cases referred to in terms of resources and regional strengths, regulative reasons do not seem to be the predominant ones behind

²¹Ibid, 16.

²²As is said in the programme, p. 14 and 21.

²³Ibid, 34.

²⁴Ibid, 27.

²⁵Ibid, p.14.

Table 3. Comparative advantages – Satakunta

Harbours

- Of relevance for export industries (Pori and Rauma)
- Tahkoluoto
- Co-operation between harbours on the west coast

Marine and offshore-expertise

- Top expertise in the areas of ship-building and oil rigs

Energy

- 22% of the electricity produced in the region
- Multifaceted energy supply
- Expertise in nuclear power

Expertise in export industries

- Paper industry and related fields
- Metal industry
- Chemical industry

Developing innovation system

- New innovation- and expertise clusters
- Competitiveness of the Centres of Expertise
- Research units of excellence in the export businesses
- Networking with national and international research units

Expertise in food production

- R&D activities in this field (Satafood, Pyhäjärvi-institute, network Centre of Expertise in food production)
- Greenhouse expertise
- Multifaceted expertise in specialized farming and food production

Living and housing costs

- Affordable price level of housing, as well as in public and private services
-

the inclusion of themes relevant to SD, rather SD is included as it is seen as a genuine resource for development. The regulative requirements are however referred to in the impact assessment and monitoring sections.

6.2.3 The Goals of Regional Development and Growth

When looking at the aspects addressing regional growth, it soon becomes obvious that a growth-orientation is included both as a horizontal approach and that it is separately addressed. There is a separate section on an 'Analysis of regional competitiveness' where economic growth is particularly pronounced (and where the SD issues seem to rate only cursory mention when compared to the rest of the document).

On the level of the projects identified for funding (in the project survey undertaken for the implementation plan), the share of projects identifiable in the different dimensions of SD is approximately:

- Economic: 60%
- Ecological: 30%
- Social: 10%.

Here it is worth noting that there are a number of projects that fit into more than one category, as for example, projects relating to the road and traffic infrastructure (which are over 50% of the projects), which are listed often both as having economic and ecological, and at times, even social, implications.

Perhaps indicative of the dominance of regional growth as a policy goal, there is often a lack of an explicit definition for this concept: it is usually taken as a given, and is not problematized or defined in any great detail. It can however be seen that regional growth is implicitly equated with economic growth, as for instance in the analysis of regional competitiveness, where it is argued that 'the improvement of regional competitiveness is naturally dependent on the continuation of growth in the regional economy' (ibid, 13).

In addition, the goals set for the whole programme (for 2003–2006) can largely be equated with regional economic growth, as most of these relate to the development of the regional economy. These goals are outlined in the table 4 on next page.

The integration of SD and regional growth, together with the acknowledgement of the need to foster win-win

Table 4. Programme Goals – Satakunta

-
- The growth of the regional economy at least in line with the national average
 - Increase in business turnover and profitability higher than the market growth
 - The growth in income levels at least in line with the national average
 - Slowing down of the out-migration across the whole region, and stopping out-migration in Pori and Rauma regions
 - Increasing the number of university starting places by launching new higher education programmes and enlarging the current programmes
 - Developing the supply of higher education provided by the polytechnics and developing training programmes
 - Ensuring labour supply by establishing new growth-oriented businesses and ensuring the profitability and competitiveness of the current business base
 - Ensuring the continuing labour supply of an educated and competent workforce to meet the needs of the business communities
 - Increasing the employment level to 75%
 - Increasing the share of TEKES technology funding in the region and increasing the R&D volume in businesses, educational institutions and Centres of Expertise
 - Increasing the number of businesses by 200 annually and by 400 annually by business acquisitions (or by transferring the business to the next generation)
 - Maintaining and improving the environment in order to increase regional attractiveness
-

situations is apparent. As identified previously, the environment is seen as a factor in regional attractiveness on the level of programme objectives, and relating to the Regional plan the three aspects of SD are referred to as goals for regional development. This is also further elaborated in the report drafted by Savola,²⁶ where it is argued that, in connection to the processes related to evaluation and impact assessment, SD concerns need to be addressed both as processual prerequisites of regional development and in particular as elements in developing regional attractiveness and competitiveness, as for instance argued in Savola²⁷, where it is noted that evaluation needs to identify the environmental strengths that have to be taken into account in developing regional strategies. As an example it is argued that the relevance of environmental protection is growing as an element of the regional image, attractiveness and competitiveness, particularly as markets are becoming 'greener' and businesses increasingly now realize the value of environmentally friendly solutions and eco-efficiency.

In relation to monitoring, the indicators used are those proposed in the 'Ministry of the Interior guidelines', i.e. relating to educational levels, the labour market situation, migration and population, and regional GDP and production. It is however noted here that the indicators developed by the Regional Environment Centre of South-Western Finland for the monitoring of the regional environmental programme can be also used in the monitoring of the regional development programme.

6.2.4 The Role of Partnerships

Partnerships are referred to in the section dealing with programme process and participation, where the deliberations that were part of the programme preparation are described in brief. For instance it is said that the project information is based on a survey among the 'municipalities, state authorities, association and organisation, as well as other actors'.²⁸ It is also mentioned that the official opinions of the 'municipalities, state regional authorities, social partners, educational institutions and other stakeholders' were asked for.²⁹ More detailed partnership descriptions are not further elaborated in the programme document, though reference is made to the thematic working groups involved in the preparation of the regional plan. The regional plan on the other hand contains a separate 'plan for participation and evaluation'.³⁰ Here the partnerships are outlined in more detail, including in addition to the RMC the municipalities and their co-operative organs, state authorities (in particular regional state authorities), the neighbouring regional councils, the business community, trade unions and social partners, institutions of higher education and training, voluntary organisations and citizens (ibid, 5). The participants represented in the RMC are identified as '8 members representing the regional council and its member municipalities, as well as the most central financing organisations (including the TE-centre, the Environment Centre, the State Provincial Offices, the Regional art Council and the Regional Road administration). The so-

²⁶2002.

²⁷Savola 2002, 5.

²⁸Ibid, 34.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Satakunnan Maakuntasuunnitelman 2000+ Osallistumis- ja arviointisuunnitelma 2001.

cial partners involved are said to include the main trade unions (AKAVA, SAK, STTK, MTK), as well as the Chamber of Commerce and the representatives of the employers' organizations. The thematic working groups involved in the preparation of the regional plan were also used as an additional resource in the programme preparation. These groups included thematic working groups in the following areas:

- Education and research
- Business development
- Welfare
- Culture and tourism
- Environment and spatial structure
- Regional development resources
- Rural development and
- EIA working group.

In relation to SD specifically, there are very few explicit references in the document to regional partnerships or partnership methodology. The exception here being the theme of impact assessment, where partnership is seen as a potential innovation within rural policy, basically boiling down to the potential *indirect* effects of economic activities on social sustainability. It is thus argued that:

'Rural development and the protection of diversity is integrated into the programme in a new type of partnership thinking, that can, in addition to the expected positive environmental and economic effects, also have important social effects. The strengthening of systems of innovation and expertise are of central relevance for the promotion of sustainability in Satakunta. When realized, the activities targeting business development and entrepreneurship have positive economic effects. The positive economic trends in turn contribute to having sufficient resources available for

improving the environment, providing welfare services, and maintaining basic infrastructure etc.'³¹

Furthermore, responsibility for environmental impact assessment clarifies some aspects of the partnership methodology, as it is stated in the section dealing with the impact assessment that the responsibility for EIA lies with the implementing organization of each project and direct reference is made to the EIA legislation (paragraphs 4 and 25).³²

There are aspects of partnership methodology, as well as using partnership methodology as a means of integrating SD and regional growth, which are perhaps less visible from the programme document, and more likely to be addressed in more detail in the next phase of the project when the regional interviews are undertaken. Such processes include developing ways on integrating SD concerns with regional development activities through thematic and expert focus, which is reflected both in the membership of the Regional Management Committee, mobilizing the environmentally relevant actors in the thematic working groups and making an effort to render the connection between SD and regional growth more visible.³³

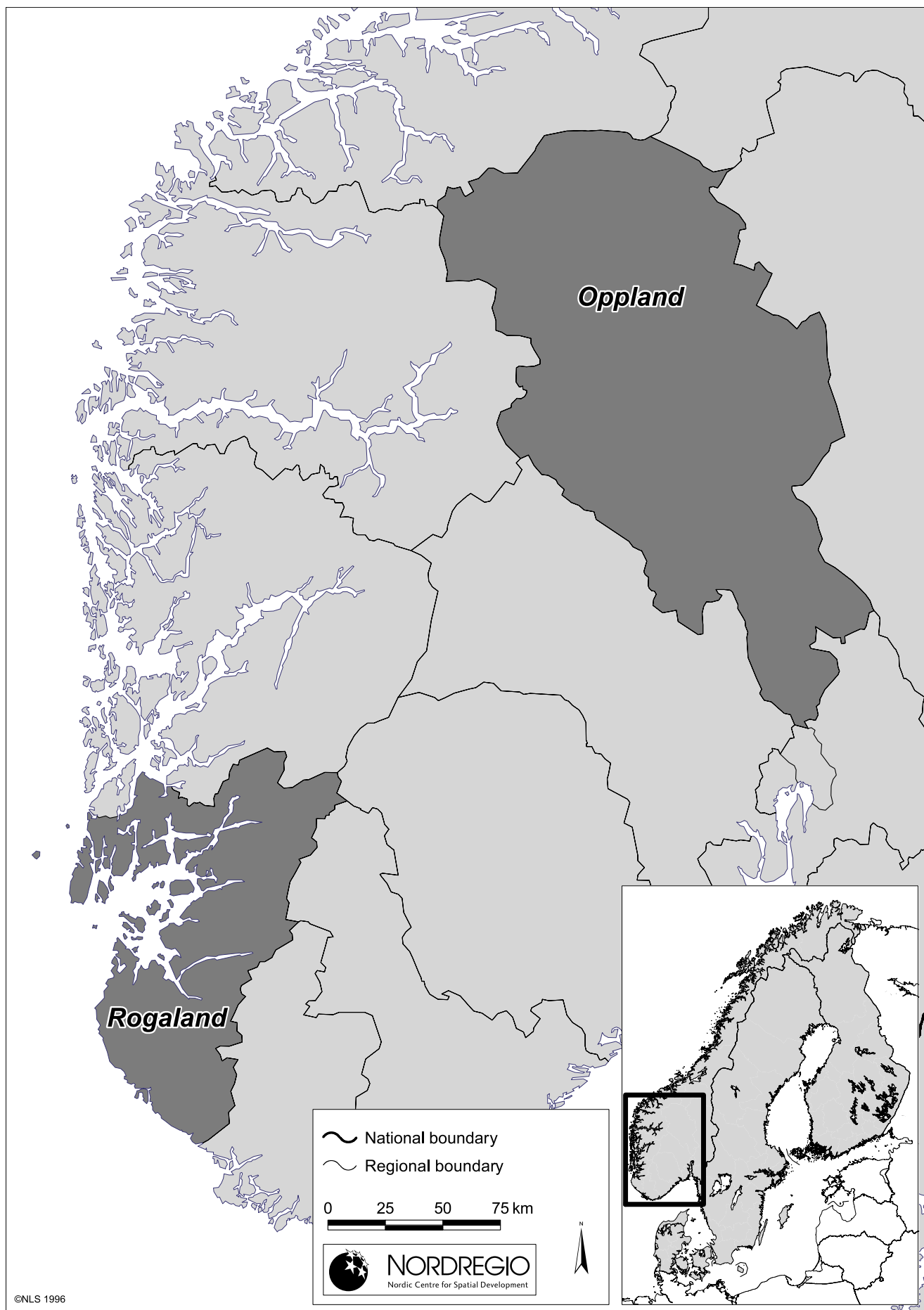
The close interconnectedness of the regional plan and the regional programme seems to be an interesting point for further elaboration in the closer regional analysis at the next stage of the project. The fact that the regional plan has also drafted scenarios for the position of the Satakunta region within the spatial structure of Finland in its thematic group deliberations also seems interesting, not least given the current interest in the issue of polycentricity linked to broader European policy debates on regional development and economic cohesion.

³¹Ibid, 34.

³²Ibid, 34.

³³E.g. in strategies, reports and working papers; e.g. Savola 2002.

Figure 4. Norwegian regions included in the study: Oppland and Rogaland.



7 The Regional Level in Norway

The regions have been given increased responsibility for regional development in Norway. Through the regional plans (FP), the region is expected to co-ordinate the activities of the state, the fylkeskommun and the main aspects of the physical, economic, social and cultural activities of the municipalities. The regional plans are strategic plans for the region. Regional development plans (RUP) are annual

action-plans through which the goals from the regional plans are to be achieved.

What is the status of SD within concrete regional growth and development processes in Norway? An indication of this can be found via a document analysis in relation to the regions of Oppland and Rogaland.

7.1 The Example of Oppland

The region of Oppland is located in the middle of Norway, with a population of 183 419 (end of 2000 figures). The capital, Lillehammer, has a population of 24 873 (2000). It is a region where recreational activities, tourism and natural and cultural values are important. Since 2004, regional action-plans (regionala handlingsprogram, RHP) have been formulated integrating the former RUP:s, the annual regional budgets and the action-section of the regional plan. The first regional action-plan was laid down by the regional government (fylkesting) on the 9th of December 2003. The ambition is to ensure a better connection between planning and the instruments of control, a clarification of responsibilities and roles so that the fylkesting can establish a good base for decisions and priorities, and an 'Oppland of possibilities' (mulighetenes Oppland) can be created within the goals of regional development (RHP Oppland 2004). It is stated that the current action plan has not been sufficiently co-ordinated with the upcoming work with the regional plan 2005–2008 so the strategic base for the whole action-plan is expected to increase in the next version.

7.1.1 The Goals of Regional Development and Growth

The vision for Oppland 2010 from the present regional plan is launched as follows:

'Good living-conditions, a high level of competence for the population and environmental qualities in work and leisure time, turns Oppland into an attractive region in which to live in. In 2010, Oppland has developed a culture for innovation and Oppland is known as the region where it is a rule to invest'¹

Among other things, this includes developing and making the most of the region, to stimulate and increase the profitability of industry, to increase knowledge about Oppland, preventive work with health-issues, a revitalisation of the public sector and the development of the physical infrastructure and communications in the region. The plan also has two recurring perspectives, namely, environmental and gender issues, which are prerequisites that are supposed to permeate the whole content of the plan.²

Regional growth and development is a central part of the action programme of 2004. A number of success-factors for regional development can be discerned: living qualities, work, business and innovation, learning and competence, public and private services, experiences and cultural expressions, regional and national offers and infrastructure (RHP Oppland 2004, p 6). These factors can be seen as a general base, which facilitates regional development, according to the programme. The regional perspectives and the main priorities outlined as decisive for the future development of Oppland are:

- Arena- and network-building between the central authorities, fylkesmannen, other regions, internationally and in relation to NGO:s and the business community
- The development of innovative and competitive arenas for competence
- The development of communications such as roads and collective traffic
- 'Green Oppland' where environmental qualities are used as the driving-force for regional development and resources used in a sustainable way. These regional priorities are to be developed further in the upcoming work with the regional plan 2005–2008 (RHP Oppland 2004, p 8).

¹FP Oppland, p 2.

²FP Oppland, p 7.

7.1.2 The Concept of Sustainable Development

SD is not used as a primary-concept in the new action-plan. No general declarations were made in terms of SD being an overriding goal for the region. This does not mean that the different aspects included in the concept of SD are not dealt with in the regional document. As one of the four prioritized goals for development in the region we find 'The green Oppland', referred to above, which can be seen as clearly related to the perspective of ecological sustainability. Concerning the goal it is stated that:

'Oppland appears as 'the green region'. The environmental qualities of the region are used as a driving-force for regional development. The use of natural, cultural and human resources takes place within a perspective of sustainability'³

We do not learn much about what is actually meant by SD from the action programme and the concept seems to be used only in the context of environmental or green initiatives. A green region is at the same time clearly seen as an important strategic goal for the future of the region and the driving-force for development.

In latter parts of the action-plan SD does reappears as a concept, once in the section on 'Business, planning and environment' where 'a balanced and SD within the region' is listed as an important challenge for the region and once in the section on 'Culture, libraries and cultural protection' where 'protection and the sustainable use of cultural heritage, environments and buildings' are listed as challenges.⁴ There is however no mention of how to approach these particular challenges in practice. Overall strategies for accomplishing the notion of the 'green Oppland' are however clearly listed in the action programme and include: natural and cultural activities, alternative energy, city-development, quality of life (comfort and health), environmentally sound companies, transport and the handling of waste.⁵

From the regional plan of 2000–2003 we also learn that SD is defined in terms of environmental perspectives. In the current regional plan 'local Agenda 21/environmental perspectives' appears as a recurring and horizontal perspective 'integrated into the main themes' and guiding strategies and measures rather than being a theme of its own.⁶ The environmental aspects of SD are thus discussed when outlining goals for business and employment, land, transport and infrastructure, welfare, health and culture. In line with the Brundtland-report 'Our Common Future', sustainable development is defined as a development that 'meets the needs of today without destroying natural resources so that the coming generations won't be able to

fulfil their needs'.⁷ The wider definition of social, economic and environmental perspectives is however not used. The RUP from 2002 also states that the perspective of SD and local Agenda 21 is a principal and overriding goal for the programmes and is thus of importance for both industry and the environment.⁸

7.1.3 The Status and Integration of Sustainable Development

The potential of 'the green Oppland' vision to contribute to regional development is, as mentioned above, clearly indicated in the current action plan. It is for example stated that the connections between culture and business, i.e. culture as a means of innovation and development within the regional needs are important.⁹ Competitive advantages such as bio-energy, the environmental certificates of small and medium-sized companies, tourism and the potential to develop national parks are also mentioned.¹⁰ The same potentials and competitive advantages are discerned in the regional plan where examples such as green tourism, bio-energy and bio-fuel, ecological farming and the promotion of ecological products are listed.¹¹ In the RUP from 2002, where SD was declared to be an overriding goal, SD was not however given an explicit role in terms of the various priorities, nor as a strategic area. One important exception here is the strategy outlined for SND Oppland and the Nærings- og miljøfond (see below). A change can thus be noted here in the RUP for 2003 in which, in a list of strategies for the societal development of Oppland, one of the strategies concerns the fact that SD is a basis for all activities within the region, and that industries shall use the opportunities for changes in energy-use, production and services. One prioritized area in terms of the change of industries in 2003 was also 'sustainable development – possibilities and challenges for industry in Oppland'. This change is based on the fact that, in September 2002, the fylkesting of Oppland decided that its environmental efforts needed to be strengthened.¹²

The Nærings- og miljøfond, administered by SND, has been an important part of the green growth and development efforts in Oppland. SND has encouraged a strong focus on environment, technology and export, where environmental demands and environmental standards have been presented as an increasingly important precondition for international competitiveness.¹³ SND has contributed financially to the costs of the development of green products and the use of the natural and environmental accomplishments of the region in an industrial context, for ex-

³RHP Oppland 2004, p 9.

⁴Ibid, p 26 and 27.

⁵RHP Oppland 2004, p 9.

⁶FP Oppland, p 61.

⁷FP Oppland 2000–2003, p 8 and 30.

⁸RUP Oppland 2002, p ii.

⁹RHP Oppland 2004, p 27.

¹⁰RHP Oppland 2004, p 26.

¹¹FP Oppland, p 41ff.

¹²RUP Oppland 2003.

¹³RUP Oppland 2002, s 28.

ample ventures concerning bio-energy. The fund has had an annual budget of 1 million NKR. The total amount of financing available for achieving change and the development of business is approximately 88 million NKR so the fund is rather small in comparison, as indicated by an overview from 2003.¹⁴

In the new action-plan the assumption is that environmental perspectives can be combined with, and also promote, regional growth and development. There is no mention of any potential goal-conflicts in the document, not even in the sections relating to transport and the building of new roads. Instead, the possibilities of a sustainable use of natural and cultural resources and green technologies are presented.¹⁵ There is however more talk of goal-conflicts in this respect in the current regional plan. Goal conflicts are discussed between, on the one hand, industrial development and communication/ transport planning and, on the other, environmental considerations. It is also noted that while it is important to take into consideration the values of landscape and the environment, important industrial interests often gain the upper hand in conflicts.¹⁶

7.1.4 The Role of Partnerships

The RUP of 2002 clarified the fact that Oppland sees the national focus on partnerships and co-operation, as opposed to national control and steering, as a positive signal.¹⁷ The regional action-plan from 2004 is seen as a basis for obligatory partnership-agreements with municipalities, national and regional actors (RHP Oppland 2004, p 5). From the regional 2003 development programme it is stated that 17 million NKR have been deposited for partnership-agreements between co-operating municipalities in the region. The partnership-agreements are focused on developing specific municipalities while the rest of the RUP

concern the whole region. The agreements have the task of:

‘Contributing to regional competitiveness in a long-term perspective. The goal being to produce visible results through constructive engagement and co-operation and to make the process of administering the means for development easier and more efficient’ (RUP 2003, p 17)

The work with the regional development programmes has also been a process of co-operation across different sectors and levels of administration. In the introduction to the RUP from 2002 we learned that the programme has been the joint task of representatives from Kommunenes Sentralforbund Oppland, SND Oppland, Opplands fylkeskommune represented by regional services and development (RTU), the section for business and the section for planning) as well as the area for learning and development and competences (VOOK), labour offices and Opplands fylkesman/ department of agriculture. The participation of business will be, it is noted, secured by a working-group that will give its reaction to the strategic work of the regional partnership. It is also noted that it is hoped that more sectors that are deemed important for regional development become involved in the work with the RUP, and that new models for co-ordination will be tried out.¹⁸ In later versions there is no mention of which actors have participated in working with the regional programmes, or whether any specific representatives or working-practices for dealing with perspectives of SD existed.

The environmental aspects are undoubtedly a part of the strategies within the current action plan and the current regional plan. What happens in practice with the different strategies however cannot be answered by this analysis alone. We only learn about the explicit goals and the reasoning in outlining them, as they appear in the actual documents.

¹⁴RUP Oppland 2003, p 7 and RUP Oppland 2002, p 8.

¹⁵RHP Oppland 2004.

¹⁶FP Oppland 2000–2003, p 34.

¹⁷RUP Oppland 2002, p i.

¹⁸RUP Oppland 2002, p i.

7.2 The Example of Rogaland

Rogaland is located in the south western part of Norway. The region consists of 27 municipalities, with Stavanger as the largest city and administrative centre. The inhabitants of Rogaland number 389 000, which corresponds to 8.5% of the total population in Norway. Rogaland is one of the leading industrial regions in Norway, and is a centre for the development of oil and gas. Rogaland is also one of the largest agricultural regions and the largest producer of fish- food in Norway. Tourism is also important for the region.

The annual regional development programmes (RUP) are an operational section of the strategic plan for business, making it – as well as the overall strategic regional plan – more action oriented and operational. The RUP:s are an arena for joint action between the different development agencies concerned with business.¹⁹

7.2.1 The Goals of Regional Development and Growth

In the Strategic Plan for Business (SNP) for the period of 2000–2003, which is a part of the regional plan, and which was accepted by the fylkesting in June of 2000, it was stated that:

‘Rogaland shall be one of the leading business regions of Europe, based on high competence, innovation, internationalisation, the high quality of life and an environmentally sound use of natural resources’²⁰

This is the regional vision for business in Rogaland. On the Rogaland webpage we also learn that the goals of a comprehensive regional policy lie in securing the development of vital municipalities in all parts of Rogaland, which means that:

‘Residents have their needs for quality services for communication, culture and business met, that the goal is a future-oriented use of natural- and environmental resources, and that the co-operation between municipalities and actors from business is strengthened’²¹

These can be seen as the overall goals for the region, which we can expect to be further specified in the regional development programme, which is the regional action-plan. In the regional development programme for 2003 eight ‘effort-areas’ for regional development are discerned:

- Employment, living- and service regions
- Result-oriented regional and international co-operation and network
- The development of methods, routines etc. for regional development

- Competence in societal and business development and innovation
- Better use of non-renewable and renewable natural resources
- Tourism
- Culture and, finally
- Communications.

These prioritised areas are seen as being the basis for the regional development programme and thus for regional development actions and activities within the region. Within the programme the current situation and future goals of these ‘effort-areas’ are discussed, as well as the prioritised projects within them.

It is stated that for RUP 2003, the issue of ‘better use of non-renewable and renewable natural resources’ is seen as being the most extensive, as:

‘The engine of business in Rogaland is based on the use of natural resources, renewable in the form of agriculture and fisheries, and non-renewable in the form of oil and gas. The petro-maritime cluster is perhaps the strongest innovation system in the country’²²

There is thus a clear dependence on natural resources within the region, which also acts as a motor for the development of new technologies, business-development, marketing-potentials, potentials for the creation of values, and the refinement of resources and food-production etc. Ecological agriculture and production, as well as tourism and the values inherent in nature, culture and landscape are also discussed in terms of regional development (RUP 2003).

7.2.2 The Concept of Sustainable Development

Despite this rather acknowledged focus on a ‘better use of non-renewable and renewable natural resources’, SD is not used as a concept at all in the latest RUP. In the current strategic plan for business we find ‘better refinement of renewable and non-renewable natural resources’ as the last of four challenges for action. Here the challenge is discussed in terms of SD. It is stated that:

‘The goal is sustainable ecological businesses, both concerning refinement and innovation within these businesses.’²³

There is however no definition made of a sustainable ecological business. In the strategic business plan for 1995–1999, the concept of SD was also apparent in the overall vision with the main target being to:

¹⁹Evaluering av RUP 2000.

²⁰Strategisk Næringsplan 2000–2003.

²¹www.rogaland.no

²²Rogaland RUP 2003, p 17.

²³Strategisk Næringsplan 2000–2003, p 7.

‘Stimulate economic well-being in all regions across Rogaland by developing a business that is profitable, built on growth-power and competence such that existing places of work are secured and new ones created. This must happen within the framework of sustainable development and environmentally sound solutions’²⁴

In today’s business plan we instead find the explicit mention of ‘an environmentally sound use of natural resources’ and the goal of ‘environmentally sustainable business’ as a part of the declared vision, but not the concept of SD. Since the concept is not defined it is not possible to say whether the larger concept of economic, environmental and social sustainability was a part of the former business plan, or whether SD was seen as being limited to ecological sustainability.

7.2.3 The Status and Integration of Sustainable Development

In the SNP 2000–2003 we find a clear indication that the aim is to find solutions that combine a sustainable use of natural resources with continued innovation and use related to these natural resources:

‘Rogaland has important natural resources. To increase the degree of refinement at the same time as a sustainable use of resources is secured is an important challenge. /.../ The goal is sustainable environmentally sound business and to increase refinement combined with innovation within these branches’²⁵

The potential in combining these perspectives seems unquestioned in the business-plan and the current regional development programme is also full of examples of the continued development of technologies and refinement related to, for example, the extensive oil and gas-resources of the region. These and other natural resources are seen as the main fundament for the development of the economy and employment within the region. The ambition here is to give the use of these and other natural resources such as agriculture and fisheries a ‘greener’ or more robust or sustainable appearance, with practice thus being central to the programme. Rogaland is also presented as a forerunner in terms of working for the environmental and economic

use of resources relating to, for example gas and food-production. No conflicts or problems are discussed²⁶ in the regional context of the rather extensive use of natural resources.

7.2.4 The Role of Partnerships

The regional development programme in Rogaland is clearly process-oriented and is based on partnerships in order to work with innovation. There is no indication of whether this is seen as a formal requirement, or merely as a preferred way of organising such work. On the Rogaland webpage the national focus on regional partnerships as a means of strengthening the current regional policy in particular, and the region more generally, as a development-actor is however referred to. It is stated here that the state does not want to say how the new role should be carried out, or indeed, what form it should take, but that the key to success lies in the ability to work together with the different municipalities of the region. A process designed to help in terms of working within partnerships currently exists.²⁷

The RUP 2003 was produced in the context of a broad partnership, consisting of SND Rogaland, National labour offices, Fylkesmannens department of agriculture, Statens utdanningskontor and NHO, LO, Fiskeridirektoratet i Rogaland, regional councils as external partners and the educational, cultural, regional planning and business sections in the fylkeskommune. The work was organised in a number of working-groups, based on the thematic areas outlined. The groups were given the responsibility to work out suggestions for the programme relating to their particular areas. This has, in the experience described in the programme, led to a more ‘action-oriented’ approach in the RUP than perhaps was previously the case, while also making the responsibility for implementation more visible.²⁸ There is however no mention of any particular effort in relation to making the perspectives of SD more visible in the partnerships, which is perhaps not that surprising, as contrary to the situations pertaining in both Finland and Sweden, this is not dealt with as a particular and overriding theme in the work.

²⁴Strategisk Næringsplan 2000–2003, p12.

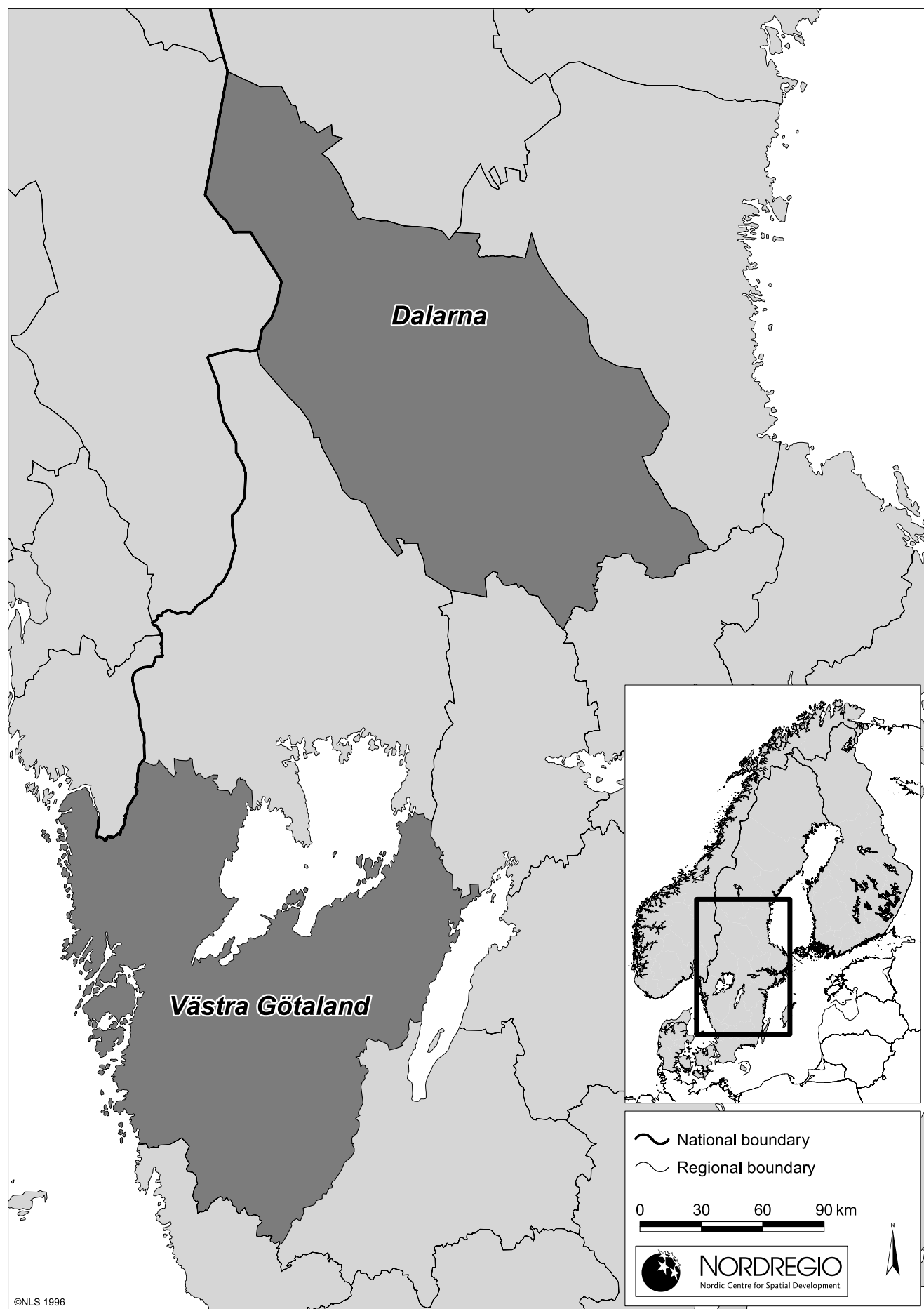
²⁵SNP 2000–2003, p 8.

²⁶RUP 2003.

²⁷www.rogaland.no

²⁸RUP Rogaland, p 2.

Figure 5. Swedish regions included in the study: Dalarna and Västra Götaland.



8 The Regional Level in Sweden

In Sweden the formerly centralised arena of regional policy is in the process of being decentralised. The focus today is on regional growth and development – the stimulation of sustainable growth – on the co-ordinating initiative of regional partnerships and is formulated on a four-year basis in the regional growth programmes (RTP). The RTP have recently replaced the former growth agreements (RTA). The growth programmes work as the action-programme of the longer-term and strategic regional development pro-

grammes (RUP). The RTP is also more clearly connected to national-level actors and their guidelines and requests than the RUP.

In this light we will take a closer look on the regions of Dalarna and Västra Götaland in order to get some indication of what happens with the integration of SD in the context of regional growth and development-processes at the regional level in Sweden.

8.1 The Example of Dalarna

Dalarna, together with Värmland and Gästrikland, constitute a transition from the Northern woodlands to the Southern cultural landscapes of Sweden. Dalarna is a rather large region taking up almost 7% of the total surface of Sweden and consisting to 79% of forest. Its population corresponds to some 3.2 % of the total Swedish population (total population in 2000 was 278 259). Industries such as iron and steel have also been important, as has tourism (Dalarna RTA 2000, p 15ff). Dalarna is often presented in Sweden as a path-breaker when it comes to SD in the context of regional growth and development.¹ Accordingly, Dalarna was one of three pilot regions selected to develop the process of integrating environmental perspectives into the former Regional Growth Agreements.²

In 1996 Dalarna formulated a regional strategy – *With united force towards 2007* – including a number of goals for the future development of Dalarna, and its regional strengths and potentials. The strategy is seen as being an important starting-point for the further process of regional development – including the Growth Agreements – as well as for the process of turning Dalarna into a model of ecological sustainability at the regional level. The Regional Growth Agreement was accepted in February 2000.³

¹At least up till 2003 when the organising of regional development programming was changed in Dalarna.

²Näringsdepartementet 2002, *Rapport om tillväxtavtalen. Andra året*, p 25 and 2001, *Näringsdepartementets arbete för hållbar utveckling*, p 21.

³Dalarna 2003, Dalarna RTA 2000, p 8.

8.1.1 Regional Development and Growth

It is clearly stated at the beginning of the document that the Growth Agreement is directed towards business, mostly small and medium-sized companies and their potential to contribute to increased growth. Growth is defined as:

'An increase in the value of the production of goods and services'⁴

The overall goals of the agreement are said to be increased growth and employment within Dalarna, equality between women and men and, finally, ecologically sustainable growth.⁵ Twenty-one qualitative factors for growth can be discerned and are presented in the agreement as the basis against which different future priorities can be discussed. These factors are:

1. Increased value of production of goods and services
2. Support for business
3. Co-ordination with EU-programmes for synergies
4. Orientation of business to growing sectors in society
5. Increased competence among the population of Dalarna – towards 'life-long learning'
6. Trust across organisational borders
7. Point-competence for companies in the region
8. Increased possibility of conversion in regional organisations
9. Increased mobility on the labour-market
10. College-competence to a larger segment of the population

⁴Dalarna RTA 2000, p 29.

⁵Ibid.

11. Development-competence for companies and organisations
12. A focus on clusters of competence
13. Improved communication across the region
14. Improved communications with the outside world
15. Linking the public sector and business
16. Building on resources that cannot be moved from the region
17. Improving the partnership process for development
18. Increased employment
19. Taking care of the landscape and living-environments
20. Contributing to, and finding, strength in the equality of men and women
21. Contributing to, and finding, strength in ecological sustainability.⁶

The most important factors for sustainable growth are said to be:

1. Co-operation in networks and partnerships, meeting places
2. Competence for development and renewal
3. Placebound physical or renewable resources representing something unique or specific (relating to natural resources, tourism and living-environments)
4. Communications (IT) as a basis for the future, and
5. Particular efforts for equality and ecological sustainability.⁷

Following this, six priorities for the agreement and for future efforts are listed:

1. Regional and local co-operation
2. The development of small and medium-sized growth-companies
3. Forests
4. Tourism
5. Living-environments and the attractive nature of Dalarna
6. Information technology.⁸

8.1.2 The Concept of Sustainable Development

According to Dalarna's regional strategy, one important strategy has been to turn the region into:

'A forerunner for environmental adjustment and long-term sustainable development, a region with a green profile that shows the way to an ecologically sustainable development'⁹

The Regional Growth Agreement states that an ecologically sustainable societal development – as one of the over-arching goals for the region – is a way to:

'Both protect the environment and secure the sustainable maintenance of energy and other natural resources. A far-reaching and effective use – mostly concerning energy in all its forms – is of vital importance both for the protection of the environment and to make sustainable maintenance possible. Seen in this way, ecological sustainability is a part of the living-environment of the region but also a long-term necessary condition for society and business'¹⁰

It is apparent from the documents that there is no question that Dalarna expresses a strong desire to work for development that is ecologically sustainable. In the regional strategy and the growth agreement 'ecologically sustainable' is a notion that is used constantly in the sense of being a goal and target for regional development. Natural environments, freedom from pollution, clean water, healthy forests and city-environments without health-risks etc., are highlighted as goals where the region has both strengths and weaknesses (Dalarna RTA 2000, p 25). It is however mostly the potential of working with these questions that is continually emphasised in the document. There is, throughout the document, a focus on environmental sustainability rather than the threefold concept of ecological, economic and social sustainability used in the Brundtland-report.

The concept of SD does not seem to be fraught with any conflicts or inconsistencies in the eyes of the writers, even though, for example, a revitalisation of roads, and transport and region enlargement systems are also emphasised in different parts of the document as being vital aspects of regional development. Instead it is simply stated that these issues – often seen as endangering environmental values and giving rise to conflicts of interest relating to the pillars of SD¹¹ – are dealt with in other respects. Not all of the issues that are potentially part of the broader field of regional development are thus dealt with in the growth agreement of Dalarna.

8.1.3 The Status and Integration of Sustainable Development

The environment, here seen as an important component of regional development and ecological sustainability should, according to the growth agreement, be developed into a strategic strength for the region. Green business profiles and competitiveness on green markets are thus also seen as being important:

'Ecological sustainability is increasingly seen as a driving-force for economic growth. In a quickly growing part of the world-market, ecological sustainability is a necessary condition for competitiveness'¹²

That environmental adjustments of products and services on markets are decisive for success and that environmental

⁶Dalarna RTA 2000, p 27.

⁷Dalarna 2000, p 28.

⁸Dalarna RTA 2000, p 30.

⁹Dalarna 1996, *Med förenade krafter mot år 2007*, p 7ff and 21.

¹⁰Dalarna RTA 2000, p 29.

¹¹Forsberg 2002, Isaksson 2001, Storbjörk 2001.

¹²Dalarna RTA 2000, p 29 and 25f.

steering and adjustment are tools that are becoming more important for companies is also discussed in the regional strategy of Dalarna.¹³ In the strategy it is also stated that the future eco-cycle society is based on science and technology, which makes knowledge and technical innovations important tools for the environmental adjustment of our modern welfare societies.¹⁴ This is an argument that is clearly in line with that of ecological modernisation, discussed in other segments of this report. The goal for Dalarna is to, in 2007:

‘Use natural resources efficiently both within traditional areas and new industrial and energy contexts, that ecological adjustment of infrastructure has come far, that we find local eco-cycles and interest for local production and consumption, that new jobs and companies have grown that manufacture equipment and systems for environmental adjustment and spread knowledge within the area’.¹⁵

To accomplish this, local investment programmes, official purchase, local environmental centres, and dialogues with industry, the building-sector, the forestry sector, agriculture, and energy suppliers are cited as being of importance.¹⁶ The gains harvested through working with environmental sustainability and the potentials inherent in combining environmental considerations with future regional development, is thus unquestioned in the regional documents. In the growth agreement, bio-energy appears as a way both to increase employment and income levels as well as a way of reaching a more ecologically sustainable society.¹⁷ Other examples here include the marketing and development of cultural and natural environments as a resource for business, local development etc.¹⁸ A lot of the proposed priorities and means for working with these are directed at such win-win-solutions.

A number of practical examples of these policy statements can be found in the fact that the County Administrative Board has decided that particular priority be given to companies and concrete projects focused on ecological SD as a lever for growth. The Board also states that support for companies shall specify ecological applications and the environmental consequences of the investment and environmental strategies of the company concerned. A post has also been filled with a specific view to integrating environmental perspectives with the handling of concrete tasks.¹⁹

So much then for the general statements. It is also emphasised in the agreement that ecological sustainability needs to be integrated into the various prioritised areas,

rather than being dealt with by itself. According to the agreement this basically concerns technical-industrial activities.²⁰ When it comes to the discussion of concrete priorities, in the latter sections of the documents, we find a lot of emphasis on ecological sustainability as intrinsic to the goals, means, and criteria for projects, and the expected effects and indicators for achievements. Concerning the priority of ‘regional and local co-operation’ it is stated that the driving-forces of the development towards an ecologically sustainable society need to be systematically used to strengthen the regional profile and regional development. One of a number of the criteria used for projects is their ‘contribution to sustainable development’ and the expected effect that environmental perspectives are ‘integrated into the activities’. No indication of the timeframe in which the goals – e.g. relating to SD – are to be achieved, are however listed.²¹ When it comes to ‘the development of small and medium-sized growth-companies’, ‘forests’, ‘tourism’ etc., we find a clear domination of environmental certificates as a solution and a means of achieving the goals of ecological SD, and the number of certified companies are, perhaps not surprisingly, seen as an indicator of the fulfilment of the goals.²² Otherwise indicators are sometimes rather vague, for example relating to the marketing of the region where the ‘elements of environmental profile’ are listed as an indicator.²³

A general impression here is however that there is a clear attempt in the document to integrate environmental sustainability into the prioritised efforts of regional development, rather than treating it as a general ambition at the beginning of the document. We often also find it lodged in the criteria and indicators sections even if the latter sometimes appear rather vague. One further issue that is of major importance here is what actually becomes of these goals in practice, namely: how many of the practical efforts and concrete projects in Dalarna are actually related to ecological SD as the document suggests? As such, we do not find any real answers to these questions in the documents studied here. There is therefore a pressing need to look more closely at concrete projects and at what happens with the practical integration of environmental sustainability in these.

8.1.4 The Role of Partnerships

The initiatives within the growth agreement in Dalarna are clearly based on partnerships and on a broad regional process. The desire to include the business sector was emphasised as being particularly central, and the agreement was witness to a number of meetings and discussions in this respect.²⁴ The growth agreement started at the local level

¹³Dalarna 1996, p 21.

¹⁴Dalarna 1996, p 23.

¹⁵Dalarna 1996, p 23.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Dalarna RTA 2000, p 32.

¹⁸Ibid, p 45f.

¹⁹Dalarna RTA 2000, p 7.

²⁰Dalarna RTA 2000, p 29.

²¹Dalarna RTA 2000, p 31.

²²Ibid, p 32.

²³Ibid, p 46ff.

²⁴Dalarna RTA p 12.

where voluntary associations, companies and business-actors were engaged together with the municipalities. For the RTA, work-groups were established for different effort areas and the groups had the responsibility of making ecological sustainability visible in the process. The director of environmental protection, as well as professor Olle Eriksson, were also engaged in the process of working constructively with environmental demands.²⁵ In a report on the process compiled by the region itself, the process was described as sometimes being tough to the extent that it was often hard to make the groups accept SD, or indeed the whole process of working with ecological sustainability in the growth agreements. Persistency on behalf of the responsible parties and the clear position of regional leaders was however seen as beneficial in this respect.²⁶

The analysis group, consisting of LAN, ALMI, the Association of Local Authorities, the County Council, the College of Dalarna, the Research Council of Dalarna, the Central-Swedish Chamber of Commerce, The National Business Association, SAF and the County Administrative Board, was related to the growth agreement. A reference group for rural development and another for agriculture were also formed.²⁷ There is however no indication of any

explicit environmental representatives taking part in any of these groups. Instead, a specific group for SD was formed in 2001, when Dalarna was selected as a pilot-region for environmental integration. This group consisted of politicians from the County Administrative Board (*länsstyrelsen*), the County Council (*landstinget*), and the Association of Local Authorities in Dalarna (*Dalarnas kommunförbund*). The aim of the group was to follow up the work of ecological conversion ongoing within the Regional Strategy and the Growth Agreement.²⁸ Three strategic areas were identified by the group:

- Purchasing
- Living-environments (building, living, public health and food/agriculture)
- Transports.²⁹

Even if there is a particular group working with SD, their role and mandate within the partnership, and in relation to the different priorities for achieving regional growth and development, is not clear from the documentation alone. It is therefore important to look further at what representation environmental advocates actually have in the current processes for regional growth and development.

²⁵Dalarna 2003, p 2.

²⁶Ibid, p 3, 5.

²⁷Dalarna RTA 2000, p 9.

²⁸Dalarna 2003, p 9.

²⁹Ibid, p 9.

8.2 The Example of Västra Götaland

Västra Götaland is located in the south-west of Sweden. The region has a total population of 1 494 641 (end of 2000 figures). Västra Götaland has also been seen as a forerunner when it comes to the integration of economic, social and environmental perspectives in the regional growth agreements. It is stated in the evaluation of the regional growth agreements from 2002 that the region 'has adopted a broad perspective and in an integrated way analysed and developed its knowledge of sustainable growth on a regional basis'.³⁰

The Regional Growth Agreement of 2000–2002 is a part of the regionalisation of regional policy.³¹ The real work on the agreement started in December 1998. In January 1999 the region of Västra Götaland was formed, and in October 1999 decisions were made on a regional development strategy (RUS), including the long-term visions and goals for regional development in Västra Götaland. The RUS is seen as the platform for the growth agreement and other efforts that strengthen the region as an attractive place to live and work in.³² Work on SD and sustainable growth was intensified at the beginning of 2000, as a number of documents show.³³ Currently a proposal for an operative Regional Growth Programme for 2004–2007 has been produced.³⁴

8.2.1 The Goals of Regional Development and Growth

The good life of the region, as depicted in the regional development strategy from 1999 is expressed as follows:

'Western Östergötland is a region with a clear belief in the future. The region is attractive for people and activities in a global perspective. Here we find a strong business sector, stimulating meeting-places for education and research, an active approach to working with environmental issues and a rich cultural life. Here we find active citizens who are a part of societal life and feel secure in their daily life and future'³⁵

This overall regional vision guides other documents such as the growth agreement of 2000–2002. The overall goal with the agreement is to:

'Create the conditions for sustainable economic growth in the region – a growth that is primarily based on the development of the inner growth-potentials of the region and efforts that offer good long-term conditions for increased employment and welfare for both women and men'³⁶

In both of these quotes issues of SD and environmental perspectives play an explicit role. For these overall goals, the competitiveness of business is seen as a central condition in the growth agreement. Economic growth here means:

'Increasing the production of goods and services or an increase in the value of production based on an unchanged level of production-volume'³⁷

The basis of growth is thus companies producing more, or becoming more profitable. External growth refers to the increase in the input of production-factors while internal growth refers to a more efficient use of existing production-factors.³⁸

The driving forces for growth discerned in the agreement are: entrepreneurship, creativity, a head for business, ambition, the willingness to take risks etc. Attitudes are also seen as important, as are the physical, economic, social and legal infrastructures such as communications, education, capital, societal administration and rules. Culture is also mentioned as an important arena for meetings and co-ordination.³⁹ The strategy is thus designed to strengthen the development environment for business by focusing on: competence-provision, renewal and availability. Equality and integration, SD, internationalisation and co-operation/networks are, according to the agreement, general principles for the implementation of the strategies.⁴⁰

Since 1999 and the emergence of the regional development strategy, the following ten goals for regional development have been agreed upon in Västra Götaland:

1. Sustainable growth
2. Leading in the development of knowledge and competence
3. An IT-region on the European front-line
4. 50 billion SEK invested in traffic infrastructure in ten years
5. Leading Europe in resource-saving and environmentally friendly technology
6. Increase its lead as the cultural region of Sweden
7. A clear lead as the most visited tourist-region in Scandinavia

³⁰Näringsdepartementet, 2002, *Rapport om tillväxtavtalen. Andra året*, p 24.

³¹*Tillväxt i Västra Götaland. Tillväxtavtal 2000–2002.*

³²*En region att växa i. Regional utvecklingsstrategi för Västra Götaland.*

³³*Hållbar tillväxt i Västra Götaland. Stora utmaningar för en hållbar framtid 2003a; Hållbar tillväxt i Västra Götaland. Underlag med idéer för Tillväxtprogram and Regional Utvecklingsstrategi 2003b; Utmaningar för en hållbar framtid i Västra Götaland 2003c.*

³⁴Förslag till Tillväxtprogram 2004–2007.

³⁵RUS Västra Götaland, p 5. RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 13.

³⁶RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 13.

³⁷RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 11.

³⁸RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 11.

³⁹RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 11f.

⁴⁰RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 13f.

8. Internationally known and acknowledged as a co-operative partner
9. Leader in equality and gender issues
10. Role model for integration.⁴¹

8.2.2 The Concept of Sustainable Development

SD is one of four overarching goals in the regional development strategy and in the growth agreement of 2000–2002. In the growth agreement it is stated that:

‘Growth must take place within the framework of sustainable development, i.e. a societal development that meets the needs of today without endangering the potential for future generations to fulfil their needs’⁴²

The UN-conventions in force are pinpointed as an important guideline for this, but otherwise there is no specification of SD and in particular, for what is included in the concept. It is mostly used, it seems, as a general guideline, not further specified or elaborated in the later sections of the agreement.

From the regional development strategy we do however learn that SD, in the regional interpretation, consists of the three equivalent dimensions of economic, social and environmental sustainability. The Brundtland-definition of SD is thus used in the regional documents, while with regard to environmental aspects it is stated that:

‘Environmental-work is partly about solving already arisen environmental problems but mostly about influencing societal development so that our living-habits and activities further eco-cycles and the long-term sustainability of society. For regional competitiveness it is important to take care of the natural and cultural landscape so that resources are used in an ecologically sound way.’⁴³

In the proposal for the 2004–2007 growth programme, we again find the overarching statements that SD is a guiding principle for the work, which also contributes to the attainment of national environmental goals. It is also stated that the work provides the opportunity to become an environmentally effective and resource-saving region, which leaves smaller traces in the environment than other regions.⁴⁴ This is seen as something well worth striving for, according to the documentation.

In 2001, a number of SD indicators were identified relating to the three dimensions of economic, social and environmental sustainability. For the economy such indicators relate to production, productivity, investments, financial stability, innovation and infrastructure. For the social aspects the indicators relate to education, work, health, incomes, participation and culture and, finally, for

the environmental aspects issues of biological manifoldness, ecosystems, climate, air, land and water are central.⁴⁵

The concept of sustainable growth has also been important in the work of Västra Götaland. Sustainable growth is thus seen as a way to attain SD.⁴⁶ By sustainable growth the region means:

‘Growth that considers humans, the environment and the economy and that contributes to sustainability’.⁴⁷

It is also said that sustainable growth has the task of facilitating economic growth in the region such that it is in the upper quarter of EU statistics, and that it makes positive population development possible. It is also important that the work is guided by a basic ecological outlook.⁴⁸ In general then we can find a number of references to the discourse of SD used in the various documents of regional growth and development, as an overarching goal for the regional processes. In the argumentation more generally, environmental considerations are seen as being possible to integrate, while also stimulating the same processes rather than restricting them.

8.2.3 The Status and Integration of Sustainable Development

From the growth agreement of 2000–2002 we learn from the general statements that a significant level of hope is attached to the possibility of combining regional growth and development with environmental considerations:

‘We need efforts focused on alternatives, new methods etc., that effect development. The environmental field in itself is an important area for growth. In co-operation between research and business products are developed for a more effective use of resources. The field of environmental technology is an area with a large growth-potential and international competitiveness’⁴⁹

A SWOT-analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in the region for future regional development was also conducted. In this analysis, the environment was, among a number of points, depicted as a new ‘growth area’.⁵⁰

SD and the gains relating to environmental efforts are not, however, a central part in the section where the three strategies of competence-provision, renewal and availability are further outlined in the growth agreement of 2000–2002. In the discussion of the strategy of renewal it is noted that centres for environmentally driven business may be one of six potential efforts relating to innovation.⁵¹ Other-

⁴¹RUS Västra Götaland 1999, p 6. Västra Götaland 2003a, p 36.

⁴²RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 11.

⁴³RUS Västra Götaland 1999, p 8.

⁴⁴RTP Västra Götaland 2004–2007, p 8.

⁴⁵Västra Götaland 2003a, p 8.

⁴⁶RTP Västra Götaland 2004–2007, p 8.

⁴⁷Västra Götaland 2003a, p 4.

⁴⁸Västra Götaland 2003, p 1.

⁴⁹RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 15. RUS Västra Götaland 1999, p 8 and 14.

⁵⁰RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 9.

⁵¹RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 25.

wise there is no follow-up on the perspectives of SD in the official writings of the agreement. Furthermore, environmental perspectives are only to a small extent further elaborated in the section where proposals from the sub-regions are discussed. There are a few exceptions to this, such as the proposal indicating a 'utilization of resources in agriculture and forestry', which might – at least in some interpretations – indicate a focus on environmental perspectives; a proposal on environmental technology; one on profiles relating to energy; one on environmental development; and one on establishing a fund for the stimulation of environmentally driven business development.⁵² The proposal for marketing natural and cultural environments for tourism can also be seen as another example of environmental perspectives in the context of regional growth, even though the perspective of SD is not explicitly mentioned in any of these propositions.⁵³ We thus find some examples of the practical impact of environmental perspectives in the growth agreement and in the sub-regional proposals but perhaps not as much as could be expected, given the general statements and outlines in the region.

In the proposal for the current growth programme 2004–2007 the focus on environmental perspectives throughout the programme is much more explicit. When discussing the strategy for innovation, the international competitiveness gained by working with 'green perspectives' and the strong traditions of environmental technology are clearly highlighted, while sustainability appears in a number of respects, such as, sustainable economic innovations, and sustainable companies. It is clear then that 'win-win'-solutions are seen as possible, and that the potential gains of working with ecological perspectives as a means of strengthening regional growth and competitiveness are:

'Based on comprehensive and qualified knowledge of the environmental field there is great potential to strengthen environmentally driven innovation in companies and organisations. Such efforts deliver incomes in the form of future preparedness, strong trademarks, more business – a strengthened economy – and at the same time a better environment'.⁵⁴

There is no question that this is presented as a significant regional potential in the programme, in line with the concept of ecological modernisation. No conflicts of interest are seen in this respect between continued growth and environmental considerations, at least from what we learned of the growth agreement, which was not even related to the field of transport and infrastructure or regional enlargement and commuting. Instead we find that infrastructure is an important part of the vision for SD, and that invest-

ment in public transport and general environmental considerations in terms of decisions about new roads are important for the realisation of the vision.⁵⁵ In the proposal for the growth programme we also find a number of discussions relating to transport, though the idea seems to be that new technology and alternative transport and infrastructure solutions, which have a relatively small influence on the environment, are possible, and that this enables previous conflicts to be satisfactorily addressed.⁵⁶ In an appendix we do however find that goal-conflicts relating to the task of an 'environmentally efficient region' are mentioned, particularly where increases in the number of travel journeys, together with increasing investment in the transport infrastructure can have a negative effect on the possibility of attaining national environmental objectives, relating both to pollution and to the infringement of the natural resources domain. The need to consider different societal goals is highlighted, but without any real discussion.⁵⁷

It seems to be a question then of finding sustainable ways to develop the region, though environmental considerations are not mentioned at all, except perhaps in the growth agreement of 2000–2002, where the suggestion of a change in the regulations regarding shore-protection in order to create more attractive living-environments is assumed.⁵⁸ The restrictive force of environmental perspectives relating to shore protection – often discussed at the municipal level – is however implicit in the statement.

In discussing the sub-regional work with the proposed growth-programme of 2004–2007, criticism is however directed towards at least two of the four sub-regions regarding the integration of SD, and in particular how they are to play their part in the implementation of the programme.⁵⁹ This may be an indication that the practice of integrating SD in the context of regional growth and development has not been pushed strongly enough in all the sub-regional contexts. These sub-regional contexts have not, however, been the explicit focus of this documentary analysis.

8.2.4 The Role of Partnerships

The ambition of the work with regional growth and development initiatives in Västra Götaland has been directed towards the creation of better co-ordination, both locally and regionally, in the drive to further economic growth and employment.⁶⁰ Co-ordination is thus presented as an important condition for regional growth and development. The work that began in December 1998 was, according to the documentation, characterised by a large engage-

⁵²RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 27ff and 38.

⁵³RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 39.

⁵⁴RTP Västra Götaland 2004–2007, p 14.

⁵⁵RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 33.

⁵⁶RTP Västra Götaland 2004–2007, p 20ff.

⁵⁷RTP Västra Götaland 2004–2007, appendix 3.

⁵⁸RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 42.

⁵⁹RTP Västra Götaland 2004–2007, p 26.

⁶⁰RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 4.

ment in the region. Regional and local partnerships have been established. At the sub-regional level smaller work-groups, partnership-based control groups and a larger partnership-forum were established. At the regional level the partnership consisted of a group of civil servants. It was originally formed with the task of producing the basis for the regional development strategy. The partnership has been based on representatives from the county administrative board, the county labour board, associations of local authorities, *Göteborgsregionen*, university/college, chambers of industry and commerce, business associations, SAF, LO, SACO, TCO, LRF and the region of Västra Götaland. Politically the work has been co-ordinated by the committee of regional development in Västra Götaland, in addition, two thematic groups were occupied with issues of competence and changes in the rules.⁶¹ The business sector, in the form of private companies, also participated on the sub-regional level.⁶²

It is also stated in the regional growth agreement of 2000–2002 that the work taking place in the partnerships needs to be developed in order to find better forms of working as a way to attract the most important actors, and to develop a greater breadth to the process.⁶³ There is however no mention of who has represented the county administrative board, and to what extent environmental representatives and competences have been part of the process. Concerning the proposal for the regional development programme of 2004–2007 we do however learn that the proposal has been discussed with politicians in, for example, the environmental board of the region. To what extent these perspectives have been the responsibility of particular actors with a habit of pushing for these issues, or whether they have been the responsibility of the partnership at large, cannot however be discerned from the documentation alone.

⁶¹RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 6.

⁶²Ibid, p 7.

⁶³RTA Västra Götaland 2000–2002, p 7.

9 Summarising the Regional Documents

The regional document studies in the four countries indicate a number of differences and similarities in the way in which issues of SD and particularly, ecological sustainability, are dealt with in the context of the regional growth and development programming processes.

In the *Danish regions* of Storstrøm and Nordjylland we find that SD – which is mostly discussed in terms of ecological sustainability – is dealt with differently in different regional documents and in different parts of the same documents. This means that SD is not dealt with consistently in the regional documents, possibly also reflecting the fact that different organizations and actors have been involved in the drafting of the different parts of the documents. SD and ecological sustainability are explicitly presented as one of several overarching regional goals in the introduction of the regional plans. The need to work actively with environmental issues – in the form of clean technologies, green tourism, green growth and business development etc. – are clearly stated in the plans, as is the need to turn these perspectives into practical politics. When reading documents specifically related to the field of regional development and growth we find the same general goal-statements but when it comes to discussing the potential of working with these issues less is said. Economic growth is at the heart of the argument in both regions, though environmental issues are not, it seems, seen as strategically contributing to this growth. Neither is it mentioned in relation to the directives formulated for concrete projects in the regional development programme of Storstrøm, for example. In Nordjylland the report on regional development, which focuses on the development potentials and factors for growth in the region, does not mention SD. In the strategy for growth and development SD is however discussed more in terms of long-term perspectives and dynamic growth than that of ecological sustainability. We can thus draw the conclusion that SD is mostly used as a general goal-statement rather than an integrated part of regional policies and a concrete regional strategy. In the regional plans the concept is elaborated, as are the advantages of working with it. Less is however said of this in other regional documents. At the same time we find, in both regions, a number of concrete projects and initiatives directed at the greening of business and growth indicating that practical possibilities are indeed seen and pursued by at least some of the regional actors. In general however, there is no mention of any potential conflict of interest or of the difficulty in combining different goals in the regional pro-

gramming processes, in the regional documents. The benefits of the partnership approach are highlighted, but we learn little of the organisation of these, or of the role SD plays within them.

The Finnish regions of Keski-Suomi and Satakunta have seen active attempts to integrate economic development and SD in its three dimensions, and there have also been some innovative and pro-active programme processes related to SD, which were behind the case study selection (e.g. thematic working groups and the presence of key persons involved in the promotion of SD in terms of regional development). The focus on SD is not as such seen to be in contradiction to the strong industrial base of these regions, though it is naturally reflected in the way in which the balance between the different dimensions of SD is addressed in strategic documents regionally. Both regions have a firm industrial base, while also relying on agriculture and primary industries. Among the most important employers in Satakunta are for instance the Finnyards shipbuilding yard (in Rauma), as well UPM-Kymmene, Metsä Rauma, Kemira Pigments, the Outokumpu Poricopper and Outokumpu Harjavalta Metals (copper smelter). One of the recent developments of particular relevance for the region was the decision in 2002 by the Finnish government to build a third nuclear power plant unit in Olkiluoto (the decision over the selection of the disposal site for nuclear fuel in Eurajoki was made in 2000). Needless to say, this issue is of great relevance in Satakunta, and the impact is considerable both on regional development and on SD. In the Keski-Suomi region the main industrial employers are found within the paper industries, where companies such as Metso, UPM-Kymmene and M-Real are part of the largest regional structure in Keski-Suomi, employing nearly 9 000 people in Central Finland. Importantly for the theme at hand, the regional centre of expertise implementing the national Centre of Expertise programme specializes (among other things, i.e. in addition to the main clusters of the paper industry and IT) on environmental technology (waste treatment and biotechnology, process industry ecology and the handling and utilization of recovered and mixed fuels). Most typically the inclusion of SD in the more 'mainstream' regional development work is done through the EIA process (thus being located on the project level), but also by cross-sectoral thematic working groups involved in programme drafting (implying a more holistic approach).

Both in Keski-Suomi and in Satakunta the regional development programmes address SD in the main as an eco-

logical issue, seeing it largely as a resource to be developed and utilized in promoting regional attractiveness in the competition and profiling between regions. SD is addressed in regional documents in terms of the regional analysis, as well as the strategies and goals defined for the regional strategic work, though the definition of SD (as well as regional growth in explicit terms) is as such largely omitted from the documents. In terms of impact assessment, the environmental aspects of SD are included in the programme, though the overall programme indicators consist of purely quantitative socio-economic aspects (population, number of businesses and jobs, unemployment and employment). In the case of Keski-Suomi the concept of sustainable growth is identified as one of the strategic priorities, while in Satakunta, the 'maintenance and improvement of the environment as a means to increase regional attractiveness' is referred to.

Partnership is likely to become a central focus in the next stage of the research project. On the basis of the findings of the document analysis of the first stage we can however conclude that the partnerships are mainly outlined in terms of the formal Regional Management Committees that are broad-based partnership bodies, and where explicit environmental interests are mainly represented by the regional Environmental Centres. This is not to imply that other actors do not represent SD concerns, in fact there are both institutional (e.g. thematic working groups and guidance documents) and personal (e.g. individual civil servants working in regional councils with a SD interest) factors which have embedded the SD question more centrally within the regional development complex than in many other Finnish cases.

In the Norwegian regions of Oppland and Rogaland, the concept of 'Green Oppland' is associated with the sustainable use of natural resources, while as a region Rogaland also claims to promote the environmentally sound use of natural resources. In both regions SD appears as a prioritised goal in documents and programmes relating to regional growth and development. The focus on the ecological dimension is strong in both regions. In Oppland a broader concept of SD is however referred to in the regional plan. In Oppland we also notice a change between the regional development programme of 2002 and 2003 where, in the latter, the strategic dimensions of working with environmental sustainability are clearly emphasised, while in 2002 the concept appeared more as an overriding goal than as a strategic. The competitive advantages realisable in working with these issues are now emphasised, with the example of new environmental technologies being of particular importance. Similarly for Rogaland, 'sustainable ecological business' is a constant theme, as is the future potential to develop technologies relating to the use of natural resources. In Rogaland – a region with a significant level of dependence on oil, gas and fisheries – it is surprising that there is no mention of conflicts relating to the

continued use of natural resources, with the larger environmental debate in mind. Instead the potential for increasing prominence to be given to the above-mentioned areas of business is strongly indicated in the documents. In Oppland, goal-conflicts between industrial development, communications and environmental considerations are discussed in the regional plan but not in the more growth and development-oriented programmes. Here instead it is the possibility of combining different considerations that is emphasised rather than potential restrictions. In general then the inherent potentials in combining different interests in the programming processes are strongly assumed in both regions. The partnership-form of working is generally seen as being positive and efficient, even if the need to highlight and further develop elements of 'good practice' and methods of working are also stated. We do not however learn much about the organisation of these partnerships, or how the different interests are taken into consideration.

In the Swedish regions of Dalarna and Västra Götaland, both with the national status of being frontrunners in working with regional SD, we learn that ecologically sustainable growth and a green profile is presented both as a necessity and as a desired goal in each region. The concept reappears in different sections of the documents, both as a general goal and as a strategic priority. In Västra Götaland, the emphasis placed on sustainable growth is more pronounced in the later documents than, for example, in the growth agreement of 2000–2002. The focus on competitiveness and on the inherent potentials of combining the competitiveness and environmental agendas are also strongly emphasised both rhetorically and in practical initiatives. In Dalarna for example, the County Administrative board has stated that priority is to be given to companies that focus on ecological SD as a lever for growth. Both regions work with indicators for SD. In Dalarna a significant level of trust is invested in environmental certificates as an indicator of environmental sustainability and the rather vague 'elements of environmental profile'. In Västra Götaland we also find the characterisation of sustainable growth as having 'a basic ecological outlook' which is also rather vague. Conflicts of interest relating to sustainable regional development and to the combination of development and growth with environmental interests are however seldom discussed, problematised or acknowledged by the regions, with the exception of an appendix to the new proposal for the growth programme for 2004–2007 in Västra Götaland. Dalarna also states that infrastructure – an important aspect of regional development and also an area where potential conflicts often emerge between the different regional goals – are dealt with in documents other than the regional growth agreements. In general then, the field of regional development appears, according to the documents at least, to be free of conflict and clashes of interest, while the assumption that new technologies

and alternative solutions are available to ameliorate any potential conflicts that do emerge remains prevalent. The partnership-model seems to be widely accepted by the regions although it is also stated in the case of Dalarna that it is not always easy to get the various parties to accept the message of SD, or to work more seriously with environmental sustainability. In Västra Götaland we also learn that two out of four sub-regions are criticised for their way of working with, and integrating, SD. There is then a lot of work left to do, even in such 'progressive' regions. In both of these regions, partnership models are currently being further elaborated. The role SD plays within these partnerships is not however clear to discern from the documentation.

We have therefore provided a document-based analysis of eight examples of regional documents, which in different respects and within different regional development contexts try to work with, or integrate, the goal of SD in its various guises into different aspects of their regional growth and development programming processes.

What can be concluded from these examples is that in most cases SD is still equated with ecological sustainability. Examples are now readily available of regions now at-

tempting to address the three dimensions of SD, and in some cases the partnership-method may in fact emerge as an instrument in this more 'holistic' approach. Such examples include, cross-sectoral working groups and goal-setting across sectoral boundaries. This question will be addressed in more detail in the second phase of this project. Partnership does not however do away with the predominantly person- or institution-based approaches to SD: it simply provides them with a new and broader forum. The potential to achieve a more holistic approach to SD seems to be provided by areas of innovation, which can cross sectoral boundaries (environmental technology for instance in the Finnish and Norwegian cases). Goal conflicts however remain (e.g. in relation to the nuclear power issue in the case of Satakunta, or energy usage in Rogaland), though in most cases, such conflicts remain invisible in the documents. In the next stage of our investigation it is hoped that discussion with the partners to the partnerships will shed more light on the processing of these goal conflicts and thus on the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership-approach to regional development programming in its attempt to provide a more multi-vocal arena for regional strategy formation.

Section 4

Final Observations, Questions and Conclusions

10 Final Observations, Conclusions and Questions

10.1 Over All Observations

The most important outcome from this stage of the project is to generate and identify a larger cluster of relevant research questions, as this is an explorative study representing the first of two inter-connected project phases. In the observations presented below, conclusions are drawn based, on the one hand, on an overview of the different national contexts, documentary materials and interviews, and on the other hand, on the analysis of the various regional texts. The conclusions that we can draw from the latter are tentative and will thus mainly serve as a way of posing further questions that will be further elaborated upon in the next phase of the project where we will attempt to go into greater depth on some of the different regional contexts by means of focus-group interviews. At this stage the regional analyses have mainly provided us with some limited examples of the ways in which the national context of SD, with their contextual and regulative frameworks, have already influenced the final outcomes of the regional development programmes (the actual texts). The next stage will consist of delving deeper into the processes relating to why, how and what took place between the national requirements and the regional programmatic outcomes (and in particular what role the partnership methodology played in this process).

In relation to the national context, the situation regarding the national policy goals, declarations and actual activities (projects and policy measures) that promote the inclusion of SD in regional growth and development programming work in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden seem to be the following:

- All four Nordic countries have general national SD strategies, but the degree to which SD is explicit in national policies and documents regarding regional growth and development, varies. Finland and Sweden have an explicit focus on SD while robust and balanced regions are the focus in Norway and Denmark.
- There are clear differences between the various countries in the extent to which the national authorities have taken measures to promote or secure the implementation of SD in regional programming. Denmark seems to represent one end of the scale, where SD at the national level is assumed to play the role of an overriding goal but where the main initiatives are left for the regions to take (which in itself is in line with the

decentralised regional policy implementation in Denmark more generally). Norway, in the main, seems similar to Denmark in this regard, with the exception that in the past significant effort has been invested in the promotion of the 'greening' of business and industry through the Industrial and Regional Development fund. In addition, the Regional Development Programmes (RUP) are expected to play a role in furthering SD. In the Swedish case there is a clear central-level regulative structure, with national SD guidelines, guide-books, and national regional development regulations including SD etc., as well as a more regionalised process whereby dialogues with regions are facilitated in relation to regional growth agreements (RTP) and regional development programmes (RUP). The Finnish case exhibits clear national-level dominance, as it is national level legislation that demands impact assessment as a part of all regional programming work. Differences in the ability of regions to implement SD in their own context of course vary, while the national level seeks to facilitate some processes of dialogue and learning, mainly through the Ministry of the Environment.

How then is the issue of SD interpreted and implemented at the regional level, particularly in regional programming documents from the eight regions in the four countries? The following summarizes the observations based on the textual analysis and the national level interviews:

- All four Nordic countries investigated here provide examples of regions where SD is an important part of the current regional programming document and where concrete measures have also been taken to promote SD within the regional development context.
- SD work is interpreted differently in the regions studied but mostly it is viewed in terms of ecological sustainability.
- Win-win solutions for SD and increasing regional competitiveness seem to sum up the predominant rhetoric and focus in the programmes. Potential goal-conflicts are generally not acknowledged on the programme level.
- The main driving forces/rational behind including SD in the programmes appears to be the possible promotion of economic growth and the potential for welfare

gains. The gains from SD-integration are however not always clear among regional actors.

- It is generally unclear from the study so far what role and status SD has in concrete regional development work, and from the general SD policy statements, what has actually been implemented through for example the formulation and financing of regional development projects and initiatives. This will be a particular point of interest in the second stage of our study, beginning in the autumn of 2006.
- Partnerships are the main planning approach in pro-

grammatic development work, but specific information about the organisation and role of the partnerships in relation to SD cannot be found to any larger extent in the documents. Increasing our knowledge of the institutional and socio-cultural aspects of partnership processes and SD-integration is thus particularly central in phase two of the project.

In relation to the bullet points above the following comments concerning SD, SD in the regional context, and the partnership format can be made from the study.

10.2 Sustainable Development in Terms of National Policy for Regional Growth and Development

Sustainable development is defined as an important goal in the national SD strategies of all four countries. In the main it is the broad SD-definitions of the Bruntland commission that are most often referred to, with the expectation that SD be integrated into all policy areas. The environmental perspective of SD tends to dominate the interpretations of SD made in the documents and interviews, which some interviewees express frustration at. In Finland, SD is addressed on the national level as a broadly based policy objective contributing to economic growth, regional competitiveness and welfare. In Sweden the concept of 'sustainable growth' is used in the regional development context. In Finland the notion of sustainable regional growth has only recently made its entrance into policy documents in regional development, motivated and inspired in the main by the EU's Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies. This is apparent for instance in the Regional policy report from the government of April 2004. In Denmark and Norway the SD approach in general focuses on

robust and balanced regions i.e. seeks to create equal development opportunities across the national territory. In the national documents concerning regional development, SD is not mentioned at all in Norway and Denmark. The interviewees in these two countries also derided the lack of effort in making SD operational and more effectively integrating it into regional development policy. Thus far then SD has emerged as an overriding political goal, though in practice it has not made a major imprint on regional development policy at the national level. In this sense, national policy integration has not come about. Some interviewees indicated that SD in these countries is an implicit goal. In Sweden and Finland on the other hand, national level political, administrative and legal efforts have been made to promote SD as a part of regional development policy. Here the question is what actually occurs in terms of regional growth and development practices, and what is seen on the ground, i.e. in policy measures and projects.

10.3 Integrating Sustainable Development and Finding Win-Win-Solutions?

Sustainable development is viewed, in most of the interviews and documents studied here, as an important issue in so far as it can contribute to regional development and economic growth. The future potential of integrating SD seems to lie here: if SD is promoted and increasingly operationalised as an element of, or as a prerequisite for, the promotion of regional competitiveness, growth and welfare. This then is where its political attraction lies. In some national level documents SD is explicitly seen as contrib-

uting to increasing regional competitive advantages, namely, that 'it pays off' to work with green business solutions and that regions assume that a greener profile for the region will attract tourists and immigration to the region, etc. At the same time, representatives from the Norwegian Industrial and Regional Development fund, for example, perceive a lack of incentives and demands from the market and the state in relation to public purchasing. This means that the competitive advantages may be over estimated.

On the other hand, the Swedish Business and Development Agency¹ has shown that Swedish small and medium sized companies that have a broad SD strategy experience cost savings, sales increases and improvements in their corporate 'image' though this is also accompanied by an rise in the risk level. This situation implies that thus far, in the context of regional development policy we are in a trial-and-error phase. The practical gains for regions and companies in working with, and promoting, SD are not that well known and we do not yet have a firm empirical basis to make claims about the usefulness of SD for regional development on an instrumental and measurable basis. This includes for example the possibility of combining different aspects of sustainable development, and environmental policies with innovation policies. In Finland regionally based cluster policies and innovation activities exist where the integration of different aspects of SD are addressed, such as in the energy cluster in Jyväskylä or the welfare and care sectors in Pori. Other examples can also be found in the interviews and documents studied. Interestingly, this is independent of the extent to which these SD-questions are emphasised in the national policy documents. Despite these examples the general image is however one of 'win-win'solutions appearing as challenging policy-statements and something to strive for rather than concrete realities. These and other challenges of working with SD in practice, related to socio-cultural, institutional and organisational aspects are currently being analysed in

an ongoing Swedish research project.² The driving forces, practices and challenges of working with SD are however not possible, in any detail, to extract from the documents we have studied but will remain an important issue in the next phase of the project.

Previous studies, presented above in the introduction, show a clear tendency when it comes to the integration of environmental aspects into other policy areas to face trouble being prioritised in relation to traditionally strong economic and other interests. This also seems to concern the field of regional growth and development, as indicated by previous evaluations. In a number of the interviews undertaken here, actors working with regional growth and development instead express a frustration that environmental aspects have too strong a focus, as SD in many minds is seen as being equivalent to ecological sustainability rather than encompassing all three dimensions (e.g. also including the social and economic aspects). In their minds their role is not all of a sudden to begin to work with ecological dimensions per se simply for the general good of it, but to the extent that ecological aspects benefit regional growth and development, as their role is to work solely with the economic dimension. These interviewees thus do not speak in terms of a total transformation of their day-to-day work, but rather of finding new SD paths and working with green business initiatives and the likes, when this is beneficial from the point of view of economic growth.

10.4 The Role and Function of Partnerships?

The partnership approach is used in all of the regional cases studied here and interviewees see this as a good way in which to involve actors and perspectives in the process of regional growth and development. From the regional documents and the interviews with national representatives we do not however learn that much about how these partnerships are in practice organised, or how they function, who gets to participate, who is excluded and how different perspectives and SD dimensions are included in the partnership constellations. In most cases the national interviewees were keen to emphasise the need to enable and promote the development of regional competences within the cognate field of SD, as this was seen as one of the prerequisites both for achieving a holistic perspective on SD, and for drafting better monitoring and development tools for SD (indicators, project selection methods etc). At the same time it was also acknowledged that, on the national level at least, greater expertise and experience is needed in order to encourage and achieve successful integration.

The interviews clearly indicate the importance of the knowledge, initiatives and ambitions of the actors involved as influential to what happens with SD-ambitions in the regional development programming process. How a cross-sectoral issue like SD is managed within the partnerships and among actors with different competences and knowledge demands is however something that needs to be further elaborated in the coming focus groups. What solutions will be created to further the exchange of information and knowledge over sectoral and organisational borders? The question of who represents or speaks for the different dimensions of SD is also important for the future: to what extent are specific representatives part of the partnerships, and do they come solely from the public sector or also from the private or voluntary sectors? The question of who holds the pen in the writing processes, the relationships

¹Nutek 2003.

²Sustainable Development and Economic Growth – Socio-cultural Conditions in the Swedish Regional Programming Processes: A joint research project including Nordregio, the Royal Institute of Technology and Linköping University. Financed by the Swedish MISTRA.

Table 5. Partnership style according to Östhol and Svensson

		Partnership model	
		Public	Public-private
<i>Policy Style</i>	<i>State-led</i>	Partnerships as an integral part of regional policy Norway	Partnership as a contract between authorities and regional agents Sweden
	<i>Regional</i>	Partnerships as platform for negotiated policies Finland	Partnership as basis for formation of innovative institutions Denmark

Source: Östhol and Svensson 2002, p 241.

and roles between the smaller and larger partnerships, the working groups and the different actors within them, all ought to be important, not least from the perspectives of power, influence and the potential of integrating the various SD-perspectives. Such questions are thus far generally unclear from the interviews, with the exception that we know that the Danish Ministry of the Environment is a part of the growth co-operation, but that they have been asked not to take a 'hands off' approach in terms of the regional actors. The form and function of the different partnerships at large however remain rather invisible at this stage.

From the general literature, different forms of partnerships in the Nordic countries can be discerned from the table above.

The partnership-models are not only nationally specific; rather there is also great regional variation as to how they are constructed and operationalised. The role of the

overall policy style and its relation to the differences in national efforts to promote SD at the national level, and in the context of regional development policy, will also be an important future question.

Within our study, the national interviewees were in most cases keen to emphasise the need to enable and promote the development of regional competence within the cognate field of sustainable development, as this was seen as one of the prerequisites, both for achieving a holistic perspective on sustainable development, and for drafting better monitoring and development tools for sustainable development (indicators, project selection methods etc.). Here partnership was seen as one important element in mobilizing the competence needed and in committing the relevant actors and organizations. At the same time it was also acknowledged that, on the national level at least, more expertise and experience is needed in order to encourage and achieve successful integration.

10.5 SD and the Role of Conflicting Values and Interests?

Based on the statements above we can draw the conclusion that the rationale for focusing on SD in the regional development and growth context is that it should and is able to contribute to regional economic growth. We cannot, from this material alone, find indications of expectations concerning the need for more profound or long-term changes in the practical work with regional development that SD requires new competences and a broader debate across traditional sectoral and organizational borders. In the main it is the people working with SD questions in the national authorities and departments that flag up the need for this competence development, but their voice may not hold sway in competition with the more traditional economic

growth-concerns. The changes spoken of mostly concern innovation and product-development in relation to the potential for regional development, rather than the need for new perspectives, organisational changes, policy-learning etc. The belief in progress and development is generally strong and there is moreover not much discussion of the potential challenges and conflicts involved when attempting to combine perspectives that have traditionally been seen to be in conflict. In the process of integrating environmental considerations into the field of regional growth and development, conflicts must however be assumed to appear and the need for tough choices to be made. The conflicts inherent in concepts such as regional enlarge-

ment that call for more transport linkages, the oil dependence in Rogaland, building more nuclear power facilities in Satakunta etc., are not problematized as they are seen to bring economic and other benefits. From a research point of view, the question of what efforts are actually made within the context of regional SD is important to pose: will the really challenging efforts related to transport, greenhouse gas reductions etc., be at all relevant for actors within the regional growth and development arena, or will efforts be made in areas where simple gains and 'win-win'-solutions can be found? Here it is worth noting however that the main focus in our study is on the ecological aspects of SD, which in itself may lead us to these conclusions. The chance that the efforts made and put into practice are little more than symbolic clearly also needs to be considered. The importance of finding and working with 'win-win' solutions should of course not be belittled since these initiatives are clearly one step towards integrating environmental concerns into the regional growth and development arena, but the question of what is accomplished and what is not in the name of regional SD cannot be ignored.

There is also the fact to consider, as expressed in one of the Norwegian interviews, that the assessment of the ecological dimensions of regional growth and development projects is often done by businesses themselves when they put a mark in a square saying 'project will benefit the environment', which in itself poses important questions over what these words actually stand for, and on what considerations such a judgement is actually based. Similar issues were raised in relation to the prioritisation of 'ecologically beneficial' projects in the Finnish case relating to the Struc-

tural Funds. Who is to decide what a 'green project' is, and when a project can be considered sustainable? Moreover, how is this currently measured and assessed? The same interviewee also indicated that the ability to evaluate different project applications in accordance with SD-dimensions varies greatly. The fact that different interpretations are made of what is sustainable is also indicated in the Finnish context. In addition, the fact remains that there does not seem to be that much money available for initiatives attempting to integrate the ecological and economic dimensions of SD. The percentage of such projects in the regional growth and development arena seems to be rather small (with the possible exception of the Finnish goal that 20–30 percent of projects must have an environmental profile), while the level of competitiveness with traditional projects is strong. The Norwegian Industrial and Regional Development fund currently have no earmarked money; instead green initiatives compete on the same terms with more traditional projects. In the light of the examples studied then we can be reasonably confident in claiming that the profound reformation of the regional growth and development sector does not yet therefore appear to be at hand. Here it is also important to consider the issue of time perspectives, as the projects funded generally risk being of a short-term character, which should influence the overall performance in the long-term of SD. What actually happens in practice to the larger political ambitions for surrounding the SD concept is an issue that is fraught with uncertainty, and thus the need for more research on implementation issues remains. The question of what drives or hinders SD-integration within concrete projects also demands further study.

10.6 Conclusions and Questions

The first phase of the project reported here was designed to provide a basis for phase 2 by giving us:

- A systematic overview of four Nordic countries concerning the national regional development policy systems.
- A systematic overview of the national level situation concerning regional development policy and the role of this field as an arena for implementing SD in the four countries.
- Examples of how SD has been interpreted and approached in the regional programming context in a number of front-runner regions.

The aim of the second phase of the project is to understand the special circumstances that prevail in the implementation of SD, particularly in relation to the partnership approach in regional programming work. The partnership

approach provides quite a different context for the integration of environmental issues as compared for example to municipal comprehensive land use planning, where there is little experience of integration. The question then is if the partnership mode of planning/programming provides, in some respects, better or worse preconditions for integration? The aim of the coming phase is also to broaden our knowledge of the process behind the production of the documents studied in phase one and reported here – concerning for example conflicts, debates, and perspectives on how different actors perceive each other and the fields they represent, and why certain issues became important and others do not – all in relation to the goal of integrating environmental issues into regional development work with a view to implementing SD. The next phase is intended to give us greater insight into the strengths and weaknesses as well as the main challenges of

the partnership approach in three of the eight regions studied here. Some tentative questions following the current overview study to be investigated in phase 2 of the project include:

- What are the main driving forces and the explicit rational, behind the implementation of SD in the partnership (legislation, regulations, competitive advantage, innovation etc)?
- How do the regions perceive the role of the national level, in terms of pressure and measures, in promoting the implementation of SD? Do they perceive national level measures to be helpful?
- What role do the different partnerships (small, large etc.) play in relation to SD? How is the SD work in relation to regional development programming being practically organized in the region – thematic working groups, SD professionals, etc.?
- Which actor groups participate (NGOs, public bodies, private business etc.)? What role do different partnership-actors (or groups of actors) play, and what power-relations and interactions can be found between them? Who is responsible for the integration and inclusion of SD concerns? Can particular gatekeepers be found? Is it the environmental actors (mainly) – this would seem to support the finding that SD is still, in most cases, seen as environmental sustainability?
- Working in a partnership constellation is often seen as a particularly slow and cumbersome method – are there ways of getting around this (while not compromising the democratic ‘value added’?) – in most Nordic countries all decision-making is slow, because of the different processes and stages required in order to ensure that everyone gets heard – is partnership-based decision-making worse in this respect?
- How are the different aspects of SD handled concretely in the partnership (the difference between words and action): what priorities are made and how are they motivated? How, and to what extent, is SD dealt with in relation to the various goals, projects, propositions etc? What role do goal-conflicts play in practice?
- What practical measures and tools have been taken and adopted to promote the SD capacity of the partnership? What practical measures and tools have been taken and adopted in order to have an impact on the development and funding of projects than, on the concrete level, can promote SD?
- What are the general lessons of working with SD in regional growth programming processes? Are there any examples of cases/regions where the integration of the three aspects of SD have been particularly successful and if so, what does this depend upon? Finally, what role do organisational aspects play?

Section 5

References and Appendices

References

- Asplund, E., and Hilding-Rydevik, T., (2001) *Arena för hållbar utveckling. Aktörer och processer*.
- Bergström, G., and Boréus, K., (2000) *Textens mening och makt. Metodbok i samhällsvetenskaplig textanalys*. Studentlitteratur: Lund.
- Berninger, K., (2003) *How to assess environmentally beneficial effects of projects in EU Regional Development Programmes*. Helsinki: The Ministry of the Environment.
- Bjarnadóttir, H., and Bradley, K., (2003) *Ny kurs för Norden – planering och hållbar utveckling*. Nordregio R2003:2. Stockholm.
- Briggs, C. L., (1987) *Learning how to ask: A sociolinguistic appraisal of the role of the interview in social science research*. Cambridge University Press.
- Clement, K, Bradley, K., and Hansen, M., (2004) *Environment and Sustainable Development Integration in the Nordic Structural Funds*. Nordregio report R2004:7. Stockholm.
- Clement, K., and Hansen, M., (2001) *Sustainable regional development in the Nordic Countries*. Nordregio report 2001:8. Stockholm.
- Commission of the European Communities (1998) *Environmental Appraisal of Regional Development Plans and EU Structural Funds Programmes: A Handbook for Programme Managers*. Environmental Resource Management. London.
- Dovlén, S., (2005) *Communicating Professional Perspectives. Local Government and Spatial Planning for Sustainability*. Royal Institute of Technology, department of Regional Planning, Trita-Infra 04-040. Doctoral thesis.
- Dovlén, S., (2001) *On the Communication of Professional Environmental Perspectives in Land-Use Planning* Royal Institute of Technology, department of Regional Planning, Trita-IP FR 01-96. Licentiate thesis.
- EU Commission (2002) *The Thematic Evaluation on the Contribution of the Structural funds to Sustainable Development*. Vol 1 and 2.
- Forsberg, B., (2002) *Lokal Agenda 21 för hållbar utveckling – En studie av miljöfrågan i tillväxtsamhället*. Statsvetenskapliga institutionen, Umeå universitet. Doktorsavhandling.
- Gabriel, I., and Narodoslawsky (1999) *Regions – Cornerstones for Sustainable Development*. Austrian Network Environmental Research.
- Hajer, M. A., (1995) *The Politics of Environmental Discourse. Ecological Modernisation and the Policy Process*. Oxford University Press.
- Hedén, J., (2002) “Critical Notes on sustainability and democracy”, in Svedin, U., and Hägerhäll Aniansson, B., (eds.) *Sustainability, Local Democracy and the Future: The Swedish Model*. Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Hellspong, L., and Ledin, P., (1997) *Vägar genom texten. Handbok i brukstextanalys*. Studentlitteratur: Lund.
- Hilding-Rydevik, T, Clement, K., Bradley, K., and Hansen, M., (2004) *Tools for Sustainable Regional Development. Experiences and Prospects*. Nordregio report R2004:4, Stockholm.
- Hilding-Rydevik, T., (2000) *Final comments and conclusions*. In: Hilding-Rydevik, T., (ed.) *Regional Development Programmes and Integration of Environmental Issues – the role of Strategic Environmental Assessment*. Proceedings from the Nordic seminar in Stockholm, Sweden, 21 May 1999. Nordregio working paper WP 2000:9, Stockholm.
- Håkansson, M., (2005) *Kompetens för hållbar utveckling. Professionella roller i kommunal planering*. Royal Institute of Technology, department of Regional Planning, Trita-Infra 05-015. Doctoral thesis.
- Håkansson, M., (2001) *The Strive for Sustainability. The perspective of Professions and Professionals in Local Environmental Work*. Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm. Trita-IP Fr 01-92. Licentiate thesis.
- Isaksson, K., (2004) *Hållbarhet – avvägningar, prioriteringar, utmaningar*. Kommunen och territoriet 4. Kungl Tekniska Högskolan, Inst för Infrastruktur, Trita-Infra 04-003. Stockholm.
- Isaksson, K., (2001) *Framtidens trafiksystem? Maktutövningen i konflikterna om rummet och miljö i Dennispaktets vägfrågor*. Linköpings universitet, Tema Teknik och social förändring. Motala.
- John, P., (2001) *Local Governance in Western Europe*. London: Sage.
- Jouve, B., and Lefèvre, C., (2002) “Urban power structures: territories, actors and institutions in Europe” in Jouve, B., and Lefèvre (eds.) *Local power, territory and institutions in European metropolitan regions*. London: Frank Cass.
- Kelleher, J., Batterbury, S., and Stern, E., (1999) *The Thematic Evaluation Of The Partnership Principle: Final Synthesis Report*. London: The Tavistock Institute.
- Kvale, S., (1997) *Den kvalitativa forskningsintervjun*. Studentlitteratur: Lund.
- Lafferty, . M., and Narodoslawsky (eds.) (2003) *Regional Sustainable Development in Europe*. Prosus, Oslo.
- Lafferty, W. M., and Eckerberg, K., (1998) *From the Earth Summit to Local Agenda 21. Working Towards Sustainable Development*. Earthscan: London.
- Lidskog, R., and Elander, I., (2000) “Environmental policies and urban planning in Sweden”, in Nicholas Low et al. (ed.) *Consuming Cities. The Urban Environment in the Global Economy after the Rio Declaration*. Routledge: London.

- Linell, P., (1994) *Transkription av tal och samtal: Teori och praktik*. Tema K arbetsrapport: Linköpings Universitet.
- Lovering, J., (1999) "Theory Led by Policy: The Inadequacies of the 'New Regionalism'" (Illustrated from the case of Wales). *Int Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 1999, vol 23, No 2, pp 379–395.
- Low, N., et.al. (2000) *Consuming Cities. The Urban Environment in the Global Environment after the Rio Declaration*. Routledge: London
- Marks, G., (1993) "Structural policy and multi-level governance in the EC" in Cafruny and Rosenthal (eds.) *The State of the European Community, Vol. 2 The Maastricht Debates and Beyond*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- Merriam, S. B., (1994) *Fallstudien som forskningsmetod*. Studentlitteratur: Lund.
- Mishler, E. G., (1987) *Research interviewing. Context and narrative*. Harvard University Press.
- Nationalkommittén för Agenda 21 och Habitat (2002) *Från vision till handling*. Stockholm.
- Naturvårdsverket (2001) *MKB under utveckling. Tidiga erfarenheter av MKB enligt miljöbalken och förslag på fortsatt utvärdering*. Rapport 5150. Stockholm.
- Nutek (2005) Tre strategier för hållbar utveckling. Miljö, jämställdhet och integration i regional utveckling. Nutek B2005:1. Stockholm.
- Östhol, A., and Svensson, B., (2002) "Conclusions on Regional Partnership and Institutional Change in the Nordic Area" in Östhol and Svensson (eds.) *Partnership Responses – Regional Governance in the Nordic states*. Stockholm: Nordregio.
- Owens, S., (1997) "Giants in the path. Planning, sustainability and environmental values", in *Town Planning Review* vol 68, no 3.
- Owens, S., (1997) "Negotiated environments? Needs, demands and values in the age of sustainability", in *Environment and Planning A* vol 29.
- Riksrevisionsverket (1996) *Miljökonsekvensbeskrivningar i praktiken*. Stockholm.
- Savola, A., (2002) *Ympäristöjärjestelmistäkö apua ympäristönäkökohdat huomioon ottavaan alueelliseen kehittämistyöhön?* Luonnon artikkeliksi. [Draft article "Environmental systems as an instrument in environmentally aware regional development activity"]
- Schleicher-Tappeser, R., and Faerber, A., (1998) *Towards Sustainable Regional Development: Experiences and Recommendations of Seven European Regions* Institute for Regional Studies in Europe, Freiburg
- Schleicher-Tappeser, R., and Strati, F., (1999) *Progress Towards Sustainable Regional Development* EU RTD in Human Dimensions of Environmental Change Report Series 3/1999, DG Research, European Commission, Brussels;
- Schleicher-Tappeser et al (1999) *Instruments for Sustainable Regional Development: The INSURED Project* Institute for Regional Studies in Europe, Freiburg.
- Skantze, A., and Asplund, E., (2005) *Hållbar utveckling i praktiken – möten, gränser, perspektiv*. Kungl Tekniska Högskolan, Inst för Infrastruktur, Trita-Infra 05-011. Stockholm.
- Spaargarten, G., and Mol, A. P. J., (1992) "Sociology, Environment and Modernity. Ecological Modernisation as a Theory of Social Change", in *Society and Natural Resources* 5.
- Stake, R. E., (1995) *The Art of Case Study Research*. Sage Publications: London.
- Svensson, P.-G., and Starrin, B., (eds.) (1996) *Kvalitativa studier i teori och praktik*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Storbjörk, S., (2004) *Att prioritera miljöfrågor? Kommunpolitikerna och det lokala miljöarbetets villkor*. Kommunen och territoriet 5. Kungl Tekniska Högskolan, Inst för Infrastruktur, Trita-Infra 04-015. Stockholm.
- Storbjörk, S., (2001) *Vägskäl. Miljöfrågan, subpolitiken och planeringsidealets praktik i fallet riksväg 50*. Linköpings universitet, Tema Vatten i natur och samhälle. Motala.
- Sustainable European Regions Network (2004) *Cohesive Thinking Towards a Sustainable Future*. Final Report. www.sustainable-euroregions.net.
- UK Audit Commission (1998) *A Fruitful Partnership: Effective Partnership Working*. London: UK Audit Commission.
- Valve, H., (2002b) Evaluating learning potentials generated by EU Structural Funding programmes – reflections from two case studies. The Finnish Environment Institute. Submitted article.
- Vartiainen, P., (1998) *Suomalaisen aluepolitiikan kehitysvaiheita*. Helsinki: Sisäasianministeriö, 6/1998. [Stages in Finnish regional policy, Report published by the Ministry of the Interior]
- Westholm, E., (1999) "From State Intervention to Partnerships", in Westholm, E., Moseley, M., and Stenlås, N., (eds.) *Local Partnerships and Rural Development in Europe*. Dalarna Research Institute, Sweden and Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education, UK. Falun and Cheltenham.
- Yin, R. K., (2003) *Case Study Research. Design and Methods*. 3rd Edition. Sage Publications: London.

References to Material Used as a Basis for the Empirical Analysis (by Country)

Denmark

- EBST (1998) *Fremtidens TIC – en central aktør i national og regional erhvervsfremme*.
- KL (2000) "Blinde vinkler" i den statslige regionalpolitik.
- MIM (2003) *Et Danmark i balance. Hvad skal der gøres?*
- MIM (2002) *Planloven i praksis*.
- MIM (2002) *Overblik over statslige interesser i regionplanrevision 2005*.
- Regeringen (2002) *Fælles Fremtid – udvikling i balance*.
- ØEM (2003) *Den regionale vækststrategi*.
- ØEM (2003) *Den regionale vækststrategi. Retningslinier 2003–08*.
- ØEM (2003) *Handlingsplan for iværksættere*.
- ØEM (2002) *Vækst med vilje*. www.danmark.dk www.greencity.dk
- Nordjylland (2003) Nordjysk Erhvervsredegørelse.
- Nordjylland (1999) Nordjysk Regional Erhvervsudviklingsprogram (REUP) 1999–2003.

Nordjylland (2001) Nordjysk Regionplan.
 Nordjylland and Fyn (2003) Strategi for det jysk-fynske erhvervssamarbejde 2003–2005.
 Storstrøm (2004) Beretning Regionplan 2005–2017.
 Storstrøm (2002) DRUP-programmet 2002: formål og vejledning.
 Storstrøm (2003) Erhvervspolitisk handlingsplan.
 Storstrøm (2001) Regionplan 2001–2013.
 Storstrøm (2001) Årsrapport DRUP 2000–2001.
 www.n-ge.dk

Finland

Council of the State/Valtioneuvosto (1998) *Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös ekologisen kestävyys edistämisestä*. [Council of the State: Principle decision on the promotion on ecological sustainability from 1998 = “The governmental programme on promoting sustainability”.]
 Council of the State (2000) *Alueellinen kehitys ja aluepolitiikka Suomessa: työryhmäraportti*. (Working group report from the government: Regional development and regional policy in Finland).
 Council of the State (2001) *Tasapainoisen Kehityksen Suomi 2015: Valtioneuvoston tulevaisuusselonteko eduskunnalle*. (Finland: A Country of Balanced Development: The future report delivered to the parliament.)
 Council of the State (2003) *The Government Programme of Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Government of 24 June 2003*.
 Council of the State / Valtioneuvosto (2004) Valtioneuvoston päätös alueiden kehittämislain mukaisista valtakunnallisista alueiden kehittämisen tavoitteista. [Council of the State: Principle decision on national objectives for regional development according to the Regional Development Act.]
 Keski-Suomen liitto: Keski-Suomen maakuntasuunnitelma Regional Council of Keski-Suomi: Regional Plan of Keski-Suomi, Jyväskylä.
 Ministry of the Environment (2000) *Land Use and Building Act*. [Maankäyttö- ja rakennuslaki]
 Ministry of the Interior (1999a) *Hallituksen esitys Eduskunnalle laiksi rakennerahasto-ohjelmien kansallisesta hallinnoinnista annetun lain muuttamisesta*. (The governmental proposition on changing the law on national administration of the Structural Funds programmes.)
 Ministry of the Interior (1999b) *Laki rakennerahasto-ohjelmien kansallisesta hallinnoinnista* 30.12.1999/1353. (Act for the national administration of the Structural Funds).
 Ministry of the Interior (2000) *Objective Programme for regional development*, dating from November 2000, the new one being currently drafted.
 Ministry of the Interior (2002) *Regional Development Act* (602/2002).
 Ministry of the Interior (2003) *Huippuosaamisesta alueille kilpailukykyä*, Mid-term evaluation of the Finnish Centres of Expertise, Helsinki: Ministry of the Interior, 4/2003.
 Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (2001) *Sosiaali- ja terveyspolitiikan strategiat 2010 – kohti sosiaalisesti kestävää ja taloudellisesti elinvoimaista yhteiskuntaa*. Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriön julkaisuja 2001:3, Helsinki 2001.

Satakunnan Maakuntasuunnitelman 2000+ Ossallistumis- ja arviointisuunnitelma 2001. Valtioneuvosto 1998, 4.
 (Satakunta Regional Plan 2000+, Participation and evaluation plan. Council of the State. 1998, 4)
 Valtiovarainministeriö (1999) *Laki rakennerahasto-ohjelmien kansallisesta hallinnoinnista* 1353/1999. [Ministry of Finance: Law on national management of the Structural Funds programmes.] Available in Finnish at <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/smur/1999/19991353>
 Ympäristöministeriö (2001) *Suuntana menestyvä maakunta. Maakuntasuunnitelmatyöryhmän ehdotus*. Helsinki: Ympäristöministeriö, Suomen ympäristö 514. [Ministry of the Environment: Towards a successful region, Proposal from the working group for the development of regional plans]
 Ympäristöministeriö (2003) *Kestävän kehityksen kansallinen kokonaisarvio*. Helsinki: Ympäristöministeriö, Suomen ympäristö 623. [Ministry of the Environment: National Evaluation of Sustainable development.]

Norway

KRD (2000) *Miljøhandlingsplan 2001–2004*.
 Mariussen, Å., et al. (2000) *Evaluering av regionale utviklingsprogram i Norge*. Nordregio report 2000:5.
 MD (1998) *Nasjonale mål og interesser i fylkes- og kommunalplanleggingen*.
 MD (2003) *Skisse til Nasjonal handlingsplan for bærekraftig utvikling*.
 Oppland (2000) Fylkesplan 2000–2003, FP.
 Oppland (2002) Regionalt Utviklingsprogram, RUP.
 Oppland (2003) Regionalt Utviklingsprogram, RUP.
 Oppland (2004) Muligheteners Oppland. Regionalt handlingsprogram, RHP.
 Rogaland (2000) Evaluering av RUP.
 Rogaland (2000) Strategisk Næringsplan 2000–2003.
 www.Rogaland.no
 Rogaland (2003) Regionalt Utviklingsprogram.
 Rundskriv T-3/98B *Arbeidet med fylkesplanene*.
 SND, *Din miljøatsning – ikke bare for miljøets skyld men også et konkurransefortrinn*.
 SND (2002) *SND – aktiv samarbeidspartner fra idé til virkelighet*.
 St. red (2002) *Vekst i hele landet*.
 St. meld 34 (2000–2001) *Om distrikts- og regionalpolitikken*.
 St. meld 36 (2000–2001) *SND: Ny giv, ny vekst, nytt næringsliv*.
 St. meld 58 (1997–97) *Miljøvernpolitikk for en bærekraftig utvikling*.
 Vedtak HNK 18.06.2001.
 www.odin.dep.no/fd/

Sweden

Dalarna (1996) Med förenade krafter mot år 2007. Regional strategi för Dalarnas län.
 Dalarna (2000) Regionalt Tillväxtavtal.
 Dalarna (2003) Processen för hållbar utveckling i Dalarna inom ramen för länsstrategin och tillväxtavtalet.
 Dnr. 225-4675-01 (2001) *Överenskommelse om samarbete mellan NUTEK och Naturvårdsverket*.
 Förordning 1998:1634 om regionalt utvecklingsarbete.
 Näringsdepartementet (2000) *Tillväxt i hela Sverige*.

- Näringsdepartementet (2001) *Näringsdepartementets arbete för hållbar utveckling.*
- Näringsdepartementet (2002) *Rapport om tillväxtavtalen. Andra året.*
- Näringsdepartementet (2002) *Riktninglinjer för arbetet med regionala tillväxtprogram.*
- Naturvårdsverket (2002) *Bredda perspektiven – miljöintegration i tillväxtarbetet.*
- Naturvårdsverket (2002) *Det nya tillväxtarbetet. Förändringsarbete för hållbar utveckling.*
- Nordregio et al. (2000) *Regionala tillväxtavtal. Utvärdering av förhandlingsprocessen i sju län och på central nivå.*
- NUTEK (2001) *Tre näringspolitiska utmaningar – allianser för hållbar tillväxt.*
- NUTEK (2002) *Starka regioner. För nationell tillväxt i en global ekonomi.*
- NUTEK (2003) *Nationell samordning för regional utveckling.*
- Prop 2001/02:4 *En politik för tillväxt och livskraft i hela landet.*
- Prop 2001/02:7 *Regional samverkan och statlig länsförvaltning.*
- R.Skr 2001/02:50 *Hållbara Sverige – uppföljning av åtgärder för en ekologiskt hållbar utveckling.*
- R.Skr 2001/02:172 *Nationell strategi för hållbar utveckling.*
- Svenskt Näringsliv, *Från defensiva till proaktiva – företag och hållbar tillväxt.*
www.nutek.se
- Västra Götaland (1999) *En region att växa i. Regional utvecklingsstrategi för Västra Götaland*
- Västra Götaland (2000) *Tillväxt i Västra Götaland. Tillväxtavtal 2000–2002.*
- Västra Götaland (2003) *Förslag till Tillväxtprogram 2004–2007.*
- Västra Götaland (2003a) *Hållbar tillväxt i Västra Götaland. Stora utmaningar för en hållbar framtid.*
- Västra Götaland (2003b) *Hållbar tillväxt i Västra Götaland. Underlag med idéer för Tillväxtprogram och Regional Utvecklingsstrategi.*
- Västra Götaland (2003c) *Utmaningar för en hållbar framtid i Västra Götaland.*

Questions for Interviews with National Representatives

“Sustainable Regional Development and Growth in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden”

Personlig bakgrund

1. Berätta kort om din roll på NUTEK, Näringsdepartementet, EBST, KRД, SND ...

Regionalt utvecklings- och tillväxtarbete

2. A: Vilka är, som Du ser det, centrala aktörer när det gäller regional utvecklingsplanering och tillväxtarbete i x-land?
B: Är det någon skillnad formellt sett – enligt lagstiftningen – och informellt?
3. A: Vilka är, som Du ser det, de centrala planeringsinstrumenten för regional utveckling och tillväxt i x-land (regionala utvecklingsprogram, erhvervsudviklingsprogrammer, tillväxtavtal, vekstsamarbejden och liknande)?
B: Är det någon skillnad formellt sett – enligt lagstiftningen – och informellt?
4. Vilken roll spelar partnerskapsformen i det regionala utvecklings- och tillväxtarbetet?

Hållbar utveckling och miljöfrågor

5. A: Är hållbar utveckling och/eller miljöfrågor prioriterade på nationell nivå i x-land?
B: Vilka departement och myndigheter har hittills utvecklat sitt arbete med hållbar utveckling och/eller miljö mest i x-land?
C: Hur har man tolkat hållbar utveckling nationellt: handlar det om samspelet mellan ekonomiska, sociala och ekologiska aspekter eller är det mest traditionellt miljöarbete som avses?

Hållbar regional utveckling/tillväxt?

6. A: Tar det regionala tillväxt- och utvecklingsarbetet hänsyn till miljöaspekter och hållbar utveckling och finns det särskilda direktiv för detta?
B: Har man tolkat hållbar utveckling annorlunda inom ramen för det regionala utvecklingsarbetet jäm-

fört med mer traditionellt hållbarhetsarbete (exempelvis i termer av hållbar tillväxt)?

7. Om nej

A: Varför inte?

B: I vilka sammanhang lyfts hållbar utveckling i första hand fram?

C: Ser man överhuvudtaget en koppling mellan regionalt utvecklings- och tillväxtarbete och miljö/ hållbarhet, exempelvis att företag mer och mer måste vara medvetna om hållbarhet/ miljö för att bli betraktade som seriösa och konkurrenskraftiga?

D: Såsom det regionala utvecklingsarbetet är organiserat, partnerskap eller dylikt, bedömer Du att det underlättar eller försvårar för miljöfrågorna och dess företrädare att delta i det regionala utvecklings- och tillväxtarbetet?

8. Om ja

A: Är det samma aktörer och verktyg som är viktiga när man pratar om att lyfta fram miljö/hållbarhetsaspekter i det regionala utvecklings- och tillväxtarbetet eller ser det annorlunda ut då? (jfr fråga 1 och 2)

B: Såsom det regionala utvecklingsarbetet är organiserat, partnerskap eller dylikt, bedömer Du att det underlättar eller försvårar för miljöfrågorna och dess företrädare att delta i det regionala utvecklings- och tillväxtarbetet?

9. Om ja

A: Vilka nationella politiska och administrativa mål finns för att arbeta med hållbarhet och miljöfrågor i relation till regionalt utvecklingsarbete i x-land?

B: Sedan när och vad säger de i huvuddrag?

C: Upplever Du att dessa mål har tillräckligt genomslag i det regionala utvecklings- och tillväxtarbetet och hos de aktörer som jobbar med detta?

10. Om ja

A: Hur har Ni som myndighet tolkat dessa mål (vad handlar hållbar regional utveckling om för Er)? Finns särskilda strategier/ policydokument/ planer kring detta?

11. Om ja

A: Hur organiserar Ni det praktiska/konkreta arbetet med målen, vad gör Ni av målen i praktisk handling?

B: Har Ni utvecklat eller genomfört några nya/innovativa åtgärder eller arbetsmetoder inom detta område?

C: Vilket praktiskt genomslag har målen för ert arbete i stort (gäller det framför allt vissa projekt eller är det mer genomgående)?

Regionerna

12. A: Hur samarbetar Ni med regionerna och vilken roll har Ni i det regionala utvecklings- och tillväxtarbete som regionerna bedriver?

B: Hur driver Ni på de processerna (styrmedel, verktyg osv.)?

13. A: Vilket stöd finns för ett miljöanpassat/hållbarhetsinriktat tillväxt- och utvecklingsarbete ute i regionerna och exempelvis hos olika företag?

B: Vilka värden ser de med arbetet (att göra rätt för sig, följa nationella mål, konkurrenskraft osv.)?

C: Är det några särskilda regioner som kommit extra långt med detta?

14. A: Går det som Du ser det att i praktiken skapa situationer/projekt där miljöhänsyn förenas med tillväxt och regional utveckling, s.k vinna-vinna-situationer eller är detta mer ett mål att sträva efter?

B: Kan du ge konkreta exempel?

15. A: Hur skapar man sådana vinna-vinna-situationer, behöver de särskild uppmuntran eller kommer de av sig själva? B: Vilka aktörer/organisationer är mest viktiga – finns det "gatekeepers" som man måste aktivera först?

Utmaningar

16. Vad ser du som stora utmaningar för detta arbete att praktiskt nå en mer miljömässigt hållbar regional utveckling(splanering) i X-land? Några särskilda hinder och/eller möjligheter?

Något vi har glömt fråga om?

17. Något annat kring detta som du tycker är angeläget att ta upp och som inte har kommit upp under intervjun?

Haastattelurunko

”Kestävä kehitys pohjoismaisessa aluekehittämisessä: ohjelmavälineet ja alueellinen kumppanuus”

Nordregio, marraskuu 2003

Taustaa

1. Millainen on oma roolisi suhteessa ko. teemaan (alueellinen kehittäminen ja kestävä kehitys)? Miten keskeisenä pidät kysymyksenasetteluamme oman työsi ja oman ministeriösi näkökulmasta?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Alueellinen kehittäminen

2. Mitkä ovat nähdäksesi keskeisimmät toimijat alueellisen kehittämisen alalla – kansallisesti ja alueellisesti? Onko toimijaroolien suhteen eroa virallisen (lainsäädännöllisen) työnjaon ja ”todellisuuden” välillä?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Mitkä ovat nähdäksesi keskeisimmät alueellisen kehittämisen ohjelmalliset politiikkavälineet? Onko politiikkavälineiden suhteen eroa virallisen (lainsäädännöllisen) ja ”todellisen” sisällöllisen merkityksen välillä?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

4. Mikä on alueellisen kumppanuuden merkitys alueellisessa kehittämisessä? Parantaako kumppanuusmallin toteuttaminen alueellisessa kehittämisessä (a) toiminnan tehokkuutta ja tavoitteiden saavuttamista (b) demokraattisen päätöksenteon ja hallinnon laatua ja avoimuutta? Mitkä ovat nähdäksesi kumppanuusmallin suurimmat ongelmat tai heikkoudet? Entä vahvuudet?

.....
.....

.....
.....
.....

Kestävä kehitys ja ympäristönäkökulma

5. Ovatko kestävä kehitys ja ympäristönäkökulma nähdäksesi priorisoituja kysymyksiä alueellisen kehittämisen alalla Suomessa?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

6. Miten kestävä kehitys on tulkittu kansallisesti: sisältykö siihen taloudellisten, yhteiskunnallisten ja ekologisten aspektien vuorovaikutus vai korostuuko perinteisempi ympäristönäkökulma?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Kestävä kehitys ja alueellinen kehittäminen (“kasvupolitiikka”)

7. Alueellinen kasvu on korostunut viime vuosina alueellisen kehittämisen tavoitteena pohjoismaissa. Onko ”kasvun aluepolitiikassa” huomioitu ympäristönäkökohdat ja kestävä kehitys? Voitko tässä suhteessa mainita konkreettisia esimerkkejä säädöksistä, joissa tämä näkökulma olisi mukana?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Alakysymykset:

- Mikäli ei ole sisällytetty, miksi ei?
- Mikäli on sisällytetty, miksi? Missä yhteyksissä yhteys alueellisen kasvun tavoitteiden ja kestävä kehityksen tavoitteiden välillä on nostettu selvimmän esiin? (Ja kenen toimesta?)

- Mikäli kestävä kehitys on sisällytetty alueelliseen kehittämiseen, onko kestävä kehitys tulkittu eri tavoin alueellisen kehittämisen alalla ja perinteisen ympäristölähtöisen kestävä kehityksen alalla?

.....

8. Nähdäänkö kestävä kehitys kilpailutekijänä? (Esim. yrityselämän toimijoiden näkökulmasta? Onko Suomessa olemassa taloudellisia tai muita kimmokkeita yritysten motivoimiseksi kestävä kehityksen huomioimiseen?)

.....

9. Tukeeko tapa, jolla alueellinen kehittäminen on kansallisesti ja alueellisesti organisoitu nähdäksesi kestävä kehityksen huomioimista vai ei? Miten tässä suhteessa arvioisit ns. alueellisten kumppanuuksien merkitystä – voidaanko niiden avulla lähentää alueellista kehittämistä ja kestävä kehitystä toisiinsa?

.....

10. Missä määrin kestävä kehityksen ja alueellisen kehittämisen toimijat ovat samoja? Entä ohjelmalliset politiikkavälineet?

.....

Alakysymykset:

Mikäli vastauksesi oli myönteinen,

- a. Millaisia hallinnollisia tavoitteita on asetettu kestävä kehityksen ja alueellisen kehittämisen suhteen tiivistämiseksi? Milloin ja kenen aloitteesta tällaisia tavoitteita on asetettu?

.....

- b. Ovatko asetetut tavoitteet nähdäksesi riittäviä ja huomioivatko alueellisesta kehittämisestä vastaavat organisaatiot niitä riittävästi?

- c. Miten omassa työssäsi/omalla hallinnonalallanne on tulkittu näitä tavoitteenasetteluja? Onko tässä suhteessa olemassa erityisiä strategioita/asiakirjoja/ohjelmia?

.....

- d. Miten organisaatiossanne on käytännössä järjestetty tavoitteiden mukainen toiminta? (Kenellä on vastuu, miten tavoitteiden saavuttamista seurataan, rajoittuuko tiettyihin hankkeisiin vai toteutetaanko kautta linjan politiikkatyössä?)

.....

Alueellinen taso

11. Missä muodossa teet/teette yhteistyötä alueellisen tason kanssa ja mikä on roolinne aluehallinnon toteuttamisessa alueellisen kehittämisen toiminna? Onko roolinne prosesseja ohjaava vai niitä seuraava? (Vai jotain muuta?)

.....

12. Millaisia kimmokkeita on olemassa kestävä kehityksen ja alueellisen kehittämisen yhdistämiseksi esim. yritystoiminnassa?

.....

13. Miten arvioisit aluetason normatiivista motivaatiota kestävä kehityksen kohdalla – pyritäänkö aluetasolla ennen muuta (a) noudattamaan säädöksiä ja kansallisia tavoitteenasetteluja vai (b) onko tavoitteena esim. alueellisen kilpailukykyyn parantaminen, alueen profilointi ympäristöystävällisenä tms.?

.....

14. Voitko mainita esimerkkejä maakunnista, joissa olisi (a) toimittu erityisen aktiivisesti (b) saatu aikaa erityisen myönteisiä tuloksia suhteessa kestävä kehityksen

huomioimiseen ja edistämiseen alueellisessa kehittämisessä?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

15. Voidaanko alueellisen kehittämisen ja kestävän kehityksen suhdetta lähentämällä luoda ns. ”win-win” tilanteita? Syntyvätkö tällaiset tilanteet itsestään vai erityisten toimien tuloksena? (Mainitse mielellään esimerkkejä)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

16. Mitä toimijoita/organisaatioita pidät erityisen tärkeinä kestävän kehityksen ja alueellisen kehittämisen yhdistämisessä? Onko tässä suhteessa olemassa erityisiä ”portinvartijoita” eli sellaisia organisaatioita/toimijoita, jotka on aktivoitava tai ”voitettava puolelleen” ennen kuin tuloksia voidaan saada aikaan?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Haasteet

17. Mitkä ovat nähdäksesi suurimmat haasteet kestävän kehityksen ja alueellisen kehittämisen suhteen lähentämiseksi Suomessa? Mitkä ovat tässä suhteessa ratkaisevia esteitä tai mahdollisuuksia?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Muuta

18. Olemmeko unohtaneet kysyä jotain tärkeää tai onko sinulla muita näkökohtia/kommentteja, joita haluaisit nostaa esiin?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Kiitokset ajastasi!

Questions for Review of the Documents, 2004-01 -23

Sustainable Development in the Regional Development Context – a Nordic Overview

1 *The role and context of the document*

A brief description of the document. Title, date, time of validity, legal status and relation to other documents. Relation to growth-oriented regional development and sustainability.

2 *The use of the concept of sustainable development*

- In which connection is sustainability referred to? (Analysis, strategy, goals, instruments, indicators, other...?) (see also section 3)
- Is sustainability addressed as an economic, social and ecological concept?
- Is there any definition of sustainable development?
- If so, cite the definition and give the source (for example the Brundtland report)
- In what way is SD described, with what kind of terms?
- Is the description of SD consistent throughout the document or is the use of the concept ambiguous or fraught with conflicts? Does the meaning and use of the concept change?

3 *The status and integration of sustainable development*

- Is SD an overarching strategy or goal?
- Is SD recurring throughout the document? Where is SD or environment mentioned, in the introduction, in relation to concrete projects etc?
- In what way is SD or environmental issues integrated in the document? Is it an overarching value base or treated separately?
- Does it seem to be referred to because of the governmental expectations/regulations or are particular gains/recognised value added of SD mentioned as a goal in itself?

4 *The status of growth-oriented regional development*

- How is the growth orientation included? (Analysis, strategy, goals, instruments, indicators, other...?)
 - Is regional growth defined? If so: how?
 - What kind of qualitative and quantitative goals are set for regional growth/development?
- Is there any connection between sustainability and regional growth (e.g. is sustainability or its aspects defined as a means for competitiveness/as a means of creating win-win situations? (Analysis, strategy, goals, instruments, indicators, other...?) How are such connections discussed?

5 *The role of partnerships*

- Is there focus on partnerships – are they referred to and if so, in which context?
- Are partnerships included only as a formal requirement or are there substantive motivations for their inclusion?
- How is sustainability addressed in relation to partnerships? (e.g. are some actors, organizations or authorities required specifically to bear the responsibility for dealing with sustainability, are the roles defined explicitly?)
- Are there specific processes or working practices developed within the partnership model(s) that address sustainability? Has the organization of the partnership been inspired by, adapted to the needs to cover SD?

6 *Additional information*

Note any additional information of interest.

NORDREGIO PUBLICATIONS

REPORTS

Northern Peripheral, Sparsely Populated Regions in the European Union: Erik Gløersen, Alexandre Dubois, Andrew Copus and Carsten Schürman: (Nordregio Report 2005:4) 162pp. SEK 200. ISBN 91-89332-55-5

From Regional Development Coalitions to Commercial Innovations. Editor: Åge Mariussen. (Nordregio Report 2005:3) 106pp. SEK 150. ISBN 91-89332-54-7

Olaf Foss and Dag Juvkam: ***Patterns of Demographic Ageing and Related Aspects in the Nordic Peripheries.*** (Nordregio Report 2005:2) 97 pp. SEK 200. ISBN 91-89332-53-9

Hanell, Tomas & Neubauer, Jörg: ***Cities of the Baltic Sea Region – Development Trends at the Turn of the Millennium.*** (Nordregio Report 2005:1) 128 pp. € 35 ISBN 91-89332-52-0

Economic Renewal and Demographic Change: An evaluation of local labour market performance in the Nordic countries. Editor Lars Olof Persson . (Nordregio Report 2004:8) 166 pp. SEK 200 ISBN 91-89332-46-6

Keith Clement, Karin Bradley and Malin Hansen: ***Environment and Sustainable Development Integration in the Nordic Structural Funds: An Appraisal of Programming Documents.*** (Nordregio Report 2004:7) 162 pp. SEK 200 ISBN 91-89332-47-4

Spatial Development Trends: Nordic Countries in a European Context. Editors Susan Brockett and Margaretha Dahlström. (Nordregio Report 2004:6) 217 pp. SEK 275 ISBN 91-89332-45-8

Hovgaard, Gestur, Eythorsson, Gretar Thor and Fellman, Katarina: ***Future Challenges to Small Municipalities : The Cases of Iceland, Faroe Islands and Åland Islands.*** (Nordregio Report 2004:5) 78 pp. SEK 100 ISBN 91-89332-44-X

Tools for Sustainable Regional Development: Experiences and Prospects. Tuija Hilding-Rydevik et al. (Nordregio Report 2004:4) 203 pp. SEK 200. ISBN 91-89332-43-1

Innovations in the Nordic Periphery. Edited by Nils Aarsæther. (Nordregio Report 2004:3) 264 pp. SEK 350. ISBN 91-89332-42-3

Planning for Sustainable Development – the practice and potential of Environmental Assessment. Proceedings from the 5th Nordic Environmental Assessment Conference...2003. Edited by Tuija Hilding- Rydevik and Asdis Hlökk Theodorsdottir (Nordregio Report 2004:2) 324 pp. SEK 325. ISBN 91-89332-36-9

Mountain areas in Europe: Analysis of mountain areas in EU Member States, acceding and other European countries. (Nordregio Report 2004:1) 271 pp. Not for sale. ISBN 91-89332-35-0

Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programs: Nordic experiences in relation to the implementation of the EU directive 2001/42/EC. Edited by Tuija Hilding-Rydevik. (Nordregio Report 2003:4) 200 pp. SEK 200

Innovations, Regions and Projects: Studies in new forms of knowledge governance. Edited by Bjørn Terje Asheim and Åge Mariussen. (Nordregio Report 2003:3) 348 pp. SEK 350

- Bjarnadóttir, Hólmfríður och Bradley, Karin: *Ný kurs för Norden – planering och hållbar utveckling*. (Nordregio Report 2003:2) 145 s. SEK 150
- Clement, Keith, Hansen, Malin and Bradley, Karin: *Sustainable Regional Development: Learning From Nordic Experience*. (Nordregio Report 2003:1) 121 pp. SEK 150
- Restructuring the State – Regional Impacts : A Comparative Nordic Perspective*. Edited by Kaisa Lähtenmäki-Smith and Lars Olof Persson. (Future Challenges and Institutional Preconditions for Regional Development Policy; Volume 5) (Nordregio Report 2002:9) 134 pp. SEK 200
- Böhme, Kai: *Nordic Echoes of European Spatial Planning*: Discursive Integration in Practice. (Nordregio Report 2002:8) 367 pp. SEK 350
- Clement, Keith & Hansen, Malin: *Environmental Incentives for Nordic SMEs*. (Nordregio Report 2002:7) 91 pp. SEK 100
- Partnership Responses – Regional Governance in the Nordic states*. Editors Anders Östhol and Bo Svensson. (Future Challenges and Institutional Preconditions for Regional Development Policy; Volume 4) (Nordregio Report 2002:6) 278 pp. SEK 280
- Lähtenmäki-Smith, Kaisa: *Regimes of regional development and growth across Nordic regions*. (Future Challenges and Institutional Preconditions for Regional Development Policy; Volume 3) (Nordregio Report 2002:5) 50 pp. SEK 50
- Bærenholdt, Jørgen Ole: *Coping Strategies and Regional Policies - Social Capital in the Nordic Peripheries*. (Future Challenges and Institutional Preconditions for Regional Development Policy; Volume 2) (Nordregio Report 2002:4) 52 pp. SEK 50
- Nordic Perspectives on Process-Based Regional Development Policy*. Editors Markku Sotarauta and Henrik Bruun (Future Challenges and Institutional Preconditions for Regional Development Policy; Volume 1) (Nordregio Report 2002:3) 275 pp. SEK 280
- Hanell, Tomas, Aalbu, Hallgeir & Neubauer, Jörg: *Regional Development in the Nordic Countries 2002*. (Nordregio Report 2002:2) 154 pp. A4, Illustrations in colour. EUR 30
- Facing ESPON*. Editor Christer Bengs. (Nordregio Report 2002:1) 171 pp. SEK 200
- Local labour market performance in Nordic countries*. Editor Lars Olof Persson. (Nordregio Report 2001:9) 148 pp. SEK 150
- Clement, Keith & Hansen, Malin: *Sustainable regional development in the Nordic countries*. (Nordregio Report 2001:8) 130 pp. SEK 150
- Sandberg, Audun: *Institutional Challenges for Common Property Resources in the Nordic countries*. (Nordregio Report 2001:7) 51 pp. SEK 50
- EIA, large development projects and decision-making in the Nordic countries*. Editor Tuija Hilding-Rydevik. (Nordregio Report 2001:6) 239 pp. SEK 250
- Polsk-svensk handbook för planeringsbegrepp – Polsko-szwedki podręcznik pojęć z zakresu planowania przestrzennego*. (Nordregio Report 2001:5) 399 pp. SEK 400

Innovation and learning for competitiveness and regional growth. Editor Peter Maskell. (Nordregio Report 2001:4) 114 pp. SEK 125

Att forska om gränser. Redaktör José L. Ramírez. (Nordregio Report 2001:3) 211 pp. SEK 250

Cluster Policies – Cluster Development? A contribution to the analysis of the new learning economy. Edited by Åge Mariussen. (Nordregio Report 2001:2) 131 pp. SEK 150

A Comparative Study of Nordic EIA Systems: - Similarities and Differences in National Implementation. Edited by Hólmfríður Bjarnadóttir. (Nordregio Report 2001:1) 155 pp. SEK 150

Evaluering av regionale utviklingsprogram i Norge. Åge Mariussen et al. (Nordregio Report 2000:5) 106 pp. SEK 100

Study Programme on European Spatial Planning: Conclusions and Recommendations : The full report is included on CD-ROM. (Nordregio Report 2000:4) 31 pp. SEK 100

Environmental Assessment in the Nordic Countries – Experience and prospects. Proceedings from the 3rd Nordic EIS/SEA Conference, Karlskrona, Sweden 22-23 November 1999. Edited by Holmfridur Bjarnadóttir. (Nordregio Report 2000:3) 253 pp. SEK 250

Regions of the Baltic States. Marko Tiirinen et al. (Nordregio Report 2000:2) 253 pp. EUR 30

Future Challenges and Institutional Preconditions for Regional Policy. Four Scenario Reports. Edited by Ilari Karppi. (Nordregio Report 2000:1) 249 pp. SEK 250

Elling, B. ***Scenarier for Nordens Infrastrukturlandskab – Transportinfrastruktur, miljø og regional udvikling,*** Del II. (Nordregio Report 1999:6) 188 pp. SEK 200

Alanen, A., Eskelinen, H., Mønnesland, J. Susiluoto, I. & Tervo, H. (eds.) ***Structures and Prospects in Nordic Regional Economics*** (Nordregio Report 1999:5) 308 pp. SEK 250

Böhme, C. & Bengs, C. (eds.) ***From Trends to Visions. The European Spatial Development Perspective*** (Nordregio Report 1999:4) 86 pp. SEK 100

Aalbu, H., Hallin, G. & Mariussen, Å. ***When Policy Regimes Meet. Structural Funds in the Nordic Countries*** (Nordregio Report 1999:3) 200 pp. SEK 150

Schmidt-Thomé, K. & Bengs, C. ***ESDP and Spatial Planning in the Baltic Countries*** (Nordregio Report 1999:2) 80 pp. plus maps SEK 125

Hallin, G. ***Avreglering och regional utveckling. Regionala konsekvenser av institutionella ändringar i Nordens kommunikationstjänster*** (Nordregio Report 1999:1) 95 pp. SEK 100

Nordic Institutions and Regional Development in a Globalised World. Editor: Åge Mariussen (Nordregio Report 1998:2) 141 pp. SEK 150

The Progress of European Spatial Planning: Facing ESDP. Editors: Christer Bengs & Kai Böhme (Nordregio Report 1998:1) 90 pp. SEK 100

WORKING PAPERS

Ruotsalainen, Arto: *Review of National Strategies for Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea Region*. (Nordregio WP 2005:4) 51 s. SEK 100

Björklund, Hanna, Damsgaard Ole og Knudsen, Jon. P.: *Nordiske prioriteringer og satsninger i Østersjøregionen*. (Nordregio WP 2005:3) 47 s. SEK 100

Integrated Multi-level Analysis of the Governance of European Space (IMAGES) . Edited by Kaisa Lähteenmäki-Smith, Sara Fuller and Kai Böhme: (Nordregio WP 2005:2) 61 pages. SEK 100

Fylkeskommunenes rolle som regional utviklingsaktør og partnerskapenes funksjon i den sammenheng. (Nordregio WP 2005:1) 68 s. SEK 100

Mariussen, Åge: *Nordic ICT Spaces : A policy-oriented overview of regional ICT*. (Nordregio WP 2004:3) 50 s. SEK 50

Spiekermann, Klaus and Aalbu, Hallgeir: *Nordic Peripherality in Europe*. (Nordregio WP 2004:2) 30 pp. SEK 50.

Stadspolitik i Norden – Fallstudier kring Hållbar stadsomvandling: - Förtätning med kvalitet. Malin Hansen et al. (Nordregio WP 2004:1) 72 s. SEK 80.

Trans-national Nordic-Scottish Co-operation: Lessons for Policy and Practice. Kai Böhme et al. (Nordregio WP 2003:3) 88 pages. SEK 100

Arbeidsprogram 2004-2006. (Nordregio WP 2003:2) 26 pages. No charge

Knudsen, Jon P.: *Future challenges and institutional preconditions for regional development policy*. (Nordregio WP 2003:1) 28 pp. SEK 50

Østby, Stein: *The Local Impact of European Policy Integration – some Issues relevant to the Nordic Countries*. (Nordregio WP 2002:11) 29 pp. SEK 50

Lähteenmäki-Smith, Kaisa: *Pohjoismaiden aluehallinto ja sen uudistuspaaineet*. (Nordregio WP 2002:10) 58 pp. SEK 60

Spiekermann, Klaus & Neubauer, Jörg: *European Accessibility and Peripherality: Concepts, Models and Indicators*. (Nordregio WP 2002:9) 43 pp. SEK 150

Hovgaard, Gestur: *Coping Strategies and Regional Policies - Social Capital in the Nordic Peripheries - Country report Faroe Islands*. (Nordregio WP 2002:8) 32 pp. SEK 50

Lehto, Esko: *Coping Strategies and Regional Policies - Social Capital in the Nordic Peripheries - Country report Finland*. (Nordregio WP 2002:7) 38 pp. SEK 50

Lindahl, Karin Beland: *Coping Strategies and Regional Policies - Social Capital in the Nordic Peripheries - Country report Sweden*. (Nordregio WP 2002:6) 73 pp. SEK 75
Benediktsson, Karl & Skaptadóttir, Unnur Dís: *Coping Strategies and Regional Policies - Social Capital in the Nordic Peripheries - Country report Iceland*. (Nordregio WP 2002:5) 47 pp. SEK 50

Bærenholdt, Jørgen Ole: *Coping Strategies and Regional Policies - Social Capital in the Nordic Peripheries - Country report Greenland*. (Nordregio WP 2002:4) 38 pp. SEK 50

Grönqvist, Mikaela: *Partnerskap – från princip till praktik*: En jämförande studie i hur partnerskapsprincipen tolkats i praktiken i ett regionalt strukturfondsprogram i Sverige och i Finland. (Nordregio WP 2002:3) 84 pp. SEK 100.

Leeson, George W.: *The Changing Face of the Population of Europe* : Geographical Distribution, Urbanization, Depopulation and International Migration. (Nordregio WP 2002:2) 61 pp. SEK 75

Låt mångfalden blomstra! – Lokal demokrati i nordiska länder. Redaktör Ulla Herlitz. (Nordregio WP 2002:1) 59 pp. SEK 50

Nordisk turisme i et regionalt perspektiv. Redaktør Anne-Mette Hjalager. (Nordregio WP 2001:11) 172 pp. SEK 150

Lars Winther: *The Spatial Structure of the New Economy in the Nordic countries*. (Nordregio WP 2001:10) 58 pp. SEK 50

Fungerande partnerskap för regional utveckling – Erfarenheter från tre regioner i Sverige och Norge. Av Elsie Hellström... (Nordregio WP 2001:9) 43 pp. SEK 50

Roger Henning: *Regional Governance in the Nordic Capital Areas*. (Nordregio WP 2001:8) 74 pp. SEK 100.

Ex-Ante Evaluation of Baltic Sea INTERREG IIIB, Programme: Final Report. Edited by Merja Kokkonen. (Nordregio WP 2001:7) 42 pp, SEK 50.

Kokkonen, Merja & Mariussen, Åge: *Ex-Ante Evaluation of Interreg III B, North Sea Programme - Final Report*. (Nordregio WP 2001:6) 31 pp. SEK 50

Mariussen, Åge: *Milieus and innovation in the northern periphery - A Norwegian/northern benchmarking*. (Nordregio WP 2001:5) 46 pp. SEK 50

Karppi, Ilari, Kokkonen, Merja & Lähtenmäki-Smith, Kaisa: *SWOT-analysis as a basis for regional strategies*. (Nordregio WP 2001:4) 80 pp. SEK 80

Sverigestudier 1996 – 1998. En konsistent syn på den rumsliga utvecklingen? Ett uppdrag från Miljödepartementet. (Nordregio WP 2001:3) 154 pp. SEK 150

Karppi, Ilari. *Competitiveness in the Nordic Economies. Assessments and Strucutral Features*. (Nordregio WP 2001:2) 45 pp. SEK 50

Arbidsprogram 2001-2003. (Nordregio WP 2001:1) 31 pp. No charge

The Baltic Sea Region Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow – Main Spatial Trends. Tomas Hanell et al. (WP 2000:10) 218 pp. Illustrations in colour. SEK 300.

Regional Development Programmes and Integration of Environmental Issues - the role of Strategic Environmental Assessment Workshop proceedings edited by Tuija Hilding-Rydevik. (WP 2000:9) 63 pp. SEK 70.

Mariussen, Å., Aalbu, H. & Brandt, M. *Regional Organisations in the North* (WP 2000:8) 49 pp. SEK 50

Competitive capitals: Performance of Local Labour Markets – An International Comparison Based on Gross-stream Data (WP 2000:7) 27 pp. SEK 50

Nordregio, Ledningskonsulterna & SIR ***Regionala tillväxtavtal: Utvärdering av förhandlingsprocessen i sju län och på central nivå*** (WP 2000:6) 43 pp. SEK 50

Böhme, K., Lange, B. & Hansen, M.(eds.) ***Property Development and Land use Planning around the Baltic Sea*** (WP 2000:5) 146 pp. SEK 150

Schulman, M. ***Stadspolitik och urbanforskning i Norden*** (WP 2000:4) 75 pp. SEK 50

Berger, S. & Tryselius, K. ***De perifera regionernas roll i de nordiska ländernas IT-strategier*** (WP 2000:3) 37 pp. SEK 50

Kokkonen, M. (ed.) ***The Common Potential in Northernmost Europe: Final report*** (WP 2000:2) 92 pp. SEK 100

Hallin, G., Borch, O-J. & Magnusson, S. ***Gemenskapsprogram (SPD) för Sveriges mål 5a Fiske – utanför Mål 6-regioner*** (WP 2000:1) 63 pp. SEK 50

Mariussen, Åge: ***Vurdering av Vestfold fylkeskommunes internasjonale arbeid.*** (WP 1999:8) 44 pp. SEK 50

Böhme, K. & Kokkonen, M. ***INTERREG IIC CADSES Interim Evaluation*** (WP 1999:7) 51 pp. SEK 50

Bengs, C. ***Spatial Planning in Perspective. A professional course for experienced Baltic planners 1998-1999.*** Evaluation report and market survey. (WP 1999:6) 47 pp. SEK 50

Eikeland, S. ***Personal Incentives in Norwegian Regional Policy*** (WP 1999:5) 17 pp. No charge.

Persson, L.O., Aalbu, H., Böhme, K. & Hallin G. ***C-FRAMÅT. Att välja regionala framtider för Uppsala län*** (WP 1999:4) 74 pp. SEK 70

H. Aalbu ***Næringspolitikken i de nordiske land*** (WP 1999:3) 36 pp. SEK 50

Amcoff, J. & Hallin, G. ***FoU-resurser i Fyrstad*** (WP 1999:2) 19 pp. SEK 50

Ceccato, V. & Persson, L.O. ***Forskning för Regional Utveckling. Svensk FoU med europeiska utblickar*** (WP 1999:1) 55 pp. SEK 50

Hanell, T. ***Availability of Regional Data to Estimate Economic Trends in Very Small Regions in Finland, Sweden and Denmark.*** (Nordregio WP 1998:7) 30 pp. SEK 50

Hallin, G. & Larsson, S. ***Företagsutveckling Fyrstad och Företagsstart Fyrstad.*** (Nordregio WP 1998:6) 78 pp. SEK 70

Ruutu, K. & Johansson, M. ***Division of Power and Foundation of Local Self-government in Northwest Russia and the Baltic States.*** (Nordregio WP 1998:5) 121 pp. with maps and statistical overviews. SEK 200

Aalbu, H. & Bachtler, J. ***Options for a Technically Feasible Performance Reserve Scheme.*** (Nordregio WP 1998:4) 13 pp. No charge.

Programme 1998-2000. (Nordregio WP 1998:3) 26 pp. No charge.

Aalbu, H. ***The Structural Funds as an Agent for System Change: A Mid-term Evaluation of Sweden's Objective 6 Programme.*** (Nordregio WP 1998:2) 19 pp. SEK 50

Arbetsprogram 1998-2000. (Nordregio WP 1998:1) 23 pp. No charge.

To be ordered from:
Nordregio Library
P.O.Box 1658
SE-111 86 Stockholm, Sweden
library@nordregio.se
Tel: +46 8 463 54 15

Or downloaded from www.nordregio.se