
21L AGENDA



ISSUE: Building on supra-local mobilization

ITINERARY 1B

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Location: Hamelin School

PROMOTER

Alain Roy, CDC des Sources | E-mail: cld.cdc@mrcdessources.com

Presentation of the issue:

The MRC des Sources territory has been subjected to significant changes during recent years, which have led to job losses in large companies that have affected the image of the MRC, particularly that of its central city, Asbestos. The desire to develop an integrated planning reflective of the people of its communities has guided the elected officials to implement a Local Agenda 21 for MRC des Sources.

MRC des Sources is mainly facing an image problem, which is affecting its economic and social development. The media image left by the asbestos issue has greatly tarnished the reputation of the region. In addition, the mono-industrial structure has created habits that are difficult to overcome. To maintain the quality of the local services, to continue the development of residential areas and to maintain quality of life, the MRC has chosen to ensure its future by supporting a sustainable development and by planning this future together with its citizens.

Project description:

MRC des Sources has chosen to implement a Local Agenda 21. To carry out this plan, the MRC asked the CLD des Sources to support the implementation of the Agenda and to ensure the monitoring. For its part, the CLD has mandated the CDC des Sources to coordinate the process over a period of two years.

The MRC had already received a territorial diagnosis taking into account the key elements for a sustainable development, filed in 2006 and produced by a team from the University of Sherbrooke. Starting from this important source of information, a round with 31 different groups of people from all municipalities, age groups and interests, allowed them to update the diagnosis. During a forum of the MRC, this update was submitted and further analysis identified six priority development issues for the coming years.

To extend our efforts, all elected members of the MRC adopted a twelve-year vision that lets us glimpse the future with optimism, and with the support of all the local actors.

The greatest difficulty in this project was probably the time required to move through the various stages and to maintain the contact with the population.

The key elements to remember according to the promoter:

- the approach comes from a desire of the MRC mayors who chose to adopt a Local Agenda 21;
- an orientation committee composed of organizational leaders and citizens from the MRC;
- a coordinating committee consisting of development officers who could act quickly;
- a round of the 31 groups, over 200 people met to update the diagnosis;
- an MRC forum where more than 80 participants learned from the process and participated in the identification of the priority regional issues;
- a vision built and adopted by the Mayors Assembly;
- the support from our French counterparts who are experienced in the implementation process of a Local Agenda 21;
- the financial resources to support the process.

RESEARCHER

Christiane Gagnon, UQAC

Summary of the researcher's presentation:

According to the literature on sustainable development, building a sustainable territory is an act of consciousness (...), an act of civility and solidarity towards humanity and all that lives today and tomorrow (...).

However, no sustainable territories exist yet here or anywhere else on our world: all are under construction.

The presentation is structured around:

- the origin of the Local Agenda 21st Century (LA21);
- the current situation in Quebec and around the world;
- the definition of a sustainable land;
- the tools to support the territorial approach towards sustainable development (SD);
- the tools to develop an LA21;
- the challenges of building a sustainable territory.

The key elements to remember according to the researcher:

- linking the approach with the projects/initiatives for local development and other planning and territory development tools;
- broadening the decision responsibility to all stakeholders, citizens and combined territories;
- consideration of global, national and regional issues at the local level, while maintaining the specificity of, but not limited to, the administrative territory;
- taking into account the transversality in the work organization, planning and implementation;
- working together with the territories impacted (resources), upstream or downstream;
- designing SD not as a constraint, but as a potential for emancipation and collective learning.

QUESTION PERIOD

Q.: Did the planned actions prove effective for small municipalities? And what about developing countries?

R. (Christiane Gagnon): Yes, the actions planned for SD are relatively more appropriate for smaller communities. Moreover, in Québec, the initiative is supported by the municipalities, thus from the base to the top. However, as SD goes hand-in-hand with in-depth transformations of the environment, economy and social fabric, it is essential that the State supports the approach and the process; top and bottom linkage is a winning scenario. In Senegal, the A21 is supported by organizations, specifically NGOs.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

NOTE: All linked documents (PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.) are only available in their original French version.

PowerPoint from Christiane Gagnon, UQAC

Christiane Gagnon, *Territoires durables en devenir*, Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2012, 255 p.

Portal for Démarches territoriales de développement durable: www.a21l.qc.ca

Tools to develop a Local Agenda 21: soluss.uqac.ca/al21/9547_fr.html