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ASPECTS OF SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MOUNTANIAN AREAS FROM N-E REGION OF ROMANIA

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Abstract

This paper intend to develop a methodology regarding actual size evaluation and the perspective of sustainable rural development through the elaboration of swot analysis, as method of strategic planning for the mountainian areas from the North-East Region of Romania.

Key words: *mountain areas, North East Region, rural development, SWOT analysis, strategic planning*

Introduction

Sustainable rural development one of the strategic objectives of the European Union is a complex process, comprehensive and lasting, which involves the elaboration and implementation of Community policies involving structural changes to the economy and society, to ensure the contemporary development in terms of impartiality towards future.

Policies on rural areas, namely the rural and agricultural development, both in Member States and in those that want to join the European Union, have embraced the principle of sustainable development.

This paper aims the approach of sustainable rural development elements at the level of the mountain areas from the North Eastern Romania Region of Development, based on factor analysis involved in this: the stabilization of population in the mountain rural areas, by eliminating or reducing rural exodus, struggle against poverty alleviation by encouraging and enhancing the work force, promoting equal opportunities for all mountain rural residents, improving quality of life and general welfare by preserving, protecting and improving environmental quality and rural mountain landscape.

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Material and methods

Methods and techniques that will be used in the developing of this methodology will be based on documentation and data from field research conducted at the local authorities, communities and households in mountain rural areas, also through collaboration with institutions both in N-E region profile of Romania and another region from The European Union which already made big steps toward sustainable rural development in the mountain areas.

The methodology will use diagnostic analysis of sustainable rural development aspects from the mountains areas of the development region; will identify existing resources and how they are recovered now.

It will also be assessed in the basis of social survey and economic potential, opportunities and problems of the region. The collection of data, information and formulation of ideas, assumptions and conclusions will be done through questionnaires and interviews adapted to this specific region.

The SWOT analysis will structure the collected data in order to show strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and risks assumed by sustainable rural development in the N-E mountain areas of Romania and will be conducted diagnostic tests to base development solutions for the region, starting from the objectives of the region's rural development strategy for the specific mountains area.

Results and discussions

The methodology proposed by this paper aims the approach of sustainable rural development elements in the mountain areas, at the level of North East region of development.

In terms of content, the methodology is structured in four parts:

- A first part in which is made a scientific documentation to develop a model of strategic planning at regional level in rural mountain areas, to be based on SWOT analysis type and then synthesizing rural characteristics and dimensions of rural development in the developing of the North-East region of Romania;
- A second part, such as applied, first held in a region with an advanced stage of rural development in another mountain region from The European Union, which will subsequently be used as a model in conducting SWOT analysis of the region of North - East from Romania;
- A third part of synthesis, which aims to formulate proposals on the objectives set out in the strategy of strategic planning for N-E region as well as suggestions for its improvement, based on analysis carried out;
- A final part that wants the spread of results to directly concerned factors in sustainable rural development of the mountain areas from NE region of Romania

Analysis of sustainable rural development, the growing region in N-E of Romania will have to determine precisely the main issues facing rural communities in this area.

This will be done by a diagnosis on what currently exists in this region, which will highlight the overall problems of the region and will open the way in developing sustainable scenarios for long-term sustainable development in rural areas.

Diagnosis will be achieved by developing a set of SWOT analysis, specific to all the size that sustainable rural development in the mountain areas has.

Once established this diagnosis can then proceed to the elaboration part of regional rural development strategies for the mountain areas, that aims the achieving of balanced socio-economic in the region analysed level and the creation of decent living conditions for rural population.

The methodology aims to contribute to the objective achievements in sustainable development strategy for the N-E region of Romania and will take account of rural development policy in the European Union, which has changed considerably in recent years, the meaning of the transition to a system pursuing integrated rural development.

Sustainable rural development of N-E Romania is a topic of great interest because of the new scientific and technological trends that will profoundly affect the mountain rural areas in the coming years.

For the next period can be estimated additional pressures on the rural environment, but also the emergence of rural development opportunities, especially as the N-E region of Romania has a high socio-economic potential in the rural mountain areas.

Diagnosis of the mountain areas from the N-E region of Romania requires consideration for all sizes involved in rural life: the social dimension, economic dimension, political dimension, technical-scientific dimension and dimension for environmental and natural mountain resources.

Part of the historical province of Moldavia, Romania's northeastern region is the most populated region in the country and has the lowest regional GDP per capita is Romania, about two-thirds of the national average.

The North East development region is an area where history, culture and tradition are present and complement the natural environment especially attractive.

Due to lower costs and better-qualified workforce, the North-East Region is one of the best areas for investment in The European Union.

The main attractions in the Northeast Region are Carpathian Mountains covered with alpine forest and rich in flora and fauna, famous painted monasteries from the fifteenth and sixteenth century protected by UNESCO, salt mines and spas that has therapeutic use, national parks and natural reservations, fishing lakes and other local tourist attraction.

Table.1 - North-east development region – Areas, population, cities, communes and villages

Counties Names	Total Area (km²)	Population	Number of cities	Number of communes	Number of villages
Bacau	6.621	721.411	5	85	491
Botosani	4.986	456.765	5	71	333
Iasi	5.476	824.083	2	93	418
Neamt	5.896	567.908	3	78	344
Suceava	8.553	705.730	11	97	379
Vaslui	5.318	456.686	2	81	449
Total	36.850	3.732.583	29	505	2414

Source: INSSE, Romania

Sustainable development is a process that must be analysed multisectoral, being necessary to take into account not only economic changes but also how to adapt human behaviour and social structures for rural specific.

More rural development cannot be sustainable unless it is adapted to the biophysical conditions and resources of the region considered. Therefore will be considered the decisional factors (politics) must participate in any development in strategy for rural development.

Sustainable development of N-E region should be considered in close connection with technological innovations, such as biotechnology and the Internet that can make major changes in rural areas.

Analysis of the social dimension will consider that the rural development bases are people. If the rural mountain space from a particular region (as there was in fact in N-E region) suffers a massive migration of young people to the city or a large number of farmers have over 65 years is very difficult to realize short-term a strong growth.

The social dimension must involve a diagnosis on the level of education in the rural mountain population from the region, their cultural identity and social structure.

The human factor is relevant not only looking at in terms of rural land, but also if we analyse in terms of the impact that the urban area has on lifestyle in rural areas.

May be relevant elements that rural areas have borrowed from the city for the spending of free time and the way of food.

Economic dimension analyse. Sustainable rural development can be achieved only in the context of achieving real economic growth in rural areas. Specific features characterizing the agriculture makes this branch of the economy to know the highest level of subsidies from the state, which had developed in recent year a complex intervention system, adapted to that prevailing in EU countries.

However the rural environment is characterized by a modest level of income achieved by the active population, which cannot ensure, in most cases, only the minimum subsistence

conditions. This requires analysis of the particularities of the mountain region in the N-E Romanian region of development, from the economic point of view, in order to find alternative activities (handicrafts, agro-tourism, non-agricultural activities) that can bring additional income for the rural residents.

Scale analysis referring to the environment and natural resources. In the long term rural development is possible only if this does not affect the depletion of natural resources and ecosystems. In fact the concept of sustainable development arose over just 30 years ago in response to the emergence of environmental and natural resource crisis, in particular those related to energy.

So the rural mountain region of N-E Romania should be realised in the circumstances ensuring water quality, prevent soil pollution, air and maintaining plant and animal biodiversity.

Unlike the urban areas where people can live and work in an artificial environment, rural areas highly dependent on natural resource conservation and maintenance of a healthy natural environment, allowing its specific economic activities.

The elaboration of rural development strategy for the N-E mountain development region of Romania should be made to prevent the impact it will have on the environment and natural resources.

The new economic and political concepts must be developed and implemented in close accordance with the promotion of biodiversity. The harmonization success of agricultural and environmental development can be achieved only through a systemic approach in environmental terms, in which scientific research must make an important contribution.

Should be considered the introduction of environmental criteria in promoting economic activities in rural mountain areas.

Political dimension analyse. Public input and involvement of significant social and economic groups in discussions regarding rural development priorities can help to choose the best strategy for rural development of NE region of Romania. It will consider trends and existing guidelines across the European Union, so that the objectives set out in strategy region development be made so as to combine the interests of residents and key political and economic persons in rural areas from the region, with priorities pursued at European level.

Rural development scenarios from the analysed region can be achieved only by taking into account the economic, social or environmental objectives, but also through evaluating the interests and political pressure. This will be done by analysing the existing balance of power between the main political factors of decision in rural development.

Technical and scientific dimension analyse. In recent decades all economic sectors have been affected by the jar rhythm that scientific and technical progress registered. Neither rural environment makes any exception in this chapter, even if the process of assimilation of technical- scientific progress has a lower dynamic to urban environment.

Achieving the objectives in the rural development strategy for the N-E region of Romania will have to take into account the application impact of new discoveries in the plant sector, biotechnology, animal husbandry and food industry. Among questions to be answered is located the one which will determine which of the new technologies will have a greater impact on rural development from the region.

New technologies of information transmission play a significant role in some sectors of rural economy, such as for example agro-tourism or direct marketing of agricultural products. Therefore it should be considered which of these are more important in the context of rural development from the considered region in a coherent strategy.

Using SWOT analysis as part of strategic planning in sustainable rural development is a modern research approach which seeks to be a novelty, at least about the region in which will carry the research theme.

Conclusions

Using SWOT analysis as part of strategic planning in sustainable rural development is a modern methodology approach which seeks to be a novelty, at least about the region in which will carry the research theme.

The methodology aims to contribute to the objective achievements in sustainable development strategy for mountain areas of the N-E mountain region of development from Romania and will take account of rural development policy in the European Union, which has changed considerably in recent years, the meaning of the transition to a system pursuing integrated rural development.

Diagnosis of the mountain area from the Romania Northeast region of development, requires consideration for all sizes involved in rural life: the social dimension, economic dimension, political dimension, technical-scientific dimension and dimension for environmental and natural resources.

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