



Sub-report of the Danish Pilot project, Seagull WP4

Elaboration of a Rural Development policy, based on the bottom-up approach

Pilot project idea

The key rural partners of Bornholm will use the Seagull WP 4 pilot project to elaborate a concrete and action oriented Rural Development Policy, based on the bottom up approach well known from the LEADER initiative.

The aim is not to take over the normal duties of the Regional Municipality of Bornholm, but to supplement these in order to assure more effective mobilizing of the ideas and resources in the rural areas, and to assure a more pro-active and action oriented policy.

Background

The Danish Government, the associations of regions and municipalities have all stressed to the Danish counties and municipalities to elaborate a rural development policy, as an annex to the official regional and municipality plans.

The Regional Municipality of Bornholm has just started to adjust the official regional plan, just as all other regions and municipalities in Denmark. The process started during 2004 and includes public debate material and meetings, public hearing and consultations and the political procedures in the regional council. Before the end of 2005 the renewed regional plan must be approved and will be valid for the next 4 years.

The regional plan is mainly a framework for the physical planning of urban and rural areas, particular areas of environmental and other interests, regulations for development of areas for housing, business activities, infrastructures and other kind of objectives for the development of Bornholm in general, such as Tourism development, Rural development, international cooperation.

Besides the regional plan the Regional Municipality of Bornholm also prepares a more strategic oriented Regional Development Strategy, which set up priorities for the future regional development of Bornholm. The Regional Development Strategy will be approved before the end of 2005, and especially form the basis for future programming connected to the EU Structural Funds and other public development programmes financed by EU, the Danish state and the Regional Municipality of Bornholm.



Involved rural partners

The network of rural partners on Bornholm is organised in the organisation “The Agricultural Development and Innovation Centre” (LUIC), which is the Danish partner in Seagull WP 4.

Members of LUIC are the Regional Municipality of Bornholm, the Farmers Union, the Family Farmers association, the Young Farmers, the State Forest District and the LEADER+ Local Action Group, which is representing in total 14 rural partners such as the Village organisations association, the Art Crafts Network, Business Centre Bornholm, Business Technical College, association of new entrepreneurs etc.

Mrs Annelise Molin, well-known as member of ERB Board and Council, is the chairperson of LUIC and the Secretariat function is placed in the rural EU information centre, Carrefour Bornholm, which also is the National ERB Secretariat.

For the implementation of the pilot project a study group of key officials for each LUIC members have been selected, and from the Planning Unit in the Regional Municipality two key officials have been associated to the study group.

The study group prepare activities and material to be approved by the Board of LUIC.

Main objective

With a specific rural development policy for Bornholm the main aim is to mobilize those ideas and resources, which is located in the rural areas.

The development of our rural areas has mainly been depending on certain enthusiastic citizens big efforts. Therefore a rural development policy especially should create room and opportunities for such enthusiastic citizens

The recent merging of the County and 5 municipalities on Bornholm into one political and administrative unit – to the Regional Municipality of Bornholm – has reduced the number of elected politicians, and hereby made the distance longer between the citizen and the politician. In this light a rural development policy should also consider to improve the local democracy.

During the last decade a big number of village organisations has been established and today we have around 20 such local community groups, and they have recently formed an association. The number of local development activities has increased significantly, through organised workshops, local development plans as well as a large number of concrete local activities.

A rural development policy must assure, that the Regional Municipality has a positive and proactive approach in supporting these local development initiatives, and hereby make it more attractive for active citizen and companies to locate and live in rural areas.

Finally a rural development policy should form the basis for future programmes and priorities under the EU Structural Fund programmes in order to strengthen the rural development on Bornholm.

Activities and output

Activity 1: 1st meeting of the Study Group (17/8-04)

A time and activity plan was discussed and agreed.

Activity 2: Rural District Forum (8/9-04)

The Forum included presentations of both external and internal key persons dealing with LEADER+ and rural development. Three workshops to discuss and collect ideas and proposals for rural development – in the specific local areas and in a more general sense with a focus on specific branches like agriculture, education, tourism etc.

The Forum was held 8 September 2004 with 27 participants. It was less than expected and though the presentations were very useful, the discussion in the groups showed to be much too general, with only a limited number of concrete ideas for an action oriented rural development policy

Activity 3: 2nd Study Group meeting (10/9-04)

The Forum was evaluated and further activities prepared.

It was agreed to put much more focus on elaboration on debate material in order to improve the bottom up approach. Creation of a better debate material should be the main output of the pilot project and not as originally discussed, the rural development policy document.

Activity 4: 3rd Study Group meeting and in connection with this Board meeting (28/9-04)

The Board approved that more focus should be put on the debate material, and that this material should be created with the use of audio-visual elements – and not only printed material to be supplied with oral presentations.

A planned Study Tour to Swedish ERB/Seagull partners was cancelled. First of all because very few persons signed in for the trip, secondly because the financial resources should be concentrated on the creation of the audio-visual material including professional support from a journalist and other specialists.

Activity 5: Combined Study Group and Board meeting (28/10-04)

A concrete proposal for an audio-visual debate concept was presented, prepared by the Communication company CONNECT.

The concept includes different audio-visual effects for an up to 3 hours debate event.

The event can be organised as local public debate meetings and can be used for board meetings in specific rural organisations, in a school class (grammar school or so).

Besides the audio-visual effects the concept also in the methodology includes some pedagogical tools to improve the debate and activation of participants, such as provocation, dilemma discussions, group discussions, questionnaires etc.

To avoid the traditional sceptical thinking among participants on what is realistic and not, the concept will include realized success stories from the recent years on projects and activities implemented in rural areas on Bornholm.

The Board approved the proposed concept with minor changes, and agreed to offer the Regional Council to take care of the public debate to be organised in beginning of 2005 as a part of the general public debate period for the regional plan.

Activity 6: Combined Study Group and Board meeting (22/11-04)

The meeting will take place in the showroom of CONNECT with a presentation of the final concept of the debate material.

Activity 7: Regional Board meeting and rural debate meetings

After final approval the material will be forwarded to the Board of the Regional Council with a recommendation to have it presented, and to discuss to let similar debate concept be developed for other specific issues like business development and tourism development.

The Board of Regional Council will also be recommended to let LUIC be responsible for the debate activities connected to elaboration of a specific rural development policy.

Under all circumstances all rural actors on Bornholm will be informed about the material and recommended during the first months of 2005 to organise debate meeting using the concept, and to use one of the Board members or members of the Study Group at the meeting, in order to assure a feed back to the further work with the rural development policy.

Activity 8: Summing up the result of debate meetings and drafting the rural development policy

This work will also be coordinated very closely with the Planning Unit of the Regional Municipality, in order to meet all formal criteria for the planning documents.

The current situation in the rural areas need to be described, concluded in an analysis of strenghtennesses, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Based on this a vision and main objectives will be formulated, and measures for specific areas like settlement, public service, nature and environment, business development, NGO sector etc.

What is especially important is to include an action plan and describe the implementing structures and processes, and means.

Budget, revised

Rural District Forum and other meetings	10 000 DKK
Professional support to create the debate material and concept	25 000 DKK
Printing and distribution of the material on CD roms	<u>15 000 DKK</u>
Total	<u>50 000 DKK</u>

Niels Chresten Andersen, Danish Seagull WP 4 coordinator