

INTRODUCTION OF MULTI-STAKEHOLDER GOVERNANCE TO PROMOTE THE TRANSITION OF ECONOMIC SECTORS TO GREATER SUSTAINABILITY

The experience of the Employment-Environment
Alliance (EEA) in Brussels



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I. THE EMPLOYMENT- ENVIRONMENT ALLIANCE (EEA)



An innovative governance framework for the transition of the key urban economic sectors

During the 2009-2014 legislative period, the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region (BCR) decided to launch an ambitious project - the Employment-Environment Alliance (EEA) - and to try out a new form of sector-based policy to stimulate and support Brussels in its transition to more sustainable economic development. The EEA had a three-fold objective: to improve employment in Brussels, to revitalise the Brussels economy and to improve the city's environmental record.

The project was created around a governance system based on local sustainability initiatives, by developing and structuring their interactions with private and institutional stakeholders in order to jointly create a global transition strategy for the sector.

During an initial phase to prepare the action plan, working groups composed of a diverse range of public and private stakeholders evaluated the priority work areas (strengthening local industries, training, innovation, etc.) on the basis of a number of identified obstacles and then developed proposals for actions to remove these obstacles and support the transition.

Four key sectors in Brussels were identified, with almost 200 actions carried out by 250 bodies: (1) Sustainable construction from 2010 (2) Water from 2012 (3) Resources/waste (4) Sustainable food from 2013.

The project governance system was unusual in that it comprised not only consultation and traditional forms of participation, but also the close involvement of all the stakeholders in order to develop real collective and individual commitment and work together to achieve shared objectives (develop environment-related economic industries and create high-quality jobs).

Despite a relatively small budget (€23 million for the legislative period), the participants who expressed their opinion through different assessment channels considered that this process made a significant contribution to the development of new transition practices and to stimulating deliberations in entire sectors of the Brussels economy.

The present document has been developed with the intention of explaining the process carried out, its governance and its key success factors, and encouraging other regions to adopt this type of process at their own level. It is an output of TURAS (transitioning towards urban resilience and sustainability) funded by the Seventh Framework Programme for research (FP7). The initiative brings urban communities and businesses together with local authorities and researchers to collaborate on developing practical new solutions for more sustainable and resilient European cities. More specifically, this document proceeds from the research of the TURAS working package on the economy, which analyses the use of different forms of adaptive governance by different European regions as a way to stimulate "Sustainable Resilient Economic Activity Locally" (SREAL).



II. THE CONTEXT

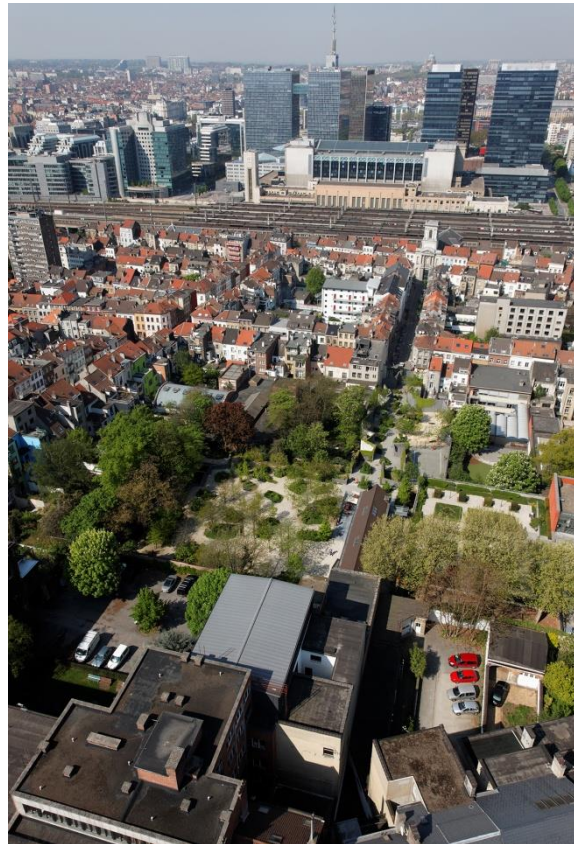


Urban regions – major transition challenges

Today, more than two thirds of the population of Europe lives in an urban area. Urban agglomerations are facing a number of challenges, including socio-economic disparity and environmental pollution issues. Like other metropolitan areas, the Brussels-Capital Region must handle the pressures of demographic growth and urban densification, ageing infrastructures, an unemployment rate of over 30% in many districts and the relocalisation of industrial sectors.

Paradoxically, although cities are witnessing the emergence of socio-economic and environmental problems, they are also centres of population flow, innovation, experimentation, diversity and cross-fertilisation between different cultures and communities. These urban regions therefore also contain valuable resources that can help with meeting these challenges.

To begin the transition towards a more sustainable and resilient urban economy, it is essential to mobilise all these intangible resources that together make up the rich fabric of the urban territory. As the challenges are multi-dimensional and cross-functional, only a coordinated multi-level approach involving many different areas of competence is likely to succeed. The future of the city will be determined by its ability to redesign its development model by facilitating synergies and making transition opportunities more tangible for all the stakeholders within the territory, i.e. businesses, civil society, public stakeholders, etc.



The crisis and the transition – what role for the local authorities?

In Brussels as in other European cities, the regional authorities have less and less room for manoeuvre, particularly in the implementation of sustainable development policies. The austerity policies put in place after the recent public debt crisis, itself a result of the 2008-2009 financial crisis, have reduced all the available budgets, particularly for new long-term programmes.

In addition to a reduced ability to manage development through public expenditure, the regional authorities also found themselves restricted in their ability to use regulatory instruments to encourage a more sustainable economy, particularly by preventing exchanges of goods and services known for their negative environmental impact. This is because to a large extent, decisions about regulatory frameworks are made at the European supranational level (a number of protectionist measures would contravene legislation promoting free competition and the free movement of goods and services).

This reduction of the authorities' room to manoeuvre has left citizens feeling that the political class is experiencing a certain type of powerlessness and has abandoned its role as guarantor of high-quality public services for all. This perception exacerbates the phenomenon of growing disaffection towards politics that has been observed in recent decades. In certain regions, this goes some way towards explaining the fact that the electorate has been moving away from the traditional parties and towards more nationalist parties.

As a result, the current situation does nothing to encourage politicians to take any risk with regard to public action. And yet the regional authorities can still play a major role in transition. This role involves building on the rich urban fabric by generating new forms of territorial governance that mobilise local resources and enable the diversity of local stakeholders to achieve common objectives. In this way, the area of intervention of the local authorities and their role in relation to the urban network of stakeholders can be redesigned using an approach where the principle of subsidiarity takes on its full meaning.

With a change of perspective, the current context can also be seen as creating opportunities for the regional authorities. Economic crises are actually turning points for changing society and the way in which the local stakeholders are involved. They can result in the stakeholders taking opposing sides or, on the contrary, working together to become more effective and better mobilise resources. The local authorities are able to swing the balance towards greater cooperation between all the stakeholders within their territories by creating a more cross-functional framework whose objective is a multi-dimensional impact (economic, social and ecological).

For the representatives of the regional authorities, taking on this new role of supporting transition also means starting their own transitioning process, since it involves breaking away from the conventional mentality of silo working in favour of encouraging and integrating the formation of new types of partnership.

The Employment-Environment Alliance, the subject of this document, is a concrete illustration of the key role that the authorities can adopt by implementing a governance system that can support the transition of entire sectors of the urban economy.



III. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE EEA



Challenges, objectives and selected strategic sectors of the EEA

The EEA was created on the basis of different general observations and considerations around the local context and challenges related to the regional agenda for transition towards more sustainability and resilience :

- There is a real opportunity to support the ambitious goals of the regional environmental policies by stimulating the economy and local employment. The achievement of a regional transition towards more sustainability and resilience relies on the active involvement of different key urban sectors (water, construction, waste, food, ...) which could potentially benefit from the value created by new market solutions and future important public investments/contracts that are needed to meet environmental requirements.
- The offer of these Brussels sectors is insufficiently structured and limited in its capacity (lack of appropriate qualified labour, existing businesses or technologies, ...) to respond to these goals meaning there is a risk a substantial part of the value created could be captured by non-local firms.
- The strive for a more resilient Brussels economy will require these key urban sectors to adapt and meet the local sustainability challenges

Drawing on these challenges, the Brussels regional government looked at the potential measures or position it could adopt to ensure these urban economic sectors were set on the road to transition. Acknowledging the importance of an active participation from the private sector and the role of the sector stakeholders in structuring their own offer, a pure top-down approach (legislation, regulation, ...) was excluded from the scope. Direct supportive measures like opening public contracts only to Brussels firms or granting them subsidies to make them more competitive were also rejected as they would evidently infringe European competition rules.

An alternative route was taken by designing a transition program with a specific form of sector governance, the EEA.. A process based on a logic of shared value creation both for business and for society as a whole and three common objectives :

- Improving the Brussels Region's environmental record
- Giving a boost to the region's economy
- Increasing employment opportunities

The intention of the EEA is to trigger a mutual adaptation process by developing a dialogue between the sector players and the authorities which allows :

- the relevant sector stakeholders to work themselves on the transition and structuration of their offer, on the one hand,
- the Brussels authorities to be able to adapt the existing institutional framework to be closer to the sector's needs, on the other hand.



Four Brussels strategic sectors were chosen to be part of the programme. The selection was based on the environmental ambitions but took also into account the related potential economic development and job creation. The specific goals set per sector are illustrated in the following table.

SOCIETAL CHALLENGES & GOALS		
SECTORS	Environmental	Economic & Employment
Sustainable construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable construction & renovation of building - Use of sustainable materials, EPB legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing a local competitive offer - Creating economic activity and local jobs
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Renovation of the water sewerage systems for more sustainability - Restoration the network of surface waters to improve the delivery of ecosystem services - Developing of alternative rain water management techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assisting businesses to position themselves in the sustainable water market - Helping businesses to capture the important investments that will be made in the public infrastructure of the region - creating economic activity and local jobs
Resource & waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evolution towards a circular economy at the level of the region - Closing of material cycles for waste proceeding from construction & demolition, electric & electronic, organic, ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancing new partnerships between industrial and waste operators - Stimulating sustainable practices and innovative business models - Creating economic activity and jobs
Sustainable food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reducing pollution - Reducing food spilling - Providing quality food for Brussels residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relocating production activities, stimulating short circuit solutions. - Creating economic activity and local jobs

Setting these different goals within a common integrated economic and environmental strategy like the EEA was uncommon for the Brussels region as these are usually addressed by separate regional policies. A closer collaboration between the ministries of environment, economy, and employment of Brussels regional government had to be set up.

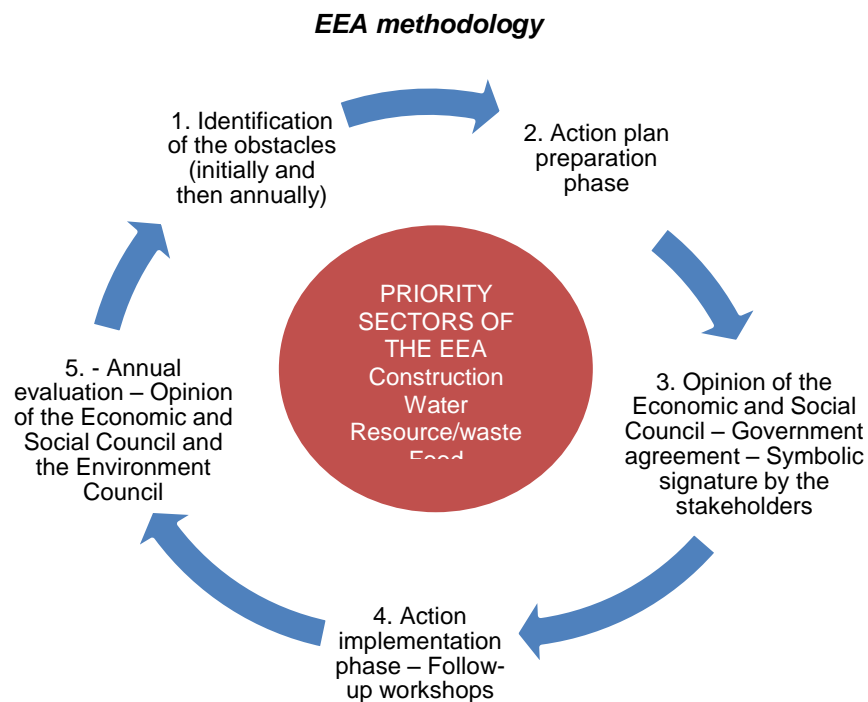


IV. THE PROCESS OF CO-CONSTRUCTION



An iterative system

The methodology of the Employment-Environment Alliance is based around several phases and an iterative approach:



Preparation and identification of obstacles phase

This first phase takes place in several stages.

- The preparation phase starts with a systemic analysis of the priority sector and the stakeholders as well as of the job creation potential linked to the improved environmental performance that the sector must achieve.
- Bilateral meetings are held with the key stakeholders in the sector (public and private), to inform them about the Alliance and identify any common ground.
- Work is then carried out with the representatives from the sector to identify the obstacles to transition or to the development of the sector, so that actions can be put forward to overcome the transition difficulties faced by Brussels businesses. The obstacles are then summarised and classified by theme.



List of the themes of the obstacles in each EEA priority sector:

Sustainable construction
Social economy in the sustainable construction sector
Construction education
Training
Tools for supporting businesses, particularly very small businesses and SMEs
Access to funding by businesses, particularly very small businesses and SMEs
Research and innovation
Excellence (certification, label, charter, etc.)
Technical references on implementation methods.
Water
Alignment of the infrastructure work contracts with the economic reality of the Region
Tools for supporting businesses (including access to funding)
Integration, training and technical and professional education
Research and innovation on implementation methods.
Technical references
Resources & Waste
Legislation and incentives in the area of waste prevention and management
Tools for supporting the sector (including access to funding and employment aid)
Integration and training
Research and innovation
Authorities with exemplary practices (procurement, ...)
Sustainable food
Structuring and strengthening the industries
Tools for supporting businesses
Research, innovation, integration, training and education

Elaboration of the action plan

- Actions for removing the obstacles identified are then put forward. Brainstorming workshops for each type of obstacle are organised to put forward ideas for potential levers. These working groups bring together all the stakeholders involved in the transition process: the private professional federations, private and university research centres, trade unions, public stakeholders in fields such as the environment, economic activation, research, integration, training, education, etc.
- Gradual work is carried out to validate and select the actions. After analysing and grouping together the proposed actions, the working groups approve those that are considered relevant.
- A leader whose role will be to oversee the work done to carry out the action is identified from among the stakeholders (see point V - The Action Leaders), whether or not they are present.
- The actions are grouped, organised and integrated into an action plan¹ which makes it possible to formulate a global coherent strategy for the sector transition.

¹See p.25-29 for an exhaustive list of actions per priority sector
http://www.environnement.brussels/sites/default/files/user_files/rap_evaluationae fr.pdf



Action sheets

The stakeholders prepare individual sheets for each action, proposing actions by means of a template.

Information to be completed in the action sheet template

Name of the action	Action leader	Action collaborators
Workshop to which the action is linked	A description of the action	Target public
Functional and temporal link with other action sheets	Link with economic development	Type of instrument implemented
Duration of implementation	Objectives and expected results	Required budget
Main activities and deadlines	Proposed partnership	Commitment expected from the government

Approval of the action plan and signature by the stakeholders

- At the end of the preparation phase, the entire action plan and the implementation methods are recorded in a summary document which is initially submitted to the Economic and Social Council of the Brussels-Capital Region for its opinion and then to the government for its approval. This takes the form of a Charter setting out the specific objectives, the responsibilities and the partners.
- After receiving government approval, all the stakeholders meet for the symbolic launch of the implementation phase. Each stakeholder is invited to sign the EEA charter, in which they commit not only to a specific action, but also to take part in the collective process.

The implementation of the co-constructed actions

- Once government approval has been received, the action plan is launched and the operators can start work on implementing the actions under the aegis of the Action Leaders (see point V - The Action Leaders).

A few examples of symbolic actions

Identification of the professions of the future	Study of the water-related skills required by construction companies
Education	Development of a School Kit comprising educational tools that provide a concrete illustration of the notions linked to the air tightness and insulation of buildings, together with training for teachers. Creation of a tool to facilitate the inclusion by the teaching body of eco-design principles in higher education curriculums (web platform project)
Training	Implementation of a selective deconstruction industry to increase the reuse of construction and demolition waste in BCR, with training at all levels of the value chain (identification, selective deconstruction, logistics, resale, preparatory workshops, etc.).
Integration & Employment	Creation of a cooperative of activities in the sustainable construction sector to stimulate and support aspiring entrepreneurs in creating their own employment.



Research and innovation	Launch of innovation cheques to boost small innovation projects in the construction sector.
Support for businesses	Support and coaching of SMEs for the transition towards innovative business models in the functionality economy
Funding tools	Granting of financial incentives to promote the transition of construction companies. Aid for accessing credit for sustainable construction companies.
Access to information	Creation and launching of an online Sustainable Construction Portal , a single entry point that will facilitate access to information on sustainable construction
Legal aid	Drafting of a Reuse Guide that presents the complete process and the specific and technical clauses that allow customers in the public and private sector to extract and sell construction and demolition materials and furniture for reuse.
Networking	Exchange of experiences between water industry professionals: roundtables and newsletters

The process follow-up

- In practice, the progress of the actions is followed up quarterly by:
 - a report on action progress and any problems using a pre-defined list of indicators (dashboard);
 - workshops attended by all the stakeholders taking part in the EEA, divided into thematic sub-groups;
 - support committees for each subsidy or contract funded in the context of the EEA, to which representatives of the ministries supporting the EEA may be invited.
- A progress report on the Alliance is presented to the Government annually.
- The process as a whole is also evaluated with the stakeholders (see point VI.– Evaluation of the EEA)



A creative and iterative co-construction process

Compared with the traditional process of a sector development programme, the EEA process seeks a maximum degree of integration: all the sector's needs are taken into consideration and are the subject of coordinated responses from the different operators involved.

The approach is also fully participative. The operators themselves work together and with the sector representatives to propose their own measures to best meet the sector's needs for competitiveness and for the qualification of the relevant workers and job-seekers and then implement them in a transparent and concerted framework.

This co-construction process has several advantages:

- identification of actions that are relevant and realistic because they are directly linked to the needs of the target publics and the reality of the operators' work;
- mobilisation of operators right from the elaboration phase in order to promote ownership of the actions even before the launch of the implementation phase;
- launch of a dynamic of cooperation between operators from different domains, which will be continued during the implementation phase;
- linking of actions based on their complementary and mutually reinforcing aspect in order to target the strategic objectives

The construction and intervention process is iterative. It was designed on the basis of the "Deming Cycle" model, a management method for the monitoring and continuous improvement of processes according to an iterative 4-stage cycle of Plan-Do-Check-Adjust:

- the operators reflect on and document the needs of businesses and the existing obstacles and levers; they identify an initial set of actions in response to these;
- while the first actions identified are being implemented, the workshops continue to meet to measure the progress of the actions and to work on improving the responses to existing needs and identifying any needs not being sufficiently met, as well as new development opportunities;
- new actions for satisfying needs that appear after the fulfilment of the initial needs are regularly identified and implemented.

The dynamic of the EEA should be regarded more as a progressive process than a strategic plan; the actions proposed by the workshops and agreed by the relevant stakeholders only represent an initial series of measures which have been debated sufficiently to allow immediate implementation. Other actions mentioned during the workshops require additional debate and analysis if they are to become the subject of sufficiently stable shared action projects. These actions are implemented when they become sufficiently mature and are then integrated into the text of the Agreement during its successive annual updates.

Multi-stakeholder workshops

The preparation of the action plan and the follow-up of the implementation of EEA actions are carried out through workshops. These workshops focus either on a certain type of obstacle or on a sub-sector.



The partners meet in thematic workshops once a quarter. These workshops are composed of both public and private operators and are open to all the partners concerned.



Priority sector 2 - Water (16 October 2014)



Priority sector 4 – Sustainable food (27 March 2014)

Sustainable construction
Construction education
Training
Integration into the sustainable construction sector
R&D, excellence (certification, label, charter, etc.) and the technical references on implementation methods
Tools for supporting businesses and their access to funding
Water
Tools for supporting businesses and the matching of public contracts
Research, innovation and technical references on implementation methods
Integration, training and education
Resources & Waste
Cross-functional actions
Construction and demolition waste;
Waste from electric and electronic equipment, bulky waste and biowaste
Sustainable food
Production and integrated projects
Tools for supporting businesses
Education, training and integration

The role of workshops:

- analysing the obstacles and the levers for converting the sector to greater sustainability;
- deliberating on how to improve each of the services provided to businesses and employees in the sector, to job-seekers and future workers (school pupils and students), to find the best way of removing these obstacles and thus facilitate the conversion of the sector;
- discussing ways of supporting the refinement of these services by strengthening the coherence, clarity, effectiveness and efficiency of the global offer for businesses and workers, job-seekers and future workers (school pupils and students);
- leading the study, design, planning and implementation of actions to directly improve the services provided and/or the service offer, particularly by working on rationalising the offer, coordination, cooperation between operators and the scope and effectiveness of their services;
- collecting and analysing the information needed to monitor the progress, achievements, efficiency and effectiveness of the actions and, generally speaking, the alignment of the operators' offer with market requirements and the improvement of this alignment;
- suggesting reorientation of existing actions;
- reflecting on new proposals for actions following the implementation of the previous actions, the development of the needs of businesses or the appearance of new obstacles; strengthening the links and collaboration between actions.



V. THE GOVERNANCE OF THE EEA

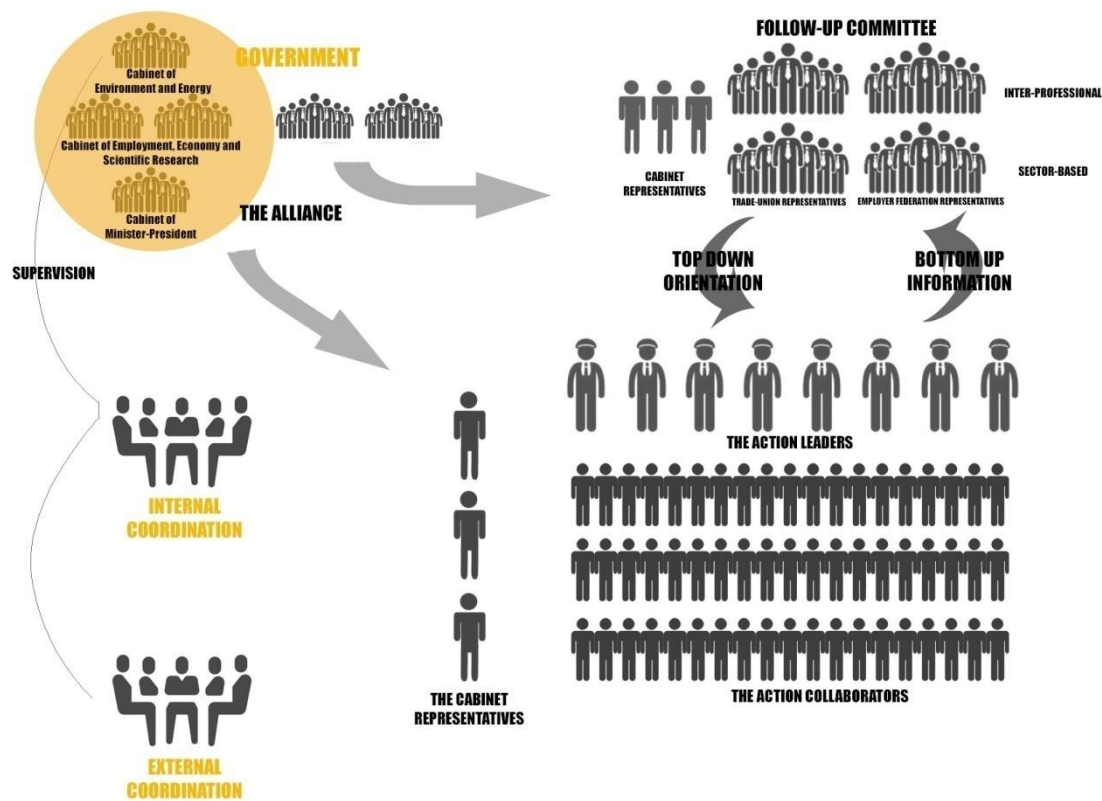


Multi-stakeholder governance

The structure of the EEA's governance is essential for guaranteeing the effective implementation of the process. It was designed in such a way as to mobilise the various stakeholders from different spheres in the Brussels-Capital Region and to provide a dedicated space for a two-way circulation of top-down and bottom-up information.

The participative construction process stimulates two forms of structured cooperation:

- between public stakeholders, for greater cohesion of their actions and instruments;
- between public and private stakeholders, to emphasise collaboration with private stakeholders that can serve as a link to Brussels SMEs due to their closer proximity to them.



The political Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is composed of representatives from three ministries in the Brussels-Capital Region (the Ministry of the Environment and Energy, the Ministry of Employment, Economy and Scientific Research and the Minister-President). It is responsible for leading the process once the Alliance is approved by the regional government. The Steering Committee is key to the establishment of links between all the other stakeholders.



The role of the Steering Committee:

- establishing the strategy that shapes the EEA process;
- identifying and elaborating the map of stakeholders that could potentially take part in the process;
- recruiting these stakeholders: calling for participation in the workshops, subsidies, public contracts, joint implementation of actions, etc.;
- holding discussions with the stakeholders on their expectations, their needs and their possibilities and also presenting the expectations and objectives of the stakeholders themselves;
- agreeing on the political message so that it is consistent within the region;
- establishing relay points and dedicated contact points for the process within key administrations in the region;
- setting the budgetary and timing priorities.

The Coordinator

The Government, via the Political Steering Committee of the EEA, appoints a coordination structure. This coordinatory role has been entrusted to Brussels Environment - the environment and energy administration of the Brussels-Capital Region.

The Coordinator sub-contracts part of its work to an external coordinator from the private sector approved by the Political Steering Committee. This external coordinator carries out the operational management, providing assistance with the strategic, organisational and administrative methodology during the implementation of the EEA.

The role of the Coordinator:

- organising and preparing the quarterly workshop meetings;
- providing support to the Leaders in implementing their action and solving the problems encountered during their implementation;
- developing a general tool for following up the actions and making it available to the Leaders, Workshops and the Follow-up Committee;
- ensuring the coherence of the actions themselves, particularly actions proposed and followed up by different Workshops, and the global coherence of the action plan;
- reporting to the Follow-up Committee on the work carried out during the workshops, the progress of the implementation work and the effectiveness of the actions;
- identifying the obstacles to the implementation of the actions and/or the smooth running of the Alliance;
- solving operational-type problems, particularly by providing support to leaders who request it;
- identifying and notifying the Follow-up Committee of strategic or institutional problems that require its intervention;
- establishing a link between different levels of power on the concrete actions that require it.

The Action Collaborators

During the brainstorming workshops (see point IV. - Elaboration of the action plan) , the stakeholders are asked to express their interest in collaborating with one or several specific actions. They become potential "Action Collaborators" until their contribution in terms of concrete achievement or expertise is formalised by the completion of the action sheets. Other Collaborators may be added to the process at a later stage on an open and voluntary basis.



The Action Leaders

Although each action is implemented collectively, it is placed under the responsibility of a Leader who is the operational manager for the implementation of the action, but not necessarily the person who carries out the action.

The role of the Action Leader:

- mobilising the partners involved in the action;
- providing the necessary impetus for the implementation of the action;
- reporting on progress and results of the actions to the Coordinator within the EEA follow-up system.

The leaders are the cornerstone of the actions. The choice of leaders is therefore extremely important and must be based on recognised legitimate skills. In practice, the collaborators agree on the appointment of the leader or put themselves forward as potential leaders. If there is no objection from the stakeholders present or from the political Steering Committee, the collaborator then becomes the Action Leader. If this is not the case, the collaborators, or if necessary the Steering Committee, must reach a consensus. The leaders are not paid for their involvement in the participative process, but the authorities fund at least part of most of the actions through subsidies or by funding studies.

The Follow-up Committee composed of social partners and ministry representatives

The EEA's implementation is closely monitored by a mixed Follow-up Committee consisting of member organisations of the Comité bruxellois de concertation économique et sociale (Brussels Economic and Social Dialogue Committee) which, with regard to Government representatives, is restricted to Ministers who support the Alliance (cf: Steering Committee) and extended to sector-based representatives, ensuring that, among these representatives, there is a balance between the different types of social partners (employers, small businesses, non-commercial and trade union organisations).

It is chaired by a representative of the Minister for the Environment. The members are not paid for taking part. The Follow-up Committee evaluates the progress of the Alliance in accordance with the indicators of progress defined in the dashboard (cf: point III, section "Follow-up"). On the initiative of the Steering Committee, it may launch new actions in cases where the needs have not been sufficiently met and may offer to redirect certain actions to specific leaders.

The role of the Follow-up Committee

- guaranteeing the respecting of the spirit, objectives, rules and operating principles of the EEA;
- taking note of the follow-up reports produced by the Coordinator;
- validating redirection requests or proposals for new actions put forward by the Workshops;
- deciding to launch new actions in response to the completion of preliminary actions, observed changes in the needs of businesses or the appearance of new obstacles;
- stopping or redirecting actions whose progress is considered to be insufficient or which are not as effective as expected;
- intervening to clarify or recall the operating principles to partners who require this and, if necessary, to solve persistent disagreements between partners, where appropriate after consulting the parties involved;
- leading, directing and supporting the coordination structure;
- reporting annually to Government on the progress of the implementation of the Agreement through the relevant cabinets.



Diversity of the stakeholders involved

Some 250 stakeholders have been involved in the Alliance from the public sphere (environment, economic activation, employment, training and research) and from the private sphere (professional federations, economic operators, trade unions and associations). The following non exhaustive table/list illustrates this diversity².

Diversity of the stakeholders invited to take part in the process:

PUBLIC BODIES	
Urban development	Brussels Urban Development (Land & Housing Management Administration), Citydev.brussels (Development Company responsible for creating spaces for businesses & accessible housing for all), ...
Employment	Actiris (Brussels Regional Employment Office), VDAB, Tracé Brussel (Employment support association), ...
Economy	Bruxelles Economie et Emploi (Administration of the Economy and Employment), Impulse.brussels (Aid body for Brussels entrepreneurs), ...
Environment	Brussels Environment, ...
Research	Innoviris (institute supporting scientific R&D for the BCR), research centres, ...
Mobility/ Logistics	The Port of Brussels, Brussels Intercommunal Transport Company, SPRB Bruxelles Mobilité (BCR administration responsible for equipment, infrastructure and mobility issues), ...
Funding	The Brussels Regional Investment Company, ...
Agriculture/ Food	SPRB Agriculture, Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC), ...
Integration and training	Bruxelles Formation (training), Espace Formation PME and Syntra Brussel (training for entrepreneurs and SMEs), professional Reference Centres, Local missions (socio-professional integration),
Local authorities	The municipalities and the Association of the City and Municipalities of the BCR, ...
Social	The Centres Publics d'Action Sociale (CPAS - Public Social Services Centres), Social inspectorate of the Federal Public Service Social Security, ...
Design	MAD Brussels
Intercommunal	Operators for the distribution of drinking water and the draining of rainwater and wastewater: Hydrobru (BCR), Vivaqua (Belgium), ...
Etc.	...

TRADE UNIONS	
National Trade Unions	FGTB, CSC and CGSLB

FEDERATION OF COMMERCIAL AND NON-COMMERCIAL BUSINESSES	
Cross-functional federations	Brussels Enterprises Commerce and Industry (BECI), Union des Classes Moyennes (UCM - Union of Small Businesses) and Dutch-speaking Union of independent entrepreneurs (UNIZO), ...
Social federations	Confédération Bruxelloise des Entreprises Non-Marchandes (CBENM - Brussels Confederation of NPOs), federations of social economy businesses (RES- SOURCES, SAW-B, FEBIO,), ...
Sector-based federations	Environmental Companies (FEGE), Technology Industry (AGORIA), Food Industry (FEVIA), Brussels-Capital Construction Confederation (CCB-C), Commerce and services (COMEOS) ...

² See p.48-49 for an exhaustive list of EEA stakeholders, http://www.aee-rbc.be/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/140313_AEE_Chapeau_preview_entier.pdf



BUSINESSES AND NON PROFIT ASSOCIATIONS	
Construction	Rotor, Atelier Groot Eiland, ...
Food	Viangro, Sodexo, Abattoirs, Karikol ...
Waste	SITA, Repair Together ASBL,...
Funding	Credal, Green Invest, ...
Study/Consultancy	Groupe One, I-Propeller, Ecores, ...
Distribution	Carrefour Belgium, Epicerie les Bon Villers, Epicerie Maison des familles, Heureux nouveau,...
Design	Design Point, Food Design...
Land/agriculture	Terre-en-vue, Ferme Nos Pilifs, Début des Haricots, Le Chant des Cailles ...
Training	Les Compagnons du Devoir, Village Partenaire ...
Culture/art	RAB/BKO (Brussels Network of art and culture institution)
Etc.	...
EDUCATION & RESEARCH (PRIVATE & PUBLIC)	
Schools	Institut E. Gryzon, Institut R. Lambion, Institut Redoute Peiffer, ...
Universities	ULB, VUB (Free University of Brussels), CERIA, ECAM, IEPSCF...



VI. EVALUATION OF THE EEA



The evaluation of the process

The Alliance is evaluated with the contribution and active participation of the stakeholders involved in designing and/or implementing the EEA. This evaluation is carried out continuously during the implementation phase on the basis of ad-hoc follow-up indicators for the implementation of actions, to be filled in by the leaders before each workshop. During the period 2010 to early 2015, the various stakeholders were also consulted through a number of other channels:

- An opinion from the Environment Council
- The social partners issued their opinion through the Social and Economic Council of the Brussels-Capital Region (CESRBC) and through the Follow-Up Committees of the different sectors of the EEA.
- The evaluation of the EEA stakeholders was collected via a series of 34 interviews carried out by the Coordinator in late 2014 - early 2015. Interviews were also conducted with stakeholders not yet involved in EEA.
- The action leaders were invited to take part in analysing the current EEA action plans through a series of self-evaluation workshops held in March 2015. This evaluation was based on an analysis table drafted by the Coordinator together with research bureaus. This table analyses the actions based on their resilience (progress of their action, target public, impact, links between actions and between stakeholders, funding methods, strategy for ensuring the sustainability of the action, etc.).
- The process was also analysed from a scientific perspective as part of the FP7 TURAS project and more specifically from the point of view of the literature on the transition of socio-ecological systems. This analysis focused on priority sector 1 - Sustainable construction, taking as a case study the creation of the working group on "the reuse of construction and demolition waste" (CDW). The results of the evaluation highlighted the role of the Brussels region public authority as a "bridging actor" between a bottom-up and a top-down approach and between "niche" players and "system-wide" players. A series of recommendations was also made for the continuation or replication of a process such as the Alliance.

An evaluation report containing all this information, collected using the different evaluation methods, was published in April 2015³. Cross-referencing the information from the different evaluation methods also made it possible to produce the following SWOT analysis of the process.

³ See: http://www.environnement.brussels/sites/default/files/user_files/rap_evaluationaee_fr.pdf



SWOT analysis following the EEA evaluations



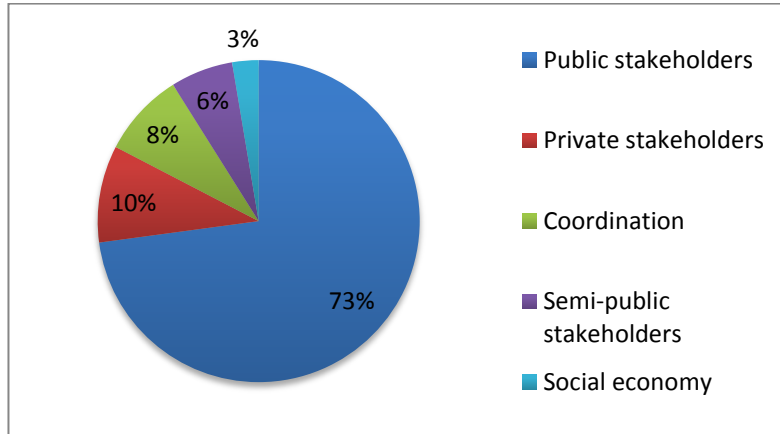
VII. THE EEA IN FIGURES



Process budget

The total budgets mobilised to implement the EEA amounted to €23 million for a period of 4 years (2010-2014). About 41% are Brussels Environment EEA budgets. The remaining 59% come from other regional budgets or Action Leaders from the private sector. Part of these budgets were existing budgets that were reallocated to implement the EEA actions. The following graph shows the distribution of the total budgets between the different types of stakeholder.

Distribution of the total EEA budgets according to the type of beneficiary



A few key figures for the 4 priority sectors of the Alliance

The following figures are based on data from 2014.

250 stakeholders were involved in the EEA and implemented almost 200 actions.



The forecast in terms of job creation during the deployment of all the current policies and actions (by 2020) is 10.100 jobs.



Priority sector 1 - Sustainable construction

The process



- 3 years' implementation (65 actions);
- 130 bodies involved in the process (52% public and 48% private);
- 8 workshops met on average 4 times a year.



Achievements



12,200 M² OF TRAINING CENTRES



1,915 YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED
155 TEACHERS/TRAINERS



800 JOB-SEEKERS TRAINED OR SCREENED



1,800 BUSINESSES OR INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS INFORMED OR SUPPORTED



184,000 HOURS OF TRAINING PROVIDED



Priority sector 2 – Water

The process



- 1.5 years' implementation ;
- 83 bodies involved in the process (59% public and 41% private);
- 3 workshops met on average 4 times a year.



Achievements



3 UNIVERSITIES - 28 RESEARCH CENTRES INVOLVED



100 BRUSSELS BUSINESSES ACTIVELY INVOLVED



10 MUNICIPALITIES ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN SIMPLIFYING THE WORKSITE PLANNING PROCESSES



12% ADDITIONAL AUTHORISATIONS FROM BRUSSELS BUSINESSES FOR THE WATER MARKETS FROM 2013 TO 2014



Priority sector 3 - Resources and Waste

The process



- 6 months' implementation;
- 73 bodies involved in the process (48% public and 52% private);
- 3 workshops met 4 times each between 2013 and 2014.



Priority sector 4 - Sustainable food

The process



- 6 months' implementation;
- 112 bodies involved in the process (37.5% public and 62.5% private);
- 3 workshops met 4 times each between 2013 and 2014.



VIII. KEY SUCCESS FACTORS FOR MULTI-STAKEHOLDER GOVERNANCE LIKE THAT OF THE EEA



Key factors of success

The present section builds on the various evaluations of the process (cf. Point V – Evaluation of the EEA). It goes into more detail about specific points highlighted during the evaluation. It draws on the strengths that made its relative success possible, as well as the weaknesses that should be kept in mind when a participative process such as the EEA is conceived or replicated.

1. A balance between the bottom-up and top-down approaches

The EEA is a strategy for the transition of the regional economy using an unprecedented mix of “bottom-up” (individual action) and “top-down” (structural action) governance forms for the Brussels-Capital Region. The process was configured so as to aim for a constant balance between these two types of orientation, both of which were perceived as potentially leading to opportunities and additional solutions. The underlying assumption was that the EEA would stimulate the transition of both the regime (top-down) and the sector players (bottom-up), with each group of stakeholders eventually influencing the other’s transition. In practice, however, these two dimensions of governance are often faced with an inherent mutual tension which was, indeed, observed during the operational phases of the EEA.

The EEA is bottom-up in its dynamics due to the way in which it identifies the needs of the sectors, the relative autonomy of the action sheets and their leaders and its organisation, which is decentralised into independent priorities. It gives a key role to the initiatives of local stakeholders. The Brussels Environment administration, which coordinates the process, had already identified a list of obstacles and barriers to transition over the last ten years. However, the administration did not want to insist on this list at the start of the process, instead seeking to act as a facilitator, bring people together and create deliberation structures that allow the different stakeholders in the sector to reformulate and specify the obstacles and levers to transition.

The bottom-up dimension of the EEA helped to improve dialogue between the stakeholders and create a common vision within the industry. The creation or consolidation of networks promoted a greater understanding by the public administrations of the niche activities and their relative viability. For the local stakeholders, public resources were focused on pragmatic actions in response to the needs expressed (information, training in innovative future technologies, funding and developing skills).

Public-private discussions also revealed needs that were not necessarily experienced by the public stakeholders in their environmental strategy. They also allowed the public stakeholders to assimilate innovative concepts such as Design for change, Design for recycling, Functional economy, etc. and to see transition in a more positive light. This shows the added value of structured public-private dialogue on the policies and actions to be implemented on the ground.

As an illustration, the discussions on the sustainable construction sector revealed opportunities for new professions in the sector, such as “reclaiming” (a job which involves identifying, selecting and carefully recovering construction materials after building so they are not sent to waste centres but rather to recovering/reclaiming industries), or expanding the area of expertise of certain other jobs, particularly architects, who could try to ensure the reuse of materials on behalf of their clients on new building worksites.

On the negative side, the bottom-up part of the process encountered difficulties when it came to mobilising niche players, i.e. the innovators, pioneers, start-ups and micro-entrepreneurs of transition. These had less influence on the process than more established stakeholders. This is explained by the fact that this type of player is at the edge of the field of vision of local administrations and is not part of their formal or informal networks. They are often recently created, small and not yet fully professionalised businesses. One of the solutions currently planned by the Coordinator is to involve and work more closely with the platforms that support innovation and the innovation networks. This type of network would be in a better position to mobilise and identify at the right time the niche players who may have a potential interest in the process or want to influence the functioning of the sector. Where necessary, they could support the niche innovation players in their integration into the process and structure their relationships with the authorities.



The Alliance is also top-down as a result of its governmental origin and its ability to adopt a cross-functional and regional perspective on the economic and environmental challenges. The regional government has in a way played the role of a "cam belt", assisted by the presence of an adviser responsible for the EEA within the Cabinet of the Environment Minister. Her duties involved replying to stakeholders on behalf of the Minister, acting as arbitrator between stakeholders and projects with the aid of the administration and working to expand the influence and credibility of the process.

However, the local stakeholders consulted during the evaluation called for stronger top-down governance in order to define clearer political priorities (see below in sub-point 5).

2. The legitimacy of the public administration as coordinator of the process

The evaluation showed that the coordination of the EEA by the public administration (see point V - The Coordinator) was considered as being key to maintaining motivation and trust among the stakeholders. Given the potential conflicts between private and public stakeholders, the public administration was seen as acting in the role of a mediator guided by general and public interest. A role that a representative from the private sector would not have been able to take.

3. A participatory and empowering process based on an eco-system of benevolent stakeholders

The fact that the EEA has helped sectors to move in a new and common direction is to a large extent due to the participation of a wide range of stakeholders from different sectors. The approach was intended from the outset to be a participative eco-system. The operators were invited to take the initiative of holding discussions between themselves and with the representatives of the sector in order to put forward actions. The stakeholders consulted revealed that it would have been difficult for them to create such a co-creation space themselves.

Particular emphasis was placed on a facilitation method that encouraged the empowerment of the stakeholders involved in implementing the actions. For instance, regular follow-up and stakeholder workshops increased the effectiveness and relevance of the actions, as well as a good level of information for the stakeholders regarding the development of the actions.

With regard to the interest of the stakeholders in taking part in the process, for many the motivation was not purely financial. Almost half the actions were co-funded by the stakeholders and 15% were fully funded from their own capital. This reveals a high awareness on the part of certain stakeholders of the public interest value of the actions. This suggests that there is significant personal satisfaction to be gained from simply working in a direction that is consistent with their values and from using their reflective and creative talents. This non-financial interest is a critical element that should encourage regional authorities to commit to a similar process.

4. An appropriate pace of process and transition

The experience of the Alliance between 2010 and 2014 reveals that particular attention must be paid to the speed of the process. With regard to the sustainable construction sector (where the process has now been running for four years), the evaluation of the EEA reveals more convincing results in terms of the implementation of the actions than in other sectors, which had a shorter period of time to define and implement the actions. Allocating enough time to the elaboration and implementation phases evidently helps ensure the effectiveness of the participative creation process.

5. Strategic and political guidance

The stakeholders consulted during the evaluation agreed that there must be a clearer vision and political guidance in addition to the bottom-up approach of the Alliance. This political vision was precise with regard to the Sustainable Construction sector thanks to a government decree setting out requirements for the energy performance and interior temperature of buildings - "The EPB (Energy Performance of Buildings) Requirements 2015". It was less so with regard to the other priorities. According to the participants, the action plans for the remaining priority sectors lacked some coherence. They considered the action preparation phase generated too many actions being identified with no consideration of the real and potential bridges between the actions and also as having been inadequate in terms of prioritisation. Thus several stakeholders expressed a certain degree of frustration regarding the final selection of funded actions.



The existence of a shared political desire to move beyond the significant structural obstacles (economic, normative or technical) is also a decisive factor with regard to the goal of achieving a positive exposure of the sector to niche innovations through the EEA process. As an example, the discussions around the Sustainable Construction priority sector of the Alliance revealed the need for Brussels legislation to make an inventory of the materials present in a building compulsory to force the widespread use of selective deconstruction. Without this obligation, there is still a risk that selective deconstruction will remain a niche activity carried out by players motivated by non-economic factors.

The public stakeholders considered that stronger cross-functional political backing was missing from the process. This was an obstacle for the integration of the EEA into their work priorities or their own strategies, particularly for the Public Interest Bodies who found it hard without political backing to free up human resources and obtain funding from their own organisation to invest in their actions.

A greater political impetus in this type of process is therefore fundamental not only to engaging and focusing the stakeholders, but also to generating an approach of subsidiarity in decision-making and more transparent political arbitration (rationalisation/prioritisation of the identified actions).

The lessons of the EEA evaluation have been drawn on for the development of a new regional programme for Circular Economy. The programme includes a "roadmap" towards a regional Circular Economy, which was drafted in collaboration with the public and private stakeholders in the region. This roadmap will set out a clear vision in order to direct the large number of actions and local stakeholders towards the same regional strategy and ultimately result in greater coherence in any action plan. It will also be included in the commitments of the future "Strategy 2025" of the Brussels government. This could result in improved coordination of the actions with the other regional policies.

6. Cross-functional political engagement in the process

The necessary political vision highlighted in the previous point must also be translated into concrete cross-functional political commitment. The challenge of the transition of an entire region is multi-dimensional and systemic. It supposes a shared desire to change the structure of society at one or more political levels. In reality, the EEA suffered from a lack of properly coordinated government action, and the lack of involvement by part of the government probably reduced the performance of the process.

As in many European regions, executive power in the Brussels region is organised in such a way that competences are divided in a "silo system" between the different Ministries. The Environment competence of the regional government supported the EEA process, but the Economy competence was not as heavily involved.

In an attempt to create greater cross-functionality, the Circular Economy roadmap mentioned in the previous point has been developed with greater involvement of the Economy cabinet. It has also been designed to produce greater cross-functionality in the participative construction process, in addition to more sector-based actions. A more cross-functional approach could also allow the major public stakeholders to dedicate themselves to selected actions and working groups, rather than have to follow the process in each sector.

7. New competences and a paradigm shift for the public services and the political authorities

Facilitating a complex and creative transition process like the EEA which is uncertain, complex and creative is a big change for a public administration. The EEA goes beyond the traditional role of the public official of ensuring compliance with laws, rules and procedures and providing a service to citizens. A highly interventionist role must be adopted in order to initiate change within the economic world. Developing a common strategic vision with private stakeholders, leading a co-construction process, arbitrating on conflicts of interest and proposed projects, evaluating the impact of external initiatives on the general public interest, justifying initiatives, removing the legislative, regulatory and fiscal obstacles, creating economic and organisational incentives, communicating, raising awareness, demonstrating creativity and reactivity in the face of complex systematic problems, etc.: the majority of these are activities that require a significant shift compared with the traditional role of public services.



Given this need for a considerable shift on the part of the administration and the unusual work and organisational methods, a particular effort must be made to develop the socio-technical skills of the administrative officials involved in facilitating the transition process. In the absence of a change of habits on the part of the public officials, the transition risks being characterised by the shortcomings of a traditional bureaucratic process. In the context of the EEA, to compensate for the absence of the various skills needed, an external coordinator was appointed to assist the public administration in charge of coordination (see point V. – The coordinator). In the long term, however, consideration must be given to greater investment in training for officials in order to guarantee a higher level of involvement by the administration responsible for coordinating this type of process. This means going against the current trend of austerity policies that promote a reduction in the number of officials.

We can observe the same paradigm shift for the political leaders, which play a potentially much more interventionist role in the organisation of economic sectors than in their traditional stance. They are no longer content to simply regulate free market forces. They take on the role of energy catalyst to facilitate the transition in a desired direction whilst vouching for the sustainability ambitions. They attempt to influence the entire system by acting directly within a sector to empower the stakeholders and foster an active and constructive attitude towards change. This requires the political leaders to adopt a strong ethic and vision of sustainable development, as well as the desire to go beyond the immediate conflicts of interest in the sectors in question.

8. New evaluation methods

During the EEA evaluation, the impacts on employment quickly proved to be difficult to measure. Many of the stakeholders consulted stated that the creation of direct jobs was not a relevant indicator for measuring the success of a process such as the Alliance. Considering the relatively short history of the EEA only the contribution of work integration and empowerment initiatives can be highlighted.

In the opinion of the participants, the real added value of the process lies in the development of favourable synergies between stakeholders with diverse skills in order to contribute together to achieving common objectives focused on a shared vision of the sectors. A non-traditional assessment formula with greater focus on a qualitative approach need to be created to reflect and illustrate this type of added value. In parallel to a more traditional formula, the evaluation was carried out by analysing the resilience of the EEA and its programme of actions. The aim pursued with an analytical framework based on the resilience dimension was to assess the EEA's ability to adapt to local realities and needs. This was done in concrete terms by using criteria for governance of the actions and for connectivity between the different actions (diversity of stakeholders, quality of collaborations, setting up of follow-up and feedback tools).

For the future, the coordinator wants to go further with the exploring of an alternative and qualitative approach. It is currently consulting different academic researchers in order to define the appropriate indicators for highlighting the impact of the EEA in terms of transition towards a new model of society.

9. A post-process strategy for disseminating the results

The definition of a strategy for funding actions and ensuring the dissemination of the results beyond the lifetime of the EEA or the allocated funds is key for guaranteeing that the process bears fruit after the implementation period. The evaluation highlighted the fact that only 29% of the actions identified a post-EEA funding strategy. Almost 10% of the actions were set up as recurrent actions, yet were not autonomous with regard to funding. In future, special emphasis could be given to the definition of a post-process strategy. For instance action leaders could be requested right from the preparation phase to provide information about the post-funding of their action and to identify potential strategies to disseminate the results of their actions.

The global dissemination and communication around the process is also important. Internally, it can help maintain a high level of motivation among the participants in the EEA, while externally it makes it possible to disseminate the process to other "sectors" of the economy. During the evaluation, the stakeholders considered that the influence of the EEA outside the Alliance's network was too weak, particularly among regional stakeholders who could potentially be interested in the process but were not yet involved and/or had not joined the process at its start. Following up this conclusion, the Brussels-Capital Region Circular Economy roadmap foresees the development of a dedicated efficient and transparent communication platform.



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