



EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL QUALITY MARK

General Regulation

Preamble:

Seen the proposed “Framework for a European Regulation on Territorial Quality” deriving from the transnational cooperation work carried out by Local Action Groups El Condado de Jaén (Spain), Pays Cathar (France) and Valle Umbra (Italy) within the framework of the EU Leader II Initiative, which set out the fundamental values of the concept of territorial quality, the minimum criteria for application of the principles inscribed therein, and drew up the assignation and control methods for a possible official European “territorial quality” mark;

Seen the general and specific letters from the above LAG, as well as from the Spanish LAG which, within the framework of the EU Leader + Initiative, have been working on implementation of a territorial quality mark in their geographical areas, such as the La Garrotxa (Girona), Poniente Granadino (Granada), Vales do Ulla e Umia (Pontevedra), Talavera, Sierra de San Vicente y La Jara (Toledo), Valle del Eze-Entrecabos (Asturias), Serranía del Turia (Valencia), Las Merindades (Burgos), Don Quijote (Toledo) and Dulcinea (Toledo) LAGs;

Considering that there is a demand for implementation of territorial quality the new European LAGs which have entered into the transnational cooperation project “European Territorial Quality Mark” such as Tradizione delle Terre Occitane (Piamonte), Halkidiki (Macedonia Central), Thessaloniki (Macedonia Central), Pella (Macedonia Central), Kilkis (Macedonia Central), Lemnos (Egeo Norte), Asociación POEDA (León);

Considering that there is interest in other rural territories in implementing this type of development process and, consequently, in their possible incorporation into this cooperation in the upcoming EU framework (2007-2013).

Considering that the rural territories face a new situation of gradual decrease in protection and assistance from the States and the European Union, at the same time as markets are globalised, which means opening, open and competitive spaces;

Considering the fragility of the rural territories to respond to this new situation, they have individually looked to go to market with a collective operation which

groups the entire territory in a global quality project, a territory which is projected to market with a differentiated identity and which works to attain territorial quality, understanding that to mean quality in products and services, quality in their production processes (socially, culturally and environmentally respectful production), with companies and entities committed to the territory, with participation by the population in the process of development and integration of all collectives. Each territory with a territorial quality project must have been identified with an image, which is its territorial quality mark;

Considering that those marks are not merely commercial instruments, but rather lead economic agents to reflect on authenticity, balanced development of the territory and the quality process;

Considering, furthermore, that all the territorial quality marks support each other in the valuation of heritage and natural resources as a lever for development and as a sign of differentiated identity (Catharism in the Departament de l'Aude, cultural tradition in Umbria, the volcanic natural park in La Garrotxa, the water of Ulla e Umia, the *vaqueiros* of Valle del Eze-Entrecabos, the history of nobility in Condado de Jaén, the final frontier of Al-Andalus in Poniente Granadino, the river of Serranía del Turia, the ancient *merindades* in Burgos, the land of Talavera, of Don Quijote and Dulcinea in La Mancha, settlers in Tierras de Ocaña, the homeland of Alexander the Great in Pella, and of Aristotle in Halkidiki, the taste of life from the villages of Thessaloniki, Kilkis: the land of excellences, and Lemnos: the island of Hephaestus,...);

Considering that each mark has established the conditions to guarantee quality and authenticity, as well as respect for the territory and, to that end, has involved the public authorities in each territory as well as a considerable number of business people, favouring solidarity within the sectors and between the territories, finding synergies and facilitating the start-up of collective operations for joint promotion;

Considering that guaranteeing the success of the marks and their sustainability requires a necessary critical mass which an isolated territorial mark is not always able to achieve, the territories with marks already established within the process of territorial quality wish to form an alliance sharing an additional common mark to give them reasonable critical mass and, consequently, the capacity to be successful in the market and facilitate identification by consumers.

Creation of the additional common mark and its logotype was agreed in Madrid, in May 2005, by the Spanish, Italian and Greek LAGs;

Considering that correct requires regulation, not only for those participating in the initial construction, but also for those territories wishing to join this process of territorial quality and to make use of this additional common mark;

The Local Action Groups *FUNDACIÓ GARROTXA LIDER, ASOCIACION PARA EL DESARROLLO RURAL DE LA COMARCA DEL CONDADO, ASOCIACION PARA EL DESARROLLO SOSTENIBLE DEL PONIENTE GRANADINO, CENTRO DE DESARROLLO RURAL VALLE DEL EZE-ENTRECABOS, ASOCIACIÓN PARA O DESENVOLVEMENTO RURAL DOS VALES DO ULLA E UMIA, CENTRO DE*

DESARROLLO RURAL MERINDADES, ASOCIACION PARA EL DESARROLLO DE LA COMARCA DE TALAVERA, SIERRA DE SAN VICENTE Y LA JARA – IPETA, ASOCIACION COMARCAL DON QUIJOTE DE LA MANCHA, ASOCIACION GRUPO DE ACCION LOCAL DULCINEA, ASOCIACION LIDER SERRANIA DEL TURIA-VALENCIA, ASOCIACION POEDA, VALLE UMBRA E SIBILLINI, TRADIZIONE DELLE TERRE OCCITANE, DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION OF HALKIDIKI SA, DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION OF THESSALONIKI SA, DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION OF PELLA SA, DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION OF KILKIS, DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION OF LEMNOS SA, PAYS CATHARE (ASSOCIATION AUDOISE DE DEVELOPPEMENT LOCAL)

in Edessa (Greece), on 26th of January 2007

HAVE ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1.-

The European Territorial Quality Mark may be applied to the Territorial Marks as an added mark, provided that those comply with the following conditions:

- They are marks which affect natural or administrative territories or those with a historical identity, with a dimension greater than a municipality and smaller than an administrative region (NUTS II), with rural predomination.
- The territories bearing those marks should be involved in a development process linked to territorial quality, understanding that this is based on two main values:
 - **Territorial quality:** This is quality which goes beyond regulated quality and the Denominations of Origin and which also affect “territoriality”, as this is a new kind of solidary behaviour which gives priority to the quality of ties between people, territories, products, services (be they agricultural, craft, tourism or heritage), producers and consumers.
 - **Sustainable development:** development involving a plurality of indivisible aspects (economic, social and cultural), and which take into account jointly the quantitative and the qualitative. This is development with a human dimension, respectful of cultural resources, understood for the territory as a dynamic equilibrium, sustainable between the environment and human activities, harmonious and favourable to personal health.
At all levels of territorial organisation solidary participation by public officials, economic and social agents and their associations is fundamental in a collective and coherent project.

Article 2.-

The process for territorial quality is identified by **eight major principles**, which can be further broken down into criteria for application.

I. Permit participation by all actors at each level of the organization and management, and guarantee transparency of actions through voluntary and formal commitment of partners.

→ Participation by all actors in the development process:

- **Participation by all actors** should inspire the different forms of execution of the development process for each territory comprising various stages:

Territorial diagnosis

Appropriation of diagnostic elements by all actors

Construction of the development project

Preparation of a common mechanism for monitoring-evaluation.

To that end, the territory will prioritise the resource of tools for creating awareness, training and accompanying.

- **In the territorial quality process**, each business person, each actor and each structure is invited to commit to the local development process on a formal basis and to join a collective network with new forms of action.

→ Existence of an organisational structure for actors in the territory:

- The **organization** bearing the development project has a **balanced composition between the public and private sectors** and the sectorial and collective work groups.

In the private sector the following will be especially represented:

Business organisations, consumer, social, humanitarian, heritage, cultural, environmental, health or quality of life organizations or associations, etc....

- **The commitment of actors** with the structure is the subject of formal agreements (treaties, contracts, etc....).

→ Transparency in management of the territorial quality process:

- In each territory, the territorial quality process is led by a political and a technical unit, being well-defined the functions and means for articulation between the two.

II. Guarantee equal access to development by all persons in their cultural, social and economic dimensions, especially disadvantaged social groups (specially young people and women).

A special consideration for **groups with difficulties and new solidarities** starting at the territorial diagnosis stage and throughout the territorial quality process with a view to **equal access to development**.

This materialises especially in:

- Specific actions in the territory in favour of disadvantaged groups (training of actors and partners, accompanying business people with difficulties, etc....);
- Actions for popular education, citizenship, social promotion;

- A representation of social associations in different units and a formalisation of their relations with the economic and political units;
- Consideration of the social aspects in the regulation of products and services;
- ...

III. Promote synergies between the different socio-professional organisations to improve the valorisation of products, services and resources of each territories.

Obligation of intersectorial cooperation and in the network is formalised in the various documents established in the territorial quality process and in commitments with actors.

To create synergies between the different actors, each territory starts up or creates the conditions for carrying out cooperation actions, mainly:

- Meetings between the various partners at arrangement encounters;
- Shared work by technicians from different structures;
- Networking in different sectors;
- Training of technicians and business people common to various sectors of activity;
- Actions to promote and commercialise common to different sectors;
- ...

IV. Create solidarities among the different actors, and fundamentally among the producers in one or various sectors, among producers and consumers in each territory and among the territories.

The actions in execution should contribute:

- To the reciprocal and solidary development of the social groups making up the territory ;
- To the organization of solidary business networks ;
- To bring producers and consumers together.

This materialises in:

- Specific projects between various territories ;
- Actions for communication and exchange between producers and consumers;
- The creation of business associations, new systems for collective action between producers and consumers (short circuit, etc...);

V. Favour the emergence and sustainability of the transversal quality process for all products and services in each of the territories.

The transversality of the process is inherent to the process of local development. It is based on interactions between the different sectors of the territory with the

objective of economic complementariness, but also of coherencies and balance in the territory in economic, social, cultural and environmental terms.

Each territory starts up:

- actions to mobilise all actors to bring to light the **added value created by the transversal process** (trade shows, diverse manifestations, etc...);
- transversal work groups to define the objectives to be reached in the area of quality of life (environment, transport, energy, health, access to culture, etc...);
- trans-disciplinary training of technicians and business people;
- ...

VI. Guarantee the authenticity of the savoir-faire and the traditions. Construct an identity based on common values shared by the actors in the territory and commit to interpersonal exchanges in their multicultural and European dimensions. Valorise the role of not for profit associations.

The territories identify and valorise **traditions and «savoir-faire»** as an intangible asset, as a resource for local development and a source of innovation. Cultural associations are associated with the process for local development and territorial quality to avoid the territorial identity being used merely for commercial purposes.

Thereby specifying the multicultural aperture sought.

This is materialised in :

- accompanying business people to share common values, construct and transmit a common image through partnership actions with associations, inhabitants and consumers;
- description of the elements of authenticity and identity in the regulations for products and services;
- organisation of exchanges between territories at a European scale ;
- ...

VII. Respond to new demands from consumers and users, from this collective identity translated into an image worn by the territory.

Each territory undertakes to look for a **balance** between **production** options and **consumption** options and coherence between the image of the territory and the new consumer demands of an ethical nature.

This is materialised in action which permit:

- cultivation and valorisation of differences, favouring exchanges between the city and the rural environment;
- promotion of biological and integrated agriculture and sustainable tourism, research and development of new production and preparation methods, creation of new services, jobs, activities ;
- experimentation with new forms of work and social and solidary organisation, starting up new sales circuits, new supports for

promotion and sale mainly thanks to new means of communication;

- ...

VIII. Guarantee that companies and entities which bear the mark are socially responsible and that their products and services go beyond the minimums required in applicable legislation.

Each territory will establish, through specific letters, the quality parameters which guarantee that companies are economically viable, environmentally respectful and socially committed. In the area of **economic quality** the importance of good business management, use of local resources, responsible marketing, innovation and tradition will be taken into consideration, as well as implication in local development of the activity, *inter alia*.

For **environmental quality** savings in water, energy and natural resources will be considered, as well as appropriate management of waste, absence of contamination, responsible purchasing and integration in the environment, *inter alia*.

For **social quality**, equal opportunity within the company, inter-cooperation, participation by workers, training and fair competition will be considered, *inter alia*.

Additionally, those specific letters will establish the minimum criteria for products or services to be considered of quality taking into consideration the tradition, innovation and current demands from consumers.

Article 3.-

Each Territorial Mark must have its own Management and Control Body, with operating regulations, which will be responsible for granting or withdrawing use of the mark, based on its general and specific letters established to that end, in accordance with its culture, history and organisation.

Article 4.-

Each Territorial Mark must have a graphic letter which establishes the coexistence of the European Territorial Quality Mark, the Territorial Quality Mark and that of a company or entity, based on the graphic letter of the European Territorial Quality Mark.

Article 5.-

An assignation and control Committee will grant the European territorial quality mark which complements the territorial mark of recognition.

Regulations will be developed for this body to regulate its functions, composition, operation and mechanisms for evaluating and granting use of the mark.

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