Design, implementation and cost elements of Green Infrastructure projects

Preliminary results: Insights into local/regional implementation of GI projects

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Project aim and objectives

**Aim:** To gain a comprehensive overview of current projects and initiatives on GI in the EU, enabling the developing of concept of GI for future policy-making

**Objectives:**

- Operationalising the GI concept
- Analysing European GI projects and providing estimates of their cost and benefits at local/regional level
- Analysing the potential of EU policy and available funding instruments to promote GI projects
Overview of tasks

Task 1: Concept and typology of GI projects
  1.1 Defining green infrastructure projects
  1.2 Creating a typology of green infrastructure projects
  1.3 Search for green infrastructure projects and creating a database
  1.4 Identifying 10 representative green infrastructure projects

Task 2: Detailed analysis of GI projects
  2.1 Developing methodology for case studies
  2.2 Document analysis and on-site visits
  2.3 Cost-benefit analysis

Task 3: Policy analysis
  3.1 Identifying policies that affect the success of green infrastructure projects
  3.2 Evaluating financing opportunities and requirements

Task 4: Expert Workshop
  4.1 Background paper
  4.2 Workshop organisation

Project duration: 01/2011 – 10/2011
Data collection

- Creation of a database of European GI projects
  (127 entries covering all EU-27 countries)
- Analysis of six in-depth case studies
Preliminary results

1. Design and implementation of GI projects in Europe
2. Integrating GI in spatial planning and relevant policies at regional and national level
3. Costs and benefits of GI
4. Financing GI policies and initiatives
1. Design and implementation of GI projects in Europe

- **Barriers to GI projects**
  
  - Changes in management, cross-border considerations, mixed land-ownership titles (*structural*)
  
  - Administrative requirements (*regulatory*)
  
  - Low public acceptance, different priorities/points of view (*cultural/behavioural*)
  
  - Limited windows of opportunity to change spatial/funding plans (*contextual*)
  
  - Insufficient funding; lacking knowledge and expertise (*capacity*)
  
  - Weather, complicated installations, harmonizing competing land use activities (*technical*)
1. Design and implementation of GI projects in Europe

Success factors

- Cross-sectoral cooperation and mix of public and private beneficiaries/partners
- Public awareness raising and continual involvement of stakeholders
- Steps to ensure post-project continuity
- Project management structure:
  - Appropriate number of partners; experienced project manager; shared aim and clear goals; targeted intervention and involvement; use of advisory committees, regular reviews
1. Design and implementation of GI projects in Europe

- **Role of local/regional and national governments and EU**
  - **Local/regional**: increase awareness of ecological situation; highlight potential of GI to contribute to functional habitat connectivity
  - **National**: promote and support development of GI; coordination among relevant agencies; create relevant legal frameworks where lacking; pre-financing of projects; support public private partnerships
  - **EU**: reduce administrative aspects of obtaining GI funding; enable combination of EU funding sources: increase coherency between relevant EU policies
2. Integrating GI in spatial planning, policy and development

- **Regulative instruments**: adoption or revision of legislation by a political institution for regulating land use (e.g. Habitats and Birds Directives, EU Biodiversity Action Plan, Ramsar Wetland Convention)

- **Spatial planning**: determines method for preserving or enhancing GI and time scale (e.g. integrated coastal zone management, regional or national GI strategies, climate adaptation strategies)

- **Strategies and action plans**: “guidance with political commitment“ (can include general principles to be considered, or concrete priorities and measures to be taken)
2. Integrating GI in spatial planning, policy and development

- Cross-cutting nature of GI projects

- Recommendations
  - National governments: require GI provision in new infrastructure and spatial developments
  - Local authorities: determine the desired amount, type, use and position of GI elements within spatial developments, taking into account local circumstances
3. Costs and benefits of green infrastructure

Costs:
- Financial & opportunity costs (one-off/ recurrent costs)
- High share of one-off costs (capital investments in land management and restoration work; cost of land purchase and management)
- Opportunity costs: poorly documented and not well understood

Benefits:
- Multiple, much more variable and less quantified than costs, often assessed in qualitative terms, often outweigh the costs (e.g. National Creation Forest: benefits will be 4.8 as high as costs)
- Reduce needs for investments in grey GI (e.g. flood defences, water treatment plants)
4. Financing green infrastructure policies and initiatives

- No particular funding scheme for development and implementation of GI projects

- **EU-funds**: LIFE+ and European Regional Development Fund (ERFD) supporting improving human well-being/health/quality of life, nature conservation and climate change actions

- **National funds**: Rural development programmes, cross-natural financing

- **Private funds**: Foundations, NGOs, business and land owners (incl. restoration projects in form of compensatory measures)
4. Financing green infrastructure policies and initiatives

Recommendations for suitable/adequate funding at project level:

- Ensure adequate funding modalities (pre-payments, less admin. work) and stable funding conditions and procedures (long-term funding, no changes in requirements)
- Funds should not only target “novelty” projects
- Provide sources for maintenance of project
- Explore innovative sources (PPPs)
- Health and recreation sectors as potential co-financing sources
Thank you.

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