

6. A SYSTEMS APPROACH TO REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

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6.1 A schematic outline for the interdisciplinary organization

The previous chapters have shown that cooperation between the different disciplines is not a self-evident organizational process; they have also shown that the tasks of each discipline have to be derived from the goals of the successive stages of the exercise. Regional planning literature contains very few references as to how these processes can be made operational. Our Research Group believes that those involved in regional planning - government officials as well as members of planning teams - could benefit from a schematic outline of the elements and relationships that (can) occur in the planning process. Especially for those who have not yet had experience with such studies, a schematic outline could (a) give them a deeper insight into the interdisciplinary cooperation required and (b) help them to identify the role of the individual discipline in the planning process as a whole.

The items that need to be indicated in such an outline are:

the identifiable *activities*, subdivided per discipline or group of disciplines;

the *sequence* of these activities, grouped in the recommended stages;

for each activity, the *cooperation* required between disciplines and the degree of *responsibility* to be borne by each.

In an effort to produce the outline, we subjected the entire regional planning process to an analysis. The result is a set of documents which are presented in Annexes I, II, III, and IV. How the documents were compiled and for what reason will be explained in this chapter.

Of course, no schematic outline can be universally applicable to all regional plans. Every region has its own characteristics and focal points and each situation will require a 'tailored-to-measure' program for its activities.