SEA INTEGRATION IN SUSTAINABLE PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

OR

(THE UNEXPECTED VIRTUE OF SEA IGNORANCE)
Houston, we have an SEA problem

Is SEA really facilitating sustainable planning?

SEA can “make the world a greener and more liveable place” (Thérivel, 2010, p.2)…

… but “appears to fail on its inherent promise” (Bidstrup and Hansen, 2014, p.34)…

…because of the existing gap between theory and practice (Lobos and Partidário, 2014)…

…and so that (SA) “faces marginalisation and or even extinction, plainly reflected by talks of streamlining in the name of efficiency” (Morrison-Saunders et al., 2014, p.7).
One SEA does not fit all contexts

“no one SEA methodology will apply to all strategic actions and in all socio-political contexts”
(Brown and Thérivel, 2000, p.186)

SEA is a ‘family of tools per se’ (Partidário, 2000, p. 655)
Australia, Italy: no countries for SEA?

Comparative study:
- planning system
- use of SEA
- governance

SEA framework:
- External to PPP, compulsory (Italy)
- Integrated in PPP; external for ecological purposes (Queensland, Australia)

Source: www.123rf.com
All the SEA’s men

• Legislators
• Administrators
• Practitioners

What we asked:
- tasks
- relationships
- suggestions
The SEA Matrix

• legislation, guidelines
• integration between PPP and SEA
• sustainability goals and indicators
• technical aspects
• participatory aspects
• monitoring phase
Queensland

READ THE
Strategic Assessment overview

Source: www.gbrmpa.gov.au

Source: www.sbs.com.au

Source: www.skyscraperocity.com

Source: www.seqcatchments.com.au

Source: www.logan.qld.gov.au

Source: www.civilsolutionsgroup.net

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Issues in Queensland

- Perceived as not useful, not applied

Reasons:
- Elective (with exceptions)
- Costs (higher than benefits)
- Mainly ecological purposes
- Integrated assessment of PPP through State Interest Review
- Monitoring phase not structured
Stakeholders’ suggestions (QLD)

Priority 1:

• Improve monitoring to assist local councils

How:

• Link in cyclical way policies, actions, outputs, outcomes
• Lobbying activity by QLD organizations
• Update regional plans
• Strengthen Natural Resource Management plans
Stakeholders’ suggestions (QLD)

Priority 2:
• Define sustainability indicators (SI)

How:
• Bring SI in statutory plans
• Guidelines for SI & database organizations
• Learn from previous experiences in QLD
Region Lombardia

Source: www.ersaf.lombardia.it
Source: http://www.isprambiente.gov.it
Source: trmengineering.it
Source: www.prolocopontedilegno.it
Source: http://docplayer.it
Source: www.ersaf.lombardia.it
Source: trmengineering.it
Source: #IAIA16
Issues in Region Lombardia (R.L.)

SEA perceived as ‘bureaucratic impediment’

Reasons:

• Confused division of competences
• Regional authority is passive assessor of SEA
• SEA unfit for local level (scale, finance)
• Poor involvement of stakeholders
• Ineffective estimation of PPP impacts
Stakeholders’ suggestions (R.L.)

Priorities:
• Coordinate database management
• Harmonize diverging sets of indicators
• Organize monitoring activities

How:
• Shared indicators
• Revise regional planning law and regional plan
• Regional support to local monitoring
Synthesis

Common themes

Differences

To where from here? The role of stakeholders
Common themes

Sustainability indicators & monitoring:
• Too aspirational indicators
• Operative guidelines
• Responsibilities for implementation

SEA not a facilitator:
• Weak, confused procedure
• Local councillors exposed to developers’ interests
• Stakeholders’ disengagement

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Differences

Legislative power

- Italy: regions define their own SEA model
- Queensland: state/national SEA framework

Planning schemes

- Italy: regional plan with SEA, local plans either (redundant, complex mechanisms)
- Queensland: SEA not mandatory (lack of practice)
Save private SEA: Where to from here?

- QLD: from “developers’ friendly” to “sustainability driven”
- QLD: less nebulous
- ITA: less bureaucratic and time consuming

How:
- Stakeholders’ engagement (learning cycles)
- Regional level of planning
Thank you all very much
References


