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Les défis de développement pour les villes et les régions dans une Europe en mutation

INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES TO CO-MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LAND ASSETS IN PROTECTED AREAS

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S3 - The impact of economic crisis and austerity policy on urban and regional development and inequalities in Europe

Résumé / Summary

Under the current global financial crisis and national economic recession, governmental policies concerning the spatial development and the management of goods and ecosystem services will be affected by past prevailing practices. Previous proposed reform's allegedly 'flexible' spatial planning system, aiming to facilitate large-scale investments without regard to sustainability, may stimulate uncontrolled economic growth with short-term benefits but long-term costs, affecting adversely natural heritage. The transfer of Greek public land to the Asset Development Fund for future privatization is a matter of great importance, having a significant impact on the environment. Unplanned privatization transforms non-rival and non-excludable public goods into rivalrous and excludable private goods. Having in view the foregoing, we may readily conclude that such a policy considers public property as dead capital, will increase urbanization and exacerbate socio-spatial inequalities. This paper introduces the perspective of public participation to co-management of public land assets in protected areas. Strategically deployed, spatial planning of investments in protected areas can be a determinant of public lands' sustainability, iff turning strategies and regulatory plans into actions to generate consensus-based decision-making, optimizing the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the affected areas in Greece.

Anthropogenic impacts have adverse effects on environmental goods and services that cause irreversible changes, reducing their capacity or availability to support human needs (MEA, 2005). The intensity of use and overexploitation of common wealth have been correlated to the absence of property rights or (in-)security

of land tenure under common, state or private property regime (Hardin, 1968); aggravating the 'free-rider' problem (concept of indivisibility) or excluding those unable or unwilling to pay for deriving benefits (exclusion principle). However, each system, operational rule and organizational structure works in some settings (Ostrom, 2011), fitting local circumstances, socio-economic conditions and ecological characteristics (UNEP, 2016).

In the face of global ecological crisis, policy contexts put focus on management issues, biodiversity conservation and development conducted without depletion of the remaining reserves in terms of sustainability (TEEB, 2010; World Bank, 2011). Sustainable development enriches spatial planning system with the concept of 'needs' and the idea of limitations (intergenerational equity) (WCED, 1987). Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning, reconsidering the rivalry of consumption and the excludability of beneficiaries from natural or human-constructed resources (EEA, 2015). It performs a demanding strategic/regulatory role on macro/micro scale, which relies on decision-making processes (CSO, 2015), promoting inclusive governance approaches and participatory practices in protected areas management. This requires synergies between authority agencies and various actors, such as communities, regional authorities, central government, knowledge institutes and the private sector.

The research is done as a deductive study, a logical process in which a conclusion is based on the premise that public involvement in co-management of public land assets in protected areas, can prove to be decisive in generating sustainable outcomes that secure equitable (re-)distribution of goods and ecosystem services within society. As a consequence, the first aim of this study is: a) to define systematic approaches and effective practices applied in "collaborative" management environmental regimes, depending on the elements, levels or period that the interested parties get involved in. The second aim is: b) to analyze the societal responses within the framework of environmental governance through models that describe the interactions between society and the environment, so as to rigorously answer 'why' and 'how' research questions that can be translated into a 'how' form. This research aims at identifying the causes and consequences of drivers of change, describing the phenomena affecting the social-ecological system with irreversible effects or losses.

Nowadays, insuperable budgetary constraints call for an effective use of increasingly scarce public land resource areas by tailoring interventions to territorial specificity, so as to assure the legal certainty for investments, serve the public interest and ensure common benefit. It is critical to integrate and implement policies for the sustainable development and economically viable use of public land assets with policies for the sustainable management of protected areas (GCP, 2012). It becomes vitally important that spatial planning gets well equipped to meet urgent challenges, with a view to outperform conventional practices in environmental conservation and reorient governance towards consensual, multi-level and multi-stakeholder approaches (Credit Suisse et al., 2014). Within that framework, establishing an optimal equilibrium among allocation of resources, conservation goals, sustainable development and governance models is a prerequisite in qualitative and quantitative terms. Effectively safeguarding natural capital as a highly-valued asset and a common good can not only be affordable but profitable in perpetuity.

Keywords: public land, spatial planning, inclusive governance, sustainability

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