Rural Development – Targeting as a Basic Principle
Case Study of the Hortobágy National Park

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Outline of the presentation

I. Aim of the work
II. General introduction
III. Method
IV. Results
V. Conclusions
Aim of the work

- Highlighting the difficulties and examining the question of targeting rural development measures in the case of a Hungarian national park
- This work also gives basis in defining a pilot area for a research financed by the Hungarian Academy in the region of the Hortobágy National Park
General introduction

- "From the point of view of the EU budget it is questionable if rural development can be considered better handled and financed at EU level" (Núñez Ferrer, 2008:4) – subsidiarity

- If we agree that central budget of rural development has to be targeted to finance actions in poor areas, a question is how to target RD measures?
Hortobágy National Park

The Hortobágy National Park – established in 1973 – is the first and so far the largest national park in Hungary.
General introduction

- Its basic area is about 80,000 hectares in 2009.
- The region belongs to the convergence regions, its GDP per capita is below 75% of the EU average.
- The HNP area touches 22 settlements, in four counties and gives nearly the 30% of their territory.
- The population of the settlements covered by the HNP is 162 thousand, and the population density is 56 inhabitants/km².
- The average number of inhabitants/settlement is less than 8000, the highest number is 32 thousand.
General introduction

- There are no significant industrial establishments in the region while strong regulations give strict limits for agriculture (Süli-Zakar, 2009)
- Result of research from Baranyi (2008) states that the region forms the periphery of the counties it covers
- These data underline that the examined territory is a region of "greater need", and that for it to be targeted is justified
Method

- The work examines how the area of the HNP is defined from different aspects. The paper reviews various aspects of the park in an attempt to identify its needs.
- It is based on documents, literatures related to the HNP. The collected documents are grouped in three sections:
  - first HNP is examined as a nature reservation area.
  - secondly from institutional breakdown,
  - and finally the area is examined in the context of development policy documents.
Nature reservation area

- The National Park is the part of the World Heritage
- Its area is not merely confined to the territory of the geographical, ecological area of the Hortobágy – especially as a result of annexations of recent years
- Environment protection has a strong legislative and institutional background in the region
Institutional breakdown

NUTS categories covered by the area of the HNP

- 2 NUTS2 regions
- 4 NUTS3 regions
- 10 LAU1 regions
- 22 LAU2 regions

There is only one LAU1 region from where all LAU2 regions/settlements are linked to the HNP area, the other LAU1 regions are only partly linked
Institutional breakdown

- The institutions on different NUTS level play different role in regional development and in administration/government.
- There are governmental institutions on NUTS3 and LAU 2 level.
- Institutions for NUTS2 and LAU1 level are under development, their tasks are linked to development policies.
National Development Policy Concept
2005–2020

The document call attention that in regional and sectoral programmes special development is needed in given rural areas, from the five group identified, one covers: *the development of areas rich in natural, cultural and landscape value*
National Spatial Development Concept
2005–2020

- The document groups the micro-regions of Hungary to rural and urban areas using the following indicators:
  - rural micro regions (<120 inhabitants/km²)
  - rural micro regions with an urban centre (<120 inhabitants/km²), Urban centre (min. 20,000 inhabitants)
  - urban micro regions (>120 inhabitants/km²)
- Three from the ten micro regions with HNP area belongs to rural micro regions with urban centre and seven belongs to rural micro region.
Spatially integrated developmental priorities for rural areas

Developments will seek to serve not just the needs of the agricultural sector, but to go beyond it to eliminate the problems that typically beset rural areas by building on their intrinsic qualities.

An increase in the rate of employment is considered to require the local retention of an intellectual and skilled work force, and a human and infrastructural basis capable of supporting businesses.
Strategic Programme
of the North Great Plain Region

One specific objective of the Programme is creating an “Eco-region”. Priorities behind this objective are:

- Protection and sustainable development of the Region’s natural condition; creation of a safe environment
- Environmentally sustainable development, sustainable economic activities based on environmental attributes
There are seven LAGs in the region with settlements linking to the HNP area.

The core LAG of the region carrying the name of Hortobágy includes the highest number of settlements (7 from 11) with a link to the protected area.

The aim of this LAG is creating sustainability in line with competitiveness.

An important task, which was drawn up, is to increase the identity of people in the region.
Agri-environment management

This measure intended to promote the ways of using agricultural land which are compatible with protection and improvement of the environment, the countryside, the landscape, natural resources, the soil and genetic diversity.
Conclusions

- The results show that there are a lot of documents targeting the HNP from different aspects.
- Taking the results in mind, the opinion of the authors is, that in the future collective actions, cooperation of local actors built on bioregionalism Dwyer and Findeis (2008:38) – „the principle that natural resources management is best organised with reference to natural territorial units rather than in relation to administrative boundaries” – is needed.
Conclusions

- The HNP has a combination of weaknesses and strengths
- The identity of inhabitants has to be improved through the enhancement of local actors’ capacity
- The activity of the core Local Action Group from the seven LAGs formulated in 2007 along the Leader program could be a starting point
- Results underline the importance of Leader in targeting rural development measures
Thank you for your attention!

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