

# TOPOZYM

Dashboard aimed at decision-makers and citizens regarding the management of public places according to the principles of sustainable development

DURATION OF THE PROJECT  
15/12/2006 – 31/01/2009

BUDGET  
367.097 €

## KEYWORDS

Collaborative/cooperative tools, Territorial intelligence, Ethical governance, Multiscalar networks, Citizen participation, Sustainable Development Education and Training

## CONTEXT

On the one hand, many projects that claim to practise sustainable development often concentrate on one single aspect of sustainability. On the other hand, public place management involves a variety of stakeholders with diverging visions, backgrounds and often conflicting interests. We want to go beyond these limitations and foster integration of the different pillars of sustainability as well as an integration of the diverse opinions and objectives of all stakeholders. The project inscribes itself in the search for “another governance,” one in which citizens play an increasing part in public space management and territorial organisation. Topozym also contributes to the objectives and commitments of Belgium to the Agenda 21 and Natura 2000. Dissemination and valorisation of key findings and results will happen partly through an integration into the REIT and CAENTI (networks of territorial intelligence).

cuses on the development of tools and methodologies to raise awareness and to ensure decision-making processes integrate sustainable development principles. User-friendliness and simplicity will be favoured in the conception of the dashboard.

## Methodology

- Step 1: Inventory and typology  
Draw up an inventory and typology of projects, tools and processes linked to the management of public space, and ideally to environmental education
- Step 2 : case studies  
Selection of six projects in Brussels (1), Flanders (2) and Wallonia (3).  
Diversity will be sought in the choice of sectors, stakeholders, places urban or rural and themes.  
Evaluation will be done partly on the basis of a framework developed during the first phase, with specific criteria such as holistic approach, integration of the four pillars of sustainability, ethics and coherence.
- Step 3 : Training activities  
The aim is to design training in order to improve practice through a transfer and adaptation of tools and approaches used in specific sectors that might prove relevant in others. This part of the research fits into a critical perspective, based on a collaborative kind of participative methodology, focusing on the co-training that will be held within the learning communities made up of each group of project stakeholders. This perspective corresponds to the desire to promote a holistic approach to the research.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Initial dashboard	March 2007
Database of tools (200 experiences)	June 2007
Presentation and analysis of six case studies	February 2008
Synthesis	June 2008
Training activities	September 2008
Analysis of the training-action research	October 2008
Closing international conference	
Final dashboard	December 2008
Final report	

## Objectives

Topozym wants to contribute to the evolution of the conception of sustainable development through an emphasis on the inter-relationship between its different dimensions and a programme of accompanied training to facilitate and improve space management. The research goal is to produce a dashboard for decision-makers, to provide support and help for the design and implementation of participative approaches in the context of territorial governance of public spaces. The research also fo-

## INTERACTION BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT PARTNERS

- Step 1: Inventory and typology  
The partners involved in the project each have their specific abilities and are in contact with different stakeholders that belong to relatively compartmentalised sectors. They will all be involved in the conception of the framework for analysis of the 200 experiences and their inventory. UGES is coordinating the work and the project in general.
- Step 2: Case studies  
Three members of the research team will participate in all



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focus groups, including each time a member of the IEP. This should ensure adequation between the needs of the stakeholders and the requirements of sustainable development.

- Step 3: Training-activities  
The six training modules will be mainly managed by the IEP. The other partners will provide support in their fields of expertise, in the evaluation of the results, as well as in monitoring and in order to ensure continuous improvements.

### EXPECTED RESULTS

- Inventory of commented experiences in public space management and participative processes.
- Integration of practices and insights from different disciplines that often work independently
- Close analysis of six different case studies
- Increasing awareness of sustainable development issues in public space management through case

### PARTNERS - ACTIVITIES

UGES (Unité de géographie économique et sociale)

UGES is one of the geography department units of the faculty of Sciences of Liege University. It has expertise in activities location, landscape analysis, territorial intelligence and problem solving in terms of regional Development and Management. It combines scientific research and applied work in economic and social geography.

ISEG (Institute for Social and Economic Geography)

The ISEG is in the faculty of Sciences at the KUL (Catholic University of Leuven). Research includes the whole of social and economic spatial processes with a clear focus on four topics: settlement systems, processes of social integration, regional economic networking, tourism and recreation. It has experience in multivariate data processing of complex databases and

study work and follow-up committee

- Dashboard for improved consideration of sustainability in decision-making and governance
- Conception, delivery and testing of tailor-made trainings to sustainable development
- Publication/dissemination work based on an open collaborative platform (WIKI-type and SYMPA-type mailing-lists). The system will be a "public space" for information, exchange, debate, co-training and diffusion between all the stakeholders concerned (based on research done in the framework of the ANCHORA project)
- Systematic dissemination of research results during the annual CAENTI symposiums (September 2007 and October 2008) and on the website of the CAENTI. Organisation of an international conference about place management according to sustainable development in November 2008.

in analysing databases by use of survey techniques. It also has a long tradition in organising qualitative research, both in a Third World and a European context.

IEP (Institut d'Eco-pédagogie)  
Specialized in the training of adults as well as research on environmental education and sustainable development, its expertise is based on an R&D strategy based on four elements:

- In-depth knowledge of the eco-socio-system of the public concerned by the trainings
- Production of original training methods and tools based on a socio-constructivist approach
- A participative evaluation approach integrating the viewpoints of all the stakeholders concerned
- A progressive modelling of a training strategy, based on experiments carried out

### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### Coordinator

*Serge Schmitz*  
University of Liège  
Allée du six Août, 2 B11  
B-4000 Liège  
Tel : +32 (0)4 366 56 29  
Fax : +32 (0)4 366 57 70  
s.schmitz@ulg.ac.be  
<http://www.dept-geo.ulg.ac.be/unites/geocosoc.php>

#### Promoters

*Etienne Van Hecke, professor*  
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KULeuven)  
Institute for Social and Economic Geography (ISEG)  
Celestijnenlaan 200E  
B-3001 Heverlee  
Tel : +32 (0)16 32 24 33  
Fax : +32 (0)16 32 29 80  
Etienne.VanHecke@geo.kuleuven.be  
[www.kuleuven.be/geography](http://www.kuleuven.be/geography)

*Christine Partoune*  
Institut d'Eco-pédagogie (IEP)  
Département de Botanique  
Boulevard du Rectorat  
B-4000 Liège  
Tel : +32 (0)4 366 38 18  
Fax : +32 (0)4 366 29 27  
ee-iep@guest.ulg.ac.be  
<http://www.institut-eco-pedagogie.be>

#### Follow-up Committee

For the complete and most up-to-date composition of the Follow-up Committee, please consult our Federal Research Actions Database (FEDRA) by visiting  
<http://www.belspo.be/fedra> or  
<http://www.belspo.be/ssd>

