

IO8 – Policy Paper

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Why do develop a Policy Paper?



- ✓ In order to sum up all the main findings, best practices and lessons learned during NGEEnvironment implementation, **a Policy Paper addressed to decision makers has been developed**, with the aim of ensuring:
 - ✓ the relevance of the project;
 - ✓ its outreach at a policy level;
 - ✓ the sustainability of its benefits beyond the funding period.
- ✓ The Policy Paper represents a useful resource for peer stakeholders across Europe, and identifies specific recommendations for policy makers.



The goal

- ✓ The main goal of the Policy Paper is to present and suggest a course of action based on an institutional perspective and targets policy stakeholders such as public bodies, government agencies, entities with the ability to support or fund civic action and NGOs.



NGOs' role: towards citizens

- ✓ NGOs facilitate the **dialogue and communication with citizens** and make the general public aware of a number of issues related to development, cooperation, ecological transformation of society, sustainability, protection of the environment, sustainable development of local communities.
- ✓ NGOs foster **interaction between groups of people** and engage them around a common goal so that their enthusiasm and motivation are kept at high levels.



NGOs' role: towards the institutions

- ✓ NGOs are in a position to **provide policy recommendations** to local and national authorities, and to **foster smooth communication between policy makers and local actors**.



The main challenges NGOs are called to face

- ✓ Excess of bureaucracy;
- ✓ Lack of funds, or discontinuous provision of funds and donations;
- ✓ Lack of feedback and social support on the part of citizens;
- ✓ General indifference of population towards certain topics;
- ✓ Effects of Covid-19 pandemic: due to the current situation many projects were postponed or eliminated.



Barriers and opportunities

BARRIERS

- ✓ Although participatory processes increased around the EU in recent years, the involvement of civil society in environmental governance remains quite low.
- ✓ Hindrances can be due to a widespread fear on the part of institutions that NGOs may constitute special interest groups, and that their engagement will lead to policy distortions.

OPPORTUNITIES

- ✓ Civil society involvement can provide substantial advantages to the political discourse thanks to NGO's experience and technical knowledge on environmental issues.
- ✓ For an environmental governance to be effective, it is crucial that NGOs cooperate with institutions and provide their experience-based input in the decision-making process.



Environmental governance

- ✓ Environmental governance refers to **policy making in the field on environment protection**.
- ✓ Civil society plays an important role in policy-making in the field of environmental governance, and its function has been officially accepted and recognised at an international level.
- ✓ NGOs should promote even further society's engagement in environmental policy, by promoting initiatives target to different groups.



Recommendations to Policy Makers

- ✓ **High-quality training** to ensure that NGOs can effectively respond to the local/regional needs and help achieve green development goals;
- ✓ Supporting the development of the NGO sector to foster sustainability in its 3 axes: **social, economic and environmental sustainability**;
- ✓ Development of a **partnership** between NGOs and other operating agents/sectors to achieve common framework towards sustainability.



Suggestion N° 1

- ✓ Policy makers should adopt the necessary measures to **strengthen the skills of NGOs' members** by implementing systematic **training and capacity-building activities** targeted at the non-profit sector.
- ✓ To this aim, the NGEEnvironment project has tested a specific training, in order to develop the internal capacities of the staff in areas like pedagogy, leadership, business management and communication.



Suggestion N° 2

- ✓ Policy makers should also invite NGOs, as representatives of the civil society, to **participate in an informed way in the definition of environmental policies.**
- ✓ In this way, active participation of citizens in the decision-making process will be considered a grounding element of transparent representation at a policy level and, in addition, institutions will be required to consider their point of view from a multi-stakeholder perspective.





Many thanks for attention

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