



Regional study on the exchange process

Italy

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1. Introduction

The activities in the first part of the project have provided to each project partner the opportunity to interact with different sort of stakeholders at different levels, within their own regions and with stakeholders of other regions and countries. This has led to a learning and capacity building processes that have allowed not only to generate the “Towards EMAS Action Plan” but also to improve and reinforce other aspects that concern the competencies of the partners.

This second part of the Regional Study of the Interreg ENHANCE Project aims to present the main lessons learned from the exchange process that has taken place during the two years of the project.

2. Lessons learnt from the SHM, IM & WS

The Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna (SSSA) – PP3 has carried on during this year several stakeholder meetings, mostly concentrated between July and December 2018. The stakeholder meetings were focused on the Policy Instrument chosen by SSSA: Regional Law n. 31 of 13th August 2007: Organisation of the Region for transparency and quality of contracts and concessions. At this point of the project, the main goal of these meetings was the validation of the conclusions of the interregional study regarding the best practices susceptible to be exchange between Liguria and the other participating regions in the project and which will be the base to develop the Towards EMAS Action plan for the region of Liguria. To do this, stakeholders' suggestions were relevant to select the best practices from other partners to include them in the Towards EMAS Action Plan.

In the stakeholder meetings with public bodies, as Municipalities and Regional ones, the contribute of Liguria Region was important because, working with them, both SSSA and LR could evaluate what was relevant for the targeted subject within the Regional Plan on Green Public Procurement.

Regarding the Interregional Meetings and Workshop organized during the last year, SSSA joined the opportunity to learn both from partners and from the other stakeholders involved by them, about good practices presented but also about the functioning of the EMAS system as a wide context in their countries. In particular, Interregional meetings were useful to understand how the partners were working with their stakeholders, in the way to select the best practices to be adopted in their regional contexts. On the other hand, workshops were important to understand the difference between regional contexts about specific fields.

3. Interaction and cooperation with stakeholders

The experience since this step of ENHANCE project with the stakeholders involved has been very deep and full of exchange from both sides. To date, SSSA has met, with almost always the presence of researchers of Liguria Region, several bodies in charge of purchasing across the Region. In July, SSSA met the Centralized Contracting Stations

of Liguria Region and of Metropolitan City of Genova, for two different in-depth analysis of their functioning and the main barriers to the inclusion of green criteria in public tenders, including the role of certifications and EMAS registrations as means of proof for public officers when verifying the criteria in tenders. On the same topic, also other bodies were met, like the Public tender office of Municipality of Genova (September), that is the main office in charge of purchasing for the capital (and biggest city) of Liguria Region. To ensure a big variety in the informants, the SSSA researchers met also the Public tender office of the Municipality of Lerici (late September) and the head of the Environment Office of the Municipality of Arcola (November), two little municipalities near the city of La Spezia. The first of the two, nevertheless its dimension, is a Centralized Station for Purchasing also for another little municipality, Ameglia. Finally, the last stakeholder meeting was organized with the Parco Beigua (December), that is a regional park very active on the way to sustainability in its activity.

From all these meetings, in addition to being able to draw ideas to select the best practices to be transferred in the regional context of Liguria, the researchers of the SSSA have had the opportunity to investigate the characteristics of the public offices of local and regional authorities. Starting from the training of public officers, up to the relationships between these bodies and the operational difficulties in the inclusion of green criteria in the calls, the work carried out so far has enriched both researchers and the largest stakeholder involved, the Liguria Region. A positive evidence that deserve to be remarked from the meeting carried out is certainly the great commitment of officers working on procurement about the need for sustainability in public tenders.

After this phase, SSSA is going to involve these stakeholders in a more in-depth analysis of public procurement. Liguria Region, because is the main stakeholder and responsible for the elaboration of the Regional Plan on Green Public Procurement inside the policy instrument Regional Law n. 31 of 13th August 2007, will be the main actor for the implementation of the Towards EMAS Action Plan. Results from the meetings described will be deepen with the join work of SSSA and Liguria Region officers during the second part (2019-2020) of the ENHANCE project.

4. Main lessons learnt from the professionals involved as SH

During the last two years, SSSA has joined the opportunity to learn both from its own stakeholders and from stakeholders met in interregional meetings and workshops. From the internal side, the stakeholders involved by SSSA in the first phase as Liguria Ricerche (an in-house company owned by Liguria Region with the main mission of research) gave us the opportunity to have an expert and interesting partner in doing research activity in the context target of the project and on the policy instrument, due to their experience gained in many years of activity. Also, the involvement in the workshop in Sevilla of ERVET, a regional body of Emilia-Romagna – one of the more advanced and rich Italian Region - has increased our knowledge on the field of the policy instrument and gave the opportunity to compare different situations with the Ligurian context.

Moreover, SSSA has learned during the exchange process from the stakeholders brought by the other partners in interregional meetings and workshops. The possibility to see how policies were operating in other contexts taught by an external view has enhanced the awareness of SSSA and its stakeholders on the importance of spreading EMAS adoption and communicating the benefits of that to the private sector.

5. Main lessons learnt from the cooperation with other partners

The contribution of the partners was very important for SSSA, both in workshops and in partner meetings and also for what concerns the exchange of good practices.

As an example, in the workshop organized in Vienna last June on the topic of European Directive on Emissions and the role of EMAS verifier, named “Environmental Inspections and the role of the EMAS verifier”, some evidences show that there are differences between the regions involved in the project in the benefits granted to EMAS registered organizations (and also ISO14001 certified ones) and the role recognized to the EMAS verifier. In Lombardy – that was the case presented in the workshop from SSSA – there is no role for the EMAS verifier, while in other regions was different. In Lombardy, only the regional competent authority is in charge of environmental inspections.

Besides this, the knowledge and the competences provided by the partners during the phases of the project since now, were very useful to understand how to try to fully implement their good practices chosen by SSSA and its stakeholders in the Italian context. Regarding the actions selected for the Towards EMAS Action Plan, most of them are related to the Green Public Procurement field and having as partners two regional government as Catalunya and Andalusia is very interesting, because it is an opportunity to compare institutions among different Regions of Europe.

6. Other lessons learnt and actions to be implemented

A limit of the activity conducted since now – coming from the comparison with some other partners of ENHANCE – that will be taken in consideration to improve the effectiveness of the project for the following two years is, without doubts, the need to involve more the private sectors, including professionals, firms and their associations. This will be the aim of, at least, two of the actions implemented in the Towards EMAS Action Plan.

7. Conclusions

To date, the path taken for the feasibility study of the adaptation of good practices to the Ligurian context has led to excellent results but is still on going and will be more intensive in the next year. The involvement of the stakeholders led to measure what were the actual needs of the regional context and what were the possible interventions on the policy object (Regional Law n. 31 of 13th August 2007). Thanks to the results of this path, in fact, it was decided to focus more on some actions that can promote EMAS overcoming the barriers that may hinder its role in public tenders. To do this, the role of two of the best practices chosen, that of training public officials and communication and formulation of guidelines, will be fundamental.