

SHERPA

Rural Science-Society-Policy
Interfaces

PRACTICE ABSTRACT

Feeding the policy process in Region Sud, France



CIHEAM
MONTPELLIER

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The regional Multi-Actor Platform (MAP) of South of France brought together regional policy-makers and rural practitioners. Both actors are used to prepare and to implement regional and EU policies which cover rural areas (incl. EAFRD, ERDF), yet they have rarely had any opportunity to reflect on present and future ruralities at regional level. In 2020, the platform chose the topic of Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas (LTVRA) to look at future challenges to be addressed in rural areas and for rural communities. The resulting SHERPA MAP position paper was of great interest to the regional Council which used it for drafting and voting a special report on regional ruralities.

Recommendations for practitioners and coordinators of Multi-Actor Platforms:

- Informing directly regional policy-makers about EU timeline at least two years before (i.e. future CAP programmes, LTVRA process, etc.) to be able to feed the policy process;
- Proposing a “Non-profit knowledge sharing process” on future ruralities, to equip policy-makers and rural practitioners with expanded insights on regional trends and challenges;
- Setting up a balanced MAP between researchers, rural practitioners and policy-makers which share common cross-cutting interests and experiences on rural areas;
- Embarking equally regional civil servants and rural mayors in the process as they are key policy-makers for designing and implementing rural policies at local and regional levels;
- Providing synthesis, facts and figures to MAP members on regional rural trends and challenges, (incl. on demography);
- Being clear about objectives and expected results, to deliver outputs for both MAP members and for EU policy-makers.



South Region MAP

Location

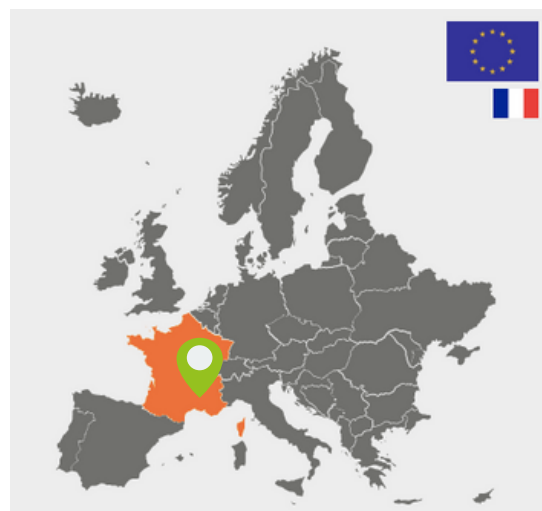
Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur region, France

MAP contacts

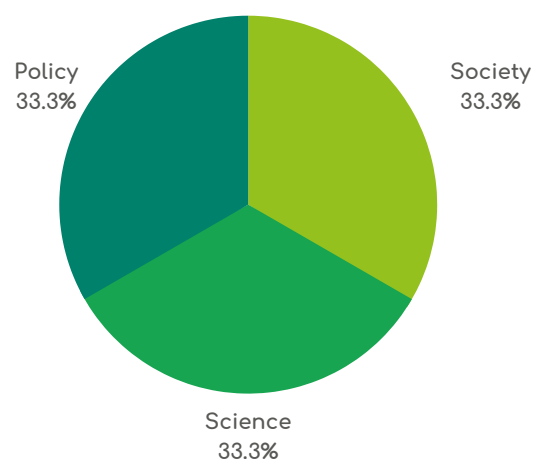
Facilitator: Jean-Pierre Rolland
Monitor: Samuel Féret

More info

<https://rural-interfaces.eu/maps/france-paca-sud/>



MAP membership:





ABOUT THE MAP

The South Region SHERPA MAP is a regional platform rooted in the Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur region, coordinated by CIHEAM Montpellier. This MAP has been set up to address cross-sectoral topics faced by rural areas in the region. The MAP includes stakeholders from different rural settings and it is composed by members of LAGs, rural business, universities, agencies, experts, members and staffs of local and regional government.

The first MAP cycle focused on the LTVRA in South region. For this, two dedicated online workshops (because of the pandemic) were organised in 2020 to discuss about key challenges and opportunities of the rural areas in the region as well as the desired future for rural areas.



OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the South Region SHERPA MAP was to discuss trends and future challenges of rural areas through an ad-hoc group mixing rural practitioners, policymakers and scientists. It contributed to re-assess regional context patterns in front of upcoming changes in rural areas. In Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region, rural areas faced demographic and climate change challenges. With the COVID-19 pandemic, the region is likely to experience new social, economic and ecological transitions by 2030-40. Since the 2000s, a repopulation of rural areas arose due to peri-urbanisation and the demographic dynamism in isolated rural communities. However, population growth has slowed for ten years, as a double effect of the deficit of births and an accentuated aging population.

Effects of climate change that Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region is already facing will become more pronounced over the next twenty years and will notably impact natural areas and the tourism and agricultural sectors. The COVID-19 crisis will undoubtedly have lasting impacts on the social and economic situation in the region, regarding the type of jobs, access to housing, access to basic services or even mobility options in rural areas.



MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2020, the South Region MAP has produced a [MAP Discussion Paper](#) and a [MAP Position Paper](#), which contributed to the [SHERPA Position Paper](#). MAP members have underlined the importance of favouring a transversal approach to rural areas so to overcome a silo-approach induced by thematic shopping list. Four cross-cutting issues have been discussed towards "*a desirable future*" for rural areas in the region: i) rethinking mobilities and sedentarities pathways in rural areas; ii) anticipating businesses and jobs of tomorrow; iii) taking care of a unique but endangered natural capital which contributes to the attractiveness of rural areas in region; iv) having better definitions of ruralities contribute to a better understanding of trends and challenges to be addressed by public policies in cooperation with rural communities (multi-layer governance).

This process has shown the usefulness of such a regional arena for a multi-stakeholder dialogue, to better understand the diversity and opportunities of rural areas as politically organised territories. MAPs members agreed on a common diagnosis on trends, challenges and opportunities in the regional rural territories. At the end of the first cycle, the Regional Council took inspiration from the SHERPA position paper for a specific report on rurality which has been adopted mid-December 2020, thus conferring a 'rural think tank' status to the MAP.



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