

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
SOUTH EAST ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
JOINT EUROPE COMMITTEE**

Date: 23 February 2007

Subject: **Update on PURPLE (Peri-Urban Regions Platform Europe)**

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1. South East England continues as a member of the Executive Board of PURPLE along with six of the other member regions (Ile de France, Randstad, Stockholm, Catalonia, Mazovia and Flanders). Activities focus on two areas – EU policy (agricultural, regional and environmental) and development of joint projects on peri-urban issues.

2. The project development group, which is led by South East England, held a working group in Brussels on 13 December where about 30 representatives submitted and discussed project ideas for development and eventual submission to the new EU funding programmes from 2007-13. These were clustered into 5 areas, summarised very briefly as follows:

- **Production** (farming, diversification, improving the market chain between producers and consumers, building and strengthening regional and local identity eg through branding)
- **Neighbours** (use of peri-urban areas and open space by people from neighbouring cities and towns, access routes and methods, economic opportunities including tourism, spatial planning and future development issues, community viability and engagement)
- **Environment** (environmental impacts and adaptations in peri-urban areas, management and protection of high value landscapes and biodiversity, climate change, education and awareness raising, improving food and bio-energy independence)
- **Research** (exploring a range of peri-urban issues through the EU's Framework programme for Research and Development and other funding programmes. Ideas so far include: linking to the Lisbon agenda – calculating the added value of landscape and leisure for Lisbon regions; developing land use models based on food/energy/leisure; and looking at new financial instruments for landscape management and maintenance.)
- **Leader** (opportunities for innovative use of Leader Rural Development funding in peri-urban areas; developing a transnational approach which builds on the wealth of Leader experience across PURPLE regions)

PURPLE will continue to develop these ideas involving interested authorities, organisations and institutions. Project outlines have been circulated to SE England contacts with a request to cascade.

3. PURPLE is participating in a project forum event hosted by the Rhone-Alpes region in Lyon on 23 February. Two other French regions, Nord Pas de Calais and Ile de France are involved along with two peri-urban networks, Terres en Villes (from France) and Arc Latin (with Italian, Catalanian and French members). The idea is to continue exploration of project work with this wider pool of potential partners. The expected audience is upwards of 200 delegates and the programme includes workshops on the themes outlined above, followed by a market place event for project promoters. Authorities and organisations from South East England have been invited to attend and/or submit project ideas.

3. The Stockholm County Administrative Board will host a conference event and General Assembly meeting for PURPLE on 21 and 22 May. The agenda will include the second of three planned debates on the future of Common Agricultural Policy designed to develop a common position for peri-urban regions. (*'The future of CAP and rural development policies - opportunities for peri-urban regions'*.)

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7 February 2007