

## DEFINING ELEMENTS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE ROMANIAN TERRITORY

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**Abstract:** *The concept of sustainable development, launched in 1987, knew an evolution that might be summarized like this: it was accepted and transformed in strategic objectives at the level of many national economies; it was extended at the level of economic branches, in various fields (human resources etc); it inspired actions at international (UNO), continental (EU) and regional level, that were transformed in understandings and agreements as well as actions referring to: protection of ozone layer, reduction of CO2 emissions, administration of dangerous substances, protection of natural habitats, etc.; it was included in the educational system at all levels; it penetrated the common language, polarizing the attention on the great challenges the present civilization is submitted to.*

*At the same time, the concept showed its limits at its transposition in economic practice, adjustments, completions at the level of each country peculiarities was needed, leading to the occurrence of tens of variants, each one viable in its application environment (Berca, M., 2006, pp. 65-70). Re-consideration also takes place in theoretical plan, in the meaning of some phrases, such as: the needs of the present and future generation, ethics and economy, the development limits the sustainable poverty, man/environment ratio, etc. It is asserted that as of man existence on the Earth, the balance with the nature was broken, so that the mankind is engage in the direction of ending a cycle of civilization or even a life cycle. As a consequence, new concepts occur alongside of the sustainable development, such as: Gaia conception, deep ecology, suicide Earth or the Medea concept, survival instead of development, etc (Bran, F., Manea, Gh., Ioan, I., Rădulescu C.V., 2011, p. 79).*

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## ***1. Sustainable Development Concept***

Sustainable development is defined by the Brundtland Commission, since 1987, as the development that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. The strategy of sustainable development proposed by the European Commission for the EU Member States is the Lisbon Agenda for growth and jobs.

This concept involves development of new energy sources and minimizing the residues that affects the environment. The fossil fuels show as finite resources and economically limited, inducing emissions that affects the environment and contributes to climate change. A sustainable energetic system must integrated renewable energy sources and chains of burning with reduced emission, accessible to acceptable costs. The sustainable development needs establishing the balance between the economic development, social equity and environment protection, in all regions of the planet. So, this concept cannot materialize without a real political will of an as higher as possible number of countries.

The Sustainable Development means a better quality at present and also for the future generations. According to the visions of the sustainable development, the progress integrates immediate and long term objectives, local and global actions, economic and environmental problems, all being inseparable. Such a vision upon the society cannot be imposed only by governmental policies, but the society as a whole, needs to adopt certain principles (political, economic, and social, of thinking).

EU has a Strategy of Sustainable Development, that proposes itself goals and clear actions, related to seven, in majority environmental priorities: climate change and clean energy; sustainable transports; sustainable consumption and production; preservation and natural resources management; public health; social inclusion, demography and migration; poverty , sustainable development challenges at global level.

A controversial issue is the relation of the Sustainable Development Strategy with Lisbon Agenda for Growth and Jobs. Additional to EU strategy for social-economic reforms, defined in the European Council in 2000 – Lisbon Agenda, EU adopted and an as much ambitious strategy for Sustainable Development. We hope that EU will not proceed as in the Romanian saying about “who runs after two rabbits will catch no one”. Although EU affirms explicitly that the sustainable development is the

dominant principle of EU policies, in reality, the EU economic competitiveness-question in front of globalisation reached to dominate the political agenda. The New Lisbon Strategy became the main goal of Barroso Commission.

The three pillars of the Lisbon Strategy (economic competitiveness, social inclusion and environment protection) were often compared to “three children”, of whom one- the competitiveness- receives more attention. In this process, the sustainable development strategy reached even to be reduced to the environmental pillar of the Lisbon Strategy. However, in the description dedicated to the assessment of the strategy, President Barroso underlined the importance of the sustainability dimension. “Sustainable Development Strategy and Lisbon Strategy mutually reinforce each other”, said Barroso.

## ***2. Romania and the Sustainable Development Concept***

The principles of the sustainable development are (partially) included in the Constitution, there is a National Strategy dedicated to this goal, the laws take over- via European Union- components of the concept, the notion penetrated in the language of the decision makers, specialists, etc., the results however, regarded from the national economy as a whole are mediocre or sub-mediocre. May be this concept would be able to generate better results, consonant with the preoccupations and achievements in EU, if it had be particularized to the Romanian economic space, that would mean:

- Existing of some environmental factors quality affected by previous anthropic activities that imposed remaking the pollution sites or, as least, ceasing the continuing degradation of the environmental factors (see the reduction of the forestry fund, phenomenon get out of legal or logical control);
- Impoverishing population, process low-controlled by the authorities and as such, about 2.5 million inhabitants went in other countries, the depopulation of the rural settlements being a consequence and a direct threat of the sustainable development of the Romanian village;
- Natural, mineral resources, fossil fuels, etc. have not transformed in a support of economic and social development, but, by a bad management, either outsourced or neglected (2.5 million hectares

of tillable land per year are not prepared for raising crops), the consequence being the fact that the country imports 70% of the food need!;

- Loss of 4-5 million jobs in the last 20 years did not assured the development or the sustainability of the economy. In the rhetoric of the authorities, on the background of the sustainable duration notion, the incomes of the population did not increased but, they had reduced according to the statistics of the National Statistics Institute;
- Branches and economic activities that could frame in the principles of sustainability devolved: agriculture with the connected fields, tourism and, especially, health tourism (balneoclimatic resort), food industry, garments and leather based on own natural resources, pisciculture, wood processing, etc.

Official acceptance of the sustainable development concept was pure formal. Under this phrase in fashion in Europe and worldwide, the economy of Romania side-slipped strongly, having as horizon the model of the countries with economy in decline (Brown, L.R., 2008, pp.13, 116, 261), not deserved position, humiliating for the population of the country (see also the place of Romania in the hierarchy of the European countries, achieved based on the economic, social performances, quality of environment factors, quantum GFP/inhabitant, external debts, etc).

If this concept of sustainable development did not fit Romania what other paradigm would possibly directed the national development strategy, the future of the country, regarded in the group of European countries?

Fortunately, in early '90, the decision makers would have at their disposal at least three options:

1. Taking seriously the concept of sustainable development, adjusting this to the realities of the economy, monitoring consistently its principles and their transposition in economic activity;
2. Choosing among the variants that the Romanian specialists had developed in time, namely: a) the entropic approach of the economic processes, author Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen (1996, p. 102); b) the circular active process, author Maria D. Popescu (1985, p. 23); c) ecological reconstruction of the Romanian economy, work of the collective led by professor Benjamin Cotigaru (2006, p. 93) from the Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies (ASE);

3. Elaboration of an own concept of bringing Romania at the average level of development of the European countries, on long term.

However, unfortunately, the three options did not exist. Formally, Romania considers it evolves under the umbrella of sustainable development concept, but even this sustainability is a chimera (we remind here, the place and the role of IMF in the decisions regarding the economy of Romania).

The weaknesses of the application in the Romanian practice of the concept of sustainable development must be sought in:

- *Non-defining the national interest* that must have taken place with preponderance in the concept of sustainable development and in its adjustment from the theoretical framework to the one of national paradigm. Until present, the national interest is a chimera that facilitates the destruction of the national economy system;
- *Non-existing of a National Sustainable Development or of evolution on long term*, to be believable and viable during the entire duration provided for the achievement of the strategic goals. Such Strategy does not belong to a government or a party (ephemeral entities everywhere), but these must set out tactics according to the national Strategy. Or, instead of such practice, each government set out an own variant of development Strategy, variant quickly forgotten because ordinarily: a) it has no financial support (during 1990 - 2010, the national budget was not in surplus); b) no entity needed to put into operation the Strategy, during its whole existing; c) the prospective thinking of the decision makers in the strategic and tactical sub-systems was not predominant; d) blocking occurred in achieving strategic goals at their interference with occult interest, with red tape, corruption, sub-mediocrity of certain decision makers; e) the fragile political framework, etc.;
- *Priorities of the decision makers* at all levels of management have also not included the care for the economy development, serving the national interest, the place of the country in the global hierarchy, the food and energetic safety, increasing the standard of living of the population, etc.;
- The only positive things during this 20 years period, is the awareness of a certain part of the population with the idea of sustainable development and with its principles- via school

curriculum; with the occurrence of the civil society organizations with preoccupation in the field of sustainable development, with the formation or capitalization of certain specialists with ecological profile, with organizing and operating Universities with ecological profile, etc. Putting out of order industrial units with great pollution potential (Copşa Mică, Zlatna, Năvodari etc.) had reduced the degree of air, soil, water pollution. The life expectancy of the inhabitants grew from 69.56 years in 1990, to 73.33 years, in 2009. The membership of Romania to EU obliges to observe the rules set out per the Union as a whole that could have favourable effects on the economy.

### ***3. Principles of the Sustainable Development Concept and the Pace of the Romanian Economy***

In the standard scheme of the sustainable development concept, the principles are set forth and structured thus:

- Peoples, animals, plants health protection, biodiversity, natural capital protection, natural landscape preservation;
- Efficiency of the human, natural, anthropic capital;
- Equity between human generations: both in the interior of the same generation as well as between generations, in their succession, as access to resources, as standard of living, etc.

In a newer acceptance, the principles of the durable development are worded thus (Drăgan, G., 2008, p. 54):

- Resources must not be consumed faster than their gradual renewal;
- Substances produced by the society must not be produced in higher quantity than they may be „consumed” by the nature;
- Greenspace must not be diminished, because they contribute to the renewal of the nature;
- In a society of the sustainable development, for the basic needs, one must resort to resources as efficient as possible and their distribution and use must be as rational as possible.

In the philosophy of the sustainable development concept, this has in its center man and its needs or the anthropocentric approach, principle found also in the philosophy laying at the basis of EU forming. The extension of the concept upon the animals, plants, biodiversity health presumes existing

of a balance between man and nature, option difficult to fulfil under the conditions of the increase of the number of inhabitants of Earth, of the exhaustion of non-renewable resources, degradation of natural ecosystems, pollution of the environment factors, etc. In approaching the ecocentric reaction human/nature, this remains to evolve at the capacity of reproduction (bearing capacity), the variables needing to be sought in the number of population, production and consumption models, social equity.

Until clearing the dilemma between the two approaches, the states must find a compromise, a solution of surviving, so that the principle 1 for sustainable development has substance. The objectives monitored by the Romanian State, in accordance with principle 1 are generally known, priority being grant to those resulting from EU laws. However, in the national practice there are peculiarities that worth to pay special attention, because they are processes or phenomena proving to be dangerous or possible to become dangerous, such as for example:

*Systematic attack to the health of people*, with all the aspects that result from this: a) the phenomenon of impoverishing the population, with all that derives for health; b) pollution of big cities, of the capital city especially- the breathing apparatus thickness is very spread among the inhabitants of the cities; c) pollution of surface waters- emblematic for the attention paid to this process is the investment near Bucharest (used water treatment plant in Glina), where of about 20-30 years there are attempts to achieve an installation of used water treatment!; d) massive multiplication of the stray dogs - at present, probably half of million at the level of the country and from here, the potential and real peril for the population; e) chemical processing of foods – support of the obesity process and cause of many nutritional diseases. Domestic agriculture could offer traditional products or ecological quality if their retail on the city markets would regulated in favour of the peasants, not only in favour of hyper markets and import products; f) existing of about 3 million primitive latrines in rural environment, showing a real peril for groundwater pollution; g) the young people sedentariness;

*Systematic attack to the health of the animal and vegetal kingdom*, that has as threats: a) large scale deforestation of the country's mountain region that leads to the destruction of the wild animals, birds, wild flora; b) organized hunting and its practice for the pleasure to kill; it is to remember here the exercises of shooting the birds in the Danube Delta, where the

hunting should be strictly forbidden – the respective migratory birds belong to the humankind thesaurus and not to the Governor of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reservation or to the Hunters Association in Tulcea county; the annual massacre in Balc is registered in the same note of free of charge cruelty towards nature; c) pollution of the surface waters on the whole territory of the country –illustrative in this direction may be the pollution of the chain of lakes around the capital city, the pollution of Dambovita river, etc.; d) forest fruit collection, occasion where hundreds or thousands of gatherers scour the forests, disturbing the fauna and reducing the food potential of certain animals (like bears for example); almost all forest fruits can be cultivated in the plains; e) citizens who, at each weekend in the spring and summer, populates the state owned forest skirts or the private forest skirts, polluting the air (chemical and sound pollution), waters, soil, affecting negatively fauna and flora- the phenomenon did not draw the attention of the authorities, or of the forest owners;

*Systematic attack of biodiversity* by: a) buildings authorized and, especially, non –authorized, in the premises of the natural reservations; b) chaotic circulation of persons and/or vehicles in the natural reservations or in Romsilva forests, due to the deficient security and protection systems; c) surface waters pollution; d) excessive fishing in the Danube Delta, massive poaching in fishing and hunting, got out of the state authorities control; e) lack of limits for setting out the number of hunters and fishers depending on the capacity of support of ecosystems- the deficient certification of new hunters; f) greenspace and peri-urban forests deforestation to make buildings as custom and not as exception in the practices of local administration; g) approval of the carrying on sportive manifestations extremely dangerous for preserving biodiversity - a ROMSILVA practice that approves motorcycle races on mountain land, deteriorating severely the land (by forming paths) and the nature by noise, disturbing everything is life in the area.

*Affecting natural landscape* by deforestation, destruction of greenspace in the cities, constructions in the Danube Delta (including military), pollution with used wrapping packages of the soil and waters, pollution of the perimeter of railroads and public roads, chaotic depositing of wood chips, etc.

A special attention must be paid to reconsider the dyke premises in the Danube Meadow and Danube Delta, consequence of making decision in the



60-70 and that proved to be irrational. The authorities, of unknown and hard to support reasons, never presented a cost-benefit analysis of this Plan decided politically (Lup, A., 2010 pp. 61-86) that did not lead to avoid floods, mitigation of the dryness of the South of the country. Despite the evidences, the well theoretically documented fund (Antipa, G., 2010, p. 72), of the efforts of the civil society (Cincă, S., 2010, p. 39) to change in good the thinking of the decision-makers, nothing changes!

*Efficiency of the natural capital* should be according to the concept of sustainable development to provide the reproduction potential of the natural resources. Population increasing in number and in its standard of living may be compensated by the improvement of the efficiency the natural resources capitalized. It is considered that the following had to be taken into consideration: a) capitalize the whole natural potential of the country for the purpose to eradicate poverty and then to make prosperous the population. The resources targeted are: tillable and farmland, especially the alpine pasture, the geothermal waters, the springs with therapeutic effect, accumulation lakes of hydro-energetic objectives, solar energy, wind, hydro- energy, surface waters, forestry fund, etc.; b) capitalization of all categories of debris that could supplement all the resources needed for the economy.

The mineral resources, the fossil fuels that are not renewable sources must be exploited according to the sustainable concept development, to provide the needs of such resources for the human future generations also. This requirement should overlap with the national interest notion and to direct the programs of capitalization of such resources. Such a thinking – would the rational and moral decision-makers be logical – would have avoided outsourcing of vital resources for the Romanian economy, the concession of resources at insignificant prices from economic viewpoint, export of wood mass under non processed form under the conditions where the furniture is imported and the own industry is in a deadlock, the price changes of the oil based fuels and of natural gases outsourced, the attempt to exploit, in the interest of the foreign companies of the gold ores and the depletion of the ore within in 20 years (Dobrescu, E., 2010 pp. 39-42).

The efficiency of human capital, also called a last resource, to ensure the development and survival, has many facets including:

- *involvement in economic activity* of working age population. In Romania, where in 1989 there were 7997 thousand employees in 2009 their

number had fallen to 4879 and continued to decline in 2010. It's hard to believe that on medium term, the Romanian economy can take the same number of employees as in 1989, justifying the migration of population and low contribution of human resources to the country's economic progress.

The loss of about 4 million jobs in 20 years – as a result of bad management of the economy – associated with the destructuring of the economy (industry, employment fell by half that number) - is by far the most important element that removes Romania from the principles of sustainable development, making the concept irrelevant on medium to long term.

- *quality of human resource*, multifaceted concept can be found as a result in the level of economic and social development of the country, its place in global flows of goods, services, culture, initiatives etc. Romania's current performances affect the development of the human resource quality and decoding perspectives. It is worth mentioning the existence of treasure of traditional knowledge, which enabled the survival of the indigenous population until today, overcoming obstacles to the tens and hundreds of human generations that have lived in the same territory and achieving balance with nature. Known under the name of *traditional ecological knowledge* (CET) it can be considered the software of sustainable development, generating ideas to continue the rural life, environment conservation and supply of production and consumption patterns, behaviours that can be assimilated to the urban population approach to sustainable development principles.

In Romania, the CET is concentrated particularly in hilly and mountainous area, where the population lives at subsistence level in small households and where six million people live in poverty, subsistence level overlapping sustainable poverty level. Recovery of the dowry of knowledge should, at best, put in work in rural areas, meaning the consolidation of rural households and, on account of contemporary progress, provided the conditions that the rural economy in areas with indigenous population to "off" time to prosperity.

*Efficiency of capital* (like wealth, money) we choose to regard it as an investment in the three components of sustainable development: economy-environment-man, where the investment fund spending priorities could be: a) the economy - creating new employment, agriculture and food security reorganization of the entire population of Romania, sustainable economic

structure, development of transport infrastructure; b) for the population: poverty eradication, modern education, the integration of Gypsies, stabilizing the rural population, highlighting the strengths of the population (intelligence, innovative spirit, talent, tradition and vocation, etc.); c) the environment - environmental cleanup affected by human activities.

*Principle 3 of the equity* has a much wider application area than expected in 1987 and provides an assessment of concerns to give the economy a sustainable trend. Examples:

- *Equity within the human generation* meaning it must be avoided large gaps between the incomes of the population (its polarization), the rights and duties of citizenship, access to education, professional affirmation, comfort, fair justice, democracy, etc.;

- *Equity between generations*, seen as access to resources, clean environmental factors, functional natural ecosystems, preservation of all that proves viable, perennial, in the traditional ecological knowledge, preserving national character that legitimizes a population as a whole population of the Earth as cultural, economic, spiritual, global innovator in knowledge input. Threats to this principle, in Romania, could be: outsourcing resources, uncontrolled environmental pollution, alienation of arable land, the export of humus, forest depletion, moral expanding pollution: alcoholism, smoking, drug use, including ethnobotanics recently introduced in the life of young people (with government support), violence, pornography, atheism, family dissolution, disappearance of the rural population, politics, demagoguery, corruption and theft, etc. as national phenomena.

#### ***4. About Sustainable Development Strategy of the European Union***

The EU has made first sustainable development strategy at the Gothenburg European Council in 2001. Although the EU treaties contain sustainable development strategies, their effective implementation remains a problem. Since February 2005 the European Commission found that several unsustainable trends continue to worsen. In 2005, the Commission began an evaluation of the Strategy for Sustainable Development. It published a critical assessment of progress made since 2001 and outlined few guidelines. The exercise revealed several trends of worsening situation with regard to climate change, public health, poverty and growing social exclusion, and excessive exploitation of natural resources and biodiversity

loss. In June 2005, Heads of State and Government of the EU adopted a declaration on principles for sustainable development, which explicitly states that “the new Lisbon Strategy is an essential component of the overarching objective of sustainable development”.

In June 2006 the European Council adopted a revised strategy. Council conclusions marked the beginning of a partnership between the EU, EU Member States, civil society and business circles, aimed at achieving sustainable development goals. Council noted that progress was modest, even though the policy level, both the EU and Member had made significant progresses, especially on climate change and clean energy. European Council on 14 December 2007 welcomed the Commission progress report and insisted on the need to give priority to implementation. It was also concluded that the EU Sustainable Development Strategy and the strategies of national sustainable development must be linked more closely.

### ***5. National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Romania (SNDDR)***

National Strategy for Sustainable Development is a policy document, developed according to European Union requirements, the Romanian Government through the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme through the National Centre Sustainable Development. In the meeting of 24 June 2008 the government presented and approved the "National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Romania - 2013-2020-2030 horizons." The document sets targets for moving to a new model of development based on knowledge and innovation and sets the main action for acquiring and applying the principles of sustainable development in the near future.

The strategy proposes a vision of sustainable development of Romania in relation to the following two decades, with objectives that transcend electoral cycles duration. The final meeting, the fifth, of the National Council for Public Debate, was on July 3, 2008, to mark the general conclusion of the process of drafting the revision of the National Sustainable Development Strategy of Romania. SNDDR is the first integrating strategy produced by Romania as EU member state. The implementation of the sustainable development concept as a general guide to the European Union and as a Romania state policy requires a continuous effort to re-evaluate the assumptions accepted.

According to the Sustainable Development Strategy for the European Union, a report evaluating the implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Development of Romania will be submitted to the Commission every two years starting 2011. Reports will be accompanied by proposals and recommendations on possible amendments to the guidelines, policies and priorities of the EU Strategy.

Strategy development process has demonstrated the value of active involvement of all social and political factors. This involvement will continue by transparent manner, in a permanent form of organization proposed in Part V, the current form of the Strategy. Peer review procedure (peer review) of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development by the relevant institutions in other states that have adopted comparable strategic processes will be initiated in parallel, as recommended by express in the EU Strategy for Sustainable Development and practice of the Member States. While the strategy is in draft stage, new contributions of concrete text are expected, hoping to get a truly representative document for a national vision for sustainable development in the next two decades.

Romania's GDP per capita in 2007 was 41 percent of the average of other EU countries. According to Strategy by 2020 Romania has to catch up from all socio-economic areas so as to arrive at the current European Union member states by 2030.

## ***6. The main proposals SNDDR***

1. The final version of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development proposes the creation of a Ministry of Energy and Resources and the establishment of an independent office for monitoring and supervision of the energy market. This institution could be created, possibly by reorganizing the Ministry of Economy and Finance.
2. To implement the strategy it is necessary to establish a Sustainable Development Interagency Committee at the executive level, chaired by Deputy Prime Minister or Prime Minister, to coordinate all sectors and ministries, as well as research institutions contributing to the implementation strategy. This committee should liaise with both the European Commission and other European institutions in the field. Annually, the Committee will submit to Parliament a report on

sustainable development indicators and monitoring progress recorded by Romania every year.

3. It was proposed the creation of a Consultative Council for Sustainable Development, which will have a permanent secretariat and to be set up by Parliament's decision as an autonomous body, but funded by the state budget and operate under the aegis of the Romanian Academy. It is to report annually to Parliament a report on sustainable development in Romania, in order to make "a permanent reference from scientific circles and civil society on what is happening in Romania". The report contains its assessments and recommendations for action.
4. Another body proposed for establishing is the National Institute of Strategic Planning, important because it is required corroboration of the strategies and to develop the key strategies.
5. To accelerate progress, the strategy envisages the reduction of disabilities, such as low labour participation of women in rural areas or sharp disparities in regional development.

The draft document on sustainable and integrated territorial development, medium and long term was publicly presented on November 11, 2009. The strategic concept of Territorial Development 2030 establishes guidelines of Romania's territorial development at regional, interregional and national cohesion and competitiveness correlating concepts. Following the gathering of numerous proposals from academic environment and relevant institutions, this concept has become Romania's territorial development strategy. The concept is mentioned in Romania's National Development Plan and National Strategic Reference Framework, as a document required ensuring the territorial dimension in the allocation and spending of EU structural funds. One of the important problems addressed in the document is linked to the development of growth poles. The development of these poles means a strong development of rural areas on a range of 60-70 km at least. But apart from these areas, we must pay attention to smaller cities that have growth potential. The European Commission has agreed that other cities with less than 10,000 inhabitants to be able to access structural funds. Under this sub-domain of Regional Operational Programme the following projects receive funding based on integrated urban development plans: a) rehabilitation of urban infrastructure and improving urban services, urban transport (public urban infrastructure,

transport and population mobility, cultural heritage World - UNESCO, national and local, urban), b) sustainable development of the business environment, c) rehabilitation of social infrastructure.

On November 12, 2009, the Government approved the National Strategy for Sustainable Development on the horizon of the years 2013-2020-2030. The document follows the methodological requirements of the European Commission and is a joint project of the executive, made through the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, United Nations Development Programme and the National Centre for Sustainable Development. The strategy sets targets for the passage, in a reasonable and realistic time frame to develop a new model of its European Union and widely shared around the world - that of sustainable development. The development of the Strategy is the result of the obligation assumed by Romania as EU member state, according to the objectives agreed at EU level, particularly those stated in the Accession Treaty, the Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs in the renewed EU Strategy for Development Sustainable 2006. Following extensive discussion of the project at national and regional level, with the active involvement of stakeholders and conceptual support of the Romanian Academy, Strategy offers a vision of Romania development in the perspective of the next two decades, with objectives that transcend electoral cycles and conjectural political preferences:

- Horizon 2013: organic incorporation of the principles and practices of sustainable development in all programs and public policies of Romania;
- Horizon 2020: reach the current average level of EU countries for the main indicators of sustainable development;
- Horizon 2030: Romania close to significant average level of EU member states that year.

Achieving these strategic objectives ensure on medium and long term, high economic growth and, consequently, a substantial reduction of social and economic disparities between Romania and other EU member states. In light of synthetic indicator which measures the real convergence process, it creates conditions for the gross domestic product per capita of Romania to exceed the EU average in 2013, to approach the EU average in 2020 and to be slightly higher than the European average in 2030.

Main lines of action, broken down by sectors and time horizons are as follows:

- matching rational development objectives, including investment in programs and regional cross-sector, with the potential and capacity to support natural capital;
- fast modernization systems education and training, public health and social services, taking into account demographic trends and their impact on the labor market;
- the widespread use of best available technologies, from the economic and environmental point of view, in investment decisions, entrenchment of eco-efficiency criteria in all production activities and services;
- anticipating climate change and early development of action plans for crisis situations caused by natural phenomena or man;
- to ensure food security and safety by exploiting comparative advantages of Romania, without compromising the requirements for maintaining soil fertility, biodiversity conservation and environmental protection;
- to identify additional funding sources for big projects and programs, particularly in infrastructure, energy, environmental protection, food security, education, health and social services;
- protection and enhancement of national cultural and natural heritage, connecting to European norms and standards on quality of life.

For accomplishing the objectives and measures set out in the Strategy, a government decision established mechanisms for implementation, monitoring and reporting within the public and the consultation of civil society and citizens throughout the process. In 2009 it began the review process complex programmatic documents, strategies and national programs, regional trade and to bring them into line with sustainable development principles and practices and the dynamic development of EU regulations. For this they have taken the following measures: a) establishment of an executive-level Interagency Committee on Sustainable Development, under the direct coordination of the Prime Minister, including ministries and other central institutions involved in implementation; b) the obligation to establish the Interagency Committee to present Romanian Parliament an annual report on how to implement a strategy based on



monitoring indicators of sustainable development agreed at EU level as well as specific indicators adapted to the specific conditions of Romania; c) the statutory obligation of Interagency Committee to submit a full report on the European Commission Strategy implementation every two years from June 2011; d) establishing a Sustainable Development Advisory Council, composed of personalities representing specific skills recognized and prestigious scientific and academic community and civil society, which will operate under the aegis of the Romanian Academy. Also, the council will present an annual report of the Romanian Parliament, complementary to the one presented by Interagency Committee on Strategy, containing its own assessments and recommendations for action. Agencies appointed by Consultative Council, namely by the Interagency Committee will develop a concrete action plan, with responsibilities, resources and precise time-scales on information, communication and dissemination of best practices from the experience of Romania and other EU Member States related to implementing sustainable development goals.

## ***7. Conclusions***

Despite the European and national strategies, the Romanian economy road to sustainable development marks the phenomenon of economic and moral involution of Romania in the last 20 years. The main tool for managing a long-term economy, to progress and prosperity, that is the strategy, appears not to be understood and used correctly. National interest should be respected in all decisions at national and regional levels. Irrational decisions, particularly dangerous for the present and future of the country are and have been taken without prospective thinking and without taken into consideration the interest of future human generations. Here there are some revealing examples of such decisions: the alienation of resources, major debt to foreign financial institutions without the funds received being reflected by their positive effects in the real economy, de-structuring of the economy and the dismantling of about 4 million jobs; depopulation of villages, food imports, reducing the wages without plausible justification, massive exports of human resources - about 2.5 million people working abroad etc.

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