

Sustainable, national transport planning: Assessment of a framework for continuous dialogue

Maria Josefina Figueroa¹

^{1,2}Technical University of Denmark, Department of Transport, Kgs. Lyngby, 2800, Denmark

Email for correspondence: mjf@transport.dtu.dk

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1. Objective

Sustainable transport planning can be a widely debated activity by different professionals and stakeholders on an action-by-action basis. Decisions involving conflictive views and expert knowledge may require sometimes to be resolved on an item-by-item basis. This complexity is addressed in a new research project in Denmark on Sustainable national transport planning (SUSTAIN), that seeks, among other things to develop a framework model for stakeholder interactions.

2. Methodology

A SUSTAIN framework for case study selection and stakeholder dialogue and interactive participation is proposed and evaluated in one case study. The framework addresses the ways in which strategic grouping, decision conferences and other participatory methodologies can resolve contradictory and interconnectivity aspects in planning for sustainability.

3. Results/Findings

The paper presents the results of the emerging Danish experience with national strategic transport planning SUSTAIN based on the appraisal of the implementation of a framework for participation to help the decision support process leading to the elaboration of the railway Trans-Baltica corridor. The explicit consideration of the framework for stakeholders involvement within the decision support system with consideration of knowledge derived from the use of performance indicators, knowledge on institutional organization and knowledge on the results from financial appraisal exercises.

4. Implications for Research/Policy

The present study is part of the initial phase of a case by case implementation of a national strategic transport planning framework SUSTAIN. The implications from this study can be substantial to enhancing the opportunities for future strategic stakeholder participation in planning and the combined representation of knowledge on the scientific challenges (how well to predict sustainability effects across temporal and spatial scales), institutional/political (how to organize to see the best combination of responses takes place), and financially (who should pay and why) all contributing to strengthening a decision support in the context of sustainability.