



## GUIDELINE PART B

### Definition of the scope of research

to be used in Phase 2

Some evaluations do not have the word “evaluation” in their title, some reports called “evaluations” are no “real” evaluations. The following checklist wants to support you (the young researchers) when making the decision which evaluation reports to analyse in detail and which not. Thus comparable analyses (between the countries) shall be ensured. The checklist below lists the criteria an evaluation report has to have, in order to be considered a report of an “evaluation of sustainable development”. The checklist also contains explanations and examples.

If the application of the criteria of the checklist is extremely reducing the number of available reports – please contact the EASY-ECO Team!

One or two criteria might have to be changed then, but please agree with us on such an adaptation first!

#### An evaluation report should fulfil all of the following criteria:

1. Applied science carrying out a systematic analysis	page 2
2. of the causal effects and relationships of an intervention	page 3
3. including a judgement	page 4
4. based on the integrated treatment of all the three dimensions of sustainable development	page 5 + annex
5. in a transparent process	page 5

*One the following pages it is explained by means of a case study (creation of a national park) how to use the checklist. In case of any questions or doubts while interpreting and using the checklist, please use the forum at [www.sustainability.at/easy](http://www.sustainability.at/easy) - we will answer your questions there.*

## 1. Applied science carrying out a systematic analysis

Evaluation is applied science and should be based on sound methods and theories. It is not necessary that these theories are documented explicitly in the evaluation report, but they should be the basis for the evaluation project. Methods of data-collection, analysis and interpretation should be suitable to the evaluandum and should reflect the state of the art.

### *Case: National Park*

*A1 A journalist writes an article on the opinions of people living in the national park region, emphasising on their different needs and requirements.*

*Conclusio: This is NO evaluation, because it is not applied science but journalism (an individual statement of a single person is accepted in journalism, but it is not sufficient in science) .*

*A2 A expert on tourism writes a report about the development he expects for the region. He does refer to general trends in tourism but the paper focuses on his personal opinion. Conclusio: This is NO evaluation, because it is not a systematic analysis.*

*A3 A monitoring system for groundwater flows is being implemented.*

*Conclusio: The monitoring system can provide the data for an evaluation, but it is NO evaluation itself.*

*A4. In order to measure the effects of the national park, a mathematical model (e.g. Multi-Criteria-Analysis), is being developed and explained in a study.*

*Conclusio: It is fundamental research but not applied science – therefore it is NOT considered an evaluation. Only when the model is used in a case study, it becomes part of an evaluation.*

*A5 A regional planning document prioritises several environmental measurements, ranking the national park first.*

*Conclusio: This document ranks measurements but does not say anything about the anticipated effects of the national park – it is therefore NO evaluation..*

*A6 A systematic and representative study carries out an opinion poll including the important stakeholders of the national park and derives the anticipated landuse conflicts.*

*Conclusion: This is an evaluation, as it includes applied science and systematic analysis.*

## 2. of the causal effects and relationships of an intervention

Evaluations are supposed to detect the causal effects of interventions (ex-ante, accompanying or ex-post) and to describe the relationships between intervention and effects. To do so, intended and non-intended effects of an intervention are detected and judged (see 3. Judgement). Therefore the intervention is the focus of attention (= evaluandum). In EASY-ECO policies, programmes, projects and technologies are the centre of the analyses, products and companies can also be seen as interventions but they are explicitly excluded from the scope of this EASY-ECO survey.

Causal effects can be assessed on the basis of empirical findings or by application of theory based models applied to specific cases of the evaluandum. A fundamental challenge of all evaluations is the identification of these causal relationships, so that effects of independently planned actions are not attributed improperly. This problem presents an absolute barrier for any correct evaluation analysis (ceteris-paribus-problem of economics).

*Case: National Park*

*A7 A study lists the endangered species of the national park area and their numbers.*

*Conclusio: NO evaluation, as it only describes the current state but does not say anything about intervention and causal effects.*

*A8 A study compares the planned rezoning with the regional and national aims of the regional development programme.*

*Conclusio: NO evaluation, but a consistency check between policies and programmes. The causal effects are missing.*

*A9 One year before the rezoning an opinion poll is being carried out with people living close to the national park.*

*Conclusio: NO evaluation, but an opinion research.*

*A10 A two-year report (after the rezoning) shows all activities of the national park management.*

*Conclusio: NO evaluation, as it does not contain effects, but describes measurements (=the intervention in more detail).*

*A11 Five years after the implementation of the national park, the development of tourism in the region and its contribution to the regional value added is being analysed.*

*Conclusio: Borderline case, as the development of tourism is not directly linked with the national park. Additionally, by showing the effects on tourism, not all effects the national park causes are explained sufficiently.*

*A12. A study shows the economic effects of the national park over a period of 10 years and anticipates the future increase of regional welfare.*

*Conclusio: This is an evaluation, as it investigates the causal effects of the intervention in a systematic and integrative way.*

### 3. including a judgement

Evaluations are supposed to be scientifically based judgements of an intervention and the effects caused by the intervention. A necessary prerequisite for such judgements is the comparison of the actually achieved results (ex-post) and the anticipated (ex-ante) effects within an appropriate framework of reference. This framework of reference can

- (a) be the intended aims of the intervention (system immanent aims)
- (b) be aims derived from policies, programmes, or scientific principles (system exmanent aims)
- (c) result from a comparison of effects between different points in time and space (benchmarking)

It is not necessary that an evaluation contains recommendations (e.g. for improvements) but in many cases it does.

Indicators or comparisons are frequently used to justify the judgement. Analyses of effectiveness (comparison between the intended and the actually achieved results), efficiency (comparison between achieved results and the resources used), and indicator based comparisons of spatial advantages are commonly used, too.

The judgement of the evaluation can be done by the authors themselves and/or by experts (monocratic), by representatives of stakeholders (politicians, programme management, etc.) (participative), or by the parties involved themselves (democratic). The judgement is a valuation, but neither a recommendation nor a political decision. Nevertheless evaluations are often used to legitimise political decisions.

A special problem is the comparison of alternatives as a basis for judgements: On the one hand, much data has to be combined (e.g. ranking, resource allocation, subsidy decisions), on the other hand the question which alternative to include arises (e.g. will „business as usual“ be included as an alternative?).

*Case: National Park*

*A13 A statistical report shows all costs of the national park.*

*Conclusio: NO evaluation – it shows effects but no judgment is made.*

*A14 The mayor illustrates the value of the national park in the region in a study.*

*Conclusio: NO evaluation – There is a judgement, but it is based on the subjective opinion of the mayor and not on a systematic.*

*A15 An expert´s report shows the conceptional possibilities for tourism in the national park area.*

*Conclusio: borderline case – it is NO evaluation if it only shows conceptual possibilities and does not deal with effects (present or future).*

*A16 A comparing of the costs per visitor of the national park with the costs per visitor in a ski resorts leads to doubts in the efficiency of the national parks.*

*Conclusio: borderline case – there is a judgement but the approach is quite one-dimensional.*

*A17 In a comparison of 3 national parks the sensitisation of visitors after an exhibition in the National Park visitors centre and the resulting acceptance of the national park is being investigated through personal interviews. Based on that, the strengths and weaknesses of pedagogical concepts are compared and valued.*

*Conclusio: This is an evaluation.*

#### 4. based on the integrated treatment of all the three dimensions of sustainable development

Contrary to all previous criteria (for evaluations), this criterion is a special requirement within EASY-ECO. It shall guarantee the analysis only of those evaluations, which include the three dimensions of sustainable development. The following TWO cases are within the scope of the survey:

- (a) The intervention itself deals with the improvement of all 3 dimensions (ecological, economic, social) of sustainable development (e.g. implementation of national sustainability strategies, Local Agenda 21 processes).
- (b) The evaluation investigates all 3 dimensions. The intervention itself does not deal with all 3 dimensions (e.g. pure programmes to provide economic incentives or educational programmes), but the evaluation investigates effects from all 3 dimensions.

The requirement to deal with aspects of all three dimensions does not necessarily mean that all 3 dimensions have to be considered in the same degree of detail. But at least the relevance of each of the 3 dimensions must be mentioned in the abstract or summary of the evaluation report.

In order to explain the three dimensions in more detail and to give you ideas of what they can be, we put a list of about 20 aspects per dimension in the annex of this guideline (page 6). See also the paper of Alain Thierstein presented at EASY-ECO-1.

*Case: National Park*

*A18 A survey shows the development of the population of endangered species within the last 5 years from the implementation of the national park.*

*Conclusio: NO evaluation – only ecological aspects are considered.*

*A19 A study shows the revenues from tourism and the resulting employment effects, compared with the aims of the regional development programme.*

*Borderline case – as the national park itself represents the ecological dimension and the survey deals with both the economic and social effects.*

*A20 A report explains the ecological effects of a more extensive mode of production on the ground water and values that in money. Social effects are not considered.*

*Borderline case – If this evaluation is meant to be an evaluation of the national park (=intervention), the consideration is one-dimensional (too narrow). If it is an evaluation of the effects of the national park on groundwater protection (=intervention), the investigation would be sufficient, because in this case social effects can hardly be intended or verified.*

#### 5. in a transparent process

The minimum requirement here is fulfilled as soon as there is an evaluation report available. We only put this criterion here in order to complete the list.

A broader interpretation of this criterion (sufficiency of the report, clear language, public availability in time, etc.) will be considered in your analysis of the evaluation reports by applying the Standards of Evaluations (part of GuidelineC).

**Annex****The 3 dimensions - examples**  
(<http://www.municipia.at/taten>)**Environmental aspects**

## Quality of the water

Various pollutants in wastewater present a hazard to natural ecosystems and to our health. The sustainable use of water as a vital element will guarantee that it will be clean and free of toxic agents when it is returned to the environment.

## Fresh water utilisation

Water is life. Considering the plentiful supply of water from our faucets and showers, we don't know what it means to be out of water. According to the principle of sustainability we try to use fresh water sparingly and responsibly. It is our use of the water that takes it away from ecosystems and finally turns it into wastewater.

## Air

Pollutants in the air are dangerous to our health and also have a negative effect on various ecosystems. Sustainable practise means to get rid of or at least defuse the sources of these pollutants without transferring the problem to another region.

## Climate

It is extremely important for sustainable development to contain climatic changes. This is the only way we can counteract the negative concomitant phenomena of the greenhouse effect, such as the ozone hole or drastic climatic changes.

## Noise

Noise does not only diminish our quality of life but also that of other living beings. Sustainable development calls for a reduction of the noise sources in order to avoid the negative effects of noise on us and on our environment.

## Poisons

It is difficult to control and dispose of toxic substances safely. They are extremely dangerous to people and to the environment, even after they have been disposed of.

## Soil

The quality of the soil is one of the essential measuring tools for sustainably securing our need of energy. Fertile soil is a basic requirement for our diet, for the lives of all domestic and wild animals, and the growth of trees and plants, which are used for our well-being and as a source of renewable energy.

## Forest

The forest with its manifold functions is extremely valuable to us. That's why the principle of sustainability has been applied to the management and care of the forest rather early, although it was not consistently carried out at all times.

**Natural landscape**

Natural landscapes are very valuable to sustainable development. They represent a sanctuary for a variety of creatures that are no longer given enough space in an environment dominated by humans. Besides that, in our free-time we can also enjoy and benefit from the regenerative power of natural landscapes.

**Cultivated landscape**

Cultivated landscapes are shaped by the exchange between society and nature, especially by the societal use of space. Sustainable development calls for an ecologically oriented use of cultivated landscapes and for a solution of the problems resulting from the conflicting forms of utilisation.

**Variety of species**

A large variety of species allows for many different paths of development and various ways to adjust to new environmental requirements. Therefore the conservation of this variety is necessary for sustainable development.

**Energy**

Fossil energy won't be available forever. The use of this kind of energy also produces substances that may cause ecological systems to change. Thus it is essential for sustainable development to switch to renewable sources of energy and raw materials.

**Renewable resources**

The total use of energy - particularly in western societies - is enormously high. Therefore sustainable development calls for a drastic reduction of energy consumption, not just because of the serious ecological hazards but also to create and maintain global equity.

**Material use / waste**

The use of materials as well as the resulting mountains of garbage have assumed serious proportions in modern "throwaway" societies. Since this is by no means sustainable, intelligent concepts will be needed to reduce the use of materials and to decrease the amount of waste.

**Traffic / transportation**

In many areas of life mobility has become an integral part of our existence. But the price for this mobility is high: sealed ground areas, pollutants, health hazards, and material damage. Sustainable development calls for a concept, which will reduce traffic and transportation and make it more environmentally sound.

**Knowledge level / research**

The knowledge about ecological matters and about the effects of people's actions on the environment will encourage sustainable decisions and a more appropriate utilisation of our natural environment.

**Education / information**

Teaching others about nature and the environment, how to use it for our well-being and how to protect it and change it, is an essential prerequisite for stable social development.

**Technologies / innovations**

The technologies applied by societies to control nature are

unmistakable indicators. In order to make our society more sustainable, new technologies and innovations will have to be employed in the utilisation of nature.

#### Integration of different goals

Sustainability involves more than just environmental protection. Although the consideration of environmental aspects is a first step towards sustainable development, this won't be sufficient in the long term. Only the integration of environmental, social and economic aspects will make sustainable development possible.

## Economic aspects

#### Energy efficiency / energy costs

Raising the efficiency of energy is one of the keys to economic productivity. At the same time this can also reduce the use of nature without decreasing the quality.

#### Efficiency of material use / product utilisation

Materials turn into waste when they are no longer used. Sustainable development implies that the lifespan of products and materials should be prolonged by optimising their quality and reusability respectively.

#### Implementation of technologies

Eco-efficient technologies largely contribute to a higher level of environmental compatibility in products and services. The development, promotion and propagation of eco-efficient technologies is thus an important step towards sustainable development.

#### Financial incentives

Changes and innovation are often very expensive. Financial incentives are a good way to raise the readiness for innovations and thus to speed up the process of sustainable development.

#### Regional spending power

Regional spending power is a significant indicator for the success of regional economic structures. A high level of regional spending power permanently raises the quality of life and promotes economic growth.

#### Securing the location

The attractiveness of a certain region as an economic location is mutually connected to the stability of economic and social life.

#### Co-operation / networking

The co-operation of enterprises and the creation of networks will enable these innovations, which will both increase environmental soundness and economic competitiveness.

#### Economic success of the project

Profitable projects are more likely to become permanent institutions than projects that can't be sustained without financial subsidies.

#### Supra-regional dependencies

The variety of local and regional economic structures lowers the supra-regional dependencies of the economy and opens up new

Jobs	<p>opportunities for a regional resource management.</p> <p>New and permanent employment and services are indicators for a lively economy, which will be stable and flexible enough to meet the needs of sustainable development.</p>
Quality of work	<p>The stability of economic development is also connected to the quality of working conditions. Performance and commitment will lead to top results wherever the workers are supplied with an appropriate physical, psychological and social environment.</p>
Responsible management / making provisions for the future	<p>Long-term thinking is a prerequisite on the path towards sustainable development. It is necessary that the people in the economy don't just take responsibility for economic matters but also for the impact of their actions on society and the environment.</p>
Qualification	<p>The long-term and stable performance of the national economy can only be guaranteed by offering appropriate opportunities to acquire the necessary skills, since a higher level of qualification will enable the labour force to deal with the growing economic demands.</p>
Qualitative growth	<p>Qualitative growth is a development concept, which emphasises on quality rather than quantity and leads to economic success even though the use of nature is reduced.</p>
Environmental management	<p>Environmental management systems in enterprises and public institutions are important steps to institutionalise the implementation of sustainable development in the economy.</p>
Knowledge level / research	<p>The knowledge about economical matters and about the effects of the economy on society and the environment is an essential prerequisite for a sustainable re-organization of the economy.</p>
Education / information	<p>Sustainable education and training in economic subjects and institutions presents new possibilities to broadly integrate various models of sustainability in the economy.</p>
Technologies / innovations	<p>The technologies that are used by societies to control nature are unmistakable indicators. In order to make our society more sustainable, new technologies and innovations will have to be applied in the utilisation of nature.</p>
Integration of different goals	<p>Sustainability involves more than just securing the supply of natural resources for economic use. Although the consideration of environmental aspects is a first step towards sustainable development, this won't be sufficient in the long term. Only the integration of environmental, social and economic aspects will make sustainable development possible.</p>

## Social aspects

- Increasing people's sensibility towards sustainability / change of behaviour  
Information offers new opportunities for action. Only an increase of people's sensibility towards the necessity of sustainable development at all levels of society will make changes possible.
- Cultural know-how  
Knowledge is preserved and conveyed in many different ways. Not everything needs to be invented anew. Sustainable concepts can also be obtained by combining well-tried experiences and skills with new cultural developments and possibilities.
- Change of values  
Not everything that is currently believed to be valuable and important for society can also be maintained in the future. In order to make sure that sustainable patterns of behaviour are not changed in the long term a re-evaluation and re-organisation of values in view of sustainable development will be necessary.
- Development of appropriate models for each location  
Despite the fact that sustainable development offers a number of general guidelines, its implementation still calls for the visionary conception of models. The process of creating such models will bring together different interest groups and define common goals.
- Local decision-making processes  
Changes ought to start out in people's immediate surroundings, an area that is important to everyone. Local decision-making processes have the advantage that local characteristics and opportunities are taken into consideration and suitably adjusted development strategies are developed and implemented in collaboration with all the parties concerned.
- Self-organisation / organisational field  
Self-organisation does not just mean that people are able and willing to do things on their own. It also implies the individual capacity of local institutions to define and meet ecological, economic and social goals.
- Networking  
The establishment of co-operative networks will increase the chances for a certain region to develop appropriately. The joint use of information/resources will present advantages to all parties concerned. It will also open up new opportunities, which may be used in a sustainable way.
- Infrastructure  
A change of behaviour can't just be obtained by changing people's opinions. It is also necessary to provide alternative options. Creating an appropriate infrastructure will promote sustainable development and is thus a necessary requirement for reducing the need for mobility.
- Mobility / variety of use  
Mobility does not just mirror the flexibility and freedom of modern society but also its inner strife and occasional idle motions. The sustainable organisation of our living space will reduce the need for mobility.

**Social security**

Social security means that people in need can rely on a social network and on the adherence to basic social standards. Anything that compromises this kind of security also has a negative effect on society, the environment, and the economy.

**Social integration**

Only the fact that different social groups have different positions and functions in a society will ensure that this society works properly. However, it is crucial that these differences don't become too large, as this would make it impossible for disadvantaged groups to actively participate in social life.

**Supporting the development of skills / re-evaluation of work**

The search for sustainable concepts also provides the people in question with new opportunities for personal development. Working with innovative concepts and co-operations will build up new skills and new possibilities to try out new forms or re-define existing forms of labour, which will be necessary for sustainable development.

**Social equality**

Sustainable development means social equality in more than one respect. The people living today shouldn't live at the expense of future generations, and they should find a fair way to meet their needs and benefit from the environment without causing too much damage.

**Supply services**

The local supply of commodities and services to meet people's needs is an important indicator for the level of sustainability in a certain region. Insufficient supply leads to migration, long-distance transportation, and environmental hazards.

**Health / quality of life**

Health and well-being are important criteria for our quality of life, without which sustainable development would be unthinkable.

**Knowledge level / research**

The knowledge about social and societal matters and about the relations between society and nature will lead to a better understanding of non-sustainable social development and its causes.

**Education / information**

Every society fundamentally needs to educate its members. This will secure and increase its ability to develop and function.

**Technologies / innovations**

The use of technologies and social innovations in our society plays a key role on the path towards sustainability.

**Integration of different goals**

Sustainability involves more than just mere survival. Human societies ought to be provided with the highest possible quality of life. However, this won't be obtained without an ecologically compatible and a fair economic use of natural resources.