

TERRAPHILIA AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FROM THE RHETORIC TO THE STRATEGIC PLANNING

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INTRODUCTION

The need to prevent losses and promote affirmation of the identity of places and regions in the context of globalized economy and culture gained momentum on development research and policy agendas since the early nineties. In the European Union, a major argument has been that the (re)valorization and strengthening of the identity of the peripheral and lagging rural regions is the key to their competitiveness on the global market of goods, services and ideas, and may be decisive for sustainable local and regional development engineering.

In Portugal, conflicting interests and unequal power-relations between local and global agents of economic and cultural change have left marks in land use anarchy and environmental degradation, fading cultural and economic authenticity and arbitrary adoption of the globalized identities. In this context, the sense of topophilia, or “the affective bond between people and place, or setting” (Tuan, 1990:4), has changed dramatically, as increasingly evidenced through the phenomenon of descaracterização (Port: “loss of character and distinctiveness”, Houasis & Villar, 2002:1249), i.e., mistreatment, profanation, degradation, waist, etc. of the uniqueness of places and regions in all spheres of economy and culture - from the progressive reduction of ecological and demographic sustainability to the deterioration of social and economic autonomy at the local level, often accompanied by chaotic land use and visual pollution.¹

¹ Among the most notorious examples of are: substitution of the traditional terraced vineyards and mixed cropping by the modern, “more competitive” agricultural production techniques; adoption of the consumer models that favour concentration of commercial activity *versus* traditional retail; abandonment of social values such as inter-generational solidarity *versus* the emergence of solitude and exclusion as commonly assumed social patterns; loss of demographic vitality through ageing and emigration, and, consequently, the reconfiguration of the spatial distribution of settlements (Roca 1998, 2004).

Descaracterização is actually an antonym of topophilia since it mirrors a strong pro-identity attitude, or, there is an inverse, negative correlation between the two notions: the stronger the descaracterização, the weaker the topophilia. However, in view of the political, academic and popular pro-topophilia and pro-identity rhetoric, how to determine which identity features need to be “saved from” or “opposed to” descaracterização, or indeed “preserved” and made “more competitive”? How to reconcile diverse, often antagonistic, perceptions and intentions amongst local agents of economic and cultural change in order to identify developmentally relevant identity features and ensure their sustainability?

In search for answers to such questions, this paper brings forward an experience of recording and assessing topophilia and terraphilia, an enhanced concept of topophilia, defined as “the affective bond between people and territory that encourage local development intervention” (Roca et al., 2006), by applying an innovative participatory analysis model, called PROSCA (Prospective Stepwise Consensus Analysis), for producing retrospective/prospective diagnosis of changing territorial local identity features.

FROM TOPOPHILIA TO TERRAPHILIA: A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF TERRITORIAL IDENTITY ISSUE IN PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The sense of topophilia changes as the places and regions become (des)integrated, (re)composed, (re)produced, (de/re)territorialized, (re)claimed and/or (re)affirmed in the globalized economy and culture, as suggested since the 90s by Massey (1991), Amin & Thrift (1994), Badie (1995), Rose (1995), Agnew (1999), Benko (2000), Haartsen et al. (2000), Tuan (2003), Boneschansker et al. (2004), Haesbaert (2004) and Roca & Mourão (2004). However, although it may suit well interpretations of socio-spatial dynamics, topophilia is not an analytical category. It is a conceptual construct that is subject to biased interpretations which reflect conjectural (a)symmetries in power-relations amongst agents of economic and cultural change in (re)shaping the identity and, thus, the sense and strength of topophilia of places and regions (Roca et al., 2006). Furthermore, topophilia is both static and passive concept, i.e., it is time-wise limited and neutral to environmental, social, economic and/or cultural change, that is, it does not incorporate elements that could induce attitudes

and actions against descaracterização as a consequence of and/or precondition for local and regional growth and development (Roca 2004).

In sum, topophilia is not policy-relevant in operational terms since it is immune to the issue of territorial identity in a developmental perspective. As way out from, and indeed an alternative to the limitations of the concept of topophilia in terms of development policy based on the (re)affirmation of territorial identity, the concept of terraphilia has been introduced as an integral part of the IDENTERRA Model – a conceptual-methodological framework for the study of territorial identity as a development resource (Roca & Roca, 2007).

According to the IDENTERRA Model, territorial identities can be illustrated by the uniqueness of a geographic area in terms of its landscape- and lifestyle-related features. Natural and cultural landscapes are constituted of spatial fixes, defined as the sum of permanently and temporarily rooted and anchored elements of the natural heritage, population and human-made economic and cultural heritage in a geographical area. Lifestyles, understood here as the patterns of use and management of spatial fixes, are constituted of the activities, relations and meanings within horizontal (territorial) and vertical (functional) networks and systems, which determine Nature, Society, Economy and Culture.

Two basic aspects of territorial identity – the objective and subjective ones – are distinguished in the IDENTERRA Model. The objective territorial identity combines spatial fixes and flows whose state and dynamics can be measured and assessed on the basis of macroscopic (deskwork) analyses of secondary and remote sources of data and images of landscape- and lifestyle-related facts. The subjective territorial identity can be studied from the point of view of two basic sets of spatial fixes and flows: first, those that are practiced and/or experienced (in the real life) and, second, those that are claimed and/or pretended (in the mind), and calls for the use of participatory (fieldwork) studies based on collection of primary data and images. The macroscopic analyses and participatory research should be complementary: the former one should enable an overall contextualization of landscape and lifestyle-related identity features and the selection of locations and methods for the latter ones, while the findings of the participatory studies should eventually point to the discrepancies and/or synergies between the subjective (experienced and pretended) and objective identities that might be relevant for local development policies that wish to promote terraphilia.

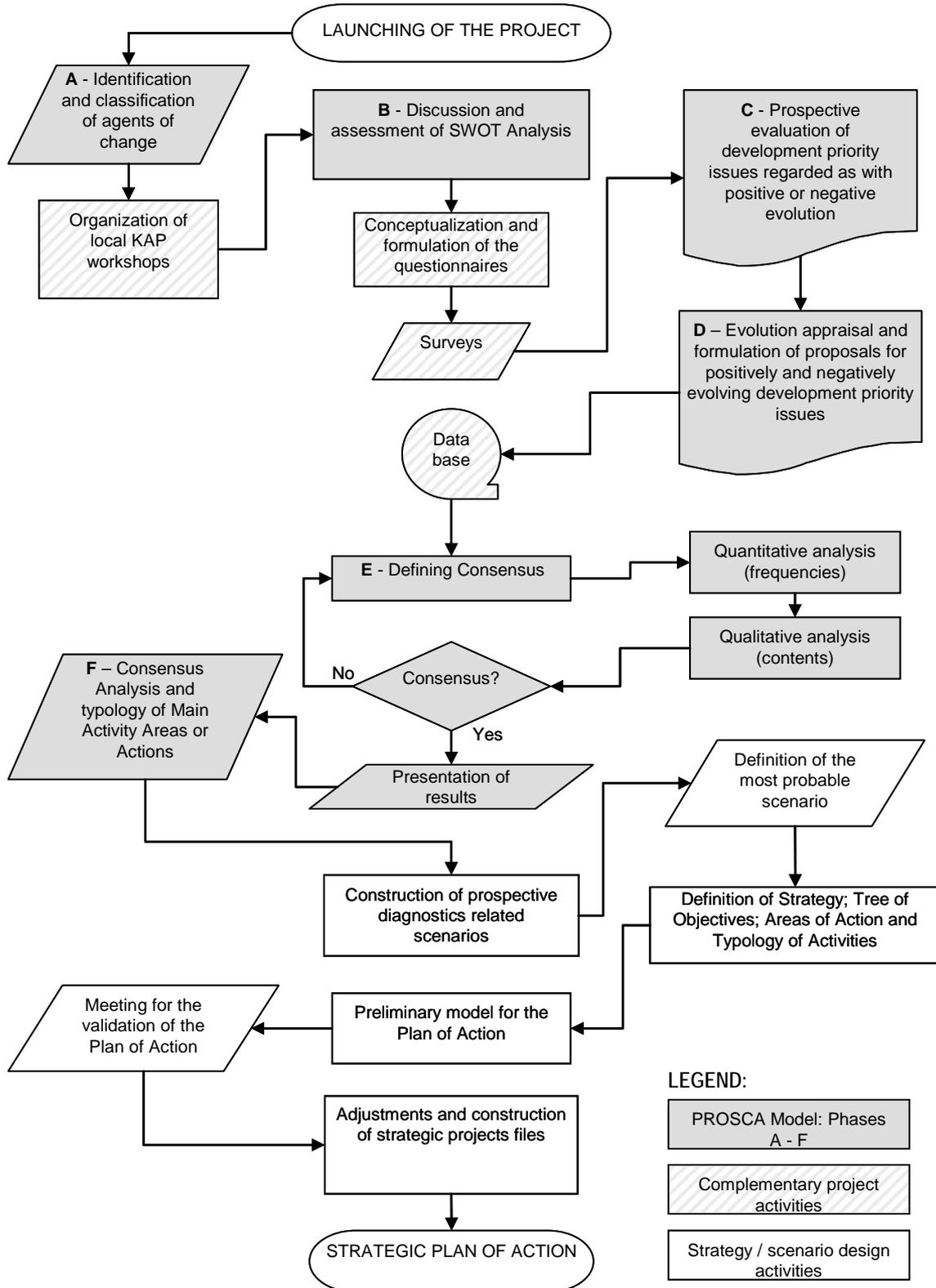
The emphasis on the participatory process² calls for the use of prospective strategy design methods capable to assess knowledge, attitudes and practice (KAP) among local/regional agents of change regarding territorial identity features as development resources. A true challenge is to create an adequate conceptual methodological framework for a comprehensive collection of territorial identity-related information, their efficient processing and resourceful outputs, while, at the same time, promoting and making good use of the consensus amongst development stakeholders. Ultimately, this calls for the promotion and activation of terraphilia. To this end the Prospective Stepwise Consensus Analysis (the PROSCA Model) was developed and applied as complementary to the IDENTERRA Model (Oliveira et al., 2005).

The basic feature of the PROSCA model is the process of disaggregation and compression of quantiquitative information on stakeholders' KAP regarding territorial identity and development, followed by selection, categorization, ranking, weighing and endorsing the consensually defined perceptions, priority areas and responsibilities for strengthening the desirable and counteracting undesirable territorial identity features.

The PROSCA Model is organized in a sequence of six phases, from A to F (Figure 1), starting with the identification and classification of local development stakeholders and their involvement in the evaluation of social, economic, environmental and other problems and priorities, followed by a step-wise process of quantiquitative disaggregation, extraction and condensation of information collected through participatory methods, culminating in the final consensual approval of proposals for policy measures, instruments and interventions in favour of sustainable local development.

² As amply evidenced in diverse literature on development policies and planning, the traditional top-down approaches which emanated from the economic development models based on theories of unbalanced growth, have failed in terms of their objectives. Consequently, their use has aggravated social problems, broadened regional disparities in the quality of life and increased environmental costs of economic growth. In this way, there are many arguments in favour of using interactive participatory methods for sustainable development planning at all levels (national, regional, local) and in different socio-economic contexts, both rural and urban.

FIGURE 1 – THE PROSCA MODEL



THE CASE STUDY OF THE OESTE REGION IN PORTUGAL: KAP-WORKSHOPS

The PROSCA model was applied in a policy-oriented research project on territorial identity (TI), local/global interface and development carried out in the Oeste Region (Figure 2), a peri-urban area of Portugal (NUTS III, NW from Lisbon Metropolitan Area).³

FIGURE 2 – THE OESTE REGION: 12 COUNTIES AND THEIR SEATS



³ "IDENTERRA – Territorial Identity in Regional and Local Development: the Oeste Region of Portugal" implemented by the CEGED – Geography and Development Research Centre of the Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias, Lisbon, financially supported by the Fund for Science and Technology, Lisbon (FCT/SAPIENS-POCT1/GEO/48266/2002).

The detection and assessment of the subjective TI dimension in terms of topophilia (experienced TI) and terraphilia (pretended TI) was based on the recordings of local knowledge, attitudes and practice (KAP) regarding qualities of landscape and lifestyles. To this end, an elaborate participatory method, labelled “KAP workshop”, was developed and applied at the level of four selected counties (Peniche, Torres Vedras, Cadaval and Óbidos), which were identified, by means of multivariate statistical and other macroscopic analyses, as a representative sample of all of the twelve counties in the Oeste Region.

Participants

The socio-demographic characteristics and work experience of the participants of KAP workshops held in the four selected counties guaranteed a collection of data based on a high level of familiarity with landscape- and lifestyle-related TI and local/regional development issues. A total of 47 participants, representing in a balanced manner the counties of Peniche (13), Torres Vedras (12), Cadaval (12) and Óbidos (10), included 23 men and 24 women in age between 21 and 74 years (median age: 40 years). All of them both lived and worked in the Oeste (40% at least 30 years and 80% at least 10 years), mostly (70%) within the same county; 50% was born in the same county and 15% in another county of the Oeste Region. A majority in Peniche, Torres Vedras and Óbidos had tertiary education (69 % in Social Sciences and Humanities) and in Cadaval upper secondary education.

The local/regional development agencies and associations, and local government entities predominated in terms of the participants' institutional affiliation. Their activities were mostly related to administrative and technical functions, including decision-making and coordination, and their professional experience was very diverse – ranging from commercial entrepreneurship and professional training, through information and communication systems to the management of natural and cultural heritage.

FIGURE 3 – SCENES FROM KAP WORKSHOPS HELD IN THE COUNTIES OF PENICHE, TORRES VEDRAS, CADAVAL AND ÓBIDOS



Method

Following the principles of the IDENTERRA Model, a KAP workshop is structured in such a way as to perform phased recordings of individual and group opinions based on the sense of belonging to a specific territory, as well as of diagnostic and prospective appraisals of actual (experienced) and claimed (pretended) qualities of the constituents of natural environment, society, economy and culture.

In Phase 1 of the workshop (individual selection of TI elements), every participant identified TI elements in the county of his/her residence in terms of: buildings and other constructions; natural environment; crafts; erudite and popular plastic arts, music and literature; folk festivities, fairs and markets and gastronomy. Through the content analysis of the open-ended responses and their grouping according to the similarity of referred TI elements, it were defined the sets of most frequently referred TI elements. Through this process the classified tangible and intangible elements which the participants mostly identify themselves with, i.e., primary sets of symbols and signs that illustrate specificities of the local TI were obtained. Such elements are, in fact, fundamental for the participants' self-esteem and topophilia.

In Phase 2 (individual identification of priority TI issues as a development resource), each participant identified 2 positive and 2 negative aspects that mark the county of his/her residence and classified them in terms of duration ("traditional" vs. "recent"), stability ("vanishing" vs. "resistant") and feelings ("optimism" vs. "pessimism") about their evolution. Using a similar data processing as for phase 1 (content analysis and classification of the referred aspects) frequency tables of the classified (positive or negative) aspects in terms of the TI features of the IDENTERRA Model (Nature, Economy, Society and Culture) were obtained. In other words, it was possible to collect a first empirical record of terraphilia, and also a first quantification of the "positive" or "negative" landscape- and lifestyle-related TI elements, enabled through the KAP workshop participants' assessment of positive or negative aspects that mark respective counties and the categorization of their responses in terms of spatial fixes and flows of the IDENTERRA Model. On the basis of qualitative ("positive" or "negative"), retrospective (traditional/"recent") and prospective ("vanishing"/"resistant", "optimism"/"pessimism") diagnostic assessments produced by the KAP workshop participants, explicit "strengths" or "weaknesses" of landscape- and lifestyle-related TI elements could be systematized, as well as integrated in territorial development planning.

In Phase 3 (group identification of priority issues of TI as a development resource) participants were randomly clustered into groups of 4-5 persons in order to, on the basis of their inputs in Phase 2, discuss and reach group consensus on the "most important" positive and/or negative identity features related to the development of their counties. The content analysis of the group responses (open-ended) and their clustering based on communalities of references, resulted in qualitative retrospective and prospective diagnostic assessments, this is, a synthesis of the explicit "strengths" or "weaknesses" of landscape- and lifestyle-related TI elements that can be integrated in territorial development planning. While eliminating the less important/consensual TI aspects, group discussions enabled (i) the selection of an individual participant's previously formulated TI aspect, or (ii) the creation of a new TI aspect resulting from the amalgamation of previously formulated individual contributions.

In Phase 4 (group proposals for actions/policy measures for the (re)affirmation of TI as a development resource), grouped participants were asked to formulate concrete policy solutions and actions aimed at the (re)affirmation of the desired TI features and to identify the key responsible individual and institutional agents of change.

Main results

Experimented TI & development features: priorities and responsibilities

On the basis of the KAP workshop participants' individual responses to the call to define and assess priority positive and negative identity features of their counties, together with the findings about the "most important identity features", the following was found out:

TABLE 1 - GROUP REPORTS ON THE PRIORITY TI & DEVELOPMENT FEATURES

<i>Classified priority TI & development features</i>		<i>Group consensus on the "most important" positive and/or negative identity features related to the development of their counties - explicit references made by the participants</i>
LANDSCAPES AND HISTORIC HERITAGE	Positive identity features related to the development of their counties	Rich and preserved historic and natural heritage.
NATURAL LANDSCAPES		Healthy natural environment with protected landscape of the Environmentally Protected Area of the Montejunto Mountain, and with traditional rurality. Natural landscape framework. (N.B.: two groups of participants explicitly referred to "natural landscape" as the main positive priority issue of their counties).
QUALITY OF LIFE		Quality of life. (N.B.: this particular group of participants explicitly and exclusively referred "quality of life" as the main positive priority issue of their county. Most probably, what is actually meant are the amenities related to the lack of urban stress, natural landscapes and the local community values).
RURALITY		Rurality. (N.B.: this particular group of participants explicitly and exclusively referred "rurality" as the main positive priority issue of their county. Most probably, what is actually meant is the still present traditional bucolic atmosphere).
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		Rich and preserved historic and natural heritage.
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	Negative identity features related to the development of their counties	Lacking social care, professional training, information and employment.
INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SERVICES		Weak road accessibilities. Low supply of health, education and training services.
HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRADITIONAL PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITY		Low levels of education and skills of active population, including school dropouts. Diminished traditional productive activities that could be conducive to concrete new opportunities for the generation of more innovative and value added employment.
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		Inadequacy of institutional response. Unfavourable socio-economic and cultural conditions for a significant part of the population.
ASSOCIATIVISM		Loss of the voluntarism in the civic and professional associations.

- the responses are more unanimous about positive identity features, while the negative ones are very diverse and hard to define in concrete terms – which is a general indication of a high degree of topophilia shared among the participants;
- the assessment of the natural environment is predominantly positive, although some threats are differentiated between the more urbanised counties (e.g.: pollution, car traffic) and the more rural ones (e.g.: waste depository in the Cadaval county) and that should be paid attention to by future local development policies;
- the social issues, frequently referred to as stemming directly from the activity of local agents, clearly emerge on the positive side when related to community cooperation and assistance networks, but also on the negative side when related to the rural settings marked by strong social control (e.g.: resistance of small communities to some aspects of social modernisation);
- the economy is, no doubt, the identity element subject to strong individual and collective disagreement; on one side, the weak bases of local economies emerged as negatively assessed features from the point of view of both unemployment and low quality of the entrepreneurial structures; however, on the other side, the components of economic infrastructure, such as those that improved accessibilities and potentials for the development of tourism industry, are assessed positively;
- regarding cultural features, such as, first, the attachment to the legacy of the rural milieu, intrinsic qualities of local people and gastronomic tradition, and, second, the elements of built heritage that in every county constitute important spatial fixes, the former ones are assessed rather negatively though with some hesitance, while the latter ones are eulogized in such a manner that a high level of topophilia, mentioned above is actually confirmed.

The results of group discussions on the most significant positive and/or negative identity features related to the development of their counties points, as the most prominent among the positive TI aspects, to the qualities of the landscapes and of the cultural-historical heritage and the preserved rurality that amalgamates specificities of natural and cultural landscapes and lifestyle patterns, being the most negative ones

associated to the weaknesses of the development process, low levels of human capital development, and inadequate accessibility to public services.

When requested to identify development agents that are accountable for the earlier defined positive and negative TI aspects, participants overwhelmingly pointed to public entities, both the central and local administration, followed by the local associations and other non-profit institutions. However, firms and entrepreneurs are mostly pointed as agents that obstruct positive TI aspects. In view of such opinions, the accountability of the central and local administrations in the spatial organization and development planning process is clearly emphasised and, at the same time, warnings are issued about the responsibility of firms as direct contributors to environmental degradation.

In sum, the principal TI aspects of the experimented subjective identity (topophilia) reported by the KAP workshop participants, can be characterised as follows:

- the amount of the perceived positive and negative TI aspects is balanced, but the positive ones are more related to the qualities of landscapes, cultural heritage and rurality, while the negative ones have more to do with social problems, unemployment, human capital development, participation and citizenship;
- amongst the agents that contribute to the strengthening of positive TI aspects major credit goes to the local and central administrations and to local associations and other non-profit institutions; local and central administrations are also blamed for their negative role in strengthening negative TI aspects, but the main responsibility for the obstruction of positive TI aspects is attributed to firms and entrepreneurs.

Pretended TI & development features: priorities and responsibilities

The components of the experienced TI features, reported as consensual priorities by the groups of participants (Table 1) were object of further group discussions aimed at the formulation of concrete action proposals for the maximisation of positive and minimisation of negative TI aspects. Every proposal for action was accompanied by the groups' suggestions as to which development agent should be involved. The responses referring to action proposals and development agents were classified according to the character of the envisaged action and the institutional framework, respectively. The results of this classification are presented synthetically hereunder as follows: in Table

2, all consensually defined positive and negative TI development priority issues are intersected with the groups' proposals for actions; in Table 3, the proposed actions are intersected by groups' suggestions regarding the agents to be engaged in the concretization of such actions. This entire exercise (i.e., the KAP workshop and data processing) enabled to detect the incidence and nature of terraphilia amongst the participants.

TABLE 2 - PROPOSED ACTIONS IN FAVOR OF TI & DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES ISSUES
(GROUP RESPONSES)

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE TI & DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES ISSUES	PROPOSED ACTIONS										
	Human capital development	Employment creation	Infrastructure and public facilities	Valorisation of natural environment	Promotion of collective and public services	Dissemination and awareness creation	Promotion of tourism industry	Restoration and valorisation of built heritage	Associations (management and organization)	Spatial planning and management	TOTAL N° OF REFERENCES
Economic development (-)	19	8			3					4	34
Landscapes and historic heritage (+)				10		12		4			26
Social development (-)	8	7			8						23
Natural landscapes (+)	5			11		4				2	22
Quality of life (+)		7			6		7				20
Rurality (+)			4				7	5			16
Infrastructure and public services (-)			15								15
Human capital development and traditional productive activity (-)	12		3								15
Social and economic development (-)	9	5									14
Associativism (-)									7		7
TOTAL N° OF REFERENCES	53	27	22	21	17	16	14	9	7	6	192

Main priorities
 Main actions
 Mainstream terraphilia

Considering that the sense of terraphilia increases proportionally with the capacity to formulate proposals to solve the weaknesses and to maximize the defined strengths, both Tables can be subject to two-fold readings and interpretations. First, reading by the lines enables assessment of the intensity of terraphilia based on the numbers and kinds of priority issues and on the typology of suggested actions for the solution of these issues. Second, reading by the columns enables delineation of actions considered most pertinent/relevant for resolving the weaknesses and maximizing strengths, as well as the identification of agents that should implement these actions and could, at

the same time, become targets of some specific actions aimed at raising their levels of territoriality (e.g.: activities of territorial marketing, or at least the sensitization for their involvement in some actions through pointing to their specific problem solving capacities).

TABLE 3 - PROPOSED AGENTS TO CARRY OUT ACTIONS IN FAVOR OF TI & DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES (GROUP RESPONSES)

PROPOSED ACTIONS	AGENTS									
	Local administration	Local associations and other non-profit institutions	Central administration	Schools and Training Centres	Firms and entrepreneurs	Others	Individuals	Economic associations	Mass media	TOTAL N° OF REFERENCES
Human resources development	8	5	10	10	5	4	6	1	2	51
Employment creation	3	2	7	7	2	1	1	3		26
Infrastructure and public services	9	2	3	4	2		1	1		22
Valorisation of natural environment	6	6	3		2	2	1		1	21
Dissemination and awareness creation	6	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	16
Promotion of collective and social services	3	9				3		1		16
Promotion of tourism industry	3	6	1	1	2			1		14
Restoration and valorisation of built heritage	3	1	2			2	1			9
Associations (management and organization)	2	2	1		1	1				7
Spatial planning and management	2	2			1			1		6
TOTAL N° OF REFERENCES	45	36	28	24	16	14	11	9	5	188

 Main actions
  Main agents
  Mainstream territoriality

Also in Tables 2 and 3, the darkest shaded area is on the intersection between lines and columns⁴ can be interpreted as the clearest and strongest (mainstream) sense of territoriality, which could be directly used as a framework of a Plan of Action for the Affirmation of Territorial Identity as a Development Resource.

As indicated in Table 2, the most problematic (negative) priority issues - for which the groups proposed solutions more readily than for other issues - are related to "economic and social development", which can be overcome through the implementation of actions aimed at "human capital development", as well as through the "promotion of new employment opportunities". Furthermore, it is also clear that

⁴ This matrix space may be defined according to different parameters, such as statistical ones, or related to available investment resources, or to a pure political option.

the most important strong (positive) priority issues (for which the groups also proposed solutions more easily) and which are related to “landscapes” – both alone and together with “historical heritage” – should be further strengthened through actions that promote the “valorisation of the natural environment”, including pollution control, improvements in the system of waste collection and disposal of residuals, and monitoring and control of the polluting agents. A priority issue classified by a group of participants as “quality of life” is too vague and too broad but this is maybe why it is referred to with equal frequency in three different actions, among which only “employment creation” is within the intersection area of mainstream terraphilia. It should also be stressed that, although there is a high frequency of references about actions to create or improve “infrastructure and public services”, they are outside the intersection area of mainstream terraphilia. This is due to an extremely reduced level of complementarity of this particular priority, i.e., the majority of actions in this domain refer to the same problem defined in only one county (Cadaval), which is where the absolutely greatest shortages are registered.

Conclusions obtained from the frequency analyses of individual responses can find their reinforcement in Table 3. While the typology of proposed actions from Table 2 is maintained, local and central administrations, local associations and other non-profit institutions, as well as schools and training centres, emerge as agents that should be most involved in the implementation of these actions. On one side, however, central administration, schools and training centres are more frequently referred to in connection with actions aimed at human capital development and employment creation, while, on the other side, local administration - though with more complementary relations with other types of actions than other agents (in a similar, but less intensive way, this also happens with local associations and other non-profit institutions) - is more frequently recognized as responsible for the creation of infrastructure and public services. Finally, considering only the analytical context that coincides with the intersection of mainstream terraphilia, local associations and other non-profit institutions emerge as agents that are particularly important for the promotion of environmental qualities and for human capital development, apart from being only logical their close relation with actions aimed at supporting collective and social services.

The results obtained from the KAP workshops were subsequently calibrated by means of a control survey of a random sample of 47 participants of the Congress of the Oeste

Region (a major triennial convention devoted to assessments of regional development issues at stake) held in the city of Alcobaça, in May 2007. The survey participants were requested to manifest their level of (dis)concordance, on a scale from 1 to 5, with the consensual opinions obtained in the KAP workshops. The survey results are systematized in Tables 4 and 5 below, showing that same opinions prevail and that the same main structure of the proposed actions is maintained as in Tables 2 and 3.

TABLE 4 –THE CONTROL SURVEY: LEVELS OF AGREEMENT ON TI & DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Typology of TI & development issues	Totally or partially disagree	Does not agree nor disagree	Totally or partially agree
Loss of traditional productive activities	5,4	24,3	70,3
Landscapes and protection of natural heritage	10,8	21,6	67,6
Quality of life	8,1	27,0	64,9
Landscapes and protection of historic heritage	8,1	32,4	59,5
Rurality	10,8	37,8	51,4
Unemployment and low prospects for the youth	13,5	35,1	51,4
Low social and economic development affecting a significant part of the population	5,4	45,9	48,6
Fragility of the economic development process	16,2	40,5	43,2
Low access to and reduced supply of health an education services	30,6	27,8	41,7
Lacking and low quality social infrastructure and services	10,8	51,4	37,8

TABLE 5 - THE CONTROL SURVEY: PRIORITIZATION OF TI & DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

Typology of TI & development actions	Most important	More or less important	Least important
Human resources development	55,6	27,8	16,7
Spatial planning and management	50,0	36,1	13,9
Employment generation	50,0	13,9	36,1
Valorisation of natural environment and landscapes	41,7	33,3	25,0
Improvement of public infrastructures and services	36,1	33,3	30,6
Dissemination of local potentials	33,3	19,4	47,2
Promotion of tourism	30,6	41,7	27,8
Rehabilitation and valorisation of built heritage	27,8	38,9	33,3
Promotion of civic associations	13,9	19,4	66,7

In order to obtain a synthesized overview of the complete range of opinions recorded by this survey, a Consensual Perception Coefficient was calculated for every development priority issue by pondering the dispersion among their respective

Evolution Scores, as shown in the following formula:

$$c_i = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{j=1}^n \left(p_{ij} - \left(\frac{\sum_{j=1}^n p_{ij}}{n} \right) \right)^2}{n}} \times \left(\frac{1}{\sum p_{ij}} \right) \times 100$$

where:

c – the value of the Consensual Perception Coefficient for every development priority issue i;

p – the Evolution Score attributed to every development priority issue i by every participant j;

n – the number of times an development priority issue is referred to and assessed by participants.

The above formula corresponds to the simplification of the ratio between the variation coefficient and the sum of Evolution Scores attributed to every development priority issue. As a rule, the smaller the value of the Consensual Perception Coefficient, the higher its level of Evolution Score attributed by the participants and, at the same time, the smaller the dispersion among the Evolution Scores. Also, the smaller the value of the coefficient, the higher the level of consensus among the participants in terms of the importance (negative or positive) they attributed to every priority issue for future development of their locality and/or region.

It is worth stressing that this formula can be useful for the prioritization of opinions within a same group of actors and agents, in the sense that the resulting values tend to vary depending on the number of persons involved in the consensus seeking process.

The following it can be concluded from the results (Tables 6, 7 and 8):

(i) from the structural point of view, conclusions obtained in the KAP workshops were validated by the control group;

(ii) generally, there is greater consensus about the negative aspects of territorial identity, suggesting that social and economic development issues, as well as the loss of traditional productive activities, are the most unanimous points of preoccupation;

(iii) regarding the positive aspects of territorial identity, the values of the consensus coefficient are balanced around all of the considered aspects; and

(iv) as regards the proposed actions, the generalized consensus is not so evident, and it is quite clear that as the level of the consensus decreases, the disagreement about

proposed actions increases.

TABLE 6 – CONSENSUAL PERCEPTION COEFFICIENT OF EACH POSITIVE TI & DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY ISSUES

	Consensual Perception Coefficient
POSITIVE TI & DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY ISSUES	
Quality of life	0,687432
Landscapes and protection of historic heritage	0,696923
Rurality	0,737669
Landscapes and protection of natural heritage	0,755565

TABLE 7 - CONSENSUAL PERCEPTION COEFFICIENT OF EACH NEGATIVE TI & DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY ISSUES

	Consensual Perception Coefficient
NEGATIVE TI & DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY ISSUES	
Low social and economic development affecting a significant part of the population	0,577677
Loss of traditional productive activities	0,601975
Low education attainment and professional qualifications of the population	0,684097
Lacking and low quality social infrastructure and services	0,698073
Unemployment and low prospects for the youth	0,790696
Fragility of the economic development process	0,809243
Low access to and reduced supply of health an education services	0,911943
Loss of voluntary activities in the civic associations	0,932126

TABLE 8 - CONSENSUAL PERCEPTION COEFFICIENT OF EACH PROPOSED TI & DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

	Consensual Perception Coefficient
PROPOSED TI & DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS	
Spatial planning and management	1,042257
Human resources development	1,059025
Improvement of public infrastructures and services	1,257389
Promotion of tourism	1,285376
Valorisation of natural environment and landscapes	1,288516
Employment generation	1,465176
Rehabilitation and valorisation of built heritage	1,589084
Dissemination of local potentials	1,797301
Promotion of civic associations	2,276866

CONCLUSIONS

The empirical validation of the concept of terraphilia in the context of the IDENTERRA Model in the Oeste Region has demonstrated how it embodies the pretended (claimed) facet of the subjective dimension of territorial identity and how its operationalization can be the lever between the subjectively experienced (topophilia) and objective (factual) territorial identity features and related local development policy and action.

The obtained results point to some concrete ways for finding solutions to the identified problems and for maximising advantages, if not for the entire Oeste Region, than at least for the four counties that hosted KAP workshops. These ways were discussed and consensually agreed upon by groups of people with diverse characteristics but with a strong common denominator – the pro-development oriented affective bonds with a territory, i.e., terraphilia. However, additional participatory research efforts are needed in order to achieve much better focussed and more effective - spatially disaggregated and thematically conjugated - active or illustrative indicators of structural elements and factors that constantly (re/de)generate territorial identity features and development process.

The promotion and activation of terraphilia may be important in the process of identification and assessment of strategically relevant elements of local and regional development, such as (i) sense of belonging to a territory, which reflects the levels of satisfaction with the environmental, social, economic, cultural and other conditions provided by that territory, and (ii) territorial attractiveness, which can be decisive for the fixation of new economic activities and for the introduction of social innovation in that territory.

Specifically, the development strategies aimed at valorising local and regional identities should rely, *inter alia*, on the strengthening of the sense of territorial belonging, since it could, for example, promote environmental and socio-cultural consciousness; encourage protection of the natural and cultural heritage; improve social relations and community spirit; facilitate efficiency and effectiveness of local institutions; reinforce self-respect and the feeling of security and satisfaction. The sense of territorial belonging could be strengthened on the basis of empirically verified knowledge and understanding of how different agents define and interpret the space of their residence, work and/or leisure, how they identify themselves with that space, and how

would they like to change it.

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