



Regional Approaches and Tools for Sustainable Revitalization A Workshop of the U.S.-German Bilateral Working Group

May 8 and 9, 2008 - New York, New York

Overview

There is growing international recognition that revitalization of regions containing potentially contaminated sites to meet economic, environmental/ecological, and social/cultural demands can and should contribute to the sustainability of the human and natural environment by improving environmental quality and sustaining ecosystem integrity. Sustainable regional revitalization seeks to incorporate a balance of social, economic, and environmental interests and objectives into growing and developing communities as well as shrinking cities. Achieving this balance is increasingly important in the cleanup and revitalization of regions incorporating sites with real or perceived contamination since many of these areas are not meeting their full economic, environmental/ecological, or social/cultural potential.

In order to encourage regional revitalization that balances social, environmental, and economic sustainability, it is important that local communities have access to practical strategies and tools to match best practices to local conditions and achieve the right balance for the particular region. To that end, under the U.S.-German Bilateral Working Group, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research are sponsoring this workshop to share information and approaches that will lead to dissemination of strategies and tools to local communities and other revitalization practitioners to facilitate sustainable regional revitalization. In Germany, this dissemination will occur through the REFINA Research Program (<http://www.refina-info.de/en/>) and in the U.S., this dissemination will occur through the Sustainable Management Approaches and Revitalization Tools - electronic website (www.smart.org). This workshop is the first in a series of workshops planned for this Bilateral Working Group's focus on regional revitalization.

Workshop Goal and General Outline:

The focus of the 2-day workshop is on international sharing of information on four primary topics: Regional Infrastructure and Transboundary Management, Financial Management, Brownscape Design, and Cross-Cutting Regional Planning. The overall purpose of the workshop is to share current information from Germany and United States on key elements of successful implementation, references and models, prioritization criteria, tools, processes, and approaches for determining reuse of individual sites in the context of the larger, overall region. The format of the workshop will be presentations from the perspective of each country on each of the four topics followed by a facilitated discussion on the presented material and associated information.

The following outline identifies general topics that will be addressed by participants during the workshop:

Regional Infrastructure and Transboundary Management – Cooperative Implementation of Regional Plans

Minneapolis/St. Paul Example and Stuttgart Example (or equivalent)

- What were the goals of the revitalization?
- Planning
- How were reuse options evaluated?
- How are impacts of social and infrastructure (e.g., transportation) investments measured?
- How are benefits communicated?

- How was the regional plan implemented at the local level (the incentives and penalties to drive implementation)?
- How are results measured in terms of the goals?

Financial Management – Shadow Effect

NKF – New German Municipal Accounting Approach and Associated Implications

- Characteristics of the approach
- Anticipated impacts

Financial Tools and Models for Quantifying Non-market Benefits

- Tools including TIFs
- Economic Modeling
 - No-build scenario
 - Implementation scenarios
 - Economic impact models (shadow effects)

Brownscape Design – Case Studies

German Coal Mine Example and The Dalles, Oregon and Breckenridge, Colorado Examples

- Applying planning criteria including limitations of zoning
- Tools for Communication
- Processes for involving stakeholders in reuse planning

Cross-Cutting – Regional Planning Criteria for Site Prioritization

Saarland Example and Niagara and Sustainable Planning Approach Examples

- Approach for prioritizing sites
- Approach for determining reuse for individual sites
- Approach for determining optimum sequencing of revitalization

During the workshop, the cross-cutting themes of communication, data management and decision support will be discussed during all sessions.

Workshop Participants

The workshop atmosphere will be maintained by encouraging interactive discussions. Participants representing a broad range of disciplines knowledgeable of the topics outlined above from both the U.S. and Germany will play a key role in this workshop. Total number of participants is expected to be 50.

Workshop Outcome and Products

The outcome of this workshop will consist of the following items:

- List of next steps for the thematic group teams addressing the four session topics of the workshop
- List of products and anticipated delivery dates
- Enhanced information sharing and relationships among the international practitioners participating in the workshop
- A workshop report which will summarize the workshop and identify the impact of the workshop in terms of lessons shared, next steps for the Bilateral Working Group, a summary of products to be developed by the thematic group teams, and information to be incorporated into SMARTe.org.