

Abstract of the Regional Spatial Development Program Mid Mecklenburg/Rostock

The Regional Spatial Development Program (RSDP) is the basis of a structured development within the planning region Rostock. The region includes the hanseatic city of Rostock and the newly formed (04.09.2011) administrative district of Rostock (former administrative districts of Bad Doberan and Güstrow). The region covers an area of 3.600sq.km where 420.000 inhabitants live in 122 municipalities (2010). Thus it is rather sparsely populated compared to other German regions. It is the aim of the RSDP to point out and develop the endogenous potentials and chances of the region in order to further strengthen a positive economic, social and ecological development.

Why a new program was needed

The realignment of the RSDP is a reaction on changed framework conditions:

- The demographic change, which goes along not only with a population decline but also with tendencies of suburbanisation,
- the EU-eastward extension with its associated opportunities and potentials of a closer cooperation with Scandinavia, Poland, the Baltic States and Russia,
- the amendment in laws on EU, federal and federal-state level.

Legally binding character

The RSDP is based on the federal regional planning act, the state planning act of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania and the state decree concerning the regional development program of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. The program consists of a text document accompanied by a map and an environmental report. It puts the objectives and general principles given in the state development program Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania into more concrete terms. Hence it closes the gap between spatial planning on a federal states (Länder) level and land use planning on a municipal level.

The spatial regulations vary according to their legally binding character:

- 'Objectives' (Ziele) and 'priority areas' (Vorranggebiete) are legally binding regulations, which have been finally decided upon by state authorities responsible for

regional or subregional planning in the individual Länder.

- 'General principles' (Grundsätze) and 'areas with special significance' (Vorbehaltsgelände) are general statements and give some discretionary power.

Regional planning objectives shall be observed by public authorities in regionally significant plans and measures. This shall also apply to

- authorizations, plan approvals and other official decisions on the permissibility of regionally significant measures taken by public authorities,
- plan approvals and authorizations with the legal effect of an official approval of a plan concerning the permissibility of regionally significant measures taken by legal persons or entities under private law.

Regulations in main thematic fields

The RSDP consists of three parts: A text, a map of the spatial structure and an environmental audit report. It deals with the following thematic fields:

- Guidelines of a sustainable regional development
- Spatial development

- Settlement development
- Development of open space
- Development of infrastructure

Selected regulations and contents will be presented in the following.

Guidelines of a sustainable regional development

The RSD defines 14 guidelines for a sustainable development within the region. The main are:

- To develop the city of Rostock and its rural suburban zone together as one growth region.
- To use the endogenous economic potential.
- To use the location within the metropolitan triangle between Berlin, Copenhagen/Malmö and Hamburg as an advantage. To further strengthen the national and international cooperation with the metropolitan areas, Denmark, Poland and the Baltic States.
- To advance Rostock's location by strengthening the link to the airport and by developing the seaport.
- To form a regional profile as a touristic and ecological region.

Spatial development

The regional centre of the planning region is Rostock. Bad Doberan, Güstrow and Teterow are subregional centres. Furthermore 14 local centres have been defined (Bützow, Dummerstorf, Gnoien, Graal-Müritz, Krakow am See, Kröpelin, Kühlungsborn, Laage, Neubukow, Rerik, Sanitz, Satow, Schwaan und Tesin). Within the urban structure these *central towns* take up a special function with special rights and obligations.

The regional centre Rostock and its suburban zone (mainly 21 municipalities) are the economical centre of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. For this area, called 'sub-urban area', a more detailed development scheme has been designed as a basis for further cooperation.

Tourism is an important economical factor for many municipalities and the whole region. Thus 75% of the whole region has been defined either as 'area for tourism development' or 'priority areas for tourism'. Especially the priority areas for tourism at the coast are endangered of becoming overloaded. Therefore inland tourism should be promoted.

Agriculture is the dominant land use. Since it both shapes the cultural landscape and is an economical factor it has an influence on spatial development. Its importance is underlined with the definition of areas with special significance for farming.

The regional involvement in *European, interregional and regional networks* should be focused. Its good infrastructural location should be strengthened within the framework of the Scandria/ South-North-Axis project. It is aimed to develop Rostock as a bridgehead along the axis.

Settlement development

According to the principle of a decentralised concentration further development of *settlement areas* should be limited to the central towns. Therefore the amount of new housing areas outside central towns is restricted to 3% until 2020. Six settlement axes with Rostock in their centre have been defined along the existing traffic axes. The development of areas that are close to the main traffic lines (railroads, streets) is prioritised within these axes. This concentration aims on the one hand to hinder a merge of different settlement areas. On the other hand it decreases the additional traffic that goes along with new settlement areas.

In the field of urban and rural development a focus is set on town centres. Vacant large housing estates should be deconstructed. Vacant buildings in sparsely populated areas should also be deconstructed or reused in a way, that it does not detract the appearance of the town or the landscape.

Priority areas for *commercial and industrial zones* have been designated by the regional development program for the whole Land Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. These sites are primarily appointed for company locations with a supra regional impact. These are (within the region of Mid Mecklenburg/ Rostock): Rostock-Poppendorf (200ha), Rostock-Mönchhagen (105ha) und Rostock-Laage (500ha).

Additionally the RSDP designates areas with special significance for commerce and industry. These serve mainly the further development of Rostock's seaport and the location of logistic related companies. These are:

- Rostock-Seehafen Ost (200ha),
- Rostock-Seehafen West (120ha),
- Bentwisch (60ha),
- Dummerstorf (140ha),
- Poppendorf Nord (340ha) und
- Güstrow Ost (260ha).

It has been resolved to examine the transformation of areas with special significance into priority areas.

Development of open space

The following designations have been made in order to achieve the goal of safeguarding the *natural environment*. 29% of the region is designated as priority areas or areas with special significance for the protection of nature and the countryside and additional 5% of the region is assigned as areas with special significance for recreation and compensation of impacts on nature and countryside.

The quality and area of *agricultural zones* should be preserved as the economical basis of farmers. Thereby an improvement of the water balance and a reduction of the discharge of nutrients into the water are aimed. *Drinking water supply* should be taken from interregional water. For this purpose the river Warnow and its tributaries should be, among others, preserved in a good condition.

The designation of priority areas for near-surface *raw material*, such as sand, gravel and peat, serve the organised extraction of raw materials. Areas with special significance for raw materials ensure a preservation of known and suspected raw material deposits. 20 priority areas with a total of 900ha (0,23% of the regional area) and 32 areas with special significance with a total of 1.500ha (0,40% of the regional area) have been assigned within the scope of the RSDP.

Development of infrastructure

Public services should be concentrated on central towns. This includes the functions education and culture, which should mainly be situated in central towns, especially in subregional and regional centres.

The further development of the *road and railroad* network goes along with an active promotion of the central towns and the local economy. Especially significant axes for roads have been assigned. The connection to the surrounding metropolitan regions should be enhanced with an improved railroad transport system and a better link between both transportation modes.

In order to ensure Rostock's competitiveness the access to its *seaport* should be deepened from 14,50m to 16,50m. An increasing importance of the port, both for transportation of passengers and goods as well as a location for producing companies is expected.

Situated at the coast of the Baltic Sea, the region has a high potential for the usage of *wind energy*. 'Suitable areas' (Eignungsgebiete) with particularly well conditions for wind

farms have been designated within the RSDP. A criterion for their designation is not only the exposure to wind, but also the interests of the population, economy, tourism, infrastructure and the preservation of nature and countryside. Thus, defined distances between a wind energy plant and other usage of space have been taken into consideration. Wind energy plants are generally restricted to suitable areas for wind energy. In not permitting wind energy plants outside this spatial category suitable areas act as strictly binding objectives. Overall 2.250ha, this equals approx. 0,6% of the whole region, have the legal status of a suitable area.

Implementation strategies

The RSDP is among the regional marketing and the regional business development one pillar of a sustainable regional development. Its implementation is part of the regional management.