

## **Stakeholder Dialogue from the Stakeholders' Side**

Pierre Frapa

Pierre Frapa, as a representative of the Regional Natural Park of Luberon gave an introduction to this park. The park is located in the South-East of France at the border of the Alps and the Provence. It has been founded in 1977 and covers an area of 165 000 ha. Pierre talked about the natural and cultural heritage of the park, the institutional settings and management aspects, the needs of the park's authority from the scientific community, and agreement processes with the local population.

Unlike a National Park, a Regional Natural Park is chosen and managed by local authorities. The authority of the park is a council of representatives of the communities involved. Each community has agreed to and signed the chart of the Regional Natural Parks. Aims of the chart of the Regional Natural Park of Luberon are:

- Protection and valuation of the natural and cultural heritage.
- Rational land management.
- Economic development and improvement of the conditions of the living environment.
- Information and education.

The daily work of the park's authority is about setting these aims into action.

The Regional Natural Park of Luberon is also a Unesco biosphere reserve. A Unesco biosphere reserve is an inhabited territory with special natural and cultural richness that is managed according to the Seville strategy – this includes for instance the concept of different zones with different access and usage restrictions. The park of Luberon has been chosen as Regional Natural Park and biosphere reserve because of both its richness in species diversity which is due to its location at the border of the Alps and the Provence and its cultural heritage aspect as the park contains proof of ancient human settlements.

Cooperation with landowners in this park is regarded as successful. More and more communities are interested in joining the park, partly because of the park's very positive contribution to regional income. Pierre Frapa explained that in the first stages of establishing such a park there are sometimes difficulties because people are afraid of losing control over the area. However, the concept of a Regional Natural Park and its chart that is developed with members of the local community, soon showed that this is not the case.

One of the most important activities conducted in collaboration with scientists is monitoring. For example special attention is given to grassland species for about 10 years by now. Further needs from the scientific community do not concern fundamental research, but applied research - for instance regarding air pollution. There would also be an interest in regional resolution of climate change modelling results.

Iris Großmann