IESA

Instituto de Estudios Sociales de Andalucía
Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas / JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

0507

DOCUMENTOS DE TRABAJO

**OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE
DEVELOPMENT OF MOUNTAIN
POPULATIONS IN ANDALUSIA (SPAIN): THE
EXPERIENCE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
INITIATIVE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LEADER IN THE SIERRA NEVADA**

David J. Moscoso

Instituto de Estudios Sociales de Andalucía (IESA –CSIC)

IESA WORKING PAPER SERIES

www.iesaa.csic.es

OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
MOUNTAIN POPULATIONS IN ANDALUSIA (SPAIN): THE EXPERIENCE
OF THE EUROPEAN UNION INITIATIVE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LEADER IN THE SIERRA NEVADA

ABSTRACT: This article is based on the study *Public Opinion and Rural Development. The Intermediate Evaluation of the European Union Initiative Leader Plus in Andalusia*, carried out between the end of 2003 and the beginning of 2004 by the Institute of Social Studies of Andalusia (IESA-CSIC). In these pages the matter of the rural development of the Andalusian mountain zones is raised, with the empirical framework of the analysis focused on the specific case of the situation in the Sierra Nevada. Through this analysis, the intention is to show which are the difficulties and hindrances that in modern times slow down the development process for the mountainous population of the domain of the Sierra Nevada, as well as the perceived changes and the opportunities for improvement detected by this population within the framework of the European Union Initiative LEADER (Links between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy).

KEYWORDS: Rural Development; LEADER Initiative; Mountain Zones; Sierra Nevada; Andalusia.

1. THE POLITICS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MOUNTAIN ZONES: DEFINITION AND FRAMEWORKS OF EUROPEAN UNION AND SPANISH PROCEEDINGS.

The mountain zones have suffered an important deterioration process in the last few decades. The main reasons for this process, as professor Mairal Lacoma summarizes relevantly, are: «depopulation, the irrational exploitation of pastures and forests, the savage development of tourism, the general atmospheric contamination, the construction of communication infrastructures and the intensification of open-air mining.» (1993:16). Indeed, as it has been verified in other works and researches conducted in Spain (González-Fernández, 2003), the mountain zones have been characterized in the last few decades as being more underprivileged than other rural zones due to their permanent natural disadvantages and the resulting socioeconomic conditions. At which point, these areas especially stand out in modern times because of their unbalanced situation with respect to other territories.

This circumstance, together with the significance of these territories for the European Union (mountainous areas cover almost a third of the territory of the European Union and they have about 30 million inhabitants, more or less 10% of its population), soon motivated the thought over its situation of underdevelopment in the bosom of the civil services of many European countries, including the European Committee itself. This concern inspired the design and application of certain policies for the development of the mountain zones, the most important being the Directive (EEC) 268/75 on “Mountain and Hill Farming and Farming in Certain Less-favored Areas”, in the case of the European Union, and “Law 25/1982 of Mountain Agriculture” (LMA), in the specific case of Spain.

The Directive (EEC) 268/75 on “Mountain and Hill Farming and Farming in Certain Less-favored Areas”, established an ordinary schedule for these areas in Europe, which took place through economic compensations and collective ventures for mountain zones. Nevertheless, almost thirty years after the setting in motion of this directive, the Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on "The future of upland areas in the EU" of 14th of March 2003, recognizes that «despite the existence of a collection of European Union measures that are destined to, or better yet include the mountain, there does not exist for the moment any structured policy regarding mountain territories, formed by measures that are applied exclusively to these areas as consequence of the recognition of their characteristics and which adhere to a deliberate and coherent global strategy» (Rodriguez Blanco, 2003:22).

With regards to the LMA, this was constituted through the six chapters with which were intended to contribute to the development of the mountain zones. The main impacts derived from this law are the following ones: firstly, the “Mountain Associations” were promoted as legal entities taking part in the socioeconomic fabric. These associations served as instruments for detection of the problematic areas affecting the mountain zones, and to offer solutions from an area-based and bottom-up approach. Secondly, “Programs of Regulation and Promotion of Mountain Agrarian Resources” (PRPMAR) were created as basic tools to integrate the distinct civil services actions on this field. Thirdly, this law put into practice a chapter referring to the “Demarcation of Mountain Agriculture Zones and Authority System”, which would come to fruition between 1983 and 1986 through the transfer of powers on this issue to the Spanish Autonomous Regions (by Royal Decree 2.717/83, 5th of October). Altogether, 3,076 territorial entities in all of Spain qualified as mountain municipalities, representing 38.5% of the total of Spanish municipalities and 41% of the total surface of the country. Also, this chapter came about in what was deemed “Mountain Agriculture Commission,” a network of Coordination

Committees in different parts of the national territory, in which programs of comprehensive rural development in the mountain zones were carried out.

Subsequently, the development of the Spanish mountain zones and, therefore, of the Andalusian region, has remained protected mainly by the European Union policies of rural development, first through what was called the “Community Support Framework” (Decision (ECC) 426/89) – which would be supported, in the Spanish case, in the “Development Plan for the Rural Zones of Spain” (DPRZS) – and later through the “European Union Initiative LEADER”.

In this article we will concentrate exclusively on the rural development experience, within the framework of the European Union Initiative LEADER, in a specific area of Andalusia: the setting of the Sierra Nevada National Park. This National Park is made up of 60 municipalities forming the regions of Las Alpujarras and El Nacimiento, the natural region of Marquesado del Zenete, situated in the regional area of Guadix, and the northeast section of the Lecrin Valley region. In all representing a territorial space of 171,829 hectares, from which 86,208 are National Park and the rest are Natural Park.

2. THE EUROPEAN UNION INITIATIVE *LEADER* IN ANDALUSIA.

The European Union Initiative LEADER entails a demonstrative experience for the development of the rural world, that respond directly to the existing concern in the bosom of the EU since the end of the eighties, because of the exodus of the rural population towards the cities and the crisis that affected the traditional economic activities at the end of the Fordist stage. This initiative attempts to experiment with new approaches for development and to involve the rural communities in the search for appropriate solutions.

In Andalusia, the implementation of this initiative affects about 700 municipalities from 50 regions, which represents 89% of the territory, and more than three million inhabitants (49% of the population of Andalusia).

The more immediate objectives of LEADER are the coordination of the rural territories, the training of the population, the diversification of the rural economy and the conservation of the environment and cultural heritage. The actions are financed through funds arriving from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) with this one focused specifically on the modernization of agriculture, the organization of the commercialization and promotion of rural activities. Nevertheless, the budgetary limit (around 4% of the total budget of the Common Agricultural Policy - CAP), and the experimental nature of the initiative¹ only permit to activate, through these objectives, the working and cooperative networks and the agents (economic, political and social) that constitute them, through the demonstrative experiences with which are expected to generate a multiplying effect, then it is considered that they must be, in the final instance, such networks and agents who watch over the development of their villages.

3. METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE EVALUATION OF THE *LEADER* INITIATIVE IN ANDALUSIA.

In what follows, we will adapt a summary of the results drawn from the successive evaluations of these programs performed by the Institute of Social Studies of Andalusia (1999, 2001 and 2003). These evaluations consist in the analysis of public opinion towards the

¹ Through the successive phases of the LEADER program and the complimentary program in Spain, the Operative Program for Economic Development and Diversification of Rural Zones” (PRODER).

LEADER and PRODER programs in the different areas of implementation within the environments of the national parks. The information is obtained through qualitative techniques (in-depth interviews and focus groups) from residents and groups acting in those areas (beneficiaries of the programs, non-beneficiating businesspeople, representatives of political associations, business think tanks and trade unions, representatives of the media and the educational system, representatives of sporting, cultural, ecological, women's associations, etc.).

Consistently with the specificities of the *LEADER* program, the main areas analyzed in these evaluations² are: the opinion and assessment of the implementation of the program (the bottom-up and area-based nature of the developed actions, its innovative character, the integrated and multi-sectoral focus and the presence of the working and cooperative networks) and the opinion and assessment of the operation of the Rural Development Associations (RDA's).

4. THE EXPERIENCE OF *LEADER* AND *PRODER* PROGRAMS IN THE SIERRA NEVADA.

The implementation of the European Union initiative LEADER in the environment of the Sierra Nevada began to develop in the first half of the nineties. Through the incorporation of the Rural Development Associations (RDA's) of the Alpujarra-Sierra Nevada and Guadix Region, the municipalities of this region benefited from the first moment of the LEADER initiative. Subsequently, the remainder of the neighboring regions established their own RDA's, and they benefited exclusively from the complimentary program PRODER, endowed with a smaller budget than any of the different LEADER editions (LEADER I, II, and LEADER PLUS).

² The European Commission requires an impact assessment of all the actions developed through the European Union initiatives. These evaluations are performed following the directives indicated in the Document STAR VI/43503/02 1st rev. and the Work Document of the Commission VI/43625/02 1st rev.

During the years of the implementation of the Initiative (1991-2006), the villages and rural areas of the domain of the Sierra Nevada have experienced great changes, summarized in a notable improvement in the living conditions of the population, as can be drawn from the different evaluations of these programs carried out in Andalusia. However, it is necessary to emphasize that this conclusion is full of nuances, thus is known the elevated degree of heterogeneity that characterizes the different regions that constitute the area of the Sierra Nevada. Said heterogeneity is materialized in the variety of natural resources and the unequal funding of public infrastructures, as well as in the pronounced and faltering relief that characterizes this territory. As such, it is also linked with the unequal population structure and social, political and economic stratification that this represents.

4.1. The Assessment of the Development Situation.

As a consequence of the above-mentioned heterogeneity, we should state that different appraisals of the rural world's situation and its difficulties are observed between regions, which we explain here by the heterogeneity to which we have made reference to. Despite this assessment, the fact is that in general, the perception of the mountainous population of the Sierra Nevada over its development situation is negative when they compare it with the conditions experienced by the inhabitants of other non-mountainous rural areas.

«The economic development is weak, because people head out to go to work and come back to sleep. People go away to work, to El Ejido, and return to sleep at night.»

«People are very passive. There is little cultural education and little training. There is not a culture of having initiative, the culture is lacking. But people are not conscious of it.»

«When there are services, people do not leave.»

(Focus Group, Orgiva, IESA-CSIC)

We should not forget that in modern times the mountain zones constitute the last redoubts of underdevelopment in Europe. The mountain dwellers of the villages of the Sierra Nevada attribute this situation to the economic stagnation they experience, the social immobilism, and the lack of basic infrastructures (channels of communication, hospitals, education centers, etc.).

Such perception contrasts partially with that of the western Alpujarra and the Lecrin Valley, thus the concern around which all of the opinions and assessments of the interviewees revolve around here is the economic activity, which is reduced in the food & agriculture and meat-processing industry, on one hand, and in rural tourism, on the other.

Another point in common among the population of the Sierra Nevada is the concern for sustainability, which reflects a clear interest in the environment and quality of life. However, we also find here distinct perceptions differentiating the eastern section from the western.

In the eastern section, the focus of sustainable development is articulated with plenty of clarity, like a coherent way to administrate the territory aiming both to satisfy the basic needs and to respect the environment thanks to which these ones are fulfilled. We find the most representative example of this concept in Ohanes (Almería), designated “Ecological Municipality” as a result of the pioneering experience in Andalusia implementing an environmental management system that takes into account all the aspects of its vital activities. In contrast, in the western section, the focus of sustainable development acquires clearly symbolic connotations, presenting a sacralized sense of space, product of the imagination of the urban and foreign population (the new settlers) that visit or settle in these villages. These new settlers generate a symbolic imaginary of a sacralized or even “invented” nature about the mountain villages, intending to maintain them in the 19th century, without considering the real needs that can exist amongst the autochthonous population³. Some people are even afraid of the danger that

³ This would be in consequence with the idea, defended by some authors as Lash and Urry (1996) and Verdú (2003), according to which in modern capitalism, the merchandise gives way to the symbols, these occupying the protagonist

this situation represents for the development of the region, because this kind of development is heavily influenced by the values of the population arriving from outside the territory. This process is generating great tensions, as those sectors of the population that may have a different vision of development (women, youths and the elderly) don't have any say in the matter: the youths migrate to the major cities, the women reproduce their situation of inequality and the elderly endure the difficulties of the past. Thus, the tension revolves around how to produce a socioeconomic change in the locale.

On the other hand, in the majority of the municipalities, the interviewees report great difficulties occasioned by the predominance of a self-centered culture (independent, competitive with the rest of the municipalities, etc.) with the political representatives of the town councils doing nothing to seek middle ground. Thus, it is observed that in practice, still admitting to theoretically having a regional identity, the majority of the population act with a egotistical mentality, putting their village interests before those of the region. The rough orography of this area contribute to space out and differentiate the diverse zones and municipalities in all of the territory. To this respect, an interviewee declares that:

«It would be necessary to create a kind of network of municipalities within the very region, in order to find interests more near and homogenous that permit integrated actions of rural development to be carried out...mainly because of the difficulties that exist in political issues between town councils, delegation... It also will be necessary, on the part of the RDA's, to execute campaigns of public awareness to elevate a feeling or identity of region, because without regional vision it is not possible to carry out actions of development of the territory. Keep in mind that when some project of these characteristics has been engaged in, some mayors have argued to take the project back to their village or to establish preferences, what in the end has amounted to nothing being done... And the same goes with the businesspeople.»

(Personal Interview, Laujar de Andarax, IESA-CSIC)

role in the market. Suffice is to say, the idea that these authors dispense with the name of «economy of signs and spaces» or «fiction capitalism» transmits to us the hypothesis that within the present market system, the significance of the goods and services have greater “value” than the goods and services themselves.

4.2. Assessment of the Territorial Approach.

In the regions of the Sierra Nevada, the territorial approach is questioned. The articulation of interests and the relation between the existent needs of development and the actions carried out show a complex and difficult panorama for various reasons. In the first place, because of the natural and cultural diversity that the different sub-territories which make up these regions themselves present.

Secondly, in the last few years these municipalities and sub-territories of the Sierra Nevada have had different development experiences. Some areas have benefited from the development of specific resolute actions (improvement of communication channels, development of the tourist sector, support for innovation in agriculture, etc.). This is the case of the Poqueira River depression, to the south of the region of Guadix and to the northeast of the Lecrin region. Meanwhile, in other parts of the region, the number and extension of development actions have been more limited.

Thirdly, the efficacy of the LEADER initiative in the setting of the Sierra Nevada is also questioned for the little coherence between the true necessities and interests of its population, in its different zones or sub-territories, and the actions developed. This aspect particularly affects the type of communication between the different social, political and economic agents.

The main weakness of the territorial approach is that it makes difficult the possibility to reach points of mediation between the different social, political and economic agents that take part in the development process of the Sierra Nevada. This induces thought that the future of the development of this territory, with attention to the principle of territoriality upon which the European Union initiative LEADER is established, passes inexorably through the reorganization

of its territory into distinct regions, smaller in size and with greater homogeneity in their natural and cultural characteristics, and therefore, in their interests.

4.3. Assessments and Opinions Concerning Natural and Cultural Patrimony.

The natural and cultural patrimony of the Sierra Nevada is mainly appreciated for its commercial value, provided by a strong comparative advantage. The population of the domain of the Sierra Nevada is aware that its heritage (the countryside of the protected natural space, its gastronomy, the rustic architecture of its villages and its lifestyles) constitutes an important tourist attraction, or what Robbe-Grillet name as «receiving zones: a geographic entity where the population has decided to value the components of the local economy arising from tourist activity» (1984:71). For this reason, many rural development actions initiated in this region have as a final purpose attaining the consolidation of a competitive tourist market.

The localization or concentration of this activity can be the primary disadvantage for the development of the municipalities of the Sierra Nevada, and, at the same time, be a threat for the diversification that the LEADER program definitely intends. This is one of the reasons why interviewees criticize the RDA's. On one hand, in the eastern or Almerian section it is believed that there is favorable treatment being given to the municipalities nearest to Orgiva, situated in the lap of the Sierra Nevada, and particularly to those that are found in the Poqueira River depression. They are annoyed because they consider that, the acts developed by the RDA's in order to extend the «*brand Alpujarra*», directly marginalize the villages situated in the Andarax and Adra depressions, excluding them from the widespread information. On the other hand, so much in this section as in the western section, the interviewees denounce the little support that

sectors different from tourism, such as the agribusiness and the meat-processing industry, receive. These sectors feel excluded from the process of rural development.

In any case, the majority of the persons interviewed perceive the recuperation of certain traditional cultural practices as a very positive effect of the development process. They openly demonstrate their position on the agricultural production and ranching, that in every moment finds itself in coherence with a sustainable and respectful practice with the environment.

«They are recuperating and placing a value on gastronomy, the production of cheese, pottery... is being revaluated, but in part by the outsiders and from the moment that it is being valued from the outside».

«There is a cultural and environmental appraisal from the economic, market point of view. But there are no commonalities to facilitate this».

«They believe that everything will be changed by the outsiders that come here to exploit the natural resources from here».

(Focus Group, Orgiva, IESA-CSIC)

4.4. The Innovative Character of Rural Development.

A poor innovative character is detected in the projects of rural development of this area. There is a lack of diversification in the actions developed. The population of this area explains this fact by the mediocre participation of the society in the processes of rural development, as a consequence of the low level of training, the shortfall in the business culture and the limited diffusion of the information concerning the opportunities of the program.

This appraisal is directly observed in the context of the actions to which we have referred to but also in other sectoral strategies, as the application of the new technologies in the business, education and domestic fields. It is mentioned that in these towns, because of the existence of

obsolete telephone lines, there exist great communication problems with the Internet. This, evidently, has a big impact on the capacity of the companies in the zone, be they of the industrial sector or the service sector. Also drawn from the obtained information is the little support that the small and medium-sized firms receive in general in all parts of this region.

4.5. Assessment of the Operation of the Rural Development Associations and the LEADER and PRODER Rural Development Programs.

In the opinion of the persons interviewed, as long as the RDA's are well managed, they represent a very important role for the development of the villages of the Sierra Nevada. They share the opinion that it is necessary for the personnel of these Associations to get involved with enthusiasm and impartiality in the diffusion and selection of the development projects. And this without considering the municipalities nor the interests of the mayors or other councilors.

For it is necessary to work for all of the territory with the same drive, spreading the existence of the RDA's and the programs they administer, analyzing the resources and opportunities of each zone, coming closer together with existent collectives and promoting integrated actions in those places. The main barrier, detected in the evaluation, to accomplish this task is, again, the amplitude of the territory, with its particular problems, and the limited capacity that RDA's have.

On the other hand, the process of granting subsidies is very slow, which obligates the beneficiaries to struggle in order to expedite the incentives through the banking entities. In many cases, this situation constitutes an important obstacle to projects being set in motion, therefore many enterprising people do not desire to be at risk once seen the degree of uncertainty that all the process can generate. It is necessary to consider that, on many occasions, the initiatives can emerge from persons with little training or skills, without experience in the business world (this is

one of the preferential groups within the logic of the LEADER program), and if they are not strongly aided, it makes it easier for them to resign. However, we should not forget that what is intended with the European Union initiative LEADER is not to maintain projects through economic incentives (they should be sustainable), but mostly to give impetus to the private initiative, always risky, and therefore, entailing costs especially for those who promote it.

In spite of the preceding appraisals, the interviewees recognize the role performed by the RDA's since the moment of their inception, promoting the economic development and revitalization of the population of the Sierra Nevada. Nevertheless, this recognition needs to be clarified: the role carried out is valued positively, but the scope of the work done is being criticized. All of the interviewees desire that the programs of a public nature, such as LEADER and PRODER, reach all of the places and sectors equally.

«The operation of the RDA's and the LEADER program has very positive results, but it affects very few people. There is also initiative lacking, but impetus has to be given to the ideas».

«Of course, in any case a social revitalization and economic development has resulted thanks to the RDA's. It has influenced somewhat the economic and social development of the region».

(Focus Group, Guadix, IESA-CSIC)

The assessment of those who know the program well is positive, because they think that it allows the initiatives of those persons that do not have the means or resources to carry them out themselves to be put in motion. Furthermore, the fact that it is one of the few engines of economic development and social revitalization in the zone is regarded positively. Despite it, some persons consider that these programs should offer greater technical aid to the beneficiaries, be more active in the process of the granting of assistance and offer greater professionalism.

Another criticism is that many times entrepreneurs presenting projects are received with particular distrust.

«The program is good, because it permits some to do things that they would not be able to do otherwise. However, it is not much because here it costs more to do things».

«In general, people get help. What is lacking is more information, more publicity about the matters... for example, sending bulletins to the businesspeople, although they are still few».

«One problem is that the process is slow, too slow, and should involve more people... and more projects and initiatives».

(Focus Group, Guadix, IESA-CSIC)

As we said before, the most important outcome of the rural development policies promoted by the European Union initiative LEADER is their ability to show what it can be done and the subsequent multiplying effect that can generate. However, the true problems of development in the rural world can only be solved through an integrated action that involves the joint participation of all of the social, politic and economic agents of the territory, who should act under the protection of the broad entity that constitutes the civil services (Moscoso, 2004 and 2005).

5. CONCLUSIONS. TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOUNTAIN ZONES.

This article has intended to display the particular difficulties that affect, in the matter of rural development, the existent mountain zones in the Spanish region of Andalusia, taking as an example the implementation of the European Union rural development initiative LEADER in the mountain populations of the Sierra Nevada. As it is signaled in a Communiqué of the *United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization* (FAO) of 2002, « Mountains are fragile ecosystems which are globally important as groundwater deposits and repositories of biological diversity, as recreational areas, and as centers for integration and cultural patrimony. Mountains provide a direct life-support base for about one-tenth of humankind. Occupying about a fifth of the total land area of the Earth, the mountains offer a base for a direct sustenance of life for almost a tenth of humanity, as well as providing goods and services for more than half of the world's population» (2002:7). For that reason, the General Assembly of the United Nations decided to declare the year 2002 as the “International Year of the Mountains,” confident in that this declaration offered a good opportunity and an exciting challenge in the monitoring of Chapter 13 (Sustainable Mountain Development) of Agenda 21, initiated in the *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development* (UNCED) held in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro.

In Europe, the European Association of Elected Representatives from Mountain Regions (AEM) and other platforms and associations of this nature (such as the *European Association for Cooperation between Mountain Territories* or EUROMONTANA) occupy an important role in the development of these areas. Amongst its principal actions, the most important is the effort exerted for the expansion of the cohesion policy, the advance in the European Union regional

policy and the devising and putting into practice of a specific European policy for the mountain zones of the European Union area.

The situation experienced at the international level is quite similar, with associations such as the *International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions*, formed by governments, organizations of the United Nations and other organizations, including the private sector. In the year 2003 the *World Summit on Sustainable Development* (Johannesburg Summit) was held. Here the questions relating to the mountains acquired a great importance. Specifically, the need to adopt a series of measures of a comprehensive nature in the mountain zones is explicitly recognized in epigraph 42 of the Report of this summit, including programs against deforestation, rural development actions, gender-sensitive policies, actions for the mobilization of mountain communities, etc.

This said, in regard to the specific case of Andalusia, and more exactly in that it concerns the repercussions of a specific experience (the implementation of the European Union initiative LEADER in the situation of the Sierra Nevada), we would like to underscore here what we consider should be the lessons concerning rural development for the mountain zones of this region.

a) *The rural development in the mountain zones should be integrated.* The integrated approach of the rural development coordinates all the specificities of the European initiative. It involves the ability to reconcile the necessities of a certain territory in accordance with the conditions of the population that inhabit it and the resources available. All in all, an integrated rural development involves a fluid communication between all of the agents of the development, manifested in working and cooperation networks, and not just through the joint subsidiarity of some actions.

b) *The rural development of the mountain zones should be sustainable* in a dual sense. In the first place, the actions of development promoted by the RDA's should guarantee their subsistence, this representing an ineffable test of the success of the program. The continuity of the initiatives act as a stimulus to new proposals. This way, the development programs are able to generate the requested multiplying effect. Secondly, the development actions that are carried out today should not have a negative influence on the opportunities of development of tomorrow. That is to say, we should guarantee that the next generations be able to continue to enjoy the resources that we process today, to bring forth the necessities that face them in the future. This entails an approach to development of a well-balanced nature, respectfully employing the existent resources in the territory and guaranteeing a qualitative improvement of the living conditions of the rural populations.

In the case of the Sierra Nevada, this would mean the setting in motion of a Sustainable Development Plan (SDP) integrated in the joint actions promoted by the local governments and RDA's, as it occurs in other areas of Andalusia. And, at the same time, at a more specific level, the adoption of criteria of respect to the environment, manifested through reports and accords such as the *European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas*, the *Agenda 21*, the *European Charter for Mountains*, etc., all of them derived from the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* and on the *Treaty on Environmental Education for Sustainable Societies and Global Responsibility*.

REFERENCES

- FAO (2002): *Año Internacional de las Montañas*, Roma: FAO, Publication and Multimedia Services of the FAO.
- GONZÁLEZ FERNÁNDEZ, Manuel T. (2003), *Sociología y ruralidades (La construcción social del desarrollo rural en el Valle de Liébana)*, Madrid, MAPYA, Serie Estudios.
- LASH, Scott y URRY, John (1996), *Economies of signs & spaces*, London: Sage.
- MAIRAL LACOMA, José Antonio (1993), *La política de desarrollo de las zonas de montaña en el marco de la Comunidad Europea*, Huesca: Diputación de Huesca, Instituto de Estudios Altoaragoneses.
- MOSCOSO, David Jesús (2003), *La montaña y el hombre en los albores del siglo XXI*, Cuarte (Huesca), Editorial Barrabes.
- (2004) “Ser líder ante el Leader. Las dimensiones del desarrollo rural”, *Actualidad Leader. Revista de Desarrollo Rural*, n.º 25, pp. 22-25, septiembre.
- (2005), “Las dimensiones del desarrollo rural y su engranaje en los procesos de desarrollo comarcal de Andalucía”, *Revista de Estudios Regionales*, 73, 79-104.
- ROBBE-GRILLET, Anne-Lise (1984), “El turismo rural en media montaña”, in *Actas I Jornadas Técnicas de Turismo de Nieve y Montaña*, pp.67-84, Madrid, Dirección General de Empresas y Actividades Turísticas.
- RODRÍGUEZ BLANCO, Julián (2003), “Ayer y hoy en la agricultura de montaña. La necesidad de un trato especial”, *Leader. Revista de desarrollo rural*, pp. 20-22, nº 22, diciembre.
- VERDÚ, Vicente (2003), *El estilo del mundo*, Barcelona, Anagrama.