



The Concept of Limit in Geography and the Problem of Territory Development

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The Concept of Limit

The concept of limit has a range of meanings, which are going to be discussed further. It represents the border of a system which comes into contact with other systems. The limit is an extreme, fix value towards which tends the development of a process or the manifestation of a certain characteristic, which are variable. The extreme taken as a limit means the maximum or the minimum values out of a range of data (meteorological or hydrological for example) recorded in a period of time. More close to the concept of limit is the absolute extreme which indicate the maximum and the minimum values ever recorded by a station.

The limit is a concept which has geographical significance, referring to the discontinuity between different natural or social-economical regions (characterised by homogeneity) used mainly in physico-geographical or economico-geographical regionalizing. The limits are linear elements. They represent borders between two areas: rivers, embankments or excavations, extension limits or walls. Limits are taken more as side references than axis of coordinates. Their meaning is to delimitate certain areas with different perceptions. The limit can also be perceived as a geographical discontinuity, as the contact line which marks a break. This discontinuity implies a sudden modification of certain geographical characteristics (climate, types of soil, vegetation, hydrology –the watershed between two hydrographic basins).

Limits can also create psychological isolation or can become some kind of protecting walls between which a bubble space begins to constrain the people. It is a compressed space, a space within which time and space are compressed.

The concept of limit can be represented by several terms which are all comprised in its meaning: the limits of life (the biosphere), the margins, discontinuities, the contact, the threshold slopes, the perimeter, the boundary, the border, the frontier, the barrier, the interface, the green or shatter-belts, the buffer zone etc. This study will further discuss the concept of limit not only as a simple line of demarcation but also as an important transition area between two distinct entities.

Categories of Limits

Natural Limits

We will shortly define more types of limits which will be further described and analyzed in this study.

The limit of the water and the limit of the land are two terms defining the position of the coastline at low tide, respectively at high tide.

The coastline represents the limit, the contact between the water and the land. The low coastlines which have an extended continental shelf and are affected by the tide have different positions at low tide and at high tide.

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The watershed is a line which separates two neighbor hydrographic basins and unites the highest points.

Starting from this line/limit, the slopes and the surface drainage have different directions. There are two kinds of watershed:

- *the superficial watershed* which marks the limits of the hydrographic basin;
- *the underground watershed* which marks the underground hydrographic basin.

The limits of a hydrographic basin can be modified by natural means through stream piracy, tectonic movements, volcanic eruptions or by artificial means.

The climatic limit separates different climatic units and enables the formation of the next type of limit which is strongly determined by the maintaining of the same parameters. .

The limit of permanent snow layer is that beyond which the snows fallen during a year time do not totally melt, only partially, during the warm season. This limit usually superposes the 0° isotherm, being situated at sea level in the Southern Hemisphere starting from the latitude of 62° and at the equator (latitude of 0-3°) at 4400-5200 m, Kenya-Kilimandjaro.

The thermic limits for life represent the minimum and maximum values between which life is possible

The geomorphologic limit means clear contacts between landscape units. Some of them are presented below, by some examples of limits which appear in the landscape and which can be better illustrated by the term "the limits of limits". This means that, inside the landscape every unit has a limit and even the limits have their own limits.

The physico-geographical limit follows the contact between geographical units, established through the interpretation of the limits of the systems' natural components. The **physical limits** for soils, deposits are : **the limit of adherence, the limit of aeration, the limit of flowing, the limit of plasticity** given by the minimum or maximum content of water of a rock, in which it is plastic.

The pedological limit on a horizontal approach separates, on the maps, areas with different types of soil. According to a vertical approach, each layer of soil represents a limit for the upper or lower layers.

The bio-geographic limit refers to bio-geographic units and sub-units, indicating areas with certain bio-geographic characteristics. Such an example is the **the upper limit of the forest** is the line which unites, in mountain regions, the trees which are at least 5 m tall. The height of the trees must be tall enough. This limit appeared as a consequence of the interaction of the geographical factors, which give it a certain feature: climatic, geomorphologic, and anthropic. The climatic feature can be *thermic* (given by the 0° medium annual average isotherm or that of +10° of the warmest month-case when the trees are very small) or *aeolian* (wind)-when the trees have the shape of a flag or standard. The geomorphologic feature appears due to the big slopes (which do not allow the forming of soil and vegetation growth) or due to certain geomorphologic processes (block collapses, avalanche). Man causes the descent of the upper limit of the forest, sometimes even with hundreds of meters, by clearing it. At the limit, because of the big height of the trees, the forest ends suddenly.

The limit as Margin as a transition area is divided into more types:

- *the Glacial Margin*, of a glacier is the contact area between the sector of firm accumulation and the ablation area where the pro-glacier drainage starts;
- *the Mountain Margin* represents the contact between the mountain and a low region and appears as a band with lower slopes than the ones on mountain gradient;
- *the Continental Margin* expresses the area belonging to the continent, situated between the coast line and the bottom of the ocean. It contains more sectors with different characteristics: the continental shelf which continues the coastline, the edge of the shelf, the continental slope which has 10-20 km and the ocean piedmont which makes the contact with the deep-sea plain. It ends with the deep-sea plain and trenches which represent areas of subduction of the continental plates.

The limit as Barrier as limit is divided in more categories:

- *the Biological barrier* is formed of all the natural ecosystems which act as barriers in the extension of the areas plants and animals. This might be illustrated through the example of the forests which represent obstacles in the development of the steppe plants;
- *the Geographical Barrier* refer to natural obstacles such as mountains, rivers, seas,

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oceans which represent a limit in the extension and development of different bio-geographical areas. This might even cause isolation or limitation of the wet air mass circulation;

- *the Coral Barrier or the Coral Reef* appears as extremely long, submerge ridges which is separated from the coastline by deep zones. A relevant example in this respect is the long coral reef situated in the north-eastern part of Australia;
- *the Ice Barrier* is an ice front formed at the edge of the ice-sheet glaciers, which arrive to the coastline and from which the icebergs detach.

The limit as threshold slope can be of more types:

- *the Thalweg swell* is a sector situated higher, on the bottom of the riverbed, which determines the decreasing of the water level and the increasing of the flowing speed. They emphasize the fact that the respective river has not reached an equilibrium/graded profile yet;
- *the Geomorphic threshold* can be described as a critical period in which takes place the transition of a system from equilibrium to lack of equilibrium;
- *the Glacial valley step* is a erosion landform created by mountain glaciers, in front of the glacial cirque or in glacial valleys in front of the exaration depressions.

The threshold expresses the existence of a discontinuity so, the limit can also be a state or condition. The saturation threshold impose the existence of a limit condition, beyond which, the respective phenomenon does not develop anymore.

The limit as Discontinuity appears as a break of the structure and is of several types:

- *the Conrad Discontinuity* appears in the internal structure of the Earth and is situated at approximately 20 km inside the earth crust, between granite-gneiss and basaltic rock structures;
- *the Guttenberg-Wichert Discontinuity* appears in the internal structure of the Earth and is situated at 2900 km depth, between the mantle and the external core;
- *the Lehmann Discontinuity* appears in the internal structure of the Earth, between the external core with gluey substance and the internal core with solid substance and is situated at 5100 km depth;
- *the Mohorovicic Discontinuity* appears in the internal structure of the Earth and is situated between the Earth crust and the mantle, at 30-40 km under continents and 10-12 km under oceans;
- *the Ripetti Discontinuity* appears in the internal structure of the Earth and is situated at 1000 km depth, between the superiour and the inferiour mantle.

The limit as Contact as limit has two types of manifestation:

- *sudden contact* which is represented by a simple line or surface;
- *slow contact* when a transition space develops between the two units.

The limit as Stratigraphic Discordance is a surface which delimitates the contact between two separate strata/layers (old and new ones) through a stratigraphic gap.

Artificial Limits

The limit of the administrative territory is the dividing line of the territory afferent to an administrative unit (county, city, parish). Territorial units have been established.

The limit urban-rural is the area or discontinuous border between city and rural settlement, in which the rural and urban units are mixed, the limit being established in reference to the city.

The limit as belt are limits which have the role to protect certain areas or have a separation role between the civilized, peaceful world and the world of conflicts (usually between E and W). We found two types of belts which are more representative and relevant in this case:

- *green Protection Belt* is a protection belt, usually planted with trees and situated around cities or around special units which require a certain isolation;
- *the so-called shatter-belts* are a consequence of the disputes between the world main political decision-makers, which transformed the states forming part of these shatter-belts into competition based systems and leded to local conflicts and wars (Bodocan, 1991). These shatter-belts are characterised by strategic, national,

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religious, political and economical complexity and are the following: Panama-Nicaragua-Salvador- Honduras-Guatemala-Cuba (in central America); Cyprus-Israel-Lebanon-Iraq-Iran-Afghanistan-Pakistan (the Persian Gulf) in Middle East; North and South Korea- North and South Vietnam- Kampuchia-Birmania-Taiwan.

The limit as Barrier can also appear in territory as an obstacle, usually created by man. This obstacle can be either deliberately built as to stop social, economical or other kind of activities or not intended and occurred as an accident.

The limit as Border concept will be presented through two systems of classification:

- according to their origins- Genetic Borders:
 - *physical Borders* according to the geographic- physical elements;
 - *ethnic Borders* which separate populations different from an ethnical point of view;
 - *historical Borders* which follow certain older lines of political separation ;
 - *geometrical Borders* represented by geometrical lines which follow geographical coordinates.
- according the cultural relations - Functional Borders:
 - *antecedent Borders* which precede a range of settlements established after deciding the border line. As its denomination states, these kind of borders were decided before other social-political decisions. Its appearance is linked to the first phases of the cultural environment development, when territories were not populated yet. This is the case of large states with large territories, such as the USA or Canada;
 - *subsequent Borders* which are decided after the appearance of settlements in the area. It is established after the respective region has already been inhabited and it corresponds to certain cultural, economical or natural divisions. As concerning the cultural divisions this kind of border separates two ethnical groups and it is called *consequent border*. Natural divisions refer to rivers (the Danube), mountains as a natural barrier/limit. A relevant case in this respect is the territory of the ex Austro-Hungarian Empire which was limited by such borders. When borders are set regardless these matters, they are called *discordant (supra-imposed) limits*. *The supra-imposed border* is established after war, showing a great discordance between its results and the cultural landscape. There are some typical examples of this type of border in the world: the border between Romania, Hungary, Moldavia, Ukraine, Yugoslavia or the border between Finland and Russia etc;
 - *the Relic Border* represents the case when a border has been moved, with no present political function, but leaving behind a series of anthropic differences in the cultural landscape, in the infrastructure and architecture.

The limit as base line is used to delimitate maritime border areas. It actually represents the line of the lowest waters at the lowest tides, as a multi-annual average, from which all the aquatic areas until the land are considered internal waters.

Sometimes, these lines can be straight and can be locally found at river mouths or at gulf openings. The straight base lines can also be found at a regional level when the shores present many inflexions (fjords) or are unstable.

The limit as Frontier according to certain specific elements characteristic for the state we can distinguish:

- *terrestrial Frontiers*;
- *fluvial Frontiers* which separate in two the waters of a river. For the non-navigable ones this line is the thalweg and for the navigable ones, the median line;
- *the Maritime Frontiers* means the external limit of the territorial waters;
- *the Aerial Frontiers* are lines which start from the terrestrial or aquatic ones until the lower limit of the cosmic space. The height until which the aerial frontiers can reach has not been established yet, as the characteristics of the Atmosphere vary.

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The Function of Limits

It is very important to establish the functions of limits, how they appear in territory and their ways of manifestation, role and effects at geographical, social, political, economic, cultural and psychological level.

Usually the best limit, as border, is the one which has the less functions and which can be found between states sharing common features from all points of view.

The Function of Protection

Limits though can constitute ways of defending, of protecting a territory from outsider attacks. A relevant example in this respect would be the "Iron Curtain" between the two Germanies or the enormous 4000 km wall built by Marocco in Occidental Sahara. This kind of barriers have been constructed since the Antiquity: the famous wall built by Adrian which represented the northern limit of the Roman Empire or the Great Chinese Wall (2000 km).

Protection though, can be understood also in other ways.

The green protection belts mainly have the role of protection. They can also have other functions such as: forest, productive plantation, orchard or cemetery. Sometimes, green belts are used to hide huge and non-aesthetic industrial plants, so to maintain the aesthetics of the landscape. This belt has an important role in improving the recreation areas, maintaining the agricultural lands, sandy soils, dam lakes, irrigation canals against erosion, evaporation or strong winds and representing a limit for the neighbouring urban areas. Seen from another point of view, the green belts influence the extension of the urban area and maintain historical characteristics.

The Psychological Function

The limits might become psychological barriers when peoples are deprived of their natural rights to circulate. This happened mostly between the developed world/western and eastern Europe, where the impossibility of traveling without restrictions lead to a kind of frustration feeling and a complex for the eastern Europeans who still needed a visa in order to travel abroad. Psychologically this psychological borders created an isolation and sometimes, even feelings of inferiority. Usually, when the capital cities are situated very far, the population living close to the border prefers to concentrate on the local, border - commercial activities.

Another psychological function of the limits would be creating the so-called bubble spaces which are samples of compressed spaces. This space is particular to every person and delimitates a personal area. It is a perception of the "*place*", a perception to the "*actors*" ("*activities*") inside the "*place*". The bubble space has a flexible size and may change size according to content/pressure.

The bubble space is a limited space like the walls around in a library or the mass-media, a space which does not allow contact with the outside. Its limits are impenetrable. The bubble space is a kind of personal space around a person. Its shape is not determined. It is said that a person better tolerates another subject on it sides than at its front or back. This space has more a psychological meaning, being connected to the relations between people.

Human Interaction Perception

The Commercial/Economical Function

The commercial aspect of limits refers to the border tax system imposed to the in-comers. Sometimes they can benefit of a leasing cross-border. This is a way of protecting the economy but also and obstacle if the taxes perceived are too high. The borders between developed countries like those of the European Union are almost invisible and very transparent enabling a good circulation of goods, services and people over their borders and a good

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common market. These limits still exist when it comes to national identity. This is a good example, showing that limiting countries by borders is not needed anymore in countries where people understand the concept of a free market where everybody contributes and sticks to his tasks.

The maritime borders have mostly an economical function as the maritime areas hold substantial resources such as oil and mineral gasses, fish, water plants, tide and wave energy. These resources have always been a subject of dispute among states and made border setting a very difficult process. These limits established in the waters are meant to: limit uncontrolled navigation, raise the security responsibilities of the states, rationally exploit the natural resources without polluting the water.

Political/Administrative Function

The border is also part of the concept of limit as it represents a line of demarcation which establishes the limits between two or more political units, such as states or administrative areas. It is actually an imaginary vertical front between sovereign states which intersects the land surface. It is continued towards the center of the Earth according to international agreements, which gives the right of using the underground resources. The extension in the air space has not been established yet because of the difficulties in determining the limit of height to which it is valid. *The concept of border* has known a historical evolution with. There exist four main stages in establishing a border: *the allocation* (the general political decision upon the division of a territory); *delimitation* (the selection of a specific border inside an area allocated in this respect); *demarcation* (marking the border with border observation posts, pickets); *administration* (activities intended to maintain as operative the respective border).

The geographical limits are not obvious. Usually, there exist large transition areas which separate a well defined territory from another one characterised by other aspects. The decreasing of the dominant character towards the margins makes it even more difficult to establish the borders. Therefore, there are some special ways of setting the limits between regions. The straight borders are arbitrary limits needed for realizing regional maps. They are established according to certain reductions of the characteristics.

The frontier is a separation or contact *area* between two states or cultures which determines the territory in which both can be sovereign and within which, borders are established. They are established by treaties and conventions or internal laws.

This term can also comprise the spatial limit of a certain ethnical group. There are lines or limit spaces in which the process of ethnical formation of a people took place. These limits mark the area which belongs to an ethnical group as a consequence of a long historical process. These ethnical limits can be situated beyond the borders and frontiers because of the ethnical extension.

The barrier can also be added as being part of the concept of limit as it represents a kind of limit which delimitates two spaces and interdicts, most of the times, access from one to the other. So, the barrier is more an obstacle limit, a place where taxes might be perceived in order to enter the space beyond it. As in urban context, the barrier might be: a (green)hedge, a water ditch, a wall etc.).

The perimeter is another limit which appears as the line which limits the construction area belonging to a settlement. Sometimes, it coincides with the administrative limit of the town. The construction perimeter is a conventional line having within its limits all categories of constructions and facilities.

The boundary is a term usually used at a micro-scale level in order to determine the limit between villages or between the precincts and the land of the same village.

The limit urban-rural. From an ecological point of view the limit can be assimilated to an area of invasion in which the density of the population grows rapidly and the value of the land is rising. The interior limit (the urban limit) is characterised by an area of advanced transition from the rural utilities to the urban ones. The exterior limit (the rural limit) is a surface where the ways of using the agricultural land are correlated with the infiltration of urban elements.

Talking about the limit between urban and rural. **The Urban Margin** is the area

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characterised by functional changes, claimed because of its use. It passes from rural use to urban use.

The buffer zone as limit spaces between urban and rural are characterised by fast changes of the social, demographic, economical, political, cultural and land use. These spaces are intermediate or transition spaces

In modern terms appeared as a new direction in urban planning. This kind of limits are based on the green zone concept which is meant to reduce the excessive extension of big cities. These measures are more characteristic in The Netherlands where there have been created special buffer zones between the main urban agglomerations. Building activities are forbidden in that area.

Function of Delimitation Between Different Geographical Units

The limits are first the lines which define life, the **biosphere**. The upper limit of the biosphere is situated at approximately 30 km height with the ozone screen. The lower limit goes down to the lowest part of the sedimentary crust. The limits of biosphere are not precise though, as life can reach unsuspected spaces through a series of tectonic processes which might perturb the atmosphere (Mac, I. 2000).

A complex structure with limits is also the geographical cover. The high atmosphere and the lithosphere have the role of protecting it. The low limit must be understood as the depth where combinations characteristic to the geospheric cover still occur. The superior limit, considered as the ozone belt, has a very important role which influences the life processes on Earth, by maintaining the ultraviolet radiation.

The concept of limit can be expressed through the term of **margin**, as the place where a homogenous area ends. This concept represents a transition band situated at the margins of an area, which enables passing towards other different areas.

The contact represents the limit between two systems. These two systems can be air masses geographical units, landforms, geological structures or any other two components of the landscape.

The concept of limit as discontinuity is present in the internal structure of the Earth and resulted as a consequence of the sudden changes of speed and direction of the seismic waves. It means a break in the development of certain processes and phenomena and forms though a horizontal discontinuity or it forms a vertical discontinuity when talking about an established horizontal hierarchy. Many times reduced to the meaning of line, the limit sets an order which is not only spatial but also temporal. The term limit is used in different contexts but means always the line between two spatial entities.

The threshold slope can be considered a kind of limit because it functions as a limit between two different stages/ states of the landscape system. It is a natural landscape level/step, marked by a layer of hard rocks or imposed by man, as an accumulation dam. It is important in the dynamics of the landscape.

We can talk about **the interface** which can also be considered a limit, more closed to the term of frontier as it represents the contact between two units of landscape, two geographical units or soil horizons etc., within which all the processes happen on both sides. The visible landscape subsystem, for example, is the interface between the objective landscape (objects) and the subjective landscape (images as a result of perception). There are interfaces between the coast line and the continental shelf, the interface between the forest and the plain

The Problem of Territory Development

The process of territory development is a very complex one, being characterised by growth and several quality transformations towards a superior stage. This process imposes a change of the previous state, so a change of the limits, a reestablishment of the limits of the main geographical or social-economical units.

Territory development means a system of coordinated measures referring to the important investments, regional or multi-regional infrastructure development. Economical,

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technical and geographical factors are decisive in this process. The process of territory development is realised on a country or regional scale, having a centralised character as concerning decision making which takes place at a central level as it is made by the state. It is mainly concerned with high level communication infrastructure needing important investments from state funds and co-financing.

Developing the territory means reducing the existing gap between development levels of different regions, creating structural means and national/community economical policies in order to reduce this gap and analyzing statistically the territory.

Territory development means re-delimitation of space, re-establishment of limits. New territories are added beyond the old limits by natural or artificial means.

Territory development by natural means. The limits can be modified by meandering, by the modification of the thalweg of a river, by the development of deltas towards the sea, by the formation of islands in the coastline area etc.

Territory development by artificial means. These artificial means are the human actions. They are best illustrated by examples such as: the polders system in the Netherlands which actually means creating new territories or creating artificial islands.

The limit between sea and land has been surpassed by the ingenious creation of the poldering system in The Netherlands and Great Britain. The polder system is a very old term which appeared in the Netherlands defining a maritime field gained from the sea through dikes and surface draining. Polders are extremely important for agriculture and can also be used as a means of developing communication infrastructure through the draining channels which connect regions.

The territory development must be done according to certain plans which reorganise the territorial structures and the settlements, provide them with different equipments, in order insure the optimum conditions for human activities and a rising of welfare. These plans also comprise all the investments and organising measures created for social-economical development of a territory.

The territory development must be realised according to the sustainable development laws which proved that development and progress can be achieved protecting the resources. Development has as a main purpose a sustainable individual/community growth which would lead to higher incomes. Development programmes take time as their objective is the changing of the main factors: institutions, possibilities, human resources. All these actions must be realised in a strategic manner, finding the best steps in the process: identification of the practical alternatives for solving problems, establishing the possible obstacles of development, proposing solutions to surpass the obstacles, finding the best ways to act on long and short term (Vincze M. 2000).

There must be established a parallel between the economical growth and the environment protection as the rural problem is a very complex one which can not be solved through short term programmes. The rural space must be subject to several long term, sustainable programmes which would improve the institutional and human conditions through productivity and creativity growth. Rural development contains all the measures that have to be taken in order to improve the life standards of the rural population, to maintain the landscape and the cultural features according to the characteristics of the respective region.

The development programmes are usually very complex, containing measures for developing the infrastructure, small industry, education, agriculture, tourism, employment, and protecting the environment. Rural development, though, focuses on a certain local aspect of the territory development and represents finally a part of it, aiming to adapt in a sustainable way the rural spaces to certain standards required by the modern society. There is a very strong connection between territory development and rural development as by rural space we understand the integrated periphery which must be developed in the framework of the territory development.

More than half of the area of the European Union is rural. The process of enlargement towards the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, will lead to the growth of this area. There are huge challenges facing rural areas in the candidate countries, including nature conservation (e.g. implementation of Natura 2000, re-structuring of landscapes to provide different services, such as flood protection, etc.) and at the same time a huge need for development. Implementation of Natura 2000 will not work unless it is rooted in policies and at least passively

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supported by people living in these areas.

Effective implementation of the legislation concerning the environment conservation, to the candidate countries, is a central strategy for ensuring preservation of the natural wealth. Nature legislation must be implemented from the first day of accession. This issue must be supported by the integration of environmental concerns in all relevant sector policies: agriculture, transportation, and rural development. Communication about the new conservation network will also be essential as there are areas where there is much to learn from the experience of the existing EU member states.

The most important role of farmers has always been maintaining regional, cultural landscapes and farming has played an important role in preserving nature. The rural area and agriculture are the key to maintaining bio-diversity.

The traditional agricultural practices developed over centuries, having a self-sustained character. These traditional methods are against much fertilisers and chemicals and serve to enhance landscapes and the natural environment.

Traditionally farmed landscapes of cultivated fields, wood pastures, permanent pastures, meadows and orchards are often now the only suitable environment left, to which a series of rare species are adapted. Agriculture also plays an important role in maintaining the socio-economic and cultural features of our rural areas. It produces social and cultural benefits and a healthy environment that contributes to the overall wealth of our regions.

However, intensive farming can also represent a significant threat to nature. Agricultural land from less competitive areas is often abandoned in the benefit of the more profitable areas which are intensively exploited causing pollution. The environment is strongly affected by both kinds of development, causing negative effects and leading to the loss of ecologically valuable ecosystems and to an increasing level of standardisation of the agricultural landscape.

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has been contributing to these problems. Efforts must be made to bring about a radical reform of the CAP, to transform it into a policy that supports sustainable rural development rather than intensive agricultural production.

By the European community initiative there have been created more types of programmes which lead to a better territory development: Interreg, Urban, Leader+, Equal. **Interreg** is a programme created on interregional transnational basis, aiming for a sustainable development of the whole community space. **Urban** has as a main objective destroying the economical and social crisis of cities and their sustainable reconstruction. **Equal** developed a transnational collaboration with the purpose of eradicating discrimination in labour market. **Leader+** deals with rural development.

There are some major steps in the fulfillment of a sustainable development. From an economical point of view it is important to distribute more rationally the resources and to put a stronger accent on the quality of production. From a social point of view, sustainable development means reducing the poverty by providing the means to assure the essential human needs for people and also controlling the demographic phenomena.

From an ecological point of view sustainable development promotes the rational use of resources and environment protection in order to reduce the risks and the great negative impact that the economical activities have upon it. The political perspective of sustainable development proposes a better state organization through decentralizing and an increase in the national and international decision-making process. All these sustainable strategies though, are different from country to country due to the local situation, development conditions and factors.

There is a conflict between economic growth, as it is dealt with today and environmental protection. This phenomenon is more clearly represented in parts of the developing world. Growing poverty and increasing the degradation of the environment are predicted to affect many developing countries in the future ... Europe, as a major trading bloc, investor and supporter could play a leading role in finding ways to reconcile development and environmental sustainability.

Conclusion

The concept of limits must be seen as a flexible and transparent concept enabling transformation and change of shape of certain geographical units. Be it a border or a margin,

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threshold slope or discontinuity, the limit is always prone to development and extension. This development process creates the limits of the ex limits and so on, being a permanent and progressive process. This process must be realised in such a way as to maintain a territorial equilibrium and its sustainability.

Programmes must be created according to some laws of land development, otherwise they may affect health when human ecology is not adequately included in the economical planning.

Then the idea of sustainable development was brought about. It was established that the needs and sustainability vary according to the values and circumstances of individuals and social groups. Sustainable development is a process through which society aims to improve quality of life and enhance the quality of the environment.

Having a great diversity of the environmental, social and economic conditions in the rural areas, sustainable development must recognise the diversity of historic, environmental, economic, social and cultural conditions. The most important issue of sustainable development is the integration of environmental, social and economic aspects of life. It is very important the way these aspects intermingle in order to complete the development process. These connections, have been largely ignored in the past because of the sector-like approach to development and the division of economic, environmental and social policy but this segmented view leads to economic development and diverse environment.

The development of limits, so a sustainable territory development should aim therefore, to understand and exploit in a sustainable way the connections between the social, economical and environmental potential of areas through a new holistic approach to development and land use planning.

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