You are cordially invited to a public lecture by the Department of Environmental Sciences and Policy on

Small is beautiful: LEADER contribution to European Entrepreneurship—an English perspective

By

Dr Jessica Sellick

Date: Tuesday, October 22, 15:00
Place: CEU, Nador 13, room 002

Abstract: The European Union (EU) Rural Development Regulations (RDR) provide the blueprint for EU rural development policy. The Regulation supports rural areas in a number of ways which recognise the connections between agricultural and economic development, environmental stewardship and community sustainability.

The RDR is structured around four Axes: (1) improving the competitiveness of the farming and forestry sectors; (2) improving the environment and the countryside; (3) rural quality of life and diversification of the rural economy; and (4) the LEADER approach.

LEADER stands for ‘links between the rural economy and development actions’ and is a “bottom up” community led approach to rural development. It has been operating across Europe since 1991, providing grants for farmers, foresters, businesses and community groups. Now in its fourth programming period (2007-2013), LEADER covers some 2,200 rural territories in 27 Member States.

The paper will describe the background and general characteristics of LEADER. This will include a consideration of: how the programme has operated in England; the role of regional organisations in managing the programme and the role of local people in writing strategies to decide how best to allocate funding. Three examples will demonstrate how LEADER has supported businesses: (i) Lakes Free Range Egg Company supply chain initiative, (ii) agglomeration effects of investment in Cumbria Woodlands, and (iii) Dales Apprenticeship/Training Scheme.

Taken as a collective, the paper will illuminate the role that LEADER plays in neo-endogenous growth; emphasising not only how economic and business development needs are embedded in the cal strategies but also how programme success depends upon the participation of these local actors.

Jessica Sellick is director at Rose Regeneration in the UK. She has 10 years of experience in economic development and enterprise issues. At Rose Regeneration she undertakes projects on behalf of the European Commission, central and local government, businesses, charities and community groups. She recently completed a project for the Royal Agricultural Society of England (RASE) describing how ‘Farmer Networks’ support entrepreneurial producers to grow the rural economy.