The LAS approach: a scheme for a sustainable local development of Southern countries rural areas?

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Paper prepared for the 116th EAAE Seminar "SPATIAL DYNAMICS IN AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS: IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND CONSUMER WELFARE".

Parma (Italy)
October 27th -30th, 2010

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Abstract - LAS (Localised Agri-food Systems) approach has been viewed until now as either an analysis of a variety of local production system or an anthropological vision of the links between food and places. Although these approaches are relevant, they prove sometimes hard to differentiate themselves of close concepts such as Local production systems. This paper intends to assess in what measure LAS approach can be redefined as an approach of rural development processes, which could be the basis of a rural development policy.

If LAS's are to be considered as the basis of a rural development path, LAS approach must be cast in the current debate on diversification of rural activities. Drawing on that, LAS can be the basis of a rural development policy, but only fit to some places, with a very specific “residential” relationship with the overall economic environment.

Key-words - LAS, rural development, new rurality, Sustainable rural livelihoods, residential economy.

INTRODUCTION

Localized Agri-food Systems (LAS from now on) approach, which popped up in late 90's, is at first sight rather close to the cluster, or local productive system, one, as it refers to geographical concentrations of specialized farms, food-processing units, distribution networks, private of public entities in a determined place. Nevertheless some contributions (Muchnik et alii, 2007; Requier-Desjardins, 2010) have tried to identify LAS specificity by underlining particularly two elements.

– LAS relationship with agriculture and cattle-raising, with means relationship with living resources;

– Food consumption status, characterized by proximity between the consumer and the product, hence the importance of qualification processes, in particular those based on geographical origin and reference to place.

These characteristics entail a specific link between LAS and place, less contingent than in the case of clusters, going further than the simple effect of geographical proximity and leading some contributors to this literature to put the stress more on food-place relationship and less on LAS structure as a production system.

Nevertheless, at an analytical level, methodologies used for cluster analysis (e.g; network analysis to grasp their ability to innovate and diffuse knowledge, see Giuliani, 2007) are relevant in the case of LAS and the overlapping of the two concepts can make the specificity of LAS approach rather fuzzy.

There is however another way to state LAS approach specificity: we can contemplate it as a scheme for a policy of sustainable local development in rural areas. Such a focus appears particularly in the debate on LAS approach carried on in Southern countries, for example Latin America (see REDSIAL network in Mexico for example).

The purpose of this paper is to elaborate on this dimension of LAS approach, considering that it could lead to rural development public policy proposals.

It will rest on the following assumptions.

– First we cannot consider as an a priori statement, except in a very ideological way, that LAS represent a model of local sustainable development.

– Consequently we have to put up LAS analytical approach in the framework of the debate on the meaning of development and on the forms rural development takes, particularly but not exclusively in Southern countries.

As LAS are about some food-processing activities
which are not agricultural and can be performed off-farm, we shall particularly stress the on-going debate on the diversification of activities in rural areas and the weight of rural non farm (RNF) activities.

The paper will thus contemplate the following points.

- It will make a survey of the current debate on rural development and the trend towards “new rurality”
- It will present recent theoretical approaches, able to deal with the current forms of rural development
- Finally it will integrate LAS approach in this debate, in order to characterize it as a proposal for rural development.

I - AN ASSESSMENT OF THE DEBATE ON RURALITY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT.

Development refers to two kinds of definition:

- First development can be characterized as a dynamic process of structural change of economies, engaged in a trend of growth of their per capita gross national product or income. This process is expected therefore to achieve welfare.

- Second development can be characterized as a goal to be reached by the process and this goal will be defined by a satisfying level of welfare.

If the first approach refers to the seminal contributions on development economics, the second one seems to be currently dominant for at least two reasons:

- First, the stress on development processes was related to the design of national development strategies and models, rather “inward-looking”, typical of pre-adjustment and pre-globalization era. As national development paths and “models” are no longer very relevant as research topics, structural change is to-day cast in a global framework, which can be not specific to developing countries, such as the focus on “sustainable development”.

- Under-development to-day is defined by the lack of welfare for a significant part of the population in some countries, in short the incidence of poverty, and the approach of welfare and poverty has been transformed by the reference made to “capacities” and “good life”, in reference to Sen’s work (Sen, 1998), integrating basic liberties as a component of development. As an illustration of that we can recall that Millenium goals stated by the UN deal with the abatement of the different forms of poverty of capacities.

However the reference to development as a process of structural change is not entirely ruled out by this new context. Even if the goal is not any more the construction of a coherent national economy in terms of inter-industrial relationship, national strategies do target the attraction of FDI which might boost growth and upgrade the productive capacity of the country, and this attraction is based on specificities in terms of resources, skills, organization, etc. If they can be identified at the national level, it has particularly a great relevance at the local level. The localized nature of development processes is thus more conspicuous at a place level than at a national strategy level.

This is particularly obvious when taking into consideration literature on clusters and local productive systems, of which LAS literature can be considered a part. This is also obvious when taking into consideration the debate on rural development and the emergence of a “new rurality”.

Since the nineties, an array of contributions has stressed the weight of rural non farm activities and employment in the income of rural households: according to FAO (1998), 50% or rural income comes from non farm activities, the percentage being higher in Asia and Latin America (around 60%) but lower, though not minimal, in Sub-Saharan Africa (between 30% and 40%). More recent contributions confirm these figures. Davis and aliii (2009), gathering data from RIGA data base over a subset of countries of Eastern Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa find that in all countries but Vietnam and African countries, the share of off-farm income is above 50%. Moreover, there is a positive relationship between GDP per capita and the share of off-farm income, which tends to show that this characteristic can be seen as an indicator of development.
Some caveats are to be underlined in this respect: off farm activities can be agricultural, when they refer to wage-earning activities in capitalist farms or plantations; they can also be food-processing activities, as in the case of rural agro-industry, and thus keep a strong link with agriculture.

But these sources of income can also stem from activities more disconnected from agricultural production, such as handicraft, tourism, industrial wage-earning, commerce and trade, many of these activities being linked to migration, internal or international. World Development Report 2008, the first one to be dedicated to agricultural issues since the eighties, stresses that the diversification of sources of income, namely wage-earning and migration, are ways out of poverty for small-holder, family-based agriculture.

Analyses of this trend are contrasted. Some (Davis et alii, 2009) argue that agriculture remains the cornerstone of the set of rural activities, as diversification occurs mainly to cope with the uncertainties of agricultural production and income; they also stress the difference to be made at the meso level or rural economy and at the micro level of rural households: diversification of households at a meso level, some of them quitting agriculture, is not the same thing that diversification of activities within households at a micro level. Others (Rigg, 2006, drawing mainly from Asian case-studies) argue that given the weight of off-farm activities for rural households, agricultural development and rural development can be decoupled with the corresponding decoupling of indicators. Agricultural development would no longer be a way to mitigate poverty in rural areas. This can even lead to considering that migration is not an alternative to rural development, but development in its own right (Pritchett, 2008).

In any case this trend, which regards Southern as well as Northern countries, leads to the consideration of a “new rurality” which cannot be reduced to agricultural production only. This is all the way more pronounced when we take under consideration the fact that new forms of agricultural production emerge, such as “network companies” (Clasadonte, 2008), linked to financial capital and fueled by “knowledge economics”, where land is just considered an input among others and main actors are more agricultural entrepreneurs than farmers (Hernandez, 2008). This contributes to a further disconnection between agriculture and rural places, as agricultural production units are not any longer defined by their land tenure.

These debates on new rurality also lead to a redefinition of what is a rural place. Statistical definitions, based on density, varies across countries. But the issue is not only statistical: diversification of sources of income in rural households can refer to employment opportunities in nearby rural but also urban areas, even, in the case of migration, in faraway places. Likewise, incomes paid by new forms of entrepreneurial agriculture, such as rents, can accrue to urban areas. A particular attention has to be directed towards small towns within rural areas.

The complexity of this issue of new forms of rural development has called for new theoretical approaches

II – NEW FORMS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT: SOME THEORETICAL APPROACHES.

As far as theoretical analysis is concerned, two theoretical contributions have greatly changed the vision of the link between rural development and agricultural development:

- In terms of supply and activities, at the microeconomic level, sustainable rural livelihoods approach stressing risk aversion of rural households.
- In terms of demand and economic circle, at a more mesoeconomic level, residential economy and base theory.

The first one refers to a vision of diversification of activities at the household level, the second one takes it more at a rural economy level.3

1 Rigg (2006) states that in many Asian rural areas, people does not anticipate their income of agriculture; Pritchett (2009) considers that migration is a component of development, income per national being higher of income per resident.
2 In France only 15% of rural active population works in agriculture.
3 Davis and alii note that the assessment of the diversification of activities might not be the same at both levels.
II-1: The sustainable rural livelihoods approach

This approach can be considered as an offspring of the microeconomic producer-consumer modeling of agricultural households based on “New Household Economics” achievements from the sixties to the eighties (Ellis, 1993). Nevertheless these models were basically geared towards the discussion of microeconomic internal equilibrium of the household and its relation with general equilibrium and response to market incentives.

The SRL approach (Ellis and Freeman, 2005) is more geared towards the appraising of long term sustainability of rural households and its link with general sustainability of rural areas. Households are thus defined by their assets, or capital, (productive, human, financial, natural and social) and their behavior is viewed as the management of a portfolio of opportunities to mitigate risk and ensure the resilience of the household.

In this approach the various activities open to households are seen as alternatives. The joint production effects are not emphasized. Thus an approach in terms of productive systems could be useful to characterize the supply side of rural activities.

II-2: The residential economy approach

This approach can be considered as the transfer at place or territory level of the Keynesian approach of export multiplier.4 Every place gets a certain level of income from the outside, its “exportation”, which fuels through the local demand this level income entails, a series of “domestic” activities. Consequently it is always possible to make a distinction between territorial economic basis and activities resulting from the multiplier effect of this basis. It has to be stressed that these forward linkages are only demand linkages (and not for example spillover effects at the productive level).

According to Davezies (2008) four bases can be identified:

- A productive basis which refers to local productive activities “exporting” outside the territory and distributing income to local people such as wages, interests or profits.
- A residential basis which refers to the existence of local residents which enjoy incomes created and distributed in other territories. This can encompass for example the residence of retirees or the residence of professionals who work outside the territory, physically or even virtually through CIT. This can also encompass local tourism income5.
- A public basis which refers to the implementation of public administration and services and to the distribution of wages and subsidies it entails.
- A transfer basis which can be linked to various forms of transfer made by outside agents to local agents, which encompass social security transfer or migrants remittances.

Obviously the main distinction is between the productive basis and the three others as they can overlap: what is the frontier between residence and part-time migration for example? In the case of the productive basis, incomes are generated locally through production.; in the other cases incomes are generated outside but distributed locally.

This approach support an economic model of new rurality. Rural development in many places would be fueled by residential economy at large, meaning the multiplier effect of income transfer from outside. This would concern primarily rural areas rather far from urban economic centers and main transportation links, but boasting “amenities” likely to attract residents or tourists.

This approach has been mainly used for the characterization of the local development of some rural places in Europe (for example in France) which can register better incomes per capita that urban areas concentrating industrial activities. It allows therefore to characterize a new rurality where agriculture, namely the productive basis, is no longer dominant as the basis of the local economy.

As far as southern countries are concerned, this

4 It has to be reminded that Lucas (1988) stresses that the mechanisms of economic development are not essentially different at a national level or at a more reduced geographical scale.

5 As tourists are not residents, the term “presencial economy” is sometimes used.
move is still incipient, although some areas attract tourism and even urban residents. But the basis of a residential economy in these countries rests often on incomes linked to migration, either incomes from part-time migration to urban areas or remittances of international migrants (Requier-Desjardins, 2009).

Residential economy is not only about rural areas: some cities, can also attract residents and income generated elsewhere. In some cases income generated in agriculture can be distributed to urban residents, especially in small towns: this could be the case of “reverse tenancy” when small-holders rent their land to entrepreneurial agriculture (the case of sowing pools in Argentina).

These two approaches offer a new vision or rural development: if development is the abatement of poverty, it does not rest any more only on agricultural income; if it is a specialization path, it is not necessarily geared towards agriculture or even agro-food.

Some crucial issues for the characterization of rural development paths can be identified in these approaches.

- The role of agriculture in the set of activities.

As we have seen, some contributions to the debate (Rigg, 2006) take a very radical view, claiming that the abatement of rural poverty and rural welfare in developing countries is no longer depending on agricultural development, given the diversification of activities. Other claim that, though it may represent to-day less than 50% of the income of rural households, agriculture remain at the center of rural livelihoods, given the relationship it maintains with other sources of income, which are often viewed as means of tackling the variability of agricultural incomes, and which have a productive synergy with agriculture.

- The relationship with urban areas:

Urban residents not only demand food products but enjoy a set of rural amenities either as tourists or residents. Place qualification can contribute to competitiveness of some agricultural products and attract residents and tourism. Products with some form of Geographical, organic or fair trade Indication are mainly geared towards urban markets, including in Southern countries. But this mechanism rests on the capacity of income generation in urban areas to be channeled towards these forms of consumption. This goes back, particularly in Southern countries, to food consumption patterns linked to the existence of an urban “upper-middle” class. It goes back also to the capacity of rural areas to attract income generated in urban areas towards these forms of consumption thus building a local economic circle.

- The role of entrepreneurial agriculture in the shaping of income generation.

New forms of entrepreneurial agriculture emerge from subcontracting agriculture to sowing pools and network companies (like in Argentina), with intervention of financial actors and a decoupling of agricultural production from farm structure, farmers being merely reduced in some cases to the status of small rent-seekers. Agriculture is akin to other sectors, knowledge, technological package and vertical integration being the main tenets of this new organization. Diversification of activities, including towards food-processing concerns households whose link with agricultural production consists mainly in the perception of an income. Residence in rural areas is no longer a prerequisite to enjoy this kind of income. Diversification stemming from a multiplier effect of this income might occur in nearby urban areas.

All these issues must be taken in consideration while assessing the characterization of LAS approach as a rural development proposal.

III - LAS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT.

The interrogation on the contribution of LAS to rural development stems primarily from the fact that they represent rural income generating activities, although the main point is to integrate them in a specific category: they probably appear in some cases within on-farm activities, especially in the case of rural agro-industry performed at farm level, but can be integrated in off-farm manufacturing activities, especially in the case of the most developed and complex types of LAS where there exist processing units managed by actors who are not primarily farmers.

Whatever their classification, as Davis and alii (2009) put it, their analysis can contribute to the design of adequate rural development policy.

We have identified three forms of articulation...
between activities carried on in rural places and thus defining their development path.

- The microeconomic link which stems from the portfolio management of activities by rural households (Sustainable Rural Livelihoods approach for example): in this respect rural agro-industry is a way to cope with the low level of agricultural income, as it was stated at the beginning in Latin America.

- The identification of an economic circuit, bequested from macroeconomics, but here applied at a meso-economic level: this circuit stems from the distinction between an economic basis fueling a demand, at its origin, which can be residential, and domestic activities, linked to the basis by a multiplier effect. It is relevant to recall that territorial qualification of products is based on demand as it is stated by the « basket of goods » approach and that this demand is fueled very much by external incomes.

- The intertwining of activities within local productive systems and for that reason within local agri-food systems is therefore adamant to assess their ability to constitute a proposal for rural development policy. It can only be based on the existence of synergies between activities. Some of these synergies can be contemplated: the link between rural agro-industry and agriculture, the link between territorial qualification, agro-food and tourism, the link between migration and LAS. But the synergy can also derive from skills and competences of people which can be invested in the various activities.

In order to be considered as a proposal for a rural development strategy, LAS approach must represent the quest for a determined relationship between these three forms of articulation, as the convergence of these three mechanisms should ensure the resilience of the system and the associated development path. Activities covered by LAS must be:

- An effective way to ensure sustainable livelihoods, meaning that they are part of the portfolio, not having been crowded out by others activities, and they are able to mitigate risks associated with the other activities of the portfolio. (1)

- They must either be part of a productive basis or be effectively impulsed by the multiplier effect of an income distribution at the local level. Clearly the issue of market access of LAS products and the issue of the link with tourism is raised. (2)

- They must develop productive and knowledge links between themselves but also with other activities present on the territory. Territorial qualification could be a central tenet of that as well as the existence of networks. (3)

III-1 : The household level and the poverty and vulnerability dimension

Davis and alii (2009) have stressed the difference between diversification of activities in a rural area at the meso level and diversification of activities at the micro level of households: only the second one exhibit a capacity for households to mitigate poverty and vulnerability through a portfolio management of this set of activities.

This was the case in the first approach of rural agro-industry (Boucher and Riveros, 1989) when it was seen mainly as a way for smallholders to grasp more value added by climbing down the processing chain of agricultural products. It was genuine diversification of activities at farm level. But, as LAS case-studies developed the picture changed. In many cases LAS production units are no longer embedded in farms, but are independent units, sometimes operated by people with no link with agriculture. This is particularly the case when we deal with LAS able to compete on non-local markets. This evolution entails an heterogeneity of actors involved in LAS, some of them being in a position to control the system and grasp most of the value added linked with it. Networks which constitutes the underlying skeleton of LAS present nodes through which goes primarily the information about market opportunities, technology, new
products etc and particularly which manage the relationship with external actors. LAS literature provides a number of examples:

- In Colombia (Requier-Desjardins, Rodriguez-Borray, 2004), trapiches (sugar cane processing units) are the main actors of “panela” LAS.
- In Cajamarca (Boucher, 2004) urban cheese-mongers of Cajamarca are at the center of the system. They control networks of milk suppliers and manage to control the market in Cajamarca and the entry to supermarkets.
- In Turrialba (Blanco, Riveros). The two groups of processing units, small ones integrated to farms and “industrial” ones have very different strategies regarding the qualification of turrialba cheese.

The result of that is that food-processing activities might well not allow small-holders at the microeconomic level able to allow them to mitigate risk and improve the resilience of their household through income generation as most of the value-added will accrue to other actors.

LAS comes partly from the consideration of rural agro-industry as a way to raise the part of value added located at farm level. It was expected that such a move would improve the income of marginalized rural areas and therefore, although it was rather implicit, the level of economic activity stemming from the use of this income but the shift from rural agro-industry to Localized agri-food system entails a recognition of the heterogeneity of actors and therefore of the discrepancies in their access to incomes flowing from these systems. Part of this income might well accrue to external actors. The consolidation of a true LAS system might well represent a greater difficulty for small-holders and particularly the poorest ones to access to these kind of RNF activities (raising thus a concern quoted by Davis and alii).

Nevertheless:

- Diversification of market exits for small-holders (ex: milk sales or cheese), which LAS might entail, are part of the process of diversification and can reduce vulnerability, when this exit is perennial.
- Some “induced” LAS, set up for example in the case of rural development projects (Boucher, Brun, Requier-Desjardins, 2010, on the Selva Lacandona for example), might target specific members of households, for example women developing production of marmalade through a cooperative. In that case LAS allows for a diversification at the household level which promote empowerment of discriminated members. The question remains as whether these LAS are able to develop, when the support of the project ends.
- Moreover a successful LAS might represent an opportunity for smallholders to integrate a network of providers of local food-processing activities, under the condition they enforce standards regarding quality of raw material (the “queso mantecoso mejorado” in Cajamarca for example). But it is an open question to assess if these opportunities are more valuable than “classic” contract agriculture managed by large firms.

At the end we can raise the issue of whether LAS can compete at the household leve with other forms of diversification of income. In some areas particularly, non agricultural wage-earning or internal or international migration might represent the bulk of income diversification.

III-2 : LAS in local economic circuits

The second dimension refers to LAS ability to meet a market demand, either external to the place or “residential”.

At the external level this ability is boosted by product qualification, particularly qualification linked to place, an element common to most LAS. At the internal level LAS might cater to a demand fueled by the multiplier effect linked to external incomes. In both cases, it requires to scrutinize how demand is fueled by incomes and how it behaves.

The role of demand and the way it is fed has not been until now a central concern in LAS literature. However the basket of goods approach (Lacroix, Mollard, Pequeur, 1998; Pequeur, 2001), very close to LAS one, put the stress on demand: it rests on the formation of a territorial quality characteristic which apply to a set of goods and services produced in a rural area. Of course this dimension of
territorial qualification is also a central tenet of LAS approach and the basket of goods usually encompasses food-processing. Two elements are particularly relevant in the “basket of goods” approach:

- The basket of goods is created and composed by demand, some products of the area are recognized by demand as enjoying this territorial quality characteristic, others no. Demand might be external but it has to do at least primarily with an internal perception of quality at the territorial level: as a matter of fact the basket encompasses private goods such as food products but also public ones such as residential amenities, which explains that tourism is a main component of the basket, as it allows consumers to appreciate the quality link to place.

- The fact that the basket of goods encompasses tourism activities is, first, coherent with what we see in many examples of LAS where tourism is a way to ensure a market for LAS products, and, second, stresses that these activities are “domestic activities” in the framework of a residential/presencial economy, meaning that a multiplier effect is at work.

In other words in the case of LAS products, productive basis stemming from “exportations” catering to an external demand of “typical” products appears partly intertwined with a residential/presencial one.

To appreciate the contribution of LAS to local economic circuits, the distribution of income and its relationship with demand formation has to be taken into account. It seems that the formation of a basket of goods, for example integrating typical products and tourism amenities, attracts a type of demand which refers to the existence of an urban upper-middle class. This seems to be the case in many places in Latin America for example. But residential demand can also be fueled by migrant remittances, and the existence of “diapora” markets (Guzman Hernandez et alii for a Mexican case). It seems that some exportation flows of LAS products (panela in Colombia, Cheese in Mexico) are very much the consequence of the existence of a diaspora market in migration countries (United States for Latin America). It is clear that these requirements cannot be met in all cases.

III-3 : productive synergies and the role of networks

LAS approach and the reference to qualification processes, in the framework of the “basket of goods” approach, do introduce the idea of a productive synergy between agriculture, food-processing and other activities such as tourism and distribution, which can mean intra-household as well as inter-household diversification of activities. LAS would represent a way to promote a diversification leading to a productive systemic coherence between activities. It would be an advantage in front of diversification towards activities with no relationship with agro-food or agriculture.

But this systemic coherence entail the existence of an organizational structure which refers the existence of networks linking the various actors. This is particularly important if we take into consideration the fact that the development of such a system needs innovations to be performed, whether technological, product or market. The role of social networks in cluster innovation has been stressed by the literature (Giuliani, 2007; Giuliani and Bell, 2005), and some quantitative indicators has been designed in order to characterize them. This approach should be extended to LAS. It is true that the existence of social relations and social networks has been identified in LAS case-studies. Put it remains to be seen if the structure of these networks does not give to some actors a specific position compared to others: some might be “gate-keepers”, given their position and relation with external actors, or constitute a “cohesive subgroup”, entailing a better ability to innovate and generate value-added.

The social basis of these networks is also of great importance. We can for example refer to migrant networks which, while channeling remittances, which can be used for investment, can also channel innovation.

As a matter of fact, there is a debate going on about the impact of remittances on development and particularly at the local level of territories, as migration exhibit a largely territorial structure, with a concentration of flows at the origin as well as the destination (Requier-Desjardins, 2010 for a survey). One of the main issue to be raised is the contribution of remittances to investment in local activities;
another related issue is the capacity of migrant networks to diffuse information and knowledge towards the places of origin. Investment generally represent a minor part, though not negligible, of the use of remittances but, regarding rural areas, it seems that the impact on investment in agriculture of food-processing activities is largely predetermined by the competitiveness and abilities of concerned places in agricultural and food production.

The evidence regarding links between migrant remittances, migrant networks and to the investment in LAS development is sketchy: Guzman Hernandez et alii, 2009 gives an example of the contribution of migrant networks to innovation in the production of cheese in the Mexican state of Zacatecas. Likewise, according to Ribai (2010), drawing from an Ecuadorian case-study, it seems that migration, which can crowd out subsistence agriculture as a livelihood in marginalized areas can be strongly associated with the development of commercial agriculture and food-processing by rural households in areas close to an urban market.

CONCLUSION

The main question emerging from these considerations is whether LAS approach can represent the basis for a rural development policy in the framework of a “new rurality trend”. Its main advantage is that it entails a form of diversification which reinforce the link between agriculture and rural non farm activities, thus preserving the articulation between rural development and agricultural development.

However, as it deals more with meso diversification of rural places, it may represent a local development path but not necessarily a way to enforce resilience of poor rural households at a micro level.

Moreover, given that it entails a residential link with urban areas at various levels, this proposal would only fit the situation of some rural places, characterized by the dominance of smallholders but also by a network of relationships of rural places with urban places likely to spur a residential or presencial demand. At the end LAS approach cannot be seen as a general alternative to other forms of rural or agricultural development as LAS development appears dependent of economic relationship at the macro-meso level in a “specific” place context: for example in case of reverse tenancy and “inverse” residential economy linked to the development of new forms of entrepreneurial agriculture, LAS would only emerge of the investment of land rents in this kind of activity. Moreover the kind of sustainability it ensures is basically a local sustainability, only relevant to some places, which leaves open the question of the relationship between local and global sustainability.

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