



Generalitat de Catalunya
Departament de Cultura

Directorate General of Cultural Co-operation

Culture and sustainability



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Contents

	<i>Pages</i>
1. Introduction to the study.....	3
2. An approach to the concepts of culture and sustainability.....	7
3. The territorial planning, design and management of cultural facilities according to the eight core principals of sustainable cultural action.....	14
4. Culture and sustainability: a question of sensitivity.....	19
5. Recommendations.....	23
Appendices.....	29



1. Introduction to the study

A) Justification of the study:

- **The Government of Catalonia's Department of Culture has raised the need to promote reflection about culture and sustainability**, largely focused on the field of cultural services provided by public administrations.
- **This reflection lies within a general process followed by the Government of Catalonia so that all its sectorial polices contribute towards building a sustainable future in an integrated, coherent way.**

B) Objectives of the study:

This study, promoted by the Directorate General of Cultural Co-operation of the Department of Culture, **is intended to achieve the following objectives:**

1. **Setting criteria in order to define the content, scope and organisation of cultural public services from the point of view of sustainability.**
2. **Identifying the tools required for managing cultural public services in terms of sustainability.**
3. **Analysing the key elements of cultural policy that could contribute to encouraging sustainable development.**

Given the breadth and complexity of the issue, **the study focuses its attention on the area of cultural facilities and services** (museums, archives, libraries, theatres, auditoriums, arts centres, multi-use cultural centres, etc.).

C) Structure of the study:

1. **An approach to the concepts of culture and sustainability.**
2. **Regional planning:** the need for and location, size and characteristics of cultural facilities.
3. **Design:** the design of the scheme and construction of cultural facilities.
4. **Management:** the administration of cultural facilities.
5. **Culture and sustainability: a question of sensitivity.**
6. **Recommendations.**



2. An approach to the concepts of culture and sustainability

2. An approach to the concepts of culture and sustainability

A) Definition of the concept of sustainability:

The notion of sustainability began with the search for a concept of development “corresponding to the needs of the present without mortgaging the capacity of future generations”, as defined in the so-called *Brundtland Report* entitled *Our common future (1987)* which was drawn up by the World Commission on Environment and Development.

Based on this idea, the concept of sustainability is defined on the basis of three main pillars:

- a) Economic growth.
- b) Ecological balance.
- c) Social progress.

2. An approach to the concepts of culture and sustainability

B) Recognition of the existence of close links between culture and sustainability:

The consideration of the existence of close links between culture and sustainability was also opened up from an academic point of view and from the point of view of cultural policy.

This is the origin of the proposal to **see culture as the fourth pillar of sustainability, together with the other three already indicated** (economic growth, ecological balance and social progress).

In other words, **it is considered that the advance towards a sustainable society occurs “most effectively if cultural vitality is included as one of the basic requirements”** (Hawkes, J., 2001).

2. An approach to the concepts of culture and sustainability

Diagram 1. The four pillars of sustainability and cultural action

Economic	Social
<p>A cultural action viable in economic terms (the result) contributing towards the growth of the economy (direct and indirect impact).</p>	<p>A cultural action based on participation fostering equality of opportunity for citizens to access knowledge, creation and cultural consumption.</p>
Environmental	Cultural
<p>A cultural action respecting the environment through the responsible use of materials, energy and the natural environment.</p>	<p>A cultural action encouraging creativity, cultural diversity and the conservation and dissemination of cultural heritage in order to contribute towards increasing individual and collective well-being.</p>

2. An approach to the concepts of culture and sustainability

The intersection between these four pillars forms a broad frame of reference for the planning, design, management and evaluation of cultural activities, allowing integrated planning of the issue by including in it the following four headings (see diagram 2):

Eco-efficiency: producing goods and services competitively, reducing waste of resources and environmental impact.

Effectiveness: maximising the degree to which the objectives of the cultural action are achieved using the available resources.

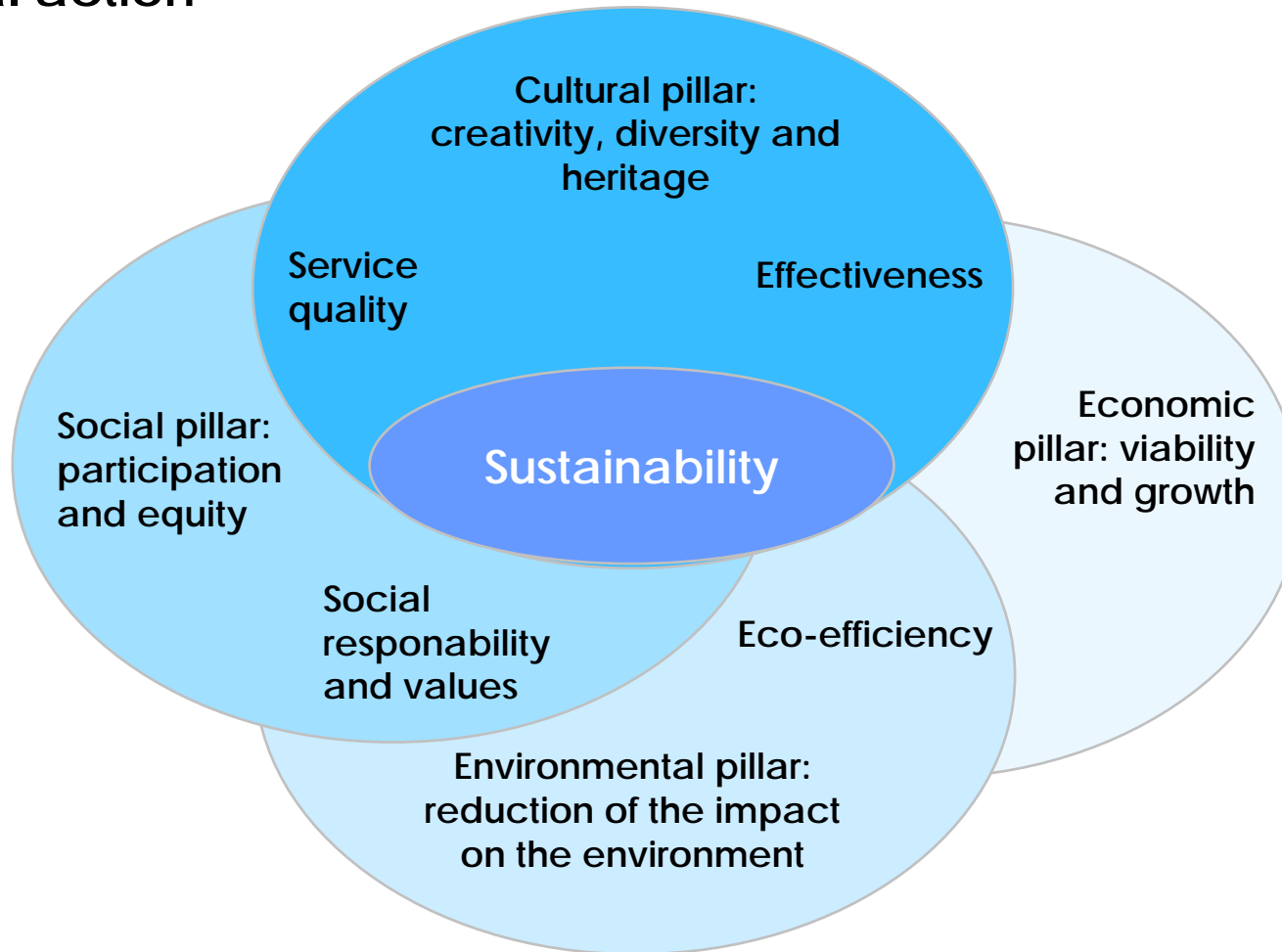
Service quality: meeting the expectations of the beneficiaries/users of the cultural action and opening channels for them to participate in managing it.

Social responsibility and values: spelling out the organisation's commitment to the achievement of social, cultural and environmental needs.

The result of this approach is a multi-criteria assessment model for cultural action (see diagram 3).

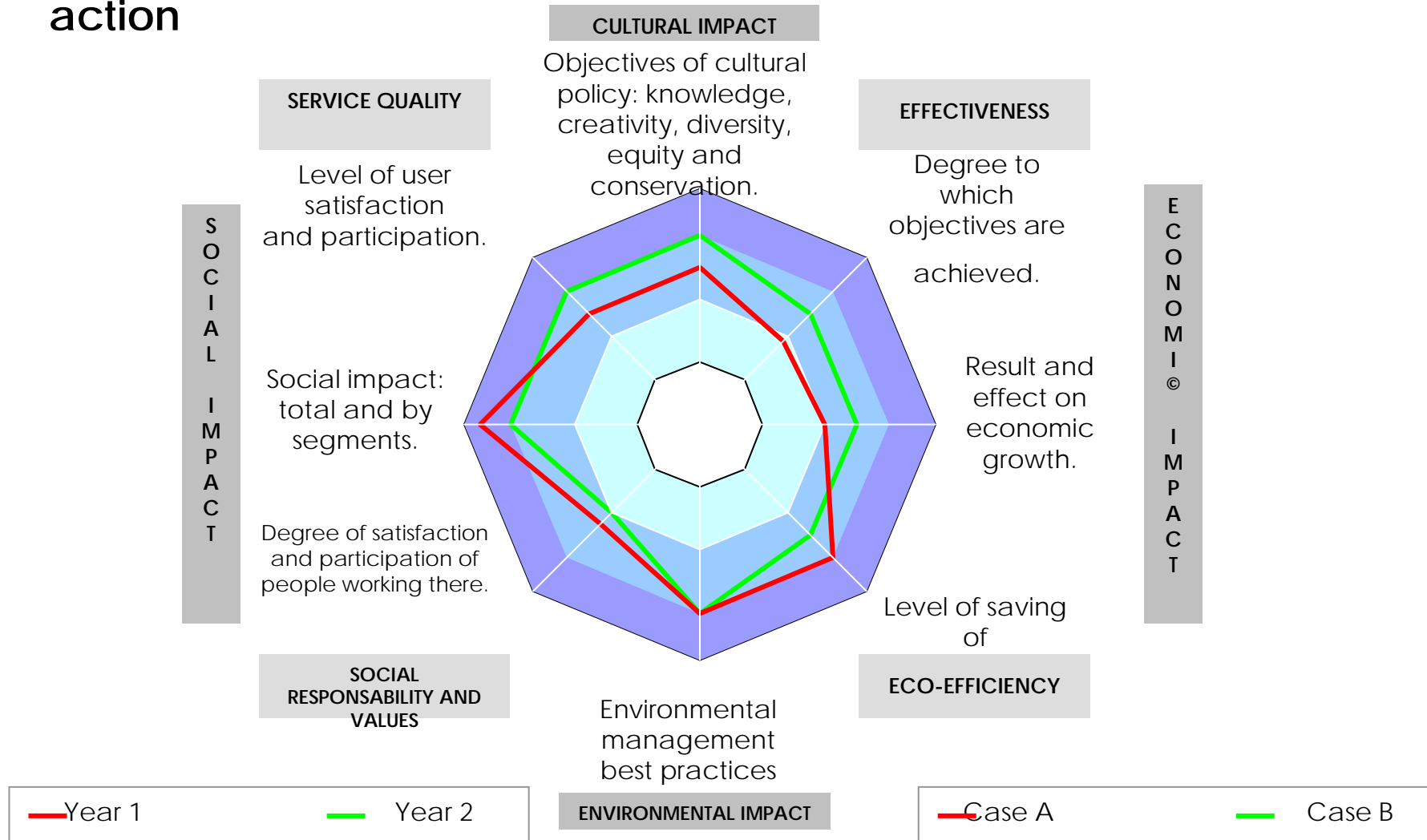
2. An approach to the concepts of culture and sustainability

Diagram 2
The eight central features of a sustainable cultural action



2. An approach to the concepts of culture and sustainability

Diagram 3
Multi-criteria model for evaluating a sustainable cultural action





3. The territorial planning, design and management of cultural facilities according to the eight core principals of sustainable cultural action



3. The territorial planning, design and management of cultural facilities according to the eight core principles of sustainable cultural action

A) The territorial planning of cultural facilities:

The sustainable planning of cultural facilities and services in the territory would have to occur in two directions:

- Firstly, **integrating cultural planning criteria into the general territorial planning framework.**
- Secondly, **incorporating sustainability criteria into territorial cultural planning**, in the same way as is already done in other spheres.

Specifically, the territorial planning of cultural facilities in terms of sustainability, largely affects the following issues:

- **The creation / existence of cultural facilities.**
- **The location of facilities.**
- **The size and characteristics of the facilities.**



3. The territorial planning, design and management of cultural facilities according to the eight core principles of sustainable cultural action

B) Designing cultural facilities:

The design of the facilities forms the last stage of the planning progress, in which the **building plan tends to become the central element of the whole process**. The quality of the building plan is highly conditioned by:

- The availability and quality of the other technical components of the plan for the facility /Usage and needs plan, resources plan, etc.).
- The capacity to integrate the technical (functional, cultural, social, environmental, etc.) requirements properly into the architectural plan and into the monitoring of its implementation.

The design and implementation processes for the works become a **crucial question which must be included in the full construction cycle**: planning, design, construction, use and maintenance, and even demolition.



3. The territorial planning, design and management of cultural facilities according to the eight core principles of sustainable cultural action

C) Managing cultural facilities:

- In the area of management of cultural facilities, there is a wide range of planning, management and evaluation instruments.

In order to provide a coherent, systematic response to the challenges of sustainable management of cultural facilities, it must:

- **Gradually incorporate management instruments concerning environmental management** (which, in general and in comparison with others, are the least commonly applied in cultural management).
- **Move towards integrated management of the 8 core principles of sustainability indicated including monitoring and multi-criteria assessment systems.**

Summary of criteria for planning and managing cultural facilities according to the principles of sustainable cultural action

	Regional planning	Regional planning	Regional planning
Cultural impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programme of activities. - Multi-use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coherence between the programme of activities and the architectural plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quantitative and qualitative expression of the objectives of the facility.
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Networks of facilities. - Standardisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Architectural plan respecting the historical heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-assessment of the level of achievement of the objectives.
Economic impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic viability (of investment and current activity). - Effect on economic growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The plan's coherence with the requirements of networks of facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budgetary indicators (income and expenses).
Eco-efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accessibility/proximity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transparency and budgetary control of the works. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic impact indicators.
Environmental impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compacting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouragement of sustainable mobility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicators of saving of environmental costs.
Social responsibility and values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environmental criteria for location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environmental quality of the infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-assessment of environmental management practices.
Social impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrated view of natural and cultural heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction/use of environmental effects deriving from the location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicators of satisfaction and participation of people working there.
Service quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subsidiarity in decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication and participation in decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicators of social impact: number of people attending and participants, etc.



4. Culture and sustainability: a question of sensitivity



4. Culture and sustainability: a question of sensitivity

The relationship between culture and sustainability has traditionally been subject to a relatively low level of interest from cultural managers and from analysts specialising in the study of culture management.

By contrast, scientists and ecologists have traditionally highlighted the strong relationships between culture and sustainability. Beyond the technological problems raised by sustainability, the issue should focus on knowledge and information; that is, culture.

In the words of Salvador Rueda, the ideas "lodged in our minds (and which have been dominant since the beginning of the industrial revolution) largely explain the current process towards insustainability".



4. Culture and sustainability: a question of sensitivity

Therefore, a great effort at raising awareness in favour of a Culture contributing decisively towards resolving the deep-seated causes of the environmental and sustainability problem.

This objective already appears among the priorities of the British government DCMS – Department for Culture, Media and Sport – according to which :

“enjoyment of and participation in the arts are fundamental in what is essential in order to successfully achieve sustainable development – quality of life.

The arts have always stimulated commitment and protest, as well as entertaining; and imagination and creativity can be used to encourage a change in attitudes as well as the social and environmental transformation necessary for sustainable development to be really possible”.

4. Culture and sustainability: a question of sensitivity

Summary of the main strategic lines of the British DCMS concerning sustainable development, forming orientative programme guidelines for the content of cultural policy based on sustainability criteria.

- Encouraging and providing support for all cultural and artistic institutions so that they consider how they can contribute to fostering sustainable development.
- Using the social communication capacities of the cultural agents to raise awareness concerning the interconnections existing between the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development.
- Collaborating with the teaching and research community to publicise and interpret the principles of sustainability .
- Ensuring the sustainability of projects in terms of financial resources.
- Introducing good environmental management practices in the administration of services and cultural companies, making it possible to move forward towards the eco-efficient management of cultural facilities and events (in libraries, museums, archives, theatres/auditoriums, festivals, etc.).
- Adopting an integrated approach to the management of the historic and natural heritage.
- Recognition of the contribution of the historical heritage to economic development and the improvement of the quality of life.
- Confronting the tensions that may arise between environmental protection and heritage conservation policies.
- Contemplating cultural action covering the needs of the most disadvantaged groups in society (immigrants, disabled people, etc.).



5. Recommendations

A) General indications

Inclusion of the cultural dimension as the fourth pillar of sustainability in all sectorial policies of the Government of Catalonia, from the general territorial planning processes for Catalonia to sectorial policies.

The introduction and use of multi-criteria planning and assessment instruments including the eight core principles of sustainable cultural management (cultural impact, effectiveness, economic impact, eco-efficiency, environmental impact, social responsibility and values, social impact and service quality).



B) Territorial planning of cultural facilities

- **Fixing the priorities for action so as to move forward to the sustainable planning of cultural facilities in the territory:**
 - Analysis of the possibility of establishing some standards, parameters or modules for local cultural facilities.
 - Define the criteria for organising these facilities in the territory through a network structure.
 - Defining recommendations in order to foster sustainable mobility to access cultural facilities, as well as respecting the environment.
 - Fixing requirements or recommendations on the procedure that must be followed in the initiatives to create and remodel cultural facilities.
 - Determining priorities for territorial action directed at providing support to the most disadvantages rural or urban areas with cultural policies.



C) Designing cultural facilities

Establishing protocols for action during the process of constructing facilities ensuring sustainability.

- Establishing a monitoring team ensuring coherence between the architectural plan and the plan of uses and needs, as well as their adaptation, as necessary, to the standards and general modules.
- Developing the mechanisms for communication with the concerned agents so they can monitor the development of the works.
- Having an information system allowing accurate financial monitoring of the works.

Determining requirements and/or recommendations ensuring that the construction of cultural facilities from the perspective of sustainability.

D) Management of cultural facilities

The management of certain cultural facilities can serve as an example for the public as a whole, so it is important to:

- Ensuring management of cultural facilities in terms of eco-efficiency.
- Stimulating the spread of good sustainable management practices in all cultural activities in the surroundings.
- Making sure there is a balanced programme of activities at the facility including the different dimensions of cultural action.
- Including a range of services and activities at the facility covering the needs of the most disadvantaged groups in society (immigrants, disabled people, etc.).
- Ensuring the sustainability of projects in terms of financial resources.
- Having elements in the programming, information and evaluation making possible multi-criteria monitoring of the management of the centre.
- Introducing channels for participation (by people working there and cultural agents, etc.) in the management of facilities.

Also, and finally, the capacity of cultural facilities for communication must contribute to and increase public awareness of sustainability. Among the many actions that can be carried out in terms of raising awareness, the following could be highlighted:

- Encouraging the production and dissemination of cultural works (exhibitions, books, audiovisual programmes, etc.) with contents concerning sustainable development.
- Providing the teaching and research community with resources for disseminating and interpreting the principles of sustainability.

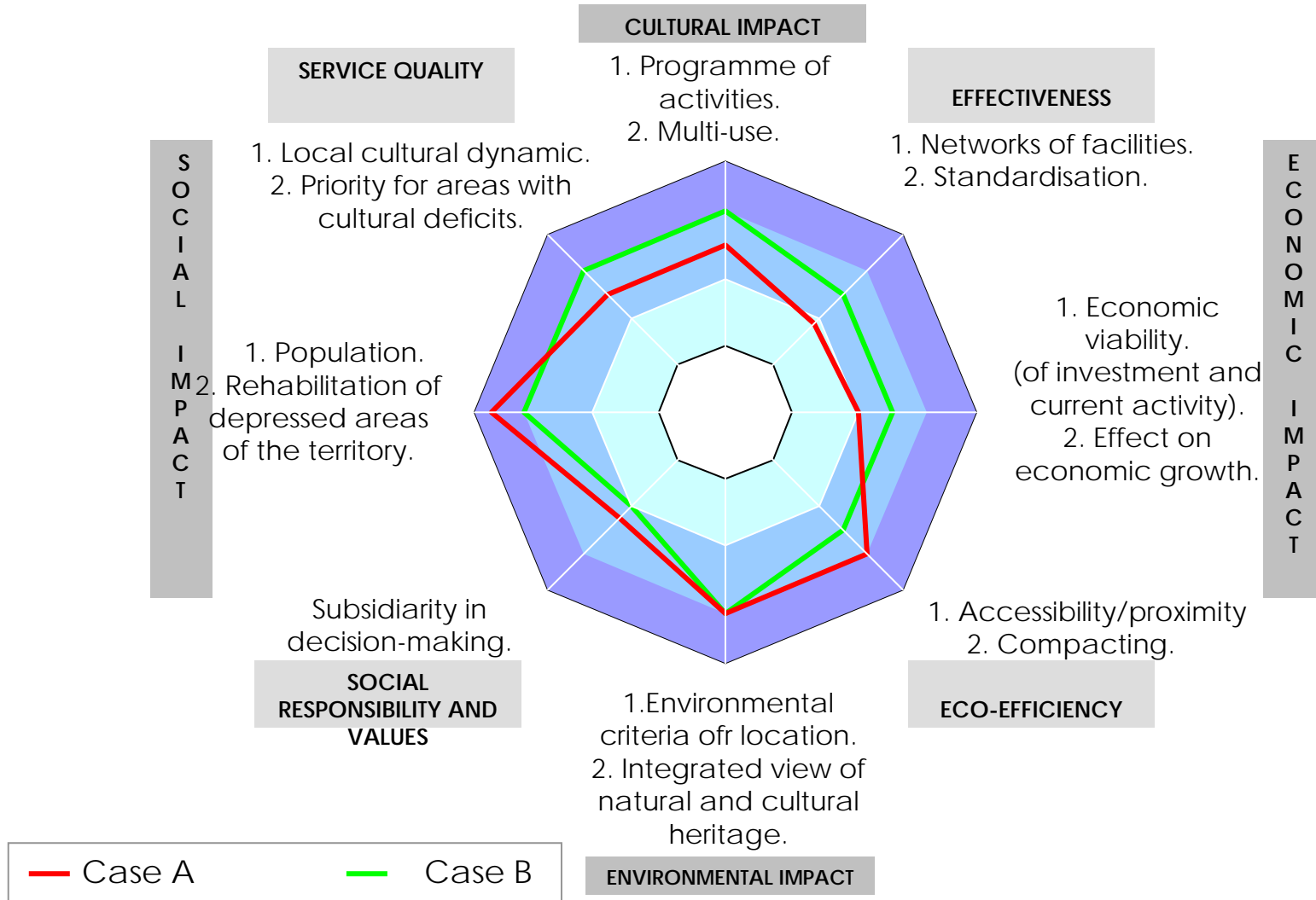


Appendices

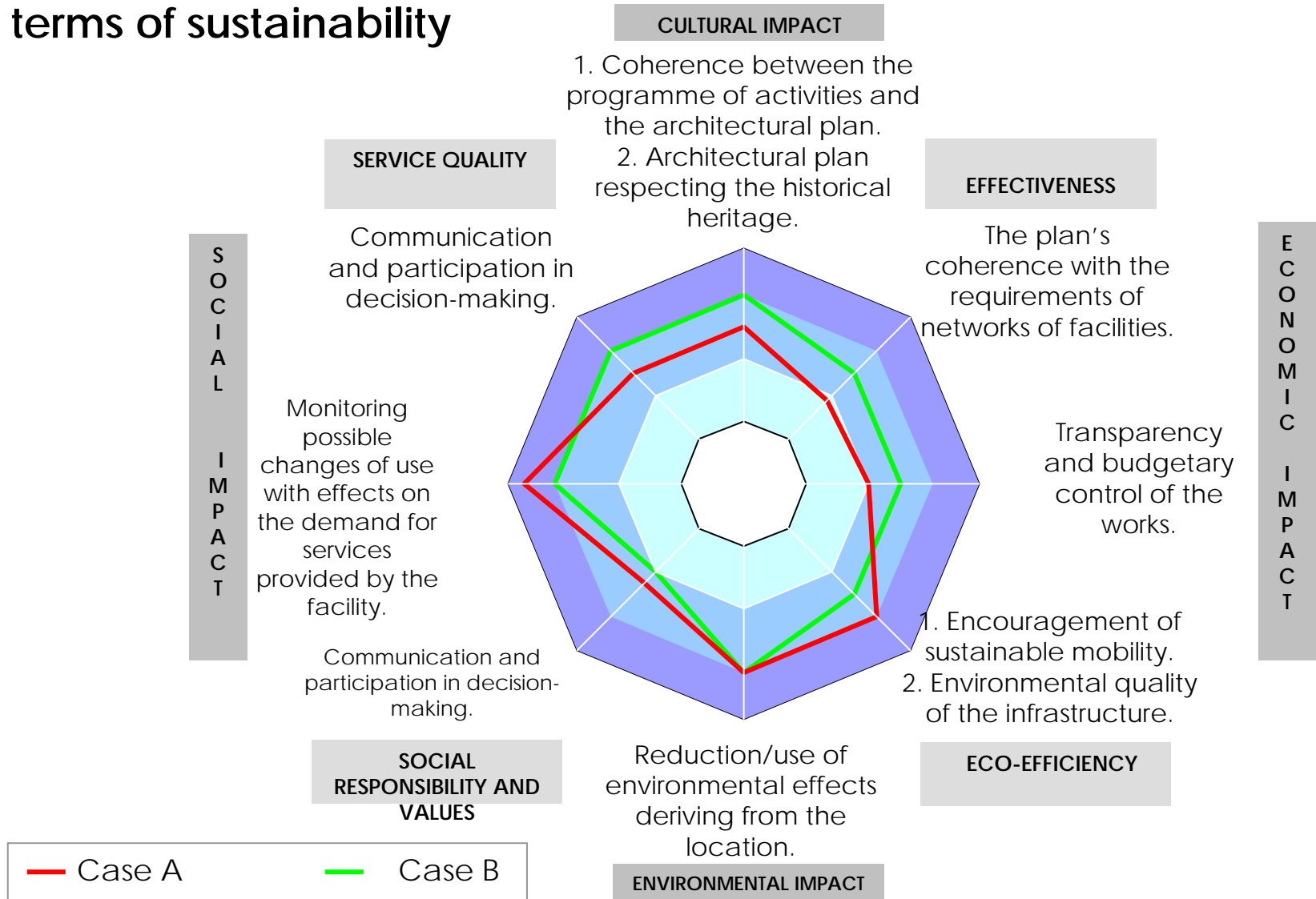
Appendix 1: List of people interviewed for carrying out the study:

Name	Post	Insitution
Mr. Yves Chapón	Manager	Poliprograma, SL
Mr. Albert Cuchí	Lecturer in the Department of Architectural Constructions	Vallès College of Architecture - UPC
Mr. Àlex Farnós	Director	Montsià Museum
Mr. Carles Mendieta	Director	Environmental Forum Foundation
Mr. Àngel Hom	Culture Officer	Vilafranca del Penedès Town Council
Mr. Oriol Nel·lo	Regional Planning Secretary	Department of Regional Planning Policy and Public Works of the Government of Catalonia
Mr. Joan Rieradavall	Director	Eco-design Research Group, ELISAVA / UPF - UAB
Mr. Santi Romero	Head of the Works Unit	Barcelona Provincial Council Libraries Service
Mr. Salvador Rueda	Director	Local Urban Ecology Agency
Mr. Tomàs Seix	Director	Otto projectes, SL
Mr. Roger Zamorano	Mayor	Arbúcies Town Council

Appendix 2: Multi-criteria model for assessing territorial cultural planning in terms of sustainability



Appendix 3: Multi-criteria evaluation model for the design of cultural facilities in terms of sustainability



Appendix 4: Multi-criteria model for evaluating sustainable cultural management

