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THE ROLE OF SUSTAINABLE AND RESPONSIBLE
DEVELOPMENT TO PRESERVE AND INCREASE THE 3S:
SOVEREIGNTY, SAFETY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Abstract. – Due to the dramatic changes, both social and economics, occurred in this last decades, almost in any continent, we assist to a substantial modification in the consideration of the Food Chain, as an important ring in the Food Security's policy (Carolan, 2013).

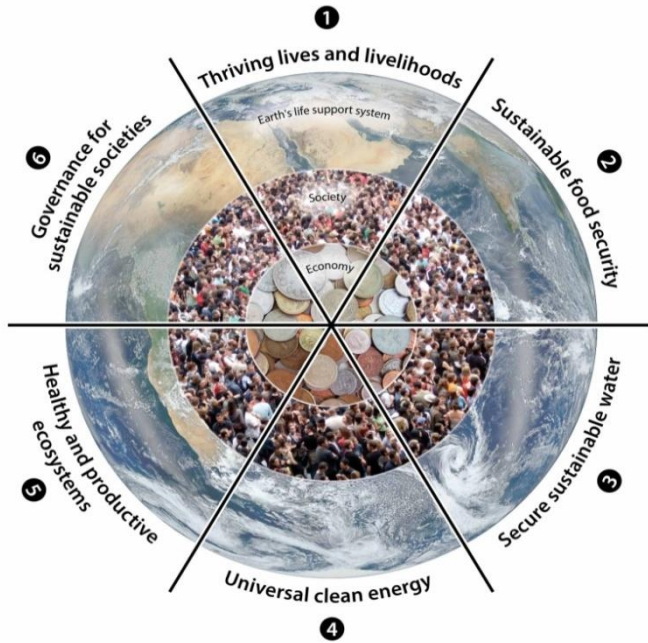
As well known, the term itself of Food Security knew in the last 50 years, a substantial modification in its mean, and now, in accordance with FAO, this is a condition that occur when «all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life» (FAO, 1996). But to win the challenge of Food Security, it is required a combination of Factors that allow a community to fully preserve the Sovereignty of its Territory, the Safety of the indigenous people, and finally the Sustainability of its economic activities.

All this within a juridical mainframe that enable the activities to be protected, as well as to be respectful of the 3 S Values. The aim of the Paper is to underline the importance of the mutual relation of trust that must occur between institutions and common people in order to create the best possible conditions to let a territory fully satisfy the needs of a population in terms of Food Security.

And to investigate how deep is the importance to “walk the talk”, involving in this process an increasing quote of the population in terms of personal responsibility, to better achieve an authentic Sustainable and Responsible Development, all along the Food Chain.

Keeping well in mind that any successful development policy should be authentically anthropocentric, by putting the human being at the very heart of the economic process.

Fig. 1 – The “wheel of fortune”



Source: Griggs D. *et al.*, 2013

Preamble and Methodological Premises. – The aim of the present contribution is to investigate how three of the major factors of progress and evolution – Sovereignty, Security and Sustainability – can completely express their potential, especially in the process of national rebuilding of the States on the south shore of the Mediterranean Basin. To achieve this goal in fact, it is of paramount importance to operate within a system of shared values, both at the local and the regional scale, and to consider these same factors as each other interdependent. This value’s shared system is like a sort of conceptual mainframe, in which the *fil rouge*, the coherent line that connect this essential elements, is the Sustainable and Responsible Development (Leto, 2005)¹.

If it is true that cannot exist full Sovereignty without Safety, it is also true that Sustainability only insure the possibility for any kind of com-

¹ «Sustainable and Responsible Development occur when in presence of a felt and coherently practiced, daily basis human activity inspired by the values of Sustainability».

munity to prosper in harmony with the environment, and to take care of the social needs of the population.

But also the population shall behave in accordance to the respect of the intergenerational dynamics (Gerlagh and Keyzerb, 2001), and in doing this shall be perfectly aware that will be the sum of the single behavior only, that will make the difference. With this regards, the Food Chain² represents probably one of the most relevant factor in terms of impact on any community, to measure its level of sustainability.

The present paper will try to explain how and why it is important to consider the Food Chain as a ring of a long chain, and how it is of fundamental importance in order to promote and practice the new, needed values of Sustainability and Responsibility, with a particular on the fastly changing situation in the Mediterranean Basin. In the following pages, we will try to explain how important is the concept itself of Food Sovereignty, intended as the right of peoples to define their own food's system (Patel, 2009; Rosset, 2008; Wittman and Desmarais, 2010).

For many of the southern and eastern Mediterranean States to consider the Food Sovereignty as a fundamental target of the national policy's agenda, will be an extraordinary opportunity to overcome the present condition of unequal wealth and resources distribution, which are for sure the strongest reasons that boost the socio-political instability in the entire region.

In the tentative to propose an ordered and comprehensible logic sequence, the present paper will preliminary investigate the role of Food Security, Sovereignty (and Food Sovereignty) and Safety and how they are currently considered within the actual debate. Then, we will try to explain how these three factors need to be linked and to act together in the policy Agendas, in order to achieve the result of a stronger rebuild of the southern Mediterranean States.

Food Security. – The concept itself of Food Security widely changed from its initial conceptualization to now: in the beginning of the last century it meant simply the capability of a single State to assure, especially under the basic needs satisfaction, the possibility to feed its population.

² Here intended as the existing feeding relationships between Actors in a community.

Later on, in the 70's, the same term enlarged its meaning and started to refer generally to the global availability of food reserves. In the 80's, in line with the up graded consideration of the importance of Food Security as a precondition to live a decent life, it became to be better pertained to an adequate and diffuse access to food for people (Pinstrup-Andersen, 1994; Guha-Khasnobis *et al.* 2007; Pinstrup-Andersen, 2009; Godfray *et al.*, 2010). Finally, in the World Food Summit held in Rome in 1996, all participants agreed on the most comprehensive, wise and correct definition: «Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for a healthy and active life» (FAO, 1996).

From that moment, that definition started to represent a standard target for every national and international policy.

From this focal point, it is wide clear that the complex interaction of the world's economies, strongly influenced by the asymmetric confrontation of each single, different State's political model, widely affects the food availability at the global scale. Moreover, in the last twenty years, it became of paramount importance the incidence of the speculative factor, since almost all kind of foods and aliments are considered just as mere financial commodities. So the question of Food Security arises as a major issue at international political level, often source of instability, becoming a great (if not the greatest) challenge for the governments (Rosegrant and Cline, 2003).

In fact, if we look at it considering this issue at the global scale, while interacting with the other great challenge of Demographic Growth, we realize that the question of Food Security arise up to the top of the list of priorities (Ehrlich, Ehrlich and Gretchen, 1993). Food availability is currently consider, today more than ever, as an emergency to treat with a different approach; in the past, it was sometimes considered just as a sort of arm of political pressure to force emerging states and developing countries to adopt measures encouraged and pleased by former colonizing countries, or superpowers (Brown, 1981).

Finally, the efforts made by the United Nations and by several NGO's, allowed the international community to behave, in this field too,

in accordance with the principles of the Human Rights Declaration³. Moreover, as well stated by Valdés «developed countries must insure and protect this right and have direct responsibility toward developing states» (Valdès, 1981).

So starting from that moment, Food Security has become an essential assumption, not only cultural, but more a fundamental measure for any policy of development that seriously takes care of democracy, equality and freedom (Carolan, 2013).

The 3 S Values: Sovereignty, Security and Sustainability. – Sovereignty can be considered as a political concept, since it is a very important factor, a sort of pre-condition for obtaining the direct possibility for a government to plan and act in a territory through the institutions.

However, not every State can achieve it, since it is quite difficult for the young ones, or for the ones made up by a heterogeneous society. This problem is particularly acute for example in the African states, with their stratified and articulate inner structure composed by population nomads and sedentary, and in some Asian states, for example India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, wherein the religious or tribal membership of the people still is a stronger feeling that slides sovereignty of the State in a secondary position.

It is a big bet, even for the most advanced countries, to slope down the concept of Sovereignty and realize all needed parameters in order to transfer it from the level of theory to a virtuous practice. Since «Food Security depends on robust food systems that encompass issues of availability, access and utilization, not merely production alone» (Gregory *et al.*, 2005), Sovereignty plays a pivotal role in creating the needed pre-conditions for a community to satisfy its basic needs.

In the specific context of the present paper, it is important to avoid misunderstanding when speaking about Sovereignty, since this value has many meanings. Therefore, once there is political sovereignty and institu-

³ «Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection».

tions can play their role in determined specific economic growth strategies, with the hope that social aspects are taken in consideration, another more specific value should innerve at political level the economic strategies: the Food Sovereignty.

When talking about Food Sovereignty, we refer to a complex value that cross right of health and right of self-sufficiency, sustainability and intergenerational equity, as well as stated by the more than 500 representatives of 80 countries in the Forum for Food Sovereignty of Nyéléni, in 2007 February⁴ (Schiavoni, 2009).

The concept of Security can be generally intended in military terms, as the absence of war, or better in terms of public order with the absence, or a very low level of conflicts. In any case, this condition is a preliminary presupposition to achieve any other result, both at the political and at the social level. Even under the economical point of view, it is of paramount importance to rely on a risk free and stable condition (or very low risk's presence), since any investment cannot be satisfactory when in presence of instability or excess of risks⁵.

From the start of "Arab Spring" clashes, the destabilization of southern States jeopardize the stability of the entire Mediterranean Basin, as consequence of the dramatic collapse of civil authorities at all level in the key States of the south and east shore. The worst cases of Libya and Syria are really alarming cases, and at the same time are serious signals of

⁴ «Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. It defends the interests and inclusion of the next generation. It offers a strategy to resist and dismantle the current corporate trade and food regime, and directions for food, farming, pastoral and fisheries systems determined by local producers. Food sovereignty prioritizes local and national economies and markets and empowers peasant and family farmer-driven agriculture, artisanal fishing, pastoralist-led grazing, and food production, distribution and consumption based on environmental, social and economic sustainability. Food sovereignty promotes transparent trade that guarantees just income to all peoples and the rights of consumers to control their food and nutrition. It ensures that the rights to use and manage our lands, territories, waters, seeds, livestock and biodiversity are in the hands of those of us who produce food. Food sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social classes and generations».

⁵ In the recent case of Libya, for example, the political instability and the absence of security forced even the main multinational oil corporations to leave their plants.

dangerous instability of the regions close to the EU Mediterranean member States.

This ruinous scenario affects also the north shore of the Mediterranean, since instability, as well as risks arising, force to a growing exodus of migrants, and to a fall of the production of commodities (including the agro-industrial ones) in the traditionally exporters countries, such as the case of Egypt. The pressure generated at the gate of Europe, is massively growing and it is a precise interest of the EU, to act in favor of an adequate policy of containment of this huge negative phenomena.

In this regards, the European Commission proposed a specific strategy aimed to better integrate the strategies of economic growth in the Mediterranean Basin and beyond, called European Neighborhood Policy (ENP)⁶. This vision, focuses on the positive impact generated by a growing and deeper political and economic integration with the adoption of ad hoc action plans, shared with the population by means of a proper communication; the aim is to facilitate bottom-up process of participation, and mutual accountability on the main regional issues, both in the field of environmental issues, as well as in terms of social improved life standards (European Commission, 2009).

Sustainability becomes nowadays an abused concept: to be better presented, almost all human activities, especially the economic ones, have often been “green labelled”. This is the consequence of a wide misunderstanding of the same concept of Sustainability in its inner meaning. The source to fully understand the real mean of Sustainable Development is for sure the Brüntland Report (WCED, 1987), in which is clearly stated that: «Sustainable is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs». This concept literally open the space to a wider epochal discussion on the future of the human being and its relation with the planet, offering growing space to the progressive affirmation of extremely important theories such as the one of Earth Carrying Capacity (Gretchen and Ehrlich, 1992; Postel, 1994; Gretchen and Ehrlich,

⁶ The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was developed in 2004, with the objective of avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and our neighbours and instead strengthening the prosperity, stability and security of all. It is based on the values of democracy, rule of law and respect of human rights.

1996)⁷, and the one of Intergenerational Equity (Weiss 1989)⁸.

However, it is important to consider Sustainability also under its social aspects, since Gro Harlem Brüntland herself insisted a lot in considering the growing importance of an equal and appropriate distribution of the wealth produced. Food Sector allow the creation of the needed pre-conditions in terms of Social Justice, not only to sustain the population in their nutritional needs, but also by encouraging the participation of common people to wealth creation's dynamics, in respect to those principle (and practice) of bottom-up processes that are widely necessary to largely diffuse benefits in deep. Sustainability, all along its chain, represents an anti-poverty approach to Food Security, since it sinks its roots both at the political level as well as at the economic and social ones. A virtuous integration of these parameters allows the creation of a model of society really based on the concept that all citizens should participate, fully and actively, in society.

Therefore it is time to share a regional strategy focused on a sustainable Food System approach (Fritz and Schiefer, 2008), with a long term partnership able to merge together the contribution of the north sores States (assisted and coordinated by EU), as well as of the south and east ones.

Interdependence and Interaction of the 3S's. – Both in terms of a balance and correct distribution of food, as well as in terms of wider access to it, a community can achieve the goal of Sustainability when in presence of an accomplished legal frame, which allows all economic activities to be performed with no major limits and without discriminations. In addition, the community need a social stability in order to allow all citizens to be part of the “mechanism” of wealth creation and distribution set there in place.

With this regards, any society can consider itself in harmony when in

⁷ Earth Carrying Capacity is here intended as the “environment's maximal load”, and is not a fix number, but is referred to the maximum capacity of our planet to sustain all living species.

⁸ «humans 'hold the natural and cultural environment of the Earth in common both with other members of the present generation and with other generations, past and future» (WEISS 1989, p. 8).

presence of a deep interaction between 4 main factors:

1. Earth Carrying Capacity
2. Food Security
3. Sovereignty
4. Respects of Human Rights.

The achievement of this complex interdependency is difficult and is the result of a long process, nowadays put under discussion even in the most advanced countries, due to the present economic crisis and the increasing weakness of the nation state model. Only when in presence of the 4 factors above mentioned, we can refer to sustainability.

However, this is not enough: efforts of our societies, both at State level and at upper level (European Union, for example), are inadequate if not in agreement with the global level's context. At global level the situation seems always more difficult, when strategies of growth and poverty alleviation seems to be often in conflict each other.

For this reason, it is important to involve all citizens in the challenge: the top-down decisions seem to be always more unsuitable, and any society, today more than ever, is composed by a level of complexity that require a massive effort to overcome problems.

Furthermore, we can say that the differences between the performances of a community are made at the individual level, and then a Sustainable and Responsible Development's approach is definitely needed; it is the primary starting point, since no major achievement and not a stable long-term perspective can be reached and maintained without the aware participation of each single citizen, in its role of member of the community.

Concluding Remarks. – Nowadays it is very difficult to achieve and maintain the parameters of a Sustainable and Responsible Development, since the economic crisis we are living in, has a strong and violent impact on the Agendas at government's level. As a result, the target of national and supranational policies are switching to a quick economic growth, more than a balance of resources consumption in respect of what we said.

The crisis we are deeply involved in, has an epochal character since it merge structural aspects and conflicts between different visions at a global level. And this makes difficult to let policies and decision makers

at all levels, tune each others in the needed structural changes that many of our States urgently needs in order to overcome the present environmental hazard, and secure citizens' rights in a changing world.

For this reason, it is of wide importance the adoption of regional strategies, not only to overcome the well-known problems, but also to consent long-term perspective of stability, the main pre-condition to allow the release of all those major investment, needed to sustain the adoption of appropriate policies of Food Security.

The forecast is for sure the one of a very difficult future, but the auspice is that every State of the Mediterranean Basin should start a new approach with regards to the Food Security-Sustainability in its all forms.

This same challenge is urgent now in different areas of the globe, and this emergency is definitely aggravated by the effects of the demographic push that seems to be one of the most delicate future's challenge too (Brown, 1981). Furthermore, this awareness should lead all decision makers worldwide, as well as all of us, in our role of active citizens, to work for the greatest challenge of Sustainability: Food Security for all, since there are no other fields in any human activity that will require such a similar, global effort.

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Il ruolo dello Sviluppo Sostenibile e Responsabile e le 3S: Sovranità, Sicurezza e Sostenibilità. – I rilevanti cambiamenti sociali ed economici occorsi negli ultimi due decenni quasi in ogni continente, hanno determinato una importante trasformazione nelle dinamiche evolutive della catena alimentare, che oggi influenzano in maniera crescente i processi politici e di sviluppo (Carolan, 2013).

Come è noto, il significato stesso del termine di sicurezza alimentare ha conosciuto negli ultimi cinquanta anni un radicale cambiamento, giungendo all'attuale definizione stabilita dalla FAO, secondo cui la sicurezza alimentare è una condizione che si determina quando «tutte le persone, in ogni momento, hanno accesso fisico, sociale ed economico ad alimenti sufficienti, sicuri e nutrienti che garantiscano le loro necessità e preferenze alimentari per condurre una vita attiva e sana» (FAO, 1996).

Ma per vincere la sfida della sicurezza alimentare, alla scala locale come globale, è necessario che si combinino fra loro alcuni fattori che consentano la preservazione là dove esiste, o la conquista laddove non è sta-

to ancora conseguito, di un equilibrio fra le necessità del genere umano (antropiche) e quelle dell'ambiente (inteso in senso compiuto).

In primis quelle che vengono comunemente chiamate le 3S: la Sovranità territoriale, la Sicurezza, la Sostenibilità delle attività economiche.

Tutto questo all'interno di un contesto giuridico evoluto ed aggiornato, che ne permetta il rispetto e l'implementazione.

Lo scopo del presente *paper* è di indagare l'importanza delle relazioni di fiducia e rispetto che dovrebbero necessariamente intercorrere fra istituzioni e popolazione, quali condizioni imprescindibili per consentire la soddisfazione dei bisogni dei cittadini in termini di sicurezza alimentare.

Se è vero che in termini teorici molti risultati in questo senso si possono dare per acquisiti, ciò che manca ancora, almeno in certe aree specifiche, è la coerente applicazione dei principi ispiratori dello Sviluppo Sostenibile e Responsabile: in altre parole è giunto il momento di praticare quanto predicato, o, parafrasando il gergo diplomatico internazionale, "to walk the talk", cioè passare dalle parole ai fatti.

Si tratta perciò di coinvolgere in questo processo di cambiamento dei paradigmi tradizionali che hanno ispirato le dinamiche di sviluppo dominanti nel XX secolo, una sempre maggiore percentuale di popolazione in termini di responsabilità personale, presupposto necessario per l'affermazione dello Sviluppo Sostenibile e Responsabile, anche lungo quella che viene comunemente definita la catena alimentare, tenendo presente infine che ogni politica di sviluppo deve mettere l'uomo al centro del processo economico, divenendo così autenticamente antropocentrica. Giungendo così alla determinazione di nuovi modelli di sviluppo, all'altezza delle sfide imposte dal XXI secolo.

Keywords. – food security, sustainability, sovereignty

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