

## **The VSM as criteria for developing an Eco-regional approach to sustainable development. A Colombian experience**

***The Viable System Model (S. Beer) offers good criteria for improving organisations dealing with environmental problems. The problem of forming a meta-view, improvements achieved with an eco-regional approach to sustainable development, and new questions for researchers in the field are described.***

The Viable System Model (S. Beer) offers a sound theoretical approach to the issue of supporting organisations responsible for promoting sustainable development. This paper supports this argument by presenting a case study in Colombia when this language (the VSM) provided good criteria for improving organisations dealing with main environmental problems of the country. It helped the national environmental authorities, which had shown to be incapable of timely and successful intervention at certain alerting levels of environmental problems (i.e. at the level of an eco-region), to develop the meta-view required for proper intervention. This paper shows how the VSM helped to understand the main tasks of the environmental agencies and to model the National Environmental System. It shows examples of some of the main diagnostic issues observed in this organisation at the recursive levels of eco-region and community. It also reveals some impact in terms of designing the national environmental information system to support effective environmental management at the national and regional levels. Finally it opens some questions raised from reviewing this experience, both at the theoretical and the practical levels, which are important to respond through further research in these issues.

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