

1a Frameworks

Short summary of characteristics

A *Framework* is defined as a support structure in which other information is organised and developed. Frameworks provide a set of information. Within PETUS, a *Framework* is a portfolio of documents of different features that aims to support actions relating to specific matters such as social implications of a project. *Frameworks* describe how to manage a project or a policy on sustainability; the phases to go through, how to involve stakeholders, types of tools to be used, how to analyse the situation, etc. Different types of end users are addressed depending on the sector covered and the point of view of the *Frameworks* developer.

Two different types of *Framework* have been identified through PETUS investigations:

1) *Frameworks* that are developed in a specific local context to guide and frame actions in a sector. These *Frameworks* organise existing references, such as analysis, legal text, benchmarks, case studies, assessment methods, other experiences, etc. to outline a policy of actions. Drivers for this kind of *Framework* development are usually public authorities. They are commonly available on a paper or computer format.

2) The second type of *Framework* is less dependent on the local context. It gathers existing tools, methods and recommendations in specific matter. Sometimes called toolkits, they nevertheless include examples and cases studies illustrations. These *Frameworks* are often developed by international consortium including researchers. These *Frameworks*, a set of tools, are often provided in a website format and provide ways of searching through the database depend on the goals of the *Framework*.

Stage that the tool is used

Frameworks tend to cover the whole process of an action. The idea lying behind *Frameworks* is to document all the steps from the inception of a project to the operation stage.

Output from the tool

The format of output is not defined. *Frameworks* tend to support the whole process of a project, providing a set of tools, methods, recommendations and illustrations at different space and time scales.

Experiences of use

The main benefit of a *Framework* is to provide a panel of tools that are organised and documented. It enables the user to create an internationally referenced background. Often, the way of searching information through *Frameworks* are different and well adapted to the sector covered.