

# National planning in South Africa: A temporal perspective

Ernst Drewes & Mariske van Aswegen

Peer reviewed and revised

Paper presented at the Planning Africa 2012 Congress

## Abstract

This article aims to provide a temporal and critical perspective on national spatial planning since the 1970s until the most recent directive in 2012. From the first spatial policy initiative, the National Physical Development Plan (1975), radical changes have occurred in the various approaches to national planning. The most recent spatial planning directive in South Africa is the National Development Plan (2012), which has a diversified approach with political, social and economic goals. In the past four decades, national planning policy and directives have moved through balanced and unbalanced regional growth approaches. The top-down approach of the 1970s with rigid area-specific directives transformed into a bottom-up more adaptable, socially oriented and interpretation-based approach in recent years. In the process, South Africa's spatial policy has evolved from a policy dominated by political objectives in the 1960s to a multi-sectoral policy which purports to be based only on economic principles of a multi-sectoral free-market system; from one of strong government intervention to one of minor intervention. The general perception of this article is that only some of these policies are substantially attributed to effective socio-economic development due to the lack of spatially focused initiatives.

## NASIONALE BEPLANNING IN SUID-AFRIKA: 'N CHRONOLOGIESE PERSPEKTIEF

Hierdie artikel het ten doel om 'n chronologiese en kritiese perspektief te bied op nasionale ruimtelike beplanning vanaf die 1970's tot die mees onlangse riglyn in 2012. Sedert die eerste ruimtelike beleidsinisiatief, die Nasionale Fisiese Ontwikkelingsplan (1975), het radikale veranderinge in die benadering tot nasionale beplanning plaasgevind. Die mees onlangse beplanningsdirektief in Suid-Afrika is die Nasionale Ontwikkelingsplan (2012), wat 'n gediversifiseerde benadering tot politieke, sosiale en ekonomiese doelwitte bied. Sedert 1975 het nasionale beplanningsbeleid en voorskrifte deur fases van gebalanseerde en ongebalanseerde benaderings tot streeks groei beweeg. In die proses is 'n outokratiese benadering met rigiede areaspesifieke riglyne stelselmatig omskep in 'n meer aanpasbare, sosiaal-georiënteerde en interpretasie-gebaseerde benadering in onlangse jare. Suid-Afrika se ruimtelike beplanning het ontwikkel van 'n beleid wat oorheers is deur politieke doelwitte in die 1960's na een wat volgens aanspraak geskoei is suiwer op die ekonomiese beginsels van 'n multisektorale vryemarkstelsel; van 'n beleid van sterk staatsingryping tot een van mindere staatsingryping. Hierdie artikel het ten doel om 'n kritiese en temporale perspektief te bied op nasionale ruimtelike beplanning vanaf die 1970's tot die mees onlangse riglyn in 2011. Die algemene persepsie van die artikel is dat nie een van hierdie beleide noemenswaardig bygedra het tot waarneembare en maksimum sosio-ekonomiese ontwikkeling nie as gevolg van die tekort aan ruimtelik gefokusde inisiatiewe.

## MERERO YA METSE E MEHOLO LE MABATOWA KA HARA NAHA YA AFRIKA BORWA: DITLHAHISO MABAPI LE NAKO

Serapa sena se bua ka Ditlhaheho mabapi le nako mmoho le ditlhaheho tsa diphošo tabeng ya merero ya dibaka ka hara naha ho tloha dilemong tsa 1970 ho fihla selemong sa 2012. Ho tloha sepheo sa pele sa merero ea dibaka se tsebahalang ka lebitso la National Physical Development Plan se theoeng ka 1975, diphetoho tse ngata mabapi le merero ea dipaka ka hare ho naha di etsahetse. Morero wa dibaka ka hara naha ea Afrika Borwa o theoeng haufinyane ke National Development Plan e

theoeng ka 2012. Morero ona o akarallditse le ho ntlafatsa dikarolo tsa dipolitiki, meruo, le maphelo a batho ka hare ho ona. Ka hare ho dilemo tse ka etsang mashome a mane, dipheo tsa merero ya dibaka ka hara naha di tsamaile hara mereo e sa lekaneng ntlheng ya ho hola hoa ditereke. Morero wa ho tloha hodimo ho ya tlase (top-down) wa nako tsa 1970 o nang le sepheo se tsitsitseng sa dibaka tse khethehileng se fetohile ho ba morero oo tlohang ka tlase ho ya hodimo (bottom-up), oo khonang ho amohela dintho tse ncha, oo khonang ho kenyelletsa batho ha dipheo oo khonang ho utloiseseha ha bonolo ha dilemo di ntse di tsamaea. Ha ho ntso etsahala joalo, sepheo sa merero ya dibaka, Afrika Borwa se tlohetse ho ba sepheo se tamaisoang ke dipolitiki joalo ka nakong tsa 1960. se fetohetse ho ba sepheo se nang le dikarolo tse ngata, se nang le moelelo wa ho tsamaisoa ke taba tsa moruo, ntlheng ya dikarolo tse mmaloo ka hara maraka oo ipusang. Maraka o sa sitisoeng ke mmuso. Akarallditso ya chebahalo ya serapa sena ke hore dipheo di mmaloo tse ntlafaditseng tswedisopele ya batho le moruo ka lebaka la hore dipheo tse ding ha di na chebisiso ya merero ya dibaka.

## 1. THE ROLE OF NATIONAL PLANNING

The main theme in this article centralises around the term 'national spatial planning' which has numerous explicit and implicit definitions and refers to a number of concepts regarding spatial planning on a national level for the purpose of this analysis. According to Friedmann (1964: 61), "planning is primarily a way of thinking about social and economic problems, planning is oriented predominantly toward the future, is deeply concerned with the relation of goals to collective decisions and strives for comprehensiveness in policy and program". He (Friedmann 1966: 5) further argues that regional planning deals with the 'where' of economic development and that it "reflects the need to deal with regional problems at a national level". According to the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter (Council of Europe, 1983), "[r]egional/spatial planning gives geographical expression to the economic, social, cultural and ecological

Dr Johannes Ernst Drewes, Head: Department of Urban and Regional Planning, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom, 2520, South Africa, Phone: +27 (0)18 299 2543, Mobile: +27 (0)82 416 0935, email: <ernst.drewes@nwu.ac.za>

Ms Mariske van Aswegen, Researcher: Department of Urban and Regional Planning, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom, 2520, Phone: +27 (0)18 299 2486, Mobile: +27 (0)72 626 6758, email: <mariske.vanaswegen@nwu.ac.za>

policies of society. It is at the same time a scientific discipline, an administrative technique and a policy developed as an interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach directed towards a balanced regional development and the physical organisation of space according to an overall strategy."

The Wales Spatial Plan (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004: 3) adopts the following definition of 'spatial planning': "Spatial planning is the consideration of what can and should happen where. It investigates the interaction of different policies and practices across regional space, and sets the role of places in a wider context. It goes well beyond 'traditional' land-use planning and sets out a strategic framework to guide future development and policy interventions, whether or not these relate to formal land-use planning control." A national plan can be identified as "a government economic plan which lays down the proposed pattern of economic development (investment, production and consumption levels) over a number of years to come" (Goodall, 1987: 317).

It is against this background that this article reviews past spatial planning policy and how it gave 'geographical expression' to economic, social and cultural development policies on a national scale. Hansen, Higgins & Savoie (1990: 5) aptly define high-level planning as "policy that reflects both what is happening within national society and national economy at any particular time and the prevailing economic and social philosophy at that time; and these interact with one another".

Not so long ago, national planning had an immoral tag. It was, for many years, associated with top-down, overly bureaucratic and excessively technocratic approaches to government. This article does not mean to implicate that bottom-up planning "development from below" is better than top-down "development from above" planning (Stöhr 1981: 41). In this instance, top-down planning refers to a more traditional manner of planning. This principle accepts as hypothesis that development is driven by external demand and innovation impulses, and that from a few dynamic sectoral or geographical clusters, development would in a spontaneous, or induced way, "trickle down" to the rest of the system (Stöhr & Taylor, 1981: 1).

Top-down planning is generally initiated and implemented by a higher level of government focusing on a specific sector and driven by supply. By contrast, bottom-up planning is a more recent approach and reflects changing ideas on the nature and purposes of development itself (Drewes, 2000: 43). It considers development to be based primarily on maximum mobilisation of each area's natural, human, and institutional resources, with the primary objective being the satisfaction of the basic needs of the inhabitants of the area, relying heavily on public involvement and participation.

More recently, Lodi (2006: 251) accurately described development planning processes and plans in South Africa as in a "muddle state", arguing that "most of the regional development plans are characterised by a lack of clear strategic development agenda and an ongoing planning process that seldom sees the dawn of completion and implementation, varying time frames, inward focused plans, plans that are hardly monitored, plans that do not have teeth, and plans that seldom add value to the intergovernmental landscape of South Africa". This view is expressed in terms of the regional/provincial planning milieu, but could just as easily be applied to the state of national planning until recently. Richardson (1987: 227) warns policymakers to "avoid the dangers of viewing national urban policies as independent of the country's development strategy and overall planning process". According to Oranje (2010: 57), "the current phase of national planning is driven by a growing awareness of scarcity and the need for wise resource management, challenges, multi-level governance, and pragmatic ways of dealing with difference in and between regions".

The goal of presenting the different opinions on national spatial planning is not to narrowly define national spatial planning, neither is it to test the various South African applications of national planning, but rather to indicate that the character of national spatial planning is diverse and complex due to different viewpoints and interpretations of the concept.

This article will adopt the following explanation by Richardson (2007: 5) as main interpretation of the concept, namely "primarily an activity which is indeed focused on the control,

steering or management of land use and physical change, but which, as much more than ever, has to be set within a comprehensive grasp of spatial changes in society, economy and environment", with specific emphasis on the "physical change" or implication on the national space caused by a specific national plan. Briefly, national spatial planning, in this context, refers to inclusive and coordinated physical planning of the structure of the national space to reach economic and social goals for optimum economic growth.

## 2. RECENT GLOBAL PROPENSITIES IN NATIONAL PLANNING

Various models are used whereby national planning is implemented worldwide. In 2003, South Africa chose to adopt the indicative manner of national planning by means of a 'Spatial Development Perspective', which provides a multidimensional analysis of the national space and indicates areas of potential which could be developed over a period of 20 to 30 years. It is argued that these perspectives tend to leave too much room for interpretation and have no specific guidelines and measures whereby development is prompted (South Africa, 2006: 132). Denmark and The Netherlands also follow this approach. National planning can also be facilitated by means of 'Planning Policy and Guidelines', which are, among others, followed in England, Wales and Scotland. These are described as comprehensive descriptions on specific areas of national importance which have to be followed in all planning practices. A third approach to national planning is setting 'spatial visions, explorations and scenarios', which proposes broad strategic directions for action. This is only an indicative approach, leading this type of national plan to be overlooked by governments, in general. South Africa has also chosen to adopt a fourth approach, namely the 'Spatial Frameworks and Spatial Strategies', but on a provincial and municipal scale. These frameworks provide general guidelines to which public and private sectors must adhere, and are also found in Ireland, Wales, Australia and the United Kingdom. Another approach to national planning is that of Spatial Development Plans. This approach differs from the aforementioned approaches, as it is of a more comprehensive nature,

addressing development over various sectors. These plans are more specific in proposing what type of development should happen at which locality and time. Countries that chose to follow this approach include Mauritius, Estonia, Qatar and Belarus (South Africa, 2006: 134). A final method of national planning is by means of a more free market-oriented approach, for example development nodes and corridors, as visible in the local Spatial Development Initiatives (SDIs), whereby private sector investment and development is attracted through public sector investment.

### 3. SYNOPSIS OF SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL SPATIAL PLANNING: 1975-2011

#### 3.1 Pre-1994: National planning policy

In the National Physical Development Plan (NPDP) (South Africa, 1975), a Decentralisation Board identified growth points through a top-down approach. This plan contained various planning instruments aimed at arranging the physical development according to specific development and political ideals. Fair (1975: 130) divided the report into two sections. First, a growth centre strategy was proposed, in order to obtain more balanced spatial poles. Secondly, a framework which divided the country into 38 planning regions was proposed. Many of the officially proclaimed industrial points were located in sparsely populated areas as well as in the peripheral economic space of the country. Efforts to 'plant' a growth point away from a national or regional economic core have proven fruitless (Stern, 1985: 5; Bloch, 1989: 147). The proposed development initiatives in both instances primarily aimed to create work opportunities. Industrial development, however, was stimulated in the growth points by means of extended infrastructural development (Bos, 1987: 261). The NPDP aimed to focus national planning in a spatially unbalanced manner, as well as targeting economically unbalanced development through its focus on industrial development. The NPDP, therefore, be regarded as the overall framework through which the national decentralisation policy was implemented (Bos, 1987: 257).

The beginning of the 1980s witnessed a marginal shift from the extreme practices of "white paternalism"

(Geyer, 1989: 382) with the Good Hope Plan (GHP). After deliberations between the government and the private sector, the GHP was announced in 1981. The plan contained a number of industrial development guidelines, a framework through which the Government, in a top-down approach, intended to implement its industrial decentralisation policy. A total number of 47 "industrial development points" and 11 "deconcentration points" were designated to be developed simultaneously (South Africa, 1981: 83). "Deconcentration points" were identified adjacent to metropolitan regions to relieve pressures of industrial concentration in these areas (South Africa, 1981: 72). Similar to the NPDP, almost all of these "deconcentration points", as well as the overwhelming majority of the "industrial development points" were located within border areas (homelands). Apart from their impractical locations, from an economic point of view, too many of these points had been identified, incentives were spread over too many geographical areas, and the dispersed pattern of too many growth points also raised doubts as to whether such a strategy could be implemented successfully (Stern, 1985: 4). Conclusively, this plan could be summarised as having both an economically and a spatially unbalanced approach and intent.

A major shift in decentralisation policy occurred in 1991 with the implementation of a new, apolitical, Regional Industrial Development Programme (RIDP), based on the uniform development approach. Proposals by the Development Bank of Southern Africa were made regarding the nature of a new profit-/output-based incentive scheme, its level of incentives, and the specific spatial application of the incentive scheme (South Africa, 1991). According to Bell (1997: 4), the RIDP represented a fundamental rift from the past. Its professed aim is mainly "the self-sustaining economic growth and development of (an) integrated economy" (POE 1989: xxix). In view of the previous approach's alleged inability to give effect to the accepted principles and a declared policy of a greater democratisation of the economic processes, a spatially uniform approach was formulated. Again, however, two implicit assumptions were repeated, namely that metropolitan areas are over-concentrated and that

the promotion of secondary industry is the most effective means of achieving development (Luiz & Van der Waal, 1997: 62). A distinction on national scale was made between three levels of incentives according to the development status of an area. The primary advantage of this RIDP, namely locational freedom, allowed the new industrial developer to pick a site of his choice anywhere in the country – save in metropolitan regions – and receive 100 per cent establishment incentives (Ligthelm & Wilsenach, 1991: 7). The second primary advantage of the RIDP was its "political correctness" (Black & Roux 1991: 454). Luiz & Van der Waal (1997: 63) emphasised this issue, indicating that the government tried to appease all interest groups by making the incentive nationally applicable and avoided making tough decisions. In fact, except for the "restrictions on new development" in metropolitan regions, the government essentially implemented a *laissez-faire* approach (Drewes & Bos, 1995: 267).

#### 3.2 Post-1994: Economic policy initiatives

After coming into power in 1994, the African National Congress (ANC) undertook to ensure equal access in all sectors by creating and implementing the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (1994). The RDP was an integrated, coherent national socio-economic policy framework, aimed at mobilising all people and resources towards the final eradication of apartheid and the building of a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist future (ANC, 1994: 145). The RDP's comprehensive approach to developing and implementing policy was the first of its kind in the country's political history, bringing with it a whole new paradigm shift, which also conveyed new challenges. To improve and accelerate development, the Development Facilitation Act (DFA) was created in an effort to encourage effective decision-making and delivery. The RDP was spatially balanced, as everybody had equal access to economic activities; the DFA (South Africa, 1995) aimed to support this approach. The RDP constituted a national programme and, as such, did not have a physical spatial plan indicating where development should or should not take place.

Another post-1994 attempt to national spatial development planning was initiated by the RDP Office in the form

of the National Spatial Development Framework (NSDF) (1995). According to Oranje (2010: 60) this framework was an "outcome of concerns about uncoordinated expenditure and a lack of shared standards in infrastructure investment". It was foreseen that the framework would commence with the mapping of the entire country by means of GIS, in order to stimulate dialogue on future investment localities. The "framework", however, remained in the stage of initial mapping and came to an abrupt end with the closure of the RDP offices in 1996 (Oranje, 2010).

The Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) (1996) strategy announced an economic reform programme directed towards competitive fast-growing economy; redistribution of income opportunities; capable society, and safe environments and productive workplaces (South Africa, 1996). Robbins (2008: 3) confirmed that GEAR "limited itself to focusing on traditional macro-economic policy instruments and did little to explore the ramifications of such national choices". The GEAR strategy was regarded as being spatially and economically balanced, and being driven from the top down, although being informed by the people's needs. The GEAR strategy did not emanate a specific spatial approach linked to locations or using planning mechanisms and is regarded as a national economic strategy with implicit spatial implications, rather than a spatial one.

### 3.3 Post 1994: Regional and sectoral policy initiatives

A key document providing a first formal perspective on rural development was the Rural Development Framework (RDF) (1997), originating from the ineffective RDP. Rural South Africa came with its own unique set of difficulties, reflecting high poverty levels, the multisectoral nature of rural development, marginalised economies, and a high environmental sensitivity (South Africa, 1997b). The Framework acknowledged that, in order to balance out the rural economic space, it had to improve and develop the relevant institutional capacity and infrastructure. The envisaged provision of employment and income opportunities was to restore the basic economic rights of people and provide them with newly found justice, equity and security. The RDF was established in order to provide a counterbalance to the Urban Development Framework.

The Urban Development Framework (UDF) (1997) was specifically aimed at developing urban nodes (South Africa, 1997a). The Framework's vision was to develop spatially and economically integrated centres, affording the inhabitants economic and social opportunities, good housing and infrastructure in a more participative manner. The UDF also strived towards environmental sustainability with vibrant urban governance, and an integrated approach to develop mixed land uses. At the time, urbanising centres created many challenges such as large and growing urban populations, inequality and poverty, financial pressure on municipalities, and immense economic and financial potential for revitalisation. The UDF could be regarded as a framework aiming to provide a more balanced urban economy, while being spatially unbalanced, focusing only on urban South Africa. However, together with the RDF, it strived towards national spatial balance in terms of policy application.

A policy of Spatial Development Initiatives (SDIs) was accepted in 1996 to address fragmented development patterns and to promote equity, integration and efficiency (South Africa, 1999). The SDI approach was developed based on the lessons learnt on regional development in the European Community (EC) (Oranje, 2010: 60). Robbins (2008: 2) affirms that the launch of the SDI "heralded something of a shift in thinking towards some measure of recognition of the benefit of more spatially differentiated national policies and programmes". Developmental regions, axes and projects, identified by their inherent under-utilised economic potential, aimed at sustainable employment creation, by identifying and facilitating new investment opportunities. Private and public investments were stimulated by means of infrastructure investment, manufacturing, mining, small business (SMME), tourism, agriculture, housing and the provision of water to achieve the advantages of agglomeration economies (Wiese, 1996). With the establishment of the SDIs, the objective reverted to that of earlier policies of the 1960s to 1980s, aiming to create employment near people's homes, especially in the rural areas, to ensure a more balanced development approach – with all the associated linkage benefits (Drewes & Kleynhans, 2008: 6). SDI policies are orientated outwards and aim at the supply and

demand of commodities of which South Africa has a comparative advantage. Businesses, with large backward and forward linkages, are encouraged so that more industries develop in a centripetal action and create more employment (Drewes & Kleynhans, 2008: 7). The identification of potential economic clusters also played an important role in the development of SDIs. Where the former government was accused of establishing industries in the homelands without supplying the necessary infrastructure, the SDI initiatives were identified wherever potential existed, and the authorities ensured that the necessary infrastructure is provided and developed, making this a spatially unbalanced, but economically more balanced and integrated initiative.

The Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy's (ISRDS) main thrust was to ensure that government departments had a common platform and approach for implementing rural development strategies and programmes (South Africa, 2000). It also emphasised the relationship between rural and urban economies, and affirmed that sustainable economic growth could be achieved if it is premised on linking exploitation of rural assets and redistribution. The objective of the ISRDS was to improve the quality of life of rural citizens by alleviating poverty and providing sustainable livelihoods. This objective cannot be met unless rural development, in general, and the rural economy, in particular, are nurtured and improved. As part of the ISRDS, the President then identified 13 Nodal Development Points throughout the country. They supposedly served as pilot projects to fast-track rural development in selected areas, rendering the ISRDS a spatially and economically unbalanced national strategy.

### 3.4 A return to national planning initiatives

Concerns about the lingering spatial impact of apartheid on towns and cities led to the formulation of the National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP) in 2003 and again in 2006, in an effort to provide guidance in the spatial planning and provision of infrastructure (South Africa, 2003; 2006). "In terms of the Cabinet's approval of the first NSDP (South Africa, 2003), it was not only meant to be an indicative tool for all spheres of government to guide development and expenditure, but also

acted as a platform for discussion and debate regarding national planning" (Oranje, 2010: 61). According to the NSDP, infrastructure investment should primarily support localities that will become major growth nodes in South Africa and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, to create regional gateways to the global economy. According to Hughes (2005: 13), the NSDP placed "far greater emphasis on people than places" as a direct result of the spatially distorted legacy of apartheid, and was supposed to play an important social role to uplift the socially excluded. The NSDP principles seemingly facilitate structured and rigorous analysis that enables comparison between places and sectors, to assist the spheres of government in weighing up trade-offs, and to maximise the impact of scarce state funds. The NSDP categorised all the municipalities in South Africa according to their economic potential and human need. According to Oranje (2010: 61), an "unease" regarding the second version of the NSDP (2006) arose due to it being perceived as having a more unbalanced approach. Oranje states that the NSDP is often referred to as being 'anti-rural', stimulating growth only in urban areas of high potential and lower need, as opposed to rural areas mostly characterised by low potential and high need. It is important to note that the NSDP was the first policy/perspective to focus on the entire space economy since the GHP of 1981. However, it must be noted that the NSDP did not include any physical or spatial development plan.

Although not a spatial plan *per se*, the National Industrial Policy Framework (NIPF) (2007) sets out government's broad approach to industrialisation (South Africa, 2007). The NIPF recognised the inherent intra-governmental nature of the industrial policy. It is not a novel policy direction, but a logical evolution of general government economic policy, all of which was inspired by the principles of the RDP. More specifically, the industrial policy was based on the consensus that the economic fundamentals are, to a large extent, in place at a macro-economic level and that the strengthening of the economy at the micro-economic level was the next frontier of economic policy and implementation. The NIPF probed for a more lively industrial policy framework at a national scale, and simplified the spatial issue as being fundamentally

about infrastructure investment and development outside the traditional growth poles (Robbins, 2008: 5). The NIPF accordingly aimed at having a more balanced economy, through investment in the industrial sector, and a spatially balanced impact.

In 2010, the New Growth Path (NGP) policy set a target of creating five million jobs over the next decade, by aiming to remove unnecessary red tape, improve competition in the economy, and step up skills development (South Africa, 2010). The NGP regarded investment in five key physical and social infrastructure areas – energy, transport, communication, water and housing – as being a critical factor in growing the economy. According to the policy, government believed that high levels of public investment in these sectors would create the required jobs in construction, and the operation and maintenance of infrastructure. The target of the NGP was to reduce unemployment. This can only be achieved if the social partners and government collaborate to address key structural challenges in the economy. As a first step, government focused on unlocking the employment potential in key sectors and activities, namely infrastructure, agriculture, mining, green economy, and manufacturing. This macro-economic approach entailed more active monetary policy interventions to achieve growth and jobs targets, *inter alia* through a more competitive exchange rate and a lower cost of capital, with a more restrained fiscal stance and reprioritisation of public spending to ensure sustainability over time. The micro-economic approach involved targeted measures to support jobs and competitiveness which, in turn, is supposed to render the macro-economic strategy more sustainable and viable. This approach is regarded as aiming for balanced spatial and economic development, although no spatial plan was linked hereto.

During the same year, the need was identified for the coordinated and focused implementation of a plan on national level to eradicate poverty and exclusion in South Africa, from which the National Development Plan (NDP) (2012) was born (South Africa, 2012). The main argument of the National Planning Commission (NPC) regarding the need for a national plan is the poverty cycle and exclusion of the majority of people from opportunities for further education. The NDP aims

at creating a virtuous cycle whereby opportunities are expanded, leading to building the capabilities of the nation, resulting in a reduction in poverty and community development, ultimately giving rise to higher living standards and completing the cycle, thus expanding opportunities for a new generation. At the core of the NDP lies the dire need for growth and development, to be supported by interested, focused and determined leadership, a capable state and sacrifice on all levels of participation. As such, the plan aims to gain national consensus and social cohesion. In terms of physical spatial planning, the NDP proposes the development of a National Spatial Framework (NSF) involving government, business and civil society to create a collective vision. According to the NDP, the proposed NSF should target a number of spatial areas, viz. a national competitiveness corridor; nodes of competitiveness; rural restructuring zones; resource-critical regions; transnational development corridors, and special intervention areas.

To summarise, the above policies and national planning initiatives can be meaningfully evaluated according to the principles of their economic and spatial applications as well as the government's implementation approach (see Table 1). The aim of the summary in Table 1 is not to reduce a very complex and serious issue to something trivial, but rather to give an overview of the various plans as implemented over time. Table 1 does not list comprehensive details of the plans, but serves as a tool to assist in understanding the enormous impact of 36 years of national spatial planning.

In terms of Table 1, it is argued that national spatial policy can be divided into three distinct phases, namely an era of national physical planning (referring to the period 1975-1991); a period of socio-economic sectoral planning (1994-2001), and a post-modern chapter of more integrated planning (2003 onwards). The first period was successful in reaching economic growth goals, but lacked heavily in the social enhancement of people's lives, in fact deterring severely from the majority of people's quality of life. During the second period, the opposite was true. The focus was still on socio-economic priorities in most plans, but social goals received a great deal of attention, leaving the country to rely severely on physical infrastructure investment put in place between 1975 and 1991,

Table 1: Summary of national plans (1975-2012)

Plan	NPD	GHP	RIDP	RDP	NSDF	GEAR	RDF	UDF	SDI	ISRDS	NSDP	NIPF	NGP	NDP
<b>Aim</b>	Balancing regions in SA	Counterbalance metropolitan areas. Development closer to homelands.	Develop an integrated economy. Regional development excluding metropolitan areas.	Balance social and economic challenges	First post-1994 attempt to national spatial development planning	Reform national economic programme.	Uplift and develop rural areas to counteract urbanization.	Develop integrated spatial and socio-economic urban environment. Create sustainable opportunities.	Promoting investment in underdeveloped regions.	Government has a common approach for implementing rural development strategies and programs.	Identification of core aspects relating national development. Identify/classify places in a region.	Sets out Government's approach to industrialisation. Create a more lively industrial policy framework.	Creating five million jobs over the next decade.	Coordinated and focused implementation of a plan on national level to eradicate poverty and exclusion.
<b>Spatial Impact</b>	Successful in metropolitan areas. Peripheral areas unsuccessful.	Areas in KZN. Some areas surrounding old Transkei and Bophuthatswana	Unsustainable approach. Created agglomeration benefits in some areas.	In some areas, yes. Most areas improved but not succeeded completely.	Came to an abrupt end with the closure of the RDP offices in 1996.	Shaped macro-economic framework in which the RDF was established	Address problems in rural areas. Succeeded in drawing focus to rural areas.	Helped to improve services and backlogs in urban areas.	Maputo Development Corridor. Fish River SDI. Lumbombo SDI. Richards Bay SDI.	Linking exploitation of rural assets and redistribution	Provides clear guidelines for development. Works with SDFs and IDPs.	Simplified spatial issues about infrastructure investment and development outside traditional growth poles.	Although unemployment reduced, targets are unrealistic.	Too soon to tell.
<b>Facilitating Factors</b>	38 Planning regions. Development nodes and corridors.	Homelands workforce. Incentives offered in growth poles. RIDP of 1981. Subsidies offered.	Incentives offered. Physical Planning Act 1991. Profit/turn-over base scheme.	Development Facilitation Act. (DFA)	GIS mapping of SA. Dialogue of future investment opportunities.	Traditional macro-economic instruments. Needs of the people.	DFA. Power of local government. LEDs	DFA. Municipal infrastructure investment. Institutional roles.	Identification of investment gaps in underdeveloped areas with potential.	13 Nodal Development Points serve as pilot projects to fast-track rural development.	Coordination with local SDFs and IDPs. Development Facilitation Act.	Principles of the RDP. Macro-economic fundamentals are in place.	Slashing unnecessary red-tape, improving competition in the economy and stepping up skills development.	Nine major challenges are identified. Proposes NSDF.
<b>Economic Application</b>	Unbalanced	Unbalanced	Tends to be more balanced	Balance economy	Unbalanced - Investments only in certain parts	Balanced	Develop the rural economy.	Create more balanced urban economy.	Unbalanced	Unbalanced	Unbalanced	Unbalanced	Balanced	Balanced
<b>Spatial Application</b>	Unbalanced	Unbalanced	Balanced	No physical spatial plan	Balanced	Balanced	Unbalanced (Focus only on rural areas)	Unbalanced (Focus only on urban areas)	Unbalanced	Unbalanced	Balanced	Balanced	Unbalanced	Unbalanced
<b>Approach</b>	Top-down approach	Top-down approach	Top-down approach	Top-down approach	Top-down approach. Inputs from dialogue	Top-down approach, although being informed by the people's needs.	Top-down and bottom-up approach	Bottom-up approach	Top-down approach	Top-down approach	Bottom-up approach	Top-down approach	Top-down approach	Top-down approach

and thus detracting from reaching the identified socio-economic growth goals. During this second phase, the national physical space was left open for interpretation in terms of economic and social goals by politicians and planners alike. This led to poor implementation and failure of many of these plans in the sense that very few of the goals were attained. In the third phase, as distinguished for the purposes of this paper, a more integrated approach is clearly visible and the focus seems to be shifting towards a more balanced approach with more attention being paid to the physical aspects of national planning. The last three national spatial planning initiatives have placed greater emphasis on the 'correct' location for government spending, focusing more on areas of potential and areas of greater need.

#### 4. LESSONS TO BE LEARNED ON NATIONAL PLANNING

Richardson (1987) identified that a 'conceptual' issue is one of the major issues leading to the failure of national policies. He argued that urban development is generally approached as a 'vertical sector' rather than a 'horizontal slice' that cuts across most sectors. Accordingly, the key to successful national policies is integrating the spatial elements with the national macro- and sectoral economic and social policies. This is how the NPC approached Vision 2030. Therefore,

"intergovernmental cooperation is fundamental to realising the goals of the national developmental state in terms of economic growth, social cohesion and human rights" (Hughes, 2005). In addition, Gumede (2009: 5) identified the key elements of successful development planning as urgency, political will, and drive. The most recent of South Africa's proposed national planning approaches, the NSF, should be approached in this manner, as a matter of urgency, backed by the country's political forces and driven by a dedicated unit to ensure its success. Robbins (2008: 6) is of the opinion that "not much" has been done on national economic development policies for South Africa to include "spatially referenced elements" in these frameworks. He further argues that "the substance of policy and programmes is overly concerned with a contrived sense of national agendas that are expected to be integrated, in delivery, through remote national bureaucratic manoeuvres" (Robbins, 2008: 7). He calls for the country to pursue a "bold industrial policy framework ... informed by substantially deeper forms of localized intelligence". Similarly, Platzky (1995: 128) argued that "regional development is politically necessary in South Africa in order to provide for the development of those who have been historically excluded from privilege". Bell (1997: 26) is also of the opinion that "regional industrial policy, though inadequate on its own, should be taken as far as can be justified, giving due

consideration to the costs involved, on economic and social grounds". Lastly, and significantly, Richardson (1987: 240) argues that "national urban policy, correctly defined, should be at centre stage in the national planning process".

#### 5. CONCLUSION

Throughout the history and evolution of spatial planning and policy in South Africa, three main perspectives became evident. In the latter part of the previous millennium (1960s-1980s), economic growth was regarded as the all-encompassing goal in national development. Although founded on political ideology, national policy was based primarily on industrial development in areas earmarked for concentration. A shift in emphasis occurred in the early 1990s towards a balanced non-spatial policy approach, whereby a participative or people-centred approach replaced the previous 'fordist' approach to development. In the mid-1990s, the principles of resources management or environmental sustainability were also accepted as being part of the spatial planning and policy formulation process. The latter two approaches to development are clearly process-driven, since it involves the integration of principles, community participation and environmental sustainability in spatial planning which, by their very nature, are crucial in the development process. By contrast, in South Africa,

the end result of economic growth and separate development was the main goal in the previous regime's approach to spatial policy formulation until the 1990s. In the new millennium, the 'geographical expression' of spatial planning is again focused on social and political drives, with a great deal more focus on specific locations, aiming to balance out the country in terms of economic development. Oranje (2010: 66) confirms that the 16-year period (until 2010) after the first democratic elections was initially characterised by the creation of the RDP office, which acted as a planning agency, taking control of national planning. After that period, no specific entity took charge of national planning *per se*, as it became a more decentralised intergovernmental function. Recently, national planning, as a centralised governmental function, had been pursued, but did not meet with the approval of all stakeholders since, in a sense, it served as a reminder of earlier top-down autocratic planning initiatives. Although South Africa is perceived to be in a strong economic position on the continent, it still lags behind in terms of its national growth rate. In 2011, a growth rate of 2.5% was achieved, significantly lower than the average African rate of 3.5% and the global rate of 4%. It is argued that this is partly a result of ineffective spatial planning policies as well as investment in sectors and locations that have limited, if any, impact on regional growth and development. Economic development depends primarily on locational advantage, whether it is between cities, provinces, or countries (Weber, 1929). Corporations seek areas that offer greater opportunities for economic profit. Public infrastructure can boost these opportunities, either by increasing productivity or by reducing product costs. Fedderke & Bogetic (2009: 3) recently pointed out that "infrastructure investments have been proposed in the development literature as an influential factor of economic growth, working through at least two of the three classic drivers of economic growth: directly via capital accumulation and indirectly via total productivity gains". According to Rietveld (1989: 256), "[r]egional development is not only the result of private production factors such as labour and capital but also of infrastructure. Improving infrastructure leads to a higher productivity of the other production factors". South Africa

is currently mostly in a passive strategy phase, juggling between basic service delivery and infrastructure investment. Investment in infrastructure usually only takes place once a bottleneck is dealt with due to private sector investment.

Waterson (1965: 17) concurs that economic growth and structural change are the two main aims of development planning. It remains to be seen whether South Africa's approach to national development planning will reach the goals of accelerated economic growth and structural change.

International case studies have shown that economic development initiatives need to be spatially focused in order to be successful; in other words, a balance needs to be achieved between suitable spatial application and broad socio-economic goals. To date, the 'spatial focus' in South Africa is lacking, and it could be argued that this may be the reason for the lacklustre implementation and insignificant results of the past 20 years' 'national' spatial plans/programmes. It is hoped that the envisaged NSDF will endeavour to strike this balance and facilitate a spatially focused national development plan.

## REFERENCES LIST

- AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (ANC). 1994. *The reconstruction and development programme*. Johannesburg: Umanyano.
- BELL, T. 1997. South African regional industrial development policy: Critical issues. *Transformation*, no. 32, pp. 1-30.
- BLACK, P. & ROUX, A. 1991. The spatial dimension of regional policy selectivity versus uniformity. *Development Southern Africa*, 8(4), pp. 445-488, November.
- BLOCH, R. 1989. Post-war regional planning: Theory and record. *The South African Journal of Economics*, 58(2), pp. 139-156, June.
- BOS, D.J. 1987. Ruimtelike ekonomiese implikasies van nywerheidsontwikkeling. Unpublished Dissertation (M. Art. et Scien.) Potchefstroom: PU for CHE.
- COUNCIL OF EUROPE (CoE). 1983. *European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter (Torremolinos Charter)*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- DREWES, J.E. 2000. Differential urbanisation and regional policy: The case of the Gauteng functional metropolitan region. Unpublished Thesis (Doctor Philosophiae in Urban and Regional Planning), Potchefstroom: PU for CHE.
- DREWES, J.E. & BOS, D.J. 1995. The Regional Industrial Development Programme: An evaluation. *South African Journal of Economics*, 63(2), pp. 247-270.
- DREWES, J.E. & KLEYNHANS, E. 2008. Re-evaluation of the Platinum SDI: A critical commentary. *Town and Regional Planning*, no. 53, pp. 1-9.
- FAIR, T.J.D. 1975. The National Physical Development Plan (NPDP): A summary and review. *South African Geographical Journal*, 57(2), pp. 126-133.
- FEDDERKE, J.W. & BOGETIC, Z. 2009. Infrastructure and growth in South Africa: Direct and indirect productivity impacts of 19 infrastructure measures. *World Development*, 37(9), pp. 1522-1539, September.
- FRIEDMANN, J. 1964. The concept of a planning region – the evolution of an idea in the United States. In: Friedmann, J. & Alonso, W. (eds), *Regional development and planning: A reader*. Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, pp. 497-518.
- GEYER, H.S. 1989. Industrial development policy in South Africa - the past, present and future. *World Development*, 17(3), pp. 379-396.
- GOODALL, B. 1987. *The Penguin Dictionary of Human Geography*. Middlesex: Penguin Books.
- GUMEDE, W. 2009. Comparative development planning. DBSA - Development Planning Division, Working paper series no. 6.
- HANSEN, N.M., HIGGINS, B. & SAVOIE, D.J. 1990. *Regional policy in a changing world*. New York: Plenum Press.
- HUGHES, S. 2005. The role of intergovernmental harmonization as a national policy response to promote sustainable service delivery and development in South Africa. Unpublished paper.
- LIGTHELM, A.A. & WILSENACH, A. 1993. A preliminary evaluation of the new RIDP and its impact on regional development in South Africa. *Development Southern Africa*, 10(3), pp. 361-381, August.
- LODI, J. 2006. A critical analysis of regional planning in South Africa in the

- 21<sup>st</sup> century. In: Mander, U., Brebbia, C.A. & Tiezzi, E. (eds), *The sustainable city IV: Urban regeneration and sustainability*. Southampton, Boston: WIT Press, pp. 251-262.
- LUIZ, J.M. & VAN DER WAAL, C.S. 1997. Re-evaluating South Africa's Regional Industrial Development Programme: Case studies from Brits and Nkowankowa. *Urban Forum*, 8(1), pp. 61-79.
- ORANJE, M. 2010. Post-apartheid national spatial development planning in South Africa – a brief history. *European Spatial Research and Policy*, 17(2), pp. 55-70.
- PLATZKY, L. 1995. The development impact of South Africa's industrial location policies: An unforeseen legacy. Unpublished thesis (Ph.D.). The Hague, The Netherlands, Institute of Social Studies.
- RICHARDSON, H.W. 1987. Whither national urban policy in developing countries? *Urban Studies*, 24(3), pp. 227-244.
- RIETVELD, P. 1989. Infrastructure and regional development: A survey of multiregional economic models. *The Annals of Regional Science*, 23(4), pp. 255-274.
- ROBBINS, G. 2008. Reflecting on South Africa's post-apartheid experience with spatially informed economic development programmes. Think piece for TIPS Forum, October.
- SOUTH AFRICA. 1995. *Development Facilitation Act, Act 67 of 1995*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- SOUTH AFRICA. BOARD FOR REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT. 1991. Regional Industrial Development Programme (RIDP). Incentive scheme introduced on 1 May 1991. Midrand: DBSA.
- SOUTH AFRICA. DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE. 1996. *Growth, employment and redistribution strategy*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- SOUTH AFRICA. DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. 1981. *Good Hope Plan*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- SOUTH AFRICA. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING. 1997a. *Urban Development Framework*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- SOUTH AFRICA. DEPARTMENT OF LAND AFFAIRS. 1997b. *Rural Development Framework*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- SOUTH AFRICA. DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND THE ENVIRONMENT. 1975. *National Physical Development Plan*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- SOUTH AFRICA. DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY. 1999. *Spatial development initiatives*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- SOUTH AFRICA. DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY. 2007. *National Industrial Policy Framework*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- SOUTH AFRICA. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT. 2010. *New growth path*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- SOUTH AFRICA. OFFICE FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT. 1991. *National Regional Development Programme: General overview*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- SOUTH AFRICA. THE PRESIDENCY. 2000. *Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- SOUTH AFRICA. THE PRESIDENCY. 2003. *National Spatial Development Perspective*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- SOUTH AFRICA. THE PRESIDENCY. 2006. *National Spatial Development Perspective*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- SOUTH AFRICA. THE PRESIDENCY. 2012. *Draft National Development Plan*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- STERN, E. 1985. Developing the inter-metropolitan periphery. *Town and Regional Planning*, no. 20, pp. 4-10, September.
- STÖHR, W.B. 1981. Development from below: The bottom-up and periphery-inward development paradigm. In: Stöhr, W.B. & Taylor, D.R.F. (eds), *Development from above or below?* New York: Wiley, pp. 39-72.
- STÖHR, W.B. & TAYLOR, D.R.F. 1981. Development from below: The bottom-up and periphery-inward development paradigm. In: Stöhr, W.B. & Taylor, D.R.F. (eds), *Development from above or below?* New York: Wiley, pp.1-22.
- WATERSON, A. 1965. *Development planning – Lessons of experience*. USA, Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press.
- WEBER, A. 1929. *Theory of location industries*. Chicago, ILL: University of Chicago Press.
- WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT. 2004. *People, places, futures: The Wales Spatial Plan*. Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government.
- WIESE, H. 1996. Regional industrial development strategies: A comparison of South African countries. Paper delivered at the EBM Research Conference. University of Port Elizabeth, 27-28 November.