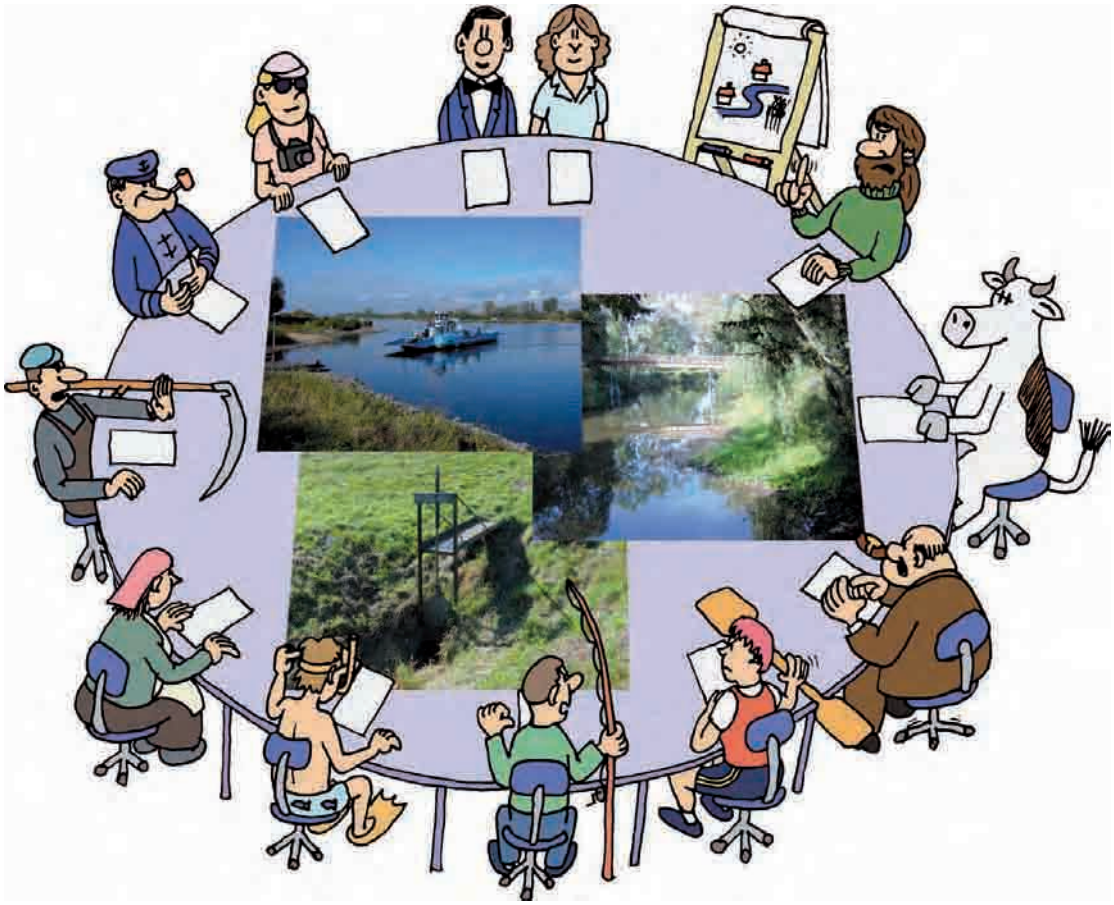
HARMONISING COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

HarmoniCOP



LEARNING TOGETHER TO MANAGE TOGETHER

– IMPROVING PARTICIPATION IN WATER MANAGEMENT –

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– IMPROVING PARTICIPATION IN WATER MANAGEMENT –

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Foreword

The development of environmental policies is a complex process, which mixes legal requirements with issues of technical feasibility, scientific knowledge and socio-economic aspects, requiring intensive multi-stakeholder consultations. In this context, the consideration of scientific progress represents one of the key aspects for the design of new policies and the review of existing ones. Within the European Union, this consideration is fully embedded into the Sixth Environmental Action programme which stipulates, namely, that "sound scientific knowledge and economic assessments, reliable and up-to-date environmental data and information, and the use of indicators will underpin the drawing-up, implementation and evaluation of environmental policy" (European Commission, 2001). This requires, therefore, that scientific inputs constantly feed the environmental policy process. This integration also involves various players, namely the scientific and policy-making communities but also representatives from industry, agriculture, NGOs etc., without forgetting the public in a broad sense.

Successful development, implementation and review of policies require collaborative planning and interactions among a wide range of actors in order to reach a common understanding. An example of successful consultation and concerted planning concerns the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC): a Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) has been agreed with the Member States and stakeholders and is operational since 2001 (European Commission, 2000), in the framework of which various topics are under discussion by experts from EU Member States, industry, agriculture, scientists etc. with the aim to gather and share knowledge and concern as seen from different perspectives. This approach, albeit time-consuming, has considerably enhanced the knowledge and common interpretation of the key provisions of the WFD, and it has been considered as a very powerful tool for sharing good practices.

Besides the sharing of information and good practices in water management among policy implementers and experts, the WFD implementation relies on information, consultation and involvement of the public, i.e. the directive encourages active involvement of a wide range of actors in its implementation process, and opens possibilities to interact with decision-makers at various steps of the river basin management planning (of which the first plan is to be formally published in 2009 pursuant to a public consultation in 2008). Despite comprehensive recommendations set out in the EU Guidance on Public Participation in relation to the Water Framework Directive which represent an authoritative interpretation of Article 14 of the WFD, practicalities for encouraging public active involvement are not described in details. It is a common understanding that we are all

"learning by doing" and shared experiences will help in consolidating a common water management approach at EU level.

The HarmoniCOP project paves the way for establishing practical solutions to enhance active involvement of all interested parties in the WFD implementation within the forthcoming years. The followed approach of social learning is not only about eliciting additional knowledge and improving the understanding of complex interconnected problems – as typical for water management issues. It also enables the different actors to better understand each others' perceptions of the problems which eventually helps to improve the relationships of actors and provides the basis for future sustainable collaboration and networking. This handbook "Learning together to manage together – Improving participation in water management" is very timely at a time where Member States are undertaking the first practical implementation steps of the WFD. On one hand the book explains why it makes sense to be more ambitious with participatory process than just informing or consulting stakeholders and the public. On the other, it provides the know how to create the right framework for a successful process. This publication will thus represent a key source of inspiration for WFD implementers and water managers.

Philippe Quevauviller
European Commission, DG Environment

CHAPTER 1: HOW TO START

CHAPTER 2: HOW TO MANAGE

Why use the book?

This handbook discusses public participation and social learning in river basin management. It has been written for water managers who are responsible for implementing the European Water Framework Directive. It contains ideas, approaches and methods for:

- *Building up trust among the different stakeholders*
- *Developing a common view on the issues at stake*
- *Resolving conflicts*
- *Arriving at joint solutions that are technically sound and implemented in practice*
- *Encouraging "active involvement of all interested parties" in river basin management as required by the European Water Framework Directive (WFD)*

The handbook will also be of interest to others involved in river basin management or in other types of natural resource management.

The Water Framework Directive and public participation

Water managers all over Europe are facing the challenge of implementing the Water Framework Directive (WFD). With few exceptions, all European water bodies should reach a "good water status" by 2015. To this end, river basin management plans and programmes of measures have to be developed. Moreover, the public should consulted be at three stages during the planning process and the "active involvement of all interested parties" should be encouraged (Box).

To support the implementation of the WFD, the EU Member States and the European Commission have developed a common implementation strategy. One of the outcomes of this strategy is the "Guidance on Public Participation in relation to the Water Framework Directive; active involvement, consultation, and public access to information on public participation". The guidance urges water managers not to forget the requirement to encourage active involvement. It describes active involvement as "a higher level of participation than consultation. [Active involvement] implies that stakeholders are invited to contribute actively to the planning process by discussing issues and contributing to their solution" (p. 11).

The public participation requirements of the Water Framework Directive

Public participation will play a key role in the implementation of the WFD. As preamble 14 puts it, "The success of this Directive relies on […] information, consultation and involvement of the public, including users." The WFD contains several public participation requirements:

1. The WFD contains a general requirement to encourage active involvement in the implementation of the WFD (art. 14.1, first sentence).
2. The WFD moreover requires three rounds of written consultation in the river basin management planning process. By December 2006 a timetable and work programme for the production of the plan have to be published, including a statement of the consultation measures to be taken. By December 2007 an interim overview of the significant water management issues has to be published. By December 2008 the draft river basin management plan has to be published. Member States shall allow the public at least six months to comment in writing on those documents (art. 14.1, second sentence, and art. 14.2).
3. The reactions of the public need to be collected and considered seriously (Annex VII point A9).
4. On request, access has to be given to background information (art. 14, Annex VII point A11).
5. Additional forms of public participation are not required by the WFD, but may be needed for reaching its ambitious environmental goals and ensuring its success (cf. preamble 14).

The guidance has been approved by the water directors and thereby constitutes an authoritative interpretation of the WFD. However, it does not contain much information on how to encourage active involvement in practice. The basin idea behind this handbook is that the best way to "encourage active involvement" is to foster social learning.

Social learning

Social learning means learning together to manage together (Section 1.1). It emphasises collaboration between the different stakeholders, starting at the earliest possible moment. It helps to build up trust, develop a common view on the issues at stake, resolve conflicts and arrive at joint solutions that are technically sound and actually implemented in practice. It helps all stakeholders to achieve better results than they could achieve otherwise.

Social learning is required whenever:

- different stakeholders depend on each other to reach their goals
- there is no agreement on the problems at stake

- the issues are important enough for the stakeholders to invest the necessary time (and therefore money)

Social learning is not something new. It happens whenever people with different goals and resources successfully manage a problem in which each has an interest. Often, however, special efforts are needed to promote it.

Reading guide

This handbook consists of three chapters. Chapter 1, "How to get started", forms the basis of the book. It introduces the social learning concept in more detail and discusses how to develop and initiate a participation strategy that fosters social learning. It discusses everything that needs to be considered before starting a participatory process.

Chapter 2, "How to manage", gives ideas and suggestions for managing participatory processes. It discusses issues such as the selection of locations and presents a number of methods and tools that can be used. Moreover, it discusses how to follow up a completed step of a participatory process as well as tricks to apply and traps to avoid during the process.

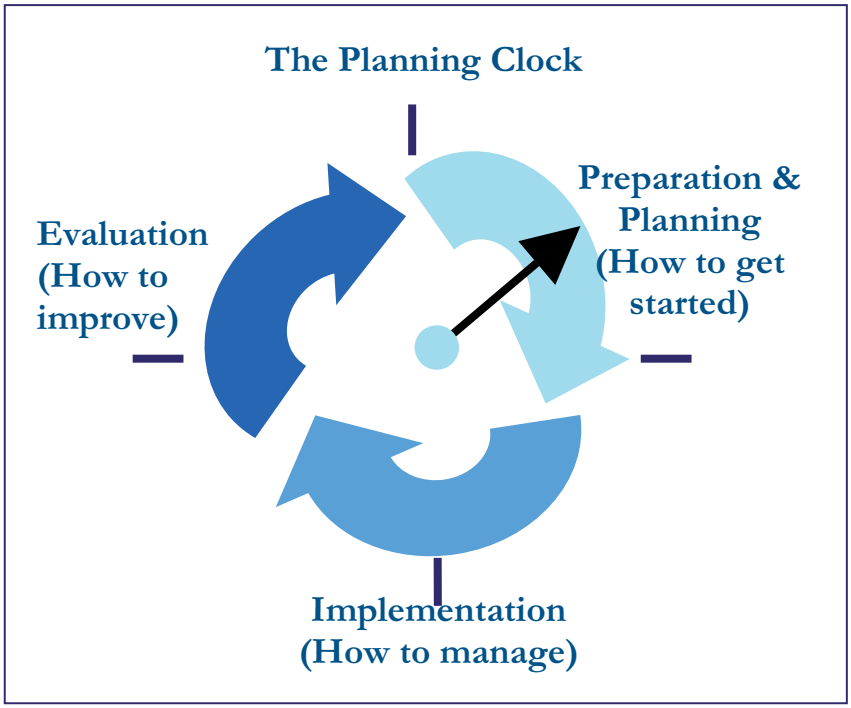
Chapter 3 'How to improve' gives information on monitoring and evaluation to improve current and future participatory processes. It presents an evaluation checklist and discusses how the lessons learned can be communicated to people that were not involved in the process.

The appendix, "How this handbook developed", at the end of the handbook describes the background and objectives of the HarmoniCOP project, of which this handbook is one of the results. Moreover, it describes and evaluates the development of the handbook as a social learning process in its own right.

The boxes in the handbook present practical experiences from the case studies that were conducted as part of the HarmoniCOP project. The full case studies can be downloaded from the project's website (www.harmonicop.info).

To facilitate navigation though the handbook, the colours in the upper part of the pages refer to the different phases in the public participation process as indicated in the following "Planning clock" (next page).

The handbook concludes with a glossary.



Further reading

At the end of each section more suggestions for further reading are given in relation to the topics dealt with. All reports written in the HarmoniCOP project can be downloaded on www.harmonicop.info.

Chapter 1

HOW TO START

This chapter helps to develop a participation strategy. It explains:

- *The concept of public participation and social learning*
- *How to design the participatory process in cooperation with the other stakeholders*
- *How to develop a participation strategy*

1.1 Public participation and social learning

Participation

The public includes all individuals, organizations and associations that do not perform official government functions. Three different levels of participation can be distinguished:

Different levels of participation

Information:
The lowest level of participation is providing access to information and disseminating information actively. Sufficient information supply is a prerequiite for meaningful involvement of the public and moreover it is often legally required.

Consultation:
Consultation means that the public can react to government proposals. In many planning procedures it is legally required to publish drafts and allow the public some time to make comments in writing. Other forms of consultation include oral consultation and surveys.

Active involvement:
Active involvement implies a more involved role for the public. The public may:

- have discussions with the authorities
- help to determine the policy agenda
- help to develop solutions
- be involved in taking decisions
- participate in implementation

- become fully responsible for (part of the) river basin management

A brief note on terminology
In this book *stakeholder* includes all persons, groups and organisations with an interest or "stake" in an issue, either because they will be affected or because they may have some influence on its outcome. This includes individual citizens and companies, economic and public interest groups, government bodies and experts.
Public includes all non-governmental stakeholders.
Please note that some authors use these terms in a different, more narrow sense.

Social learning

Social learning processes play a central role in the new public participation concept. Summarised in one sentence, social learning means:

Learning together to manage together

RBM is too complex to be managed without the involvement of others

Social learning means learning by all stakeholders to manage the issues in which they have a stake. They need to manage together since, typically, no one has all the necessary legal, financial and other resources to do this satisfactorily on his or her own. To manage together, they need to learn not only about the technical aspects of River Basin Management (RBM). They also need to learn about and recognise each other's concerns and points of view. They need to arrive at a shared understanding of the issues at stake and of possible solutions. In the end, they need to reach an agreement and pool resources to implement this agreement.

In the short run, social learning results in RBM that better serves the interest of all stakeholders that were included. In the long run, it can also result in improved management capacities. Trust may develop, relations may improve, new skills may be acquired and new knowledge and insights may be obtained. Institutions may even change.

Social learning is based on dialogue. The dialogue should contain the following elements:

Key elements of social learning

- Recognition of stakeholder interdependence
- Interaction between all stakeholders
- A minimum degree of openness and trust
- Critical self-reflection by all participants as to (1) their goals and interests, (2) their assumptions about the system to be managed, and (3) how their actions affect the other participants
- The development of a shared perception of the problems. Complete consensus is not needed, but everybody needs to recognise each other's perception of the problem
- The development and critical assessment of potential solutions

- Joint decision-making, based on reciprocity (give-and-take) and commitment
- Arrangements to promote implementation of decisions

The Hungarian Dialogue on Water for Food and Environment

In Hungary, agricultural water management is facing a number of issues. Groundwater levels are dropping due to over-abstraction and drought, aquatic ecosystems are threatened and industrial animal farms cause a lot of pollution. Many land-owners have no farming practice and their economic position is weak. Moreover, since May 2004 Hungary is a member of the EU. This means that Hungary has to meet the requirements of the WFD.
Against this background, Global Water Partnership Hungary organised the Hungarian Dialogue on Water for Food and Environment in cooperation with two ministries, two professional organisations, the Budapest University of Technology and Economics and the National Union of Water Management Associations. The general objective of the Dialogue was to reach "good water status" for all Hungarian waters by 2015 and to ensure sustainable development of agriculture. The Dialogue aimed at the successful implementation of the WFD in the field of agricultural water management by involving all stakeholders.

In the Dialogue twenty-three meetings were organised throughout the country with representatives of Hungary's 76 water management associations. The meetings consisted of two parts: a plenary morning session with presentations and, in the afternoon, small-group parallel sessions in which topics could be discussed that were suggested by the participants themselves. The meetings organised in Spring 2003 focused on introducing the WFD. The meetings in Autumn 2004 discussed the European Commission's document *The Water Framework Directive and tools within the Common Agricultural Policy to support its implementation*. The Dialogue has created more knowledge and understanding of the WFD and its implications. Moreover, the Dialogue has resulted in several changes in the official Hungarian response to the European Commission's document on the WFD and the Common Agricultural Policy. Finally, the Dialogue has led to new and better relations and better mutual understanding between the different stakeholders. Four water management associations have agreed with WWF-Hungary to setup pilot projects for the planning of measures to reach "good water status" and/or reactivate former floodplains. Beforehand, this would not have been possible.

The social learning concept of this handbook overlaps with approaches such as interactive planning or open decision-making. Insights from these approaches are also incorporated in the present handbook. What sets the social learning concept apart are not so much the individual elements, but their combination and the emphasis on learning processes and change.

Government shares responsibility to gain power

A fundamental issue concerning social learning is the role of government. Does social learning imply that government has to abandon its power? Does it become just one of the stakeholders? The answer is no. Government bodies will always have a special role and unique resources, such as regulatory power. They cannot and do not have to abandon their responsibilities. Social learning is a means for government bodies to fulfil their responsibilities more effectively. It means sharing responsibility in order to increase effectiveness, or, put differently, to gain power.

Finally, social learning is not about talking, but about doing. It is not just a theory or a new fashionable concept, it is about managing water in a specific way. The remainder of this handbook will therefore not talk much about social learning but will show how it can be put into practice.

Four words of caution

Social learning is resource intensive
Social learning processes often take a lot of time and money of both water managers and the other stakeholders. Social learning processes should only be embarked upon for issues that are important for the stakeholders, not for relatively minor issues.

Outcomes are open
The outcomes of social learning cannot be predetermined: they are determined by the participants in the social learning process. Essentials for the outcome are who is involved and what information and influence they have.

Social learning requires sharing of responsibilities
If government tries to impose its view on the issues at stake and limits the range of possible outcomes too much, the other stakeholders may lose interest in participation. They may opt for confrontation instead of co-operation. If government shares responsibility with stakeholders it can increase its effectiveness.

Social learning cannot be imposed
A facilitator of a participatory process can professionally prepare the setting and create enabling conditions for participation and social learning to occur. He or she cannot however impose participation or social learning. A leader can inspire with a powerful vision, but it takes the will, courage, maturity and effort of the stakeholders to actually engage into good manners of relations that form the basis for social learning.

Further reading:

Craps, M. (ed.) (2003): Social learning in river basin management; HarmoniCOP WP2 reference document, Leuven, COPP (download under www.harmonicop.info)

Drafting Group (2002): Guidance on Public Participation in relation to the Water Framework Directive; Active involvement, consultation, and public

access to information, Prepared in the Framework of the Common Implementation Strategy of the European Commission and the EU Member States. (http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/env/wfd/library)

Gray, B. (1989): Collaborating: finding common ground for multiparty problems, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.

Tabara, D. Integration Report. HarmoniCOP WP6 report; www.harmonicop.info

1.2 General principles

For participatory processes to become a success, they should respect four general principles:

- Openness
- Protection of core values
- Speed
- Substance

1.2.1 Openness

Openness implies that the initiator adopts an open attitude and does not take unilateral decisions. Other stakeholders must have the opportunity to influence the agenda and the decisions, or else the process cannot benefit from their co-operation.

The key question concerning openness is: who should be involved? In general terms, four groups of stakeholders can be identified:

1. Stakeholders that possess resources that may improve the quality of the decision, such as (local) information, expertise and creativity.
2. Stakeholders that possess resources necessary for implementing the decision, such as money, legal authority, good connections and physical resources.
3. Stakeholders that can block decision-making or implementation, e.g. by withholding approval, by legal action or by political pressure.
4. Stakeholders, such as the local population, who do not necessarily possess the necessary resources or blocking power.

Not everybody wants to or can participate

Not every party that meets these requirements wants or needs to be involved at all stages of decision making. Particular stakeholders need to be involved from the start; others are only consulted or give advice; others function as experts, etc. (see also 1.5).

Participants should preferably have authority, the commitment and be able to decide on behalf of the group or organisation they represent. As a

minimum, it should be clear whether they represent their group or organisation or their own personal view. When representatives or spokespersons have an insufficient mandate, time-consuming consultation with the respective constituencies is required.

The design of the decision-making process should be transparent. It should be clear what the ground rules are (see 2.1.1), how core values are protected, how decisions are reached and who will be involved at each stage. Preferably, substantive choices should not be made beforehand, but during the process.

1.2.2 Protection of core values

Openness alone is not enough for engaging stakeholders to participate. When stakeholders feel that their livelihood and their identity may be threatened, they will not join in. If they are already in, they will out of distrust constantly try to delay the process. All stakeholders must feel confident that their core values will not be harmed, regardless of the outcome. This will create a safe environment for discussion and, eventually, decision-making.

Ask commitment to the process, not to the content

An important mechanism for protecting core values is to allow stakeholders not to commit themselves beforehand to the substantial outcomes of the process that they may participate in. All that is asked is commitment to the process itself. This also implies that stakeholders do not have to commit themselves to sub-decisions early in the process. In complex processes, sub-decisions often lead up to a final decision, and commitment to sub-decisions may be perceived as a trap and as passing a point of no return. Postponement of sub-decisions and the creation of exit rules will prevent this trap.

When parties can exit, they are more likely to enter

Exit rules allow stakeholders to leave the process at given moments and reduce the risk of participation in a process that 'heads in the wrong way'. In practice the process, once it has been started, often becomes so attractive to the stakeholders that exiting is no longer a realistic option.

1.2.3 Speed

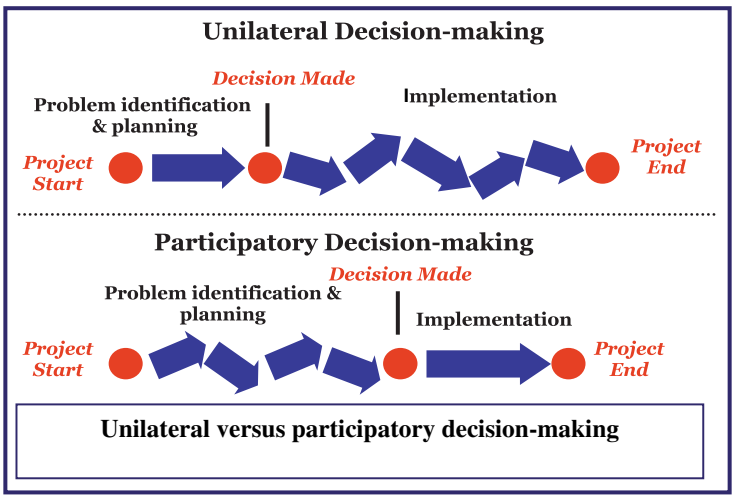
In addition, sufficient speed and progress is required. Proper methods and procedures combined with clear and realistic deadlines will make people progress.

All parties should have the prospect of gain

The best incentive for cooperative behaviour is the prospect of 'gain'. Temporary losses can be accepted when continued participation holds the promise of future gains. 'Gains' should not be reached too early in the process as stakeholders tend to behave opportunistically and may step out. Sub-decisions may be postponed for that reason and the opportunity for maximum gains should be at the end of the process.

In the implementation of the WFD, the different deadlines put an external time pressure on the process. This legitimises efforts by the facilitator to promote speed and progress

Participatory decision-making processes usually takes much more time than unilateral decision-making by the water manager. However, as illustrated in the figure, this is usually more than offset by time gains in the implementation phase.



Unilateral versus participatory decision-making

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1.2.4 Substance

Last but not least substance should not be forgotten. All stakeholders should get sufficient protection and the guarantee of progress and not be sent home with agreements that are not technically feasible, do not deliver the expected benefits or are disproportionately expensive.

Experts have an essential, supportive role to play

Although engineers and scientists tend to think substance is vital, substance does not determine a decision-making process. It is impossible to solve problems on the basis of objective information alone. The process manager should structure the process in such a way that sufficient substantive insight is present, for instance, by involving engineers and scientists alongside the stakeholders. These experts can support the other stakeholders to find out what is technically possible and what is not, what the effects of different alternatives are and which views are tenable and which are not. In addition, there should be ample room for local information and expertise. The role of the technical and scientific experts and "lay experts" should be clear and their potential contributions to the process should be acknowledged.

Information that is accepted as correct or tenable should be made available to all participants. Information management is crucial to reach substantially valid process outcomes and the process manager should pay due attention to this aspect.

Learning requires variety

Substantive quality is reached through a process of increasing variety and then selection. Many different alternatives need to be developed and discussed as it offers participants maximum chances of learning. Variety also improves the quality of the solutions and makes the winning option more authoritative. (An alternative that is chosen from among several

serious alternatives is more convincing than if only one alternative is developed.) When stakeholders start repeating facts and views, it is time to start the process of selecting the "best" alternative. Selection preferably takes place on the basis of clear criteria that are agreed upon by the participants.

The following table provides an overview of the general principles.

The design principles in brief

Openness	1. All relevant stakeholders should be able to participate in the decision-making process 2. The participants in the process should have power to commit to the process 3. The process and its management should be transparent
Protection of core values	4. The process should respect and not threaten the livelihood and identity of the different stakeholders 5. Stakeholders should commit themselves to the process 6. The process should offer participants an exit option
Speed	7. The process should create prospects of gain and incentives for cooperation 8. Third parties and external developments may be used to speed it up 9. Conflicts should be transferred to the periphery of the process (e.g. to a special group so as not to threaten progress)
Substance	10. The roles of scientific and technical experts and other stakeholders should be clear 11. The process should first result in several alternatives of which one or more can be later selected.

Further reading:

Bruijn, H. d., E. ten Heuvelhof, and R. in 't Veld. 2002. Process management. Why project management fails in complex decision making processes. Kluwer Academic, Dordrecht.

Enserink, B., and R. A. H. Monnikhof. 2003. Impact Assessment and public participation: Facilitating co-design by information management - an example from the Netherlands. Journal of Environmental Planning and Management 46:315-344.

1.3 Problem identification

Water managers initiating a social learning process usually have a rough idea of the problem that needs to be solved. The problem might, for instance, be the requirement from the WFD, to reach a "good water status" by 2015. But this rough idea may not be enough. A detailed analysis of the problem and its causes is needed. The result will consist of several causal chains and networks.

Different problem perceptions exist

Moreover, the different stakeholders may see the problems of river basin management quite differently. A farmer may be more interested in good conditions for economically viable farming whilst households and industries may be primarily interested in acceptable (low) water prices. These are also legitimate points of views. It is important not to define the problem too early and too strictly. There should be room for the concerns and points of views of the other stakeholders. This will raise and maintain their interest in participation and allow better, more inclusive solutions.

To get a first idea of the perception of problems held by the other stakeholders, stakeholder analysis, as outlined in the following section may help.

1.4 Stakeholder and context analysis

Get to know your partners!

Stakeholder analysis is a technique for getting to know the people, groups and organisations that may influence the success of a project or may be affected by it. Key questions to be answered by a stakeholder analysis are the following:

- Who are the major stakeholders?
- What are their relationships with each other?
- Are there any conflicts?
- How do they see the problem (as provisionally identified by the initiator)?
- What are their major concerns and how can they be motivated to participate?

Who are the major stakeholders?

The first step in a stakeholder analysis is always to make a preliminary list of stakeholders. The initiator can make this list using his general knowledge of the problem at stake, his initial problem analysis (section 1.3), his experience, former project reports, conversations with project partners, etc. One possibility for making the preliminary list is to organise an internal brainstorm meeting.

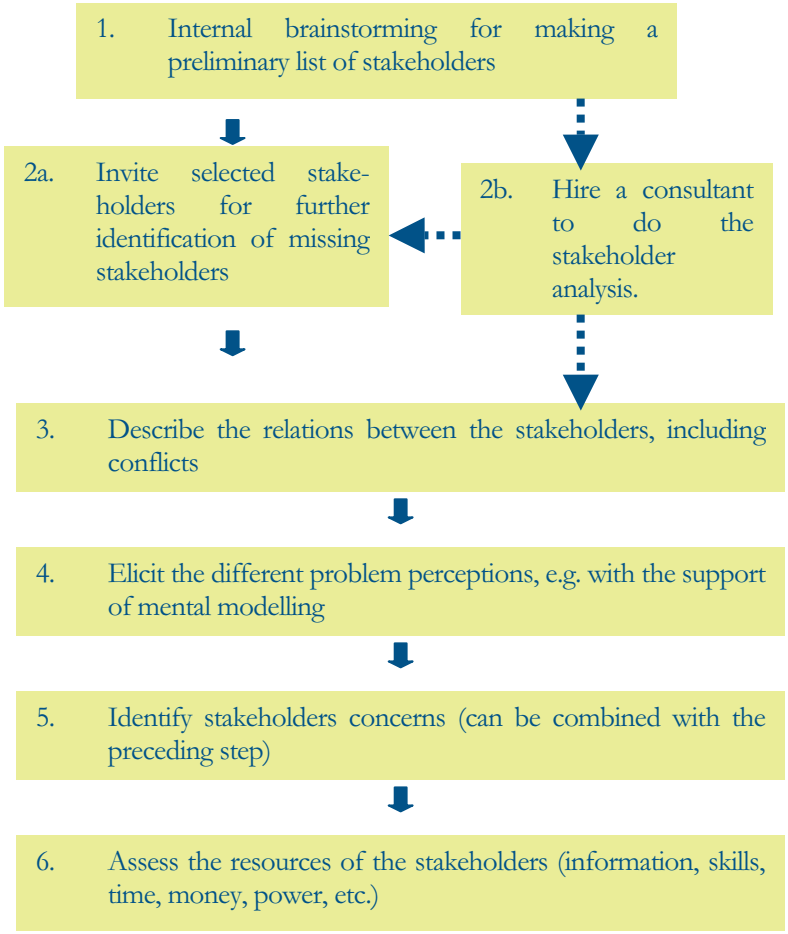
The preliminary list of stakeholders can be complemented in different ways. One way is to ask the stakeholders on the list to identify the

stakeholders they know and characterise them in terms of the criteria mentioned in section 1.2.1:

- Can they contribute to decision-making?
- Are they needed for implementation?
- Can they block decision-making or implementation?
- Are they affected by or do they have an interest in the issues at stake?

It is easy to overlook stakeholders

Possible steps in a Stakeholder Analysis



Another way is to establish a preliminary stakeholder group and organise a brainstorm meeting of this group or use another moderated group technique. This may be preferable because, in this way, the stakeholders learn more about each other and their interdependencies.

A third option is to hire a consultant to do a formal stakeholder analysis. He or she can use any or all of the techniques mentioned above.

Relationships and conflicts

Informal activities can help improve relations

The relationships between the different stakeholders are important ingredients in social learning. Are these generally good or are there conflicts? Is there any negative stereotyping? Do some people have

personal antipathies? Is there a history of co-operation? Are their any hierarchical relations between different stakeholders or other forms of interdependence?

The relationships can be elicited by asking the stakeholders questions about the other stakeholders and comparing and analysing the answers. For instance, the four questions outlined above can be complemented by a fifth one: what are your experiences with the different stakeholders?

Depending on the existing relationships, more or less time needs to be devoted to socialising and building up trust. Specific representatives from organisations and groups may be invited. Interactions later on in the process can be better understood and appropriate action can be taken.

Problem perception

Conflicts can result from different problem perceptions and a lack of acknowledgment of these differences. A stakeholder analysis should therefore always include an assessment of how the different stakeholders see the issues at stake. These perceptions might be very different from that belonging to the initiator.

Different professional, institutional and disciplinary backgrounds often go hand in hand with different value systems and different problem perceptions. Stakeholders may have private perceptions of a problem that differ from the official position of the group or organisation that they represent. It is very important to distinguish between the two.

Eliciting stakeholders' perceptions

A way to involve stakeholders and the public into the participation process is to take into account what data, knowledge, values, expertise, documents (reports, photos, ...), etc. they possess. This also allows one to maximise the amount of knowledge available to understand the complexity of the river basin system.

Problem perceptions can be elicited in different ways. Official positions of organisation can be found on their webpage and in official reports, etc. More details can be obtained by asking the stakeholders concerned. Unofficial positions – which may differ from the official ones - can also be obtained in this way, provided the initiator or his consultant has a good rapport with the stakeholder concerned and confidentiality is respected. In addition, the past activities of the stakeholders can be analysed and other stakeholders can provide information. Mental modelling could be a helpful tool for collecting and analysing data (see also section 1.6 and the index cards "Spatial mental modelling" in section 2.4).

Motivation and concerns

Address stakeholders' concerns

To ensure a satisfactory level of participation, it is also important that the stakeholders perceive that their involvement is an opportunity to fulfil some of their own interests and demands, and that they can profit from such interaction. The topic that is going to be discussed in a participatory process should therefore reflect the concerns and interests of all stakeholders that should participate, not just those of the initiator.
The elicitation of the problem perception discussed in the previous section is therefore not limited to the problem as defined by the initiator, but shows what is really important for the stakeholders.

Resources

What the stakeholders can contribute…

The resources that the different stakeholders can bring to the process include time, money, skills, information, legal competencies and influence. The resources of the different stakeholders determine whether they could contribute to the quality of decision-making and whether they could contribute to or obstruct implementation of the decision. Moreover, they also determine whether the pertinent stakeholder can participate meaningfully to the participation process itself. A specific stakeholder may, for instance, possess very relevant information. However, if he or she is easily intimated by authorities or experts, or if he or she simple lacks the funds to travel, special arrangements may need to be made to ensure that the process can benefit from his or her contribution in which they operate.

Context analysis

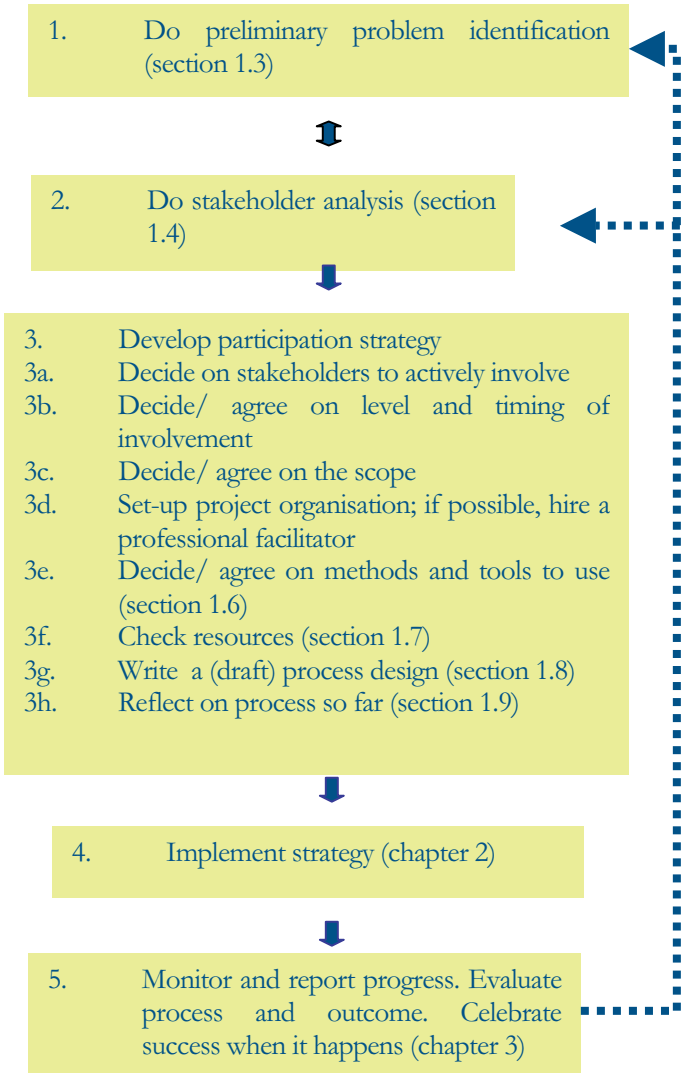
Need for political commitment, organisational flexibility and capacity

A proper stakeholder analysis is impossible without a broader contextual analysis. Stakeholders do not operate in a vacuum. Their relationships, problem perceptions, motivations and resources are influenced by the broader social, cultural, political, institutional and legal context in which they operate.

The context may constrain the possibilities for meaningful participatory processes. Important areas of attention include the following:

1. Political commitment: Authorities might have difficulties in valueing participation. They have to learn that listening to the knowledge, insight and solutions of stakeholders can enhance decision making in RBM. Moreover, they have to make sufficient funds available for organising participation (section 1.7).

2. Organisational change: Organisations may lack the necessary skills for organising participatory processes (see also section 1.7 and 2.2.2) and internal procedures may be too rigid and time-consuming to cope with the dynamic nature of participatory processes.



The participation process in brief

3. Capacity building and representation of stakeholders: skills of authorities as well as of stakeholders might not be sufficient to lead to a successful participation process automatically. The building up of knowledge, communication skills, trust and the willingness to take on responsibility for common decisions is a crucial process.

1.5 Participation strategy

Following the stakeholder analysis, it is time to determine the participation strategy. This strategy should address the following questions:

1. Why should people participate – or what is expected from their participation?
2. Who should participate?
3. When should they be involved and to what extent?
4. What kind of issues should be tackled - what will be the scope?
5. What type of project organisation is needed and who will facilitate the process?
6. Which methods and tools will be used (section 1.6)?
7. What resources are needed (see section 1.7)?

To promote participation by the stakeholders, the participation strategy should be discussed with them and should take their concerns and interests into account. Failing to do so may make participation unattractive and decreases the legitimacy of the process.

Why should people participate?

From the point of view of the initiator, several reasons can be given for organising participatory processes (c.f. 1.2.1).

Can they contribute to decision-making?	➔	Participation to improve the quality of plans and projects
Are they needed for implementation? Can they block decision-making or implementation?	➔	Participation to improve implementation of plans and prevent litigation and (costly) delays
Are they affected by or do they have an interest in the issues at stake?	➔	Participation for "moral" reasons, to complement representative democracy and protect individual rights
Is participation legally required?	➔	Participation to meet legal requirements
Is there a gap between the citizens and politicians?	➔	Participation to promote active citizenship

Participation may have several goals simultaneously

Often, there will be more than one reason. The WFD requires participation, but at the same time it can be used to improve plans and projects and their implementation, help protect individual rights and help bridge the gap between citizens and politicians if one exists.

Increased awareness may reduce resistance
In the Bacchiglione Basin in Italy, the engagement of stakeholders was initiated primarily because of initial resistance to the introduction of a new wastewater treatment plant. The knowledge of different stakeholder groupings was compared and explored in terms of developing different solutions. This process enabled stakeholders to become more aware of the water quality problems facing the river basin.

Who should participate?

A key issue in participation is who should participate. This follows from the reasons for participation outlined above. Additional factors to be considered include:

- Maximum representation of diversity
- The willingness of the stakeholder to cooperate
- The total number of participants: the smaller the group, the bigger the chance for learning to occur (and the cheaper the process)

Consideration of these factors may lead to conflicting conclusions. For example, inviting almost every stakeholder to ensure the variety of represented perspectives may lead to a very large group of participants, thus inhibiting the learning process. In each case a balance has to be struck between different considerations.

Groups of stakeholders may vary in their composition according to local, regional and national scale of water management:
Thuringia is one of the federal states of Germany. In regard to the WFD, participation was introduced at two geographical scale levels: the state and the regional level
The water authorities invited the organised stakeholder through their umbrella organisations or directly through an invitation to all organisations considered as relevant to participate in the implementation process of the WFD. The representation differed according to scale. At the state level, stakeholders were invited to become member of the advisory board, if they were active in all regions. At the regional level, stakeholders who were active in that region were invited to regional fora. Hence, stakeholders that were only active in one particular region of Thuringia were not represented at the state level. E.g. tourism stakeholders were represented at regional scale (in regional fora) but were not part of the state level advisory board because tourism was not of importance for all parts of the basin.

In case of participation addressing the public at large, deliberative participation processes cannot provide representative results in a strict statistical sense given the relatively small size of the groups. However, such processes can provide very useful indicative insights.

Make it attractive for the stakeholders to participate...

Inviting people to participate does not mean that they will actually participate. Not only should the reasons for the participatory process be

explained to the different stakeholders, but also how it can benefit them. In addition, travel costs can be reimbursed. High-level experts may have to be offered a professional fee when participation is not in their own interest. A certificate or some other proof of attendance (which may be needed by participants to show to their employers) can also be issued. Obviously, this should all be budgeted for (section 1.7).

.... but should you pay them for their time?

The initiator may also consider to compensate people for the time they have spent participating. This also is a recognition by the organisers of the value they attach to participation. On the other hand, it may attract some participants for the wrong reasons and may give other participants the impression that those receiving money are participating for the wrong reasons, thus lowering their appreciation of the participatory process.

Targeted invitations and specific incentives are important for ensuring a balanced representation. Otherwise, some sectors run the risk of being under-represented or, as is often the case, that the same people participate time and again.

Finally, it is important that stakeholders that do participate have an equal capacity and possibility to develop their arguments and contribute to the process.

Multi-Scale Planning:
The objective of the Dutch project, based on the integrated planning of the river Meuse, was to investigate whether increasing peak discharge due to climate change can be accommodated through widening the river. The stakeholders included national government, regional water boards, local municipalities and NGOs. During the participation process, it became clear that initial discussions on the issue remained too abstract for many stakeholders. Stakeholders started to become motivated to participate only once concrete measures at the local level were discussed. This shows that the problem that is discussed and the information that is presented should reflect the concerns of the stakeholders and should be made as concrete as possible.

When should stakeholders participate and to which extent?

The role and involvement of stakeholders changes at different stages of the river basin management process. As a general rule, stakeholders should be involved as early as possible. The WFD recommends active involvement from December 2000 onwards. Early and active involvement also increases the chance of better quality plans and project, better implementation and a smaller gap between politicians and citizens, if one exists. Early involvement of stakeholders may initially take more time, but it may save time later on.

Usually, active involvement at an early stage works best

A high level of participation is especially called for when:

- different stakeholders depend on each other to reach their goals
- there is no agreement on the problems at stake
- the issues are important enough for the stakeholders to invest the necessary time and money

Not every problem requires active involvement of stakeholders at all stages. Whether, and how, stakeholders are actively involved, consulted or only informed at a particular stage of the planning process also depends on the resources of the initiator and the other stakeholders (section 1.7). Smaller groups increase the possibility of successful active involvement.

Consultation and information complement a participatory process that is mainly based on active involvement. Tools like questionnaires are typically used in a traditional public participation approach to know more about stakeholders. These tools remain relevant. All that changes is that the goal of the process shifts from integrating perspectives of stakeholders in the planning process – to integrating the stakeholders themselves.

Scope

Early on in participatory processes, agreement needs to be reached about the scope of the process: the problem and how much of it is up for public debate. For instance, are participants allowed to question the need for a sewage treatment plant when compared to other measures, or are they allowed only to discuss the choice of the location and the technology to be used?

Discuss the scope and be clear about it!

The scope is initially determined by the initiator (section 1.3). However, a water managers problem definition rarely corresponds completely to the problem definition of other stakeholders. After conducting a stakeholder analysis, the initiator may decide to modify the scope of the process in order to incorporate other stakeholders' concerns and points of view. This will help to make the process attractive for the other stakeholders and to ensure their participation.

It is always good to organise a discussion with the other stakeholders to check whether the scope is acceptable for them and adjust it if necessary. The scope may also be determined together with the non-governmental stakeholders. Whoever determines the scope, it may be necessary to review it later in the process.

Project organisation and facilitation

Participatory processes require organisation and an organising team. Depending on the complexity of the project, the organising team can range from one dedicated staff member from the initiating organisation, to an elaborate structure with a project group, a bureau with supporting staff and a steering group with representatives from several organisations.

Usually, the organising team includes only representatives from different government bodies. It is indeed very important that they co-operate well because the serious follow-up of participatory processes usually requires coordinated action by several government bodies. However, there are no reasons why non-governmental stakeholders cannot be included.

External facilitators can increase the legitimacy of the process

An important issue is whether to hire an independent professional facilitator. The answer depends on several factors:

- Level of participation
- Available expertise on the side of the initiator
- Contentiousness of the issue

Higher levels of participation are usually more complex than lower levels and therefore require more expertise. This expertise may not be available in the initiating organisation and therefore a professional facilitator may need to be hired. But even if this expertise is available, it may be wise to hire an external facilitator. In contentious cases, a facilitator that is not seen as independent may threaten the legitimacy of the process (c.f. section 2.2.2).

Further Reading:

Davenport, Th. E. (2003). The Watershed Project Management Guide, Lewis Publishers, Florida.

1.6 Choosing methods and tools

Choice of methods and tools deserves much attention

This section discusses the choice of methods to interact with stakeholders and tools to support such interaction. The diversity of methods and tools makes the choice of the 'right' ones to use a very difficult one. The choice should respect the general principles outlined in section 1.2 (see also table below).

Principle	Implications for methods and tools
Openness	■ Use methods and tools to make information accessible ■ Process of choosing and using methods and tools should be transparent ■ Share control on data, methods and tools with stakeholders
Protection of core values	■ Use methods and tools to explicate different points of views, local knowledge and tacit knowledge ■ Build on local knowledge in using methods and tools ■ Allow for flexibility and be prepared to modify/adapt methods and tools as circumstances dictate
Speed	■ Use a variety of methods and tools to speed up process ■ Encourage collaboration and convergence of problem perceptions
Substance	■ Use of tools to gain system knowledge and understanding ■ Record and document activities and outcomes

Costs and the internet

The internet offers possibilities, but also has some limitations

The costs of methods and tools differ widely. Modelling and other expert information tools can be very costly, especially if large amounts of data have to be collected or bought. Internet chat rooms and public web sites are far less expensive than face-to-face meetings. Internet can also be used to create a 'virtual learning community'. Such communities may be useful for more "technical" topics. Compared to face-to-face interaction, they are less effective for topics that require in-depth exploration of worldviews, values and interests.

Diversity of tools and experimentation

To engage different types of stakeholders in the process, it is worth investing time and money in adopting a variety of engagement methods and tools. Typically a participatory process should not be confined to one tool or method but should use a range of different methods. This can also help to raise awareness about a wider collection of issues, or simply help address the problem in a different way.

More complex issues will usually need several sessions with the same people. If the aim is to arrive at a particular agreement or decision, it is important that the participants have a say in deciding the number and duration of the meetings. In a group of 6-12 people, it is common to carry sessions of two to two and half hours, although evidently, this depends on the background of the participants, the type of issues at stake, or the input material used to support the discussion. People should be consulted on these matters.

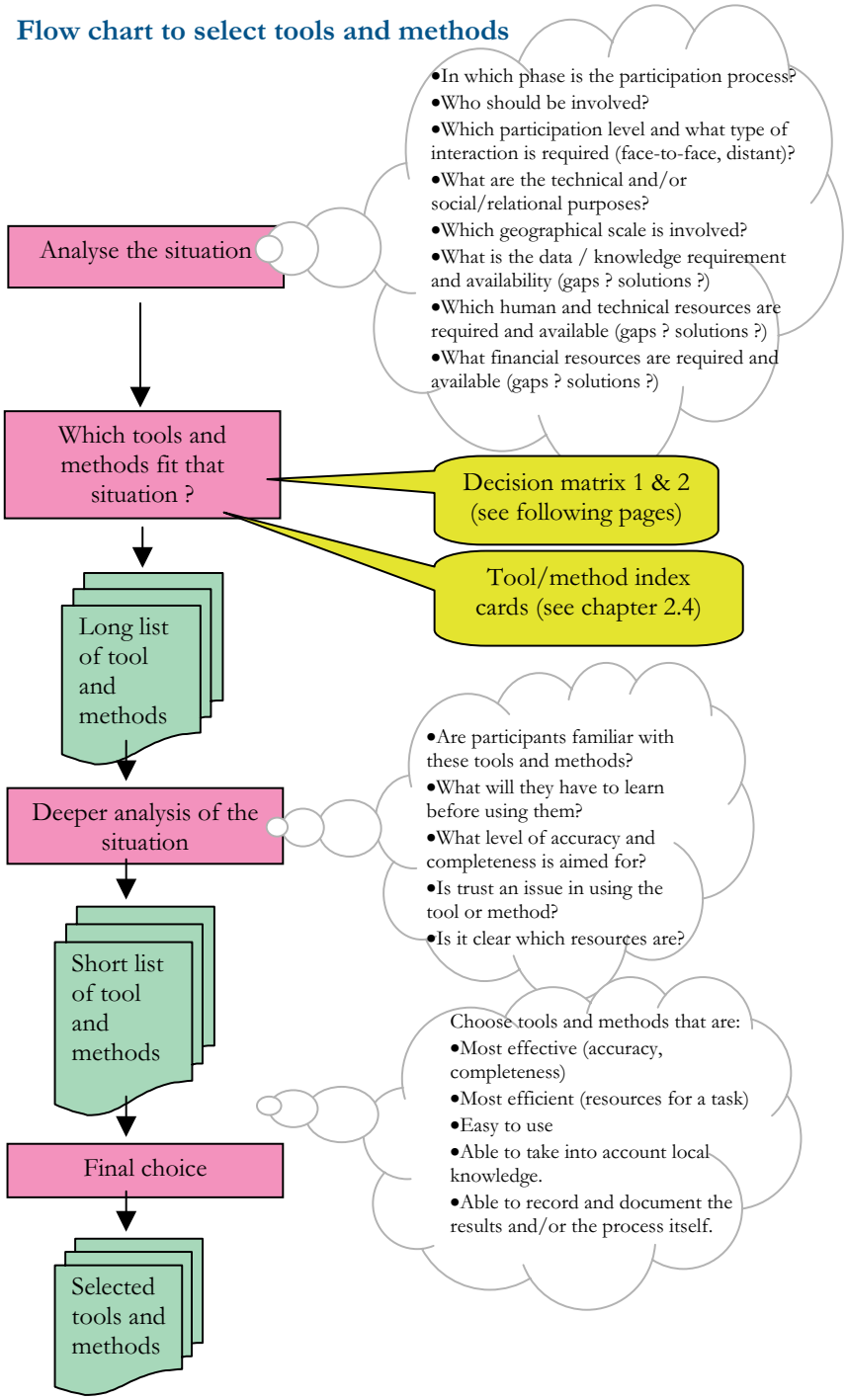
Simple tools are usually the best

The use of too many methods and tools can also be counterproductive, especially if they are complex, high-tech and unfamiliar to the stakeholders. Often, a simple group discussion session can serve as a useful engagement tool, with little need for other more elaborate methods. It is important to prevent 'tool fetishism'.

Procedure

The following flow chart can help to select the most appropriate methods and tools in a specific context. A number of steps in the above mentioned flow chart refer to "decision matrix 1" and "decision matrix 2". Decision matrix 1 presents a list of methods and tools that can support participation and social learning for the WFD. Decision-matrix 2 presents which tools can be combined with which method.

Flow chart to select tools and methods



TIP **This assessment can be done at different levels: the national level, the river basin district level, the local level, etc.**

Different phases and participation levels require different methods and tools

Certain methods and tools may be more appropriate than others to be used in specific stages of the participation process. Following the structure of this handbook, "decision matrix 1" distinguishes between three different phases:

- starting (developing and initiating a participation strategy)
- managing (implementing) and
- improving (monitoring and evaluating) a participation strategy

Moreover, some methods and tools may be more appropriate than others for certain participation levels. "Decision matrix 1" distinguishes between three different participation levels (CIS guidance document No. 8):

- information (co-knowing)
- consultation (co-thinking)
- active involvement (co-operating)

For each phase and level, the applicability of the methods and tools may be high (■), medium (●), or low (▲).

A number of methods and tools that are not already described in existing guidance documents (cf. references) are presented in more detail in section 2.4.

			Criteria	PP Phase			PP level		
				■	■	■			
Name of tool or method	**Short description**	**Ref (*)**	Starting	Managing	Improving	Information	Consultation	Active Involvement
Methods								
Brainstorming	Workshop setting focused on the collection of a large number of ideas on a specific subject	1	■	■	●	▲	●	■
Citizen's jury	A series of meetings, attended by a group of randomly selected people who represent the public, to learn about and discuss a specific issue and draw conclusions.	1	●	■	▲	■	■	■
Focus group	Group interviews with 6-10 people at the same time		■	■	●	▲	■	■
Group model building	Facilitated session in which participants build a model to improve their understanding of the issue	3	●	■	▲	●	■	■
Interviews	Discussions, usually with open questions and the possibility of extensive answers.		●	■	●	■	■	●
Problem / cause analysis	In-depth analysis of causal network which is behind a problem	1	■	■	●	●	■	■
Public audience / public hearing	Meeting which presents the public with information and provides a forum for answering questions and collecting opinions	1	■	■	●	■	■	▲

Criteria			PP Phase			PP level		
Name of tool or method	**Short description**	**Ref (*)**	Starting	Managing	Improving	Information	Consultation	Active Involvement
Reframing workshop	Workshop setting which allows participants to explore different analytical frameworks and refine their problem perception	3	■	■	▲	▲	●	■
Review sessions	Workshop setting to monitor progress, keep momentum, discuss lessons learnt and evaluate steps taken so far	5	▲	■	■	▲	●	■
Role playing game	Gaming situation in which players play roles in a real or imaginary context	3, 4	●	■	▲	●	■	■
Round table conference	Facilitated and reported open discussion between participants	3	●	■	▲	■	■	■
Scenario building	Workshop setting in which policy options for the present and the immediate future are debated and their possible future consequences are explored.	2	▲	■	▲	▲	●	■
IC-tools								
Geographic Information System (GIS)	System used for storage, mapping and analysis of geographical data	3, 4	■	■	●	■	●	■
Graphic tool-kit	Tools that help to illustrate discussions during workshops (includes whiteboards, pens and pencils, flipcharts)		■	■	■	■	■	■
Maps	Graphic scale models	3, 4	■	■	●	■	■	■
Comment Management system	System for the structuring and archiving of comments for future reference and follow-up		■	■	■	▲	■	■
Planning kit	Decision support tool that presents the effects of proposed (technical) measures	3	●	■	▲	■	●	●
Questionnaire	List of written structured questions for one-way information gathering	3	■	■	■	▲	■	■
Simulation models	Computer models that help to gain insight in effects of combinations of measures		▲	■	▲	●	●	■
Spatial mental models & maps	Geographical representation and structuring of perceptions about issues	3	■	■	●	▲	■	■
Website	Computer-based collection of information accessible on the Internet, sometimes including a forum	3	■	■	■	■	■	■

■ High applicability

● Medium applicability

▲ Low applicability

References (cf. further readings)
1. CIS guidance document N°8 on Public Participation
2. CIS guidance document N°1 Economics and the Environment
3. This handbook, section 2.4
4. HarmoniCOP report 'Role of information and communication tools'; http://www.harmonicop.info)
5. http://www.communityplanning.net/methods/method110.htm

Decision Matrix 1: Applicability of methods and tools in participation processes

Within each method, different tools can be used. Decision matrix 2 gives an overview of a specific participatory method. Again, ■ means high applicability, ● medium applicability and ▲ low applicability.

IC-tool	GIS	Graphic tool-kit	Maps	Comment Management	Planning kit	Questionnaire	Simulation models	patial mental models & aps	Website
Brainstorming	●	■	■	■	●	▲	▲	■	▲
Citizen's jury	■	■	■	■	■	■	▲	▲	■
Focus group	■	■	■	■	■	●	●	▲	●
Group model building	■	■	■	■	▲	●	■	●	▲
Interviews	▲	▲	■	▲	▲	■	▲	■	▲
Journals / Weblogs	▲	▲	●	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲	■
Monitoring and participatory evaluation	●	■	■	■	▲	■	▲	■	●
Problem / cause analysis	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Public hearings	■	■	■	■	●	■	▲	▲	■
Reframing workshop	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	●
Review sessions	▲	■	●	■	▲	■	▲	●	■
Role playing game	■	●	■	●	●	●	■	▲	▲
Round table conference	●	■	●	■	●	▲	▲	▲	▲
Scenario building	■	●	■	■	■	●	■	●	▲
Stakeholder analysis	■	▲	■	■	▲	■	▲	●	■

Decision Matrix 2: Applicability of tools within methods

Further reading:
Common Implementation Strategy for the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), Guidance Document No 1 (2003), Economics and the Environment – The Implementation Challenge of the Water Framework Directive, http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/env/wfd/ library)

Common Implementation Strategy for the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), Guidance Document No 8 (2003), Public Participation in Relation to the Water Framework Directive, http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/env/wfd/ library)

Maurel P, (ed.) 2003, Role of information and communication tools, HarmoniCOP WP3 reference document, Montpellier, Cemagref (download under www.harmonicop.info)

Wates, N. 2000, The Community Planning Handbook: How people can shape their cities, towns and villages in any part of the world, Earthscan

1.7 Making a process design

It is advisable to write up a detailed process design. This can be used to communicate the strategy with the stakeholders and helps the organisers to check whether their strategy is complete, consistent, realistic and acceptable to the stakeholders. The process design should address all elements of the participation strategy:

Write up and discuss the participation strategy

- The goals of participation
- The target audience – who should participate?
- Timing and level of participation
- The scope of the participation process
- Project organisation and facilitation
- Methods and tools
- Budget

The process design is part of project planning and management. That means typical tools of project management like time lines and Gantt Charts (or logframe technique) can be used to avoid running into trouble. A proper plan defining goals, subgoals, activities, measurable outputs and their indicators – all with a proper timing and defined requirement of resources – significantly reduces the risk of project and participation failure. These plans still offer the possibility for adjustments which will be necessary because you need flexibility for unforeseen events.

Time schedules and visualisation

Generally, timing should be generous and take the availability of major stakeholders into account. The stakeholders need to get acquainted with the issues at stake so that they can constructively contribute to the

discussion process. They may need to absorb and discuss a lot of new information and they may need time to develop and present their points of view. Organisers should refrain from overloading the participants with too much information. As the process progresses, more information can be brought into the discussion, but again this should be kept short and concise.

When organising a participatory process for the first time one should anticipate that more time will be required at all stages in order for the stakeholders to become familiar with one another, as well as with the various organisational challenges and demands.

1.8 Reflection phase on process so far

Start learning!

The crucial foundations for a participatory process are laid during the starting phase. Whether or not the process reaches its objectives depends heavily on this phase. A critical, well-founded reflection and check at this stage will help with fine-tuning and, if necessary, adapting the process, since arrangements taken so far are not yet final and participants are more open to change.

The reflection phase should be initiated by a conscious decision, as a deliberate 'step back' in order to take a fresh look at the approach taken so far. A key challenge in this exercise is to step out of the daily business of the process. It might be helpful to involve an impartial person in this step. At the same time it is advisable to initiate this reflection phase among the stakeholders as well, since this will increase their identification with the overall process. Giving them the opportunity to review the process at an early stage will substantially add to their feeling of ownership of the process and eventually its outcomes.

Apart from self-induced reflection, there is always the possibility of external developments that necessitate new approaches. Keeping the process open for change and adjustment will help one to better deal with such new developments and avoid potential tensions and problems.

Adjusting the selection of stakeholders

At this stage of the process, it might be helpful and also still possible to reconsider the current selection of stakeholders. Which additional groups should be part of the process, how can they be included? Adding stakeholders to a participatory process is usually rather unproblematic as long as the decision is based on a broad consensus of all stakeholders involved so far. At the same time, stakeholders entering in the process need to be appropriately informed about the process so far. Reducing the number of stakeholders is far more complicated as excluding certain stakeholder groups is usually not advisable. A

solution might be to clearly define at what stage of the participatory process the input of a certain stakeholder group is needed so to better steer the respective contribution of each group.

Improving information about the stakeholders

Stakeholder analysis has resulted in information about our stakeholders. This information should be evaluated in regard to its quality and completeness. Filling in knowledge gaps on the individual stakeholder groups will contribute to a better understanding of their motivation and thus help to anticipate potential frictions and problems in the future process. At the same time, the exchange and flow of information among stakeholders could be promoted to make best use of the available resources.

Make final adjustments!

Adjusting the selected participation strategy

Generally, this is the time to adjust the participation strategy and make some modifications to the process design. An adaptation of the strategy needs to be well prepared, discussed with and communicated to the stakeholders to avoid confusion and frustration.

Chapter 2

HOW TO MANAGE

Chapter one, "How to get started", has already listed a large number of tasks that need to be carefully thought through before, during and after engaging a community within a public participation process. It addressed identifying whom to invite and how to set up your participation strategy. This chapter will now concentrate upon more detailed organisational requirements. We will deal with issues like how to invite the participants; what activities to schedule; what methods to use; how to actively involve people; how to have them cooperate in a constructive way and how to prevent disruptions and delays. This chapter is about managing the process.

We will start by introducing the ground rules for workshops and public meetings, which are largely based on the four principles: of openness, protection of core values, speed and substance, which were discussed in chapter one. Ground rules should offer participants a fair chance to influence the decisions to be made and to eventually gain something from their participation.

2.1 Ground rules

Ground Rules are the "code of conduct"

This chapter provides you with basic rules – ground rules – to be respected in participatory processes. The ground rules for public meetings create a safe environment for the participants: they will know what to expect and how to behave and they know others will behave accordingly. The ground rules should be made explicit right from the start of the process. Preferably, the parties expected to participate should be involved, or at least consulted, about the process design and the ground rules. Especially in conflict-prone situations, explicit presentation, discussion and reconfirmation of the ground rules is important as they reconfirm the joint goals, the interdependence, the sense of urgency and remind the parties on how to behave in order to reach a goal. You should stick the rules on the wall at every occasion.

The ground rules are derived from the four process design principles (see 1.2) and expanded with practical provisions about the way information is shared and handled and how to deal with the process environment: the press and the general public (see textbox example). The level of detail can vary and they might include detailed arrangements about information sharing, how to deal with new information, speaking time, new participants and the like.

EXAMPLE OF GROUND RULES

General Rules:
- participation is not binding
- participants have a joint responsibility for process and outcomes
- rules for behaviour: no personal attacks, respect each others core values, no slackening of meetings.

Entrance and Exit Rules:
- exit only after each round
- entrance needs approval of the process manager

Rules for handling information and research requests:
- confidentiality should be respected
- research requests should have a broad base
- research will be executed by the expert team
- all information will be accessible for everyone

Rules for parallel processes:
- interference with other policy processes is reported
- participation does not exclude judicial steps

Rules for engagement with the press:
- workshops are restricted to participants; only final meeting will be open to the press
- all press contacts go through the process manager
- the final report will be publicly available

Further Reading:

Bruijn, Hans de, Ernst ten Heuvelhof and Roel in't Veld, 2002. Process Management, Why project management fails in complex decision making processes. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Boston, Dordrecht, London. ISBN 1-4020-7331-3

2.2 How to organise a meeting

Defining the rules and modes of interaction.

Convening is the art of bringing people together in a positive and productive way to enable and initiate a fruitful participatory process. While this might appear to be quite mundane at first sight, convening represents the first contact of a wider range of stakeholders with each other and thus clearly sets out the rules and modes of interaction for the entire participatory process. In the context of convening, stakeholders are brought together for a preliminary meeting to discuss issues at stake and pave the way for the ensuing participatory process. The convening process itself consists of the following steps, which for reasons of clarity have been presented as separate components here, but which are obviously intrinsically inter-linked with each other. Also, they usually do not occur consecutively but rather in a parallel manner.

2.2.1 Selecting a facilitator

The convenor may act in multiple roles: convenor, facilitator, participant.

The allocation of tasks to the same individual or organisation needs careful consideration. Some actors might be in a powerful enough position to bring together stakeholders, but may not be suitably skilled for facilitating the ensuing process. Thus although convenors can help start the process they do not necessarily have to bring it to an end as well.

Convenors might also be a stakeholder in the process, but their main role should be in identifying and bringing together all legitimate stakeholders to the table. To play this role successfully, convenors should meet the following characteristics:

- Credibility
- Trustworthiness
- Legitimacy to act in this role

Same criteria can be used for the planning and the evaluation phase.

Furthermore, the convenor should be knowledgeable about the issues at stake, i.e. water or river basin management. In case of being a convenor and a stakeholder as well, it is necessary to make this situation clear to everybody. For these (common) situations, it is advisable to get external moderation from outside the organisation or at least from staff inside the organisation not directly involved in the issue at stake.

The role of the convenor can be taken up by different persons or entities depending on the level of involvement in the process. At the community level, a local leader, an organisation or a steering committee made up of different groups may serve as convenors. At the state level, government agencies can take up this role. However, it should be noted that stakeholders are often distrustful of government officials, so that hiring a neutral third party might be the best solution here.

2.2.2 Identifying the required skills of facilitators

The more conflicts - the more urgent becomes the need for professional facilitation.

A good facilitator should be able to check whether most of the participants engaged in a process represent the diversity of issues at stake, as well as the diversity of interests, values and demands of stakeholders. They should also be able to translate, in a comprehensible and accessible language, such complexity of positions and their reasons to all the participants. Sending the most relevant material before the meeting to all stakeholders can save a lot of time during the discussions and can enhance the quality of knowledge obtained.

In general, the following skills of facilitators and moderators are needed:

Good facilitation requires many skills.

Previous experience with public participation processes: Whenever possible, choose an institution with a fair amount of experience in previous mediation and public participation processes. Experience is the key to mastering the technical requirements of the process and to have a sound understanding of opposing interests, reasons, values and views of stakeholders as well.

Capacity to integrate local knowledge and stakeholders: Make sure that the selected facilitator is knowledgeable about the local problems and about 'who is who' in the area of the study.

Trust in and the perception of independence of the organising facilitator: People engaged in a participatory process will first judge the messenger before the message. Lack of moral authority creates distrust and may mean that key relevant stakeholders will not attend the meetings.

Capacity to deal with differences in resources: The facilitator must be able to find a balance between those participants with greater communication skills and those with lesser abilities. In those situations where particular stakeholders do not want or are unable to come to a meeting with other stakeholders it may be possible to carry out face-to-face interviews to get their main points and then discuss their view with other single stakeholders, using an additive round procedure (Delphi technique). This "Delphi technique" is rather a family of techniques than a single clearly-understood procedure, but the typical features of a Delphi procedure are an expert panel; a series of rounds in which information is collected from panellists, analysed and fed back to them as the basis for subsequent rounds; an opportunity for individuals to revise their judgements on the basis of this feedback; and some degree of anonymity for their individual contributions.

… adapt methods and make use of supporting tools and techniques

Competence in language and managing discourse: Make sure that your chosen facilitator has a proven ability to identify, learn, and strategically use the right language that people can understand. The language should be adapted in such a way that it is attractive for the audience to listen to the given message. Different words are used by different stakeholders to describe problems, justify positions or prescribe actions.

2.2.3 Inviting the participants

Increasing the legitimacy of stakeholders
In the Dordogne Basin, as evidenced by the Dordogne Valley Summit, the lead organisation invested significant resources to ensure that all stakeholder groupings were involved in the process. The preparatory phase included a stakeholder analysis based on hundreds of questionnaires going to different stakeholders. The results of the analysis were commented on by several state services. The results of the analysis were available before the "Dordogne Summit" to enhance the legitimacy of some stakeholders e.g. fishermen, who were not well established within the existing processes of engagement.

Make stakeholders aware of the benefits of participation

Before sending the official invitation letters the stakeholders should be already contacted on a personal level i.e. face-to-face, telephone, etc…. There are multiple purposes that this can serve:

- Make stakeholders aware of the benefits and rewards they would gain from participating i.e. contributing to local decision-making, an opportunity to share their knowledge and concerns, etc…
- Clarify what their individual role would be
- Identify stakeholder expectations before the event itself so that they can be used to feed into improving the overall outcome
- Different work positions and hierarchy levels of the invited persons should be considered once inviting – e.g. it may become a demanding task to motivate certain persons to speak up in front of 'high level people'

More information on selecting the participants can be found in sections 1.4 and 1.5.

2.2.4 Choosing the venue

When deciding where to carry out a participatory process the following issues need to be considered:

Meeting locations must create a safe environment.

- If you select the office of a stakeholder (including the organising authority) you have to be careful. Trust and neutrality of the organising institution should be guaranteed for all stakeholders.
- Proximity, accessibility and general atmosphere of the location should be attractive
- To meet needs of tools – there should be enough rooms, tables to move, internet facilities, etc.

Locations must be neutral and close to stakeholders.

Trust and neutrality: places where meetings are held must be the property of trusted organisations, and if possible, of organisations which have some social recognition or prestige. If the organiser differs from the organisation which owns the building where the interaction will take place, it is important that people attending to the meetings feel comfortable and safe. Otherwise, deliberations taken in an untrustworthy context can negatively influence the whole process. Processes carried out in buildings which belong to public administration agencies run the risk of being labelled "state-manipulated", "top-down" or "conservative", while those carried out in buildings owned by private companies run the risk of being accused of being mainly interested in money.

Relevance and power: the closer the location is to the decision centre, the more relevant it is often perceived by the stakeholders. In the field of water management, NGOs are generally those actors which tend to enjoy higher levels of trust by the public – trust being their greatest capital -, but they lack the resources. Most academic institutions – except those which clearly collaborate with private companies - tend to be perceived as relatively neutral but they are often seen as too far away from the decision making process. Public agencies are those who have more power and decisional resources, but independence and trust is often questioned. Finally, there is a large diversity of private consultancies with different levels of trust, independence and competence, which makes it difficult to generalise and assess them.

Proximity, accessibility and general atmosphere: To avoid absenteeism of stakeholders, the meetings must be carried out close to their living and working areas. Some public buildings with educational or social purposes such as museums or universities are often suited to carry out such participatory procedures as they are well perceived by the public. A pleasant atmosphere for discussion is necessary, thus avoiding too formal settings. Smaller rooms and tables can contribute to more face-to-face interaction and allow body language to express positions and attitudes which would be otherwise too difficult to grasp in impersonal or large fora.

Avoiding too formal settings for meetings

For selecting the location of the participatory process, some stakeholders should be directly asked where they feel would be the most appropriate place and try to arrive at a consensus. The organiser must also have criteria of its own, e.g. in order to assure representativeness and equity, and also to try to negotiate with the rest of the stakeholders.

2.3 Tips for improving the overall process

The quality of participatory processes can be influenced by many factors. In this section, we discuss some of the most important factors and propose solutions for controlling them. Among the most determining factors for the failure or success of social learning, we find the participating individuals themselves, as well as the group composition and the structure of the participation process itself.

2.3.1 How people influence the process

Dealing with dominators and saboteurs

Having the ability to deal with saboteurs

Any participatory group process can be prey to a 'dominator'. On the one hand such individuals can liven up a discussion or a group thinking process, and will not be embarrassed or hesitant to bring more sensitive issues to the surface that may otherwise be ignored. But on the other hand, with little intervention by the facilitator or others in the group, dominators can also be very destructive to the process in general. To avoid this it is important that the facilitator is confident, well prepared and skilled in dealing with such situations.

Similar skills are required for dealing with the 'saboteur'. It is wrong to assume that someone who is dominating a process is deliberately trying to sabotage it. Often dominators are not aware that they are in fact dominating the discussion or process. However, saboteurs are more likely to be conscious of their intentions and committed to destroying a process for whatever reasons they have. It is important therefore NOT to ignore them but to engage the wider group into discussing how the 'saboteur' can be dealt with. This way all participants are made aware of the potential threats that could endanger or disrupt 'their' group process. It stimulates them to consider ways of dealing with the problem. In this way the responsibility for controlling the progress made in the workshop is shared amongst all the participants.

Stakeholders themselves took the initiative

Stakeholders may not only be involved by the water managers, they may also take initiatives themselves. This happened, for instance, in the Dutch province of North-Brabant during the 1990's.

A big issue in North-Brabant is the desiccation of nature areas due to, among others, groundwater abstraction. To stop desiccation, the provincial government introduced, in 1991, a permit requirement for smaller (agricultural) abstractions. Later in the 1990s initiatives were taken to introduce stricter regulation, but these initiatives were not successful. The farmers' organisation had some political influence and enforcement of the regulations would have been difficult. In fact, a stalemate had developed. The farmers posed a problem for the province, but the province could still pose a problem for the farmers.

In 1998, the regional farmers' organisation, ZLTO, took the initiative to set up the project 'Watermanagement Benelux Middengebied'. Farmers could get a weir in the smallest brooks on their land for free, which would be operated by the farmers themselves. These weirs would retain the water and increase groundwater infiltration, which would benefit not only nature but also agriculture. In the case of water logging, the farmers could themselves decide to open the weir. ZLTO co-operated closely with the province and the waterboards.

By 2001, nearly 2,000 weirs have been placed in an area of 140,000 ha., largely financed by the European Interreg programme.

The project is generally seen as a success. Projects such as these, whether initiated by a water manager or another stakeholder, offer possibilities for tailor-made solutions with more input by the stakeholders, improves relations and promotes social learning. They also show that government regulation is not obsolete and may stimulate the development of innovative non-regulatory approaches.

Sources:

J. Jiggins & N. Röling 2003: *Key informant study 2nd Generation Water Conservation Project; North Brabant and Limburg*, WUR

Dealing with individuals who decelerate the process.

Responsible participants who dominate discussions…

Dealing with dominators requires caution, as any efforts to reduce their dominance may be taken as a personal attack. It is also important to consider that the way a dominator is dealt with by the project management team will strongly reflect the abilities of the organising team to relate with the wider stakeholder community. Other participants will note this and it will influence their commitment or involvement in the process. The following ideas may help:

- Once you have identified your potential 'dominators', offer them a responsible role. This could be in the form of developing a wider stakeholder network, organising a meeting, researching potential historical data required, etc…
- The setting up and visualising of 'ground rules', as discussed in section 2.1, is indispensable. They provide a clear work ethic which the facilitator can refer to as and when needed.

Dealing with shy or quiet participants

Dealing tactfully, yet constructively, with shyness amongst participants can be equally challenging to the facilitator. Although stakeholders may

show enthusiasm or be willing to participate in such a group activity, this does not always guarantee their active involvement to a level, necessary for the creation of a more dynamic and constructive learning process. It is important to try and identify, beforehand, possible reasons why certain individuals may be shy or simply less willing to speak than others. This can help both the organisers and the facilitator to be aware of sensitive issues, past conflicts that may cause friction between stakeholders and also issues that can help *stimulate* the quieter participants to respond. As with dominators, shy or silent participants can be just as equally frustrating and annoying to those who feel as though 'they are the only ones speaking', particularly if these more vocal participants do not feel as though they are being supported in their opinions.

Nevertheless, it is neither wise, nor constructive, to force these quieter individuals to speak out. If they feel as though they are being 'put on the spot' against their will, this may discourage them from participating in future activities of this kind. Similarly, quietening those who speak the most, or too much, should also not be the *only* method used to encourage the quieter participants to speak more.

Create a 'safe' environment for meetings

Creating a 'safe' environment also helps to deal with shy and quiet participants. This again relates to the setting of 'ground rules'. To create a safe participatory environment the rules should require participants to:

- **Foster the practice of listening** – Agreeing to be respectful to others when they are speaking and maintain this throughout the activity. Listening is a necessary requirement for helping the learning process amongst the participants. As such, it is important to encourage all participants to be honest: honesty encourages honesty!

- **Value others' opinions** – It is necessary to encourage all participants to feel valued whether other participants agree with them or not.

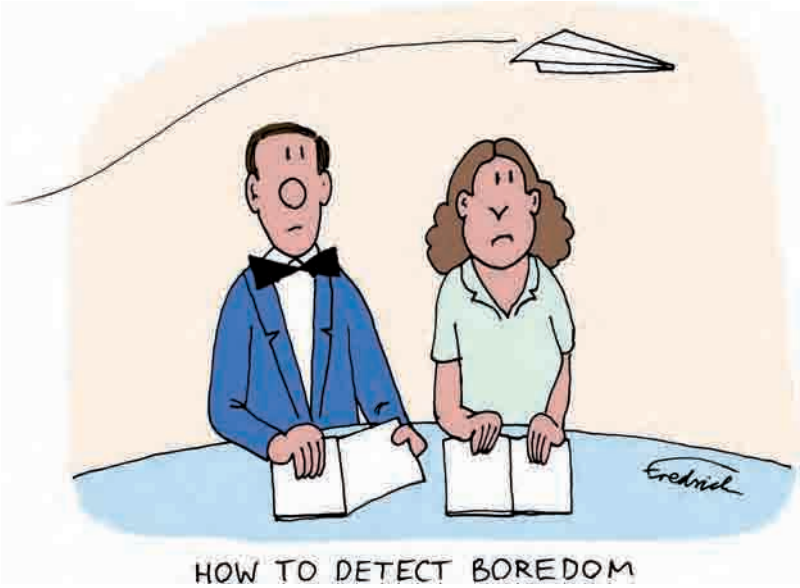
- **Commit to confidentiality** – If people have agreed to confidentiality regarding certain discussion points, participants should feel comfortable enough to raise their concerns with no fear that what they are saying will be repeated to those not involved in the process. Confidential information, date, statistics, opinions, etc… should not be disclosed outside the forum.

- **Do not lecture** – It is important that all participants, including the facilitator do not lecture others in the group. Sometimes, when key information is being communicated, or presentations are being made, lecturing can take over. In a participatory group setting, this is not conducive to the learning experience. Participants may switch off, particularly if the information being presented is too technical to what they are capable of comprehending.

- **Group work and seating**. Splitting up the group to work in smaller groups can help to encourage participation from those who lack the confidence to speak out in front of large numbers of

people. Smaller groups can help incorporating the views and opinions of all participants. In certain cases, where dominant individuals can simply be too overwhelming, it may be useful to compose the groups according to how loud or quiet the participants are. In other words, by putting all the louder more dominant participants in one group and the shyer, quieter participants in another.

- Tools for visualisation (maps, GIS, flipcharts…) and the right information supply may stimulate discussion if the group is not responding to the main subject matter. Discussing subjects that they are familiar with may help breaking the ice. Other icebreakers can include activities such as role-play, games, etc… Often, working in pairs can get everyone thinking and speaking.



Dealing with boredom and silence

Although it is necessary to allow enough time for discussion, there is a risk that participants may exhaust certain discussions to the point where there are only two or three participants left talking about a very specific or trivial matter. Others, who no longer find the discussion relevant, may switch off from the discussion. In such cases, it is difficult to know when to allow discussions to continue or when to intervene and change the conversation to something that is more relevant for the wider group. As interesting as the discussion may be it is always important to be aware of how the rest of the group is responding. If boredom is detected it can be handled in different ways. It could be necessary to encourage the participants to say their final words on the discussion and then bring it to an end, or to make the group aware that they only have a specific time left to end their discussion on a particular topic. Alternatively, if the discussion is important and it is relevant to continue with it, then it would be wise to actively direct questions at those that are not speaking so as to engage them into the conversation. This can help to re-stimulate the

Knowing when to stop discussions

participants and remind those that are talking, that others in the group may have opinions on the subject too.

Conflicts

Conflict is an inevitable part of change.

Speed and progress may be hampered by conflicts. Conflicts are almost inevitable when participants hold different views and interests. Conflicts are useful for making agreement and disagreement explicit. However some conflicts that are not central to the issue discussed may tend to draw energy from the process and side-track it, thereby obstructing progress. These conflicts should be led away from the core of the process to the "periphery", for instance to a workgroup, a scientific committee or a group of external ('objective') experts. Meanwhile the real process can continue.

Legitimacy of stakeholders

In case of hostile groups: divide them

Neutrality is a key factor of legitimacy. Neutrality (i.e., perceived neutrality) will only be achieved thanks to an adequate representation of stakeholders. The organiser might feel uneasy about dealing with very different groups and persons in a common arena. If some stakeholders or stakeholder groups show open hostility to other stakeholders it is important to deal with all of them, because often the reasons for opposition of this specific group will provide the clues to understand the group dynamics. It does not mean that they have to share a common space during the participation process. In fact, this should be avoided because the discussion would be irrelevant. When a sufficient number of stakeholders is together and some are hostile to some others, the best thing to do is to split the total number of stakeholders in two, gathering together the most homogeneous groups but making sure that enough heterogeneity is guaranteed.

Further reading:

Chambers, R. (2002) Participatory workshops: a sourcebook of 21 sets of activities and ideas. Earthscan Publications, London.

2.3.2 How structure influences the process

Adopting and sticking to a structure

The structure or programme must be clear.

A structure, or programme, is needed to provide guidance and make everyone aware of where the process is heading. It can also prevent wasting time and help reach consensus when discussions go on too long. If a planned programme is completely abandoned, it jeopardises the outcome of the process. However, it is also important not to rush any particular session just in order to ensure that all stages are completed. Often it may be necessary to create a more flexible programme so as not to prevent important issues from being properly discussed.

It is also important to present the programme to participants and agree to it at the very beginning of the workshop so that participants are fully

aware of what will be expected from them throughout the day and the process.

Keeping to the overall structure of the workshop is also dependent upon the level to which the facilitator is able to maintain control of the workshop itself. As mentioned in the preceding section, certain participants ('dominators' and 'saboteurs') may regard the facilitator as being weak and thus may try and take control of the process so that it meets their needs. Other participants may not necessarily protest and so the process is in danger of being altered if no adequate intervention by the facilitator takes place.

Professional facilitation

By now it has become apparent *why* professional facilitation can help. The facilitator is responsible to maintain the logical thread of the participation process. If the structure participants agreed to at the beginning of the process is guaranteed, it contributes to the "creation of the safe environment for participation".

Extending ownership of the process to the local stakeholder community

The local stakeholder community should share 'ownership' of the project. Together with authorities, planners, river basin managers and other organisations initiating the project, the local stakeholders should take responsibility for the overall process. Assigning responsibility through delegation of tasks to the participants can serve to achieve a greater sense of ownership of the process amongst the stakeholder community and can help to ensure their commitment and on-going involvement in the strategy. Such tasks could include: - writing ideas on cards, moderating small groups, reporting back to others in the community, bringing new stakeholders into the process.

"Homework" to assure a compromise of stakeholders

Give stakeholders homework to do!

In situations where debates are not going well due to passive participants, facilitators are allowed to include themselves in order to dynamise discussions. Additionally, it is possible to give participants some "homework". It should be a way to clarify their own ideas without time and group pressure. By this, they will better respect other interventions because they want their own contributions respected as well.

Important things not to forget

In any participatory event, no matter how well organised, there are always last minute problems that, if neglected, can jeopardise the entire day. The following lists some of the things that often are overlooked:

- *Technical equipment* – It is important to check that all the relevant technical equipment is not only working but the organising team knows how it works. That includes beamers, laptops, software tools, etc.... Use only one laptop connected to the beamer instead of switching several ones and have a data stick handy for data transfer.
- *Materials* - It is important that there is a good supply of materials that will be used during the workshop i.e. flip-charts, pens, tape, etc... It is usually better to have more than required.
- *Venue* – It is vital that the organising team visits the venue of the workshop at least once to see whether it is suitable for their needs. But also for knowing what equipment, furniture, etc... is already there and what should be additionally brought..
- *Instructions and directions* - It is important not to assume that the participants know where the venue is and how to get there. Therefore sending out clear instructions including maps and directions well in advance, can help ensure their arrival on time.
- *Contacting participants* – It should also not be assumed that simply because certain stakeholders have received invitations that they will automatically turn up at the participatory event. Usually several phone calls and/or face-to-face contact, can help to ensure their presence. A ring around the day before is a good way of gauging who will turn up and can also act as a reminder to those who may have forgotten.
- *Unexpected and sudden changes* – It is important that organisers prepare a contingency plan so as to allow for unexpected or sudden changes which may severely jeopardise the event. This could include a sudden venue change, bad weather, funding problems, or simply the facilitator being ill.

2.3.3 Promoting effective problem-solving

The objective should be to make all parties "win"

Early meetings of stakeholders often show that individuals and groups try to defend their positions heavily. People start to compete and negotiate in a "win-lose style" rather than looking for alternatives that may serve several persons interests. Within their own groups, stakeholders identify with their interests, and develop or re-affirm an acceptable group identity within the given context. Parties look for a positive social identity vis-à-vis the other parties and will focus on differentiating aspects which will give them a legitimate basis to deal with the others. Stakeholders will present themselves in terms of possible resources or contributions that are important in dealing with the problem. They narrow their vision towards serving only their own interest, and the assumption develops that the parties are each other's competitors and that interests are contradictory to each other. The challenge is now to lead the process into a direction that participants are also able to identify similarities and common interests besides all differences.

Positional bargaining

Competitive behaviour of participants is normal

Transforming positional bargaining (I give you this, if you offer me that) into integrative (win-win) bargaining (If we both to this and drop doing that…) is a slow process. Quite recognisable symptoms of positional bargaining are:

(a) detailed questioning of the parties by each other without offering any information back or withholding all important information,
(b) facts, findings and opinions are used by the parties to argue or show that they know better, are stronger, more powerful etc… than the other parties, rather than using the material to explore their differences in a problem-solving mode.

Leading the process from competition to collaboration

Getting out of positional bargaining can be realised by setting ground rules, making process interventions and building up trust. The table below contains a set of behavioural descriptions useful for moving from positional to interest bargaining.

Win-Lose Situation	Problem Solving Strategy
Define the conflict as a win lose situation	Define the conflict as a mutual problem
Pursue one's own goals	Pursue goals held in common
Force the other party into submission	Find creative agreements that are satisfying to both parties or present a mutually acceptable solution
Have an accurate personal understanding of one's own needs but publicly disguise or misrepresent them	Have an accurate personal understanding of one's own needs and communicate them correctly
Try to increase one's power over the other party by emphasising one's independence of the other's dependence upon oneself	Try to equalize power by emphasizing mutual interde-pendence, avoiding harm and embarrassment to the other party in order to reduce fear and defensiveness
Try to arrange contact where one's own power is greatest	Make sure contacts are on the basis of equal power
Use deceitful, inaccurate and misleading communication of one's own goals, position and proposals	Use open, honest and accurate communication of one's needs, goals and proposals.
Overemphasize one's needs, goals, position in the opening offer	Accurately state one's needs, goals and position in the opening offer
Avoid all empathy and understanding of the other's position, feelings and frame of reference	Work to have the highest empathy and understanding of the others positions, feelings and frame of reference.

Win-Lose Situation	Problem Solving Strategy
Communicate a win-lose orientation	Communicate a problem solving orientation
Use threats to get submission	Avoid threats in order to reduce defensiveness
Hostility is expressed to subdue the other	Express hostility to get rid of one's own feelings that may interfere with future cooperation
Communicate the highest commitment (rigid adherence) to one's position, to force the other to give in.	Communicate flexibility of position to help problem solving
Behave unpredictably to exploit the element of surprise	Behave predictably. Though flexible behaviour is appropriate, it is not designed to take the other party by surprise
Concede and change slowly, to concede concessions from the other	Change position as soon as possible to help in problem solving
Increase ambiguity and uncertainty in an attempt to use deception and confusion to one's advantage	Promote clarity, predictability, mutual understanding to help in problem solving
Use cooperative behaviours to grab the chance to exploit other's cooperativeness	Use cooperative behaviours to establish trust and mutual cooperation
Adopt a posture that allows one to exploit the other whenever possible	Adopt a consistent posture of being trustworthy towards the other
Isolate the other to reduce the possibility of his forming a coalition with third parties	Seek third parties to help in problem solving
Emphasize only differences in positions and the superiority of one's own position	Emphasize exploration of both similarities and differences in positions

The search for common ground and goals of the collaborative process

Avoiding assumptions of sharing the same vision!

It is not easy for stakeholders to develop a multi-party perspective on River Basin Management issues and to be able to see the situation from the perspective of all parties involved. Groups have a tendency to spend little time in making a common analysis of the problem and they wrongly assume that they have a similar problem perception. In addition to that, there is an initial dynamic working against dealing with diversity in a newly formed group. This results in the search for common ground as a shared vision of the future. Divergence of perspectives, points of view and values is recognised, even seen as valuable, but all energy is put into the development of a shared picture of the future, a vision. This approach

encourages minimal diversity among stakeholders. The interdependencies will not be dealt with and difficult aspects will not be tackled. Some stakeholders are likely to block the final solutions in which they do not recognise their interests.

A more appropriate, but demanding approach, consists of considering common ground as a shared problem definition as well as a shared vision of the future. This implies that existing differences in perspectives and interest are investigated in depth, and confronted by all parties, to form a collective rich picture of all problem aspects before agreement is formed, based on a common framing of the problem definition. This approach underlines the necessity to only agree on a very broad problem definition at the beginning of the process (c.f. sections 1.3 & 1.4).

During the negotiation process, the stakeholders and representatives use their interpretation of the goals of their organisations to determine their positions and to judge the degree of acceptability of the emerging collaboration goals. Again, the stakeholders most often assume that other people are informed about the goals of their organisations and fail to discuss these in the groups. These ambiguities are compounded by the emerging and changing collaborative goals which are being developed during the process. All this ultimately results in severe confusion of goals and directions, a lot of inertia, and the necessity to frequently restate interests and goals.

Other parties know less about you than you think

2.4 Methods and tools for fostering social learning

The CIS guidance document for PP (CIS 2002) offers an overview of tools and techniques for interaction and communication. They are classified according to the aim of the interaction among the actors:

- Co-knowing (information) requires provision to the media, such as presentations, articles, fact sheets
- Co-thinking (consultation) requires a feeding back by the means of interviews and discussion groups (including its recording)
- Co-operating (active involvement) requires interactive support tools such as work meetings including joint decision making, etc.

In this handbook the focus is on tools and methods for social learning in participation processes. Chapter 1 presents a decision tree and two decision matrices that help to choose the most appropriate set of tools and methods in each situation, based on the phase of the participation process and the level of participation desired. In this section we present tools and methods for social learning that are not already described for

this purpose in existing guidance documents. They are presented in the form of index cards.

Index cards

Using an index card as a form of presentation allows one to quickly get an impression of major features of the tool. Some of the tools may be known already but the index card explains how to adapt the tool to participatory processes. Index cards are provided for the following tools and methods:

All index cards presented

- Geographical Information System
- Group Model Building
- Maps
- Planning Kit
- Reframing workshop
- Role playing game
- Round table conference
- Spatial mental maps
- Website

How to read the index cards?

In the upper left of all index cards the applicability of the tool/method is given according to the different phases (starting, managing, improving) of the participatory process. Below are the symbols and the phases underneath are marked in light to dark blue. The symbols indicate the applicability of the tool/method for participation and/ or social learning.

.

Legend of symbols

High applicability

Medium applicability

Low

Example for reading the symbols:

Finding a combination of symbols like demonstrated above….it shows good applicability during the starting phase of participation, also good applicability during the managing phase and medium applicability during the improvement phase.

PP Phases

Geographic Information System (GIS)

GIS are widely used in the WFD for reporting to the European Commision and for technical analysis. They can also be used to support public participation. GIS combine the advantages of visual spatial language and digital capabilities to explore small or large geographical areas. Web-GIS and Web-Mapping extend these capabilities to support distant and asynchronous interactions between participants.

Particular functions

To identify legitimate stakeholders

- E.g. by overlaying the project area and cadastral or administrative maps (shows who is concerned).
- GIS high-tech "owners" are likely to play major rules in the process (informational power).

To manage shared geo-information capital

Improve archiving, storage, retrieval and display of data shared by the GIS community.

To communicate geo-information

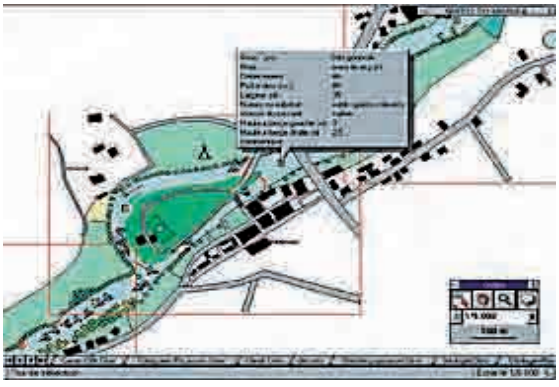
to the general public or during participative workshops for problem exploration, scenario building, screening of priorities, shaping policy formulations and actions. Visual language stimulates active learning.

To collect and to communicate public knowledge, perceptions and comments

In this case, additional functionalities are required to make the GIS interactive (digitising, comments management,...).

To bring people together

If designed and handled collectively, such a tool requires strong interactions over a long-term period of time but leads to mutual understanding.



"The GIS did wonders for the self-confidence of the elective people who thought of being in an abandoned place and who, finally, had a high-tech tool ". "The visual effect was very important there. That helped them to understand the problem of the others and their river, to open up their horizon ". " The photos of sills marked the minds. While it's very easy to do." from a River Manager, 2004

Example of use

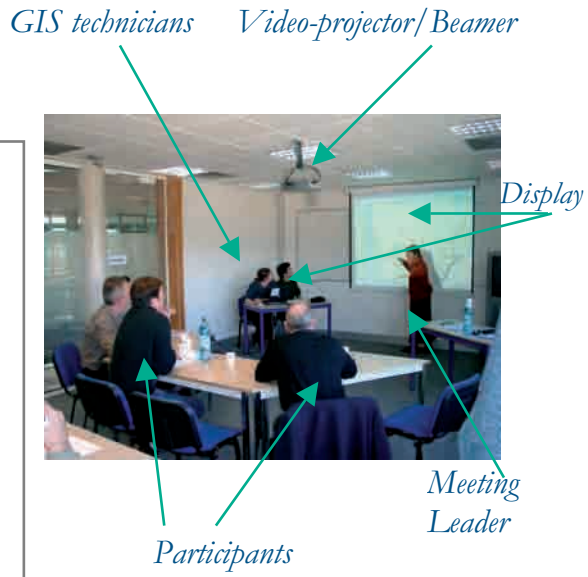
Tools: Maps + Workshop
Supporting discussions with a GIS

STEPS

Before the workshops
1) Prepare GIS digital maps
2) Index the maps (theme x area)
3) Prepare the room

During the workshop
4) Display instant maps upon request
5) Record comments

After the workshop
6) Update maps if necessary
7) Use maps to illustrate the minutes



Traps & tricks

⌦ Avoid developing the workshop setting with a technical team far from the field. Better to rely on people involved locally in the participative process.
⌦ Maps may be seen as too conceptual. Bridge the gap with reality as perceived by stakeholders: add field pictures, local facts in the GIS. Spend time with participants in the field to collect data.
⌦ Avoid extensive technical production using GIS capabilities. It can be seen as overwhelming for participants, and in fact as "contributing to less knowledge".
⌦ Design the GIS itself in a participative way: co-construction of the conceptual data model (features, attributes, relations, definitions), iterative prototyping (stakeholders validate the data content and the functionalities), content partially based on local knowledge – helps to develop co-ownership.

Main costs €

Data, GIS license (free GIS software are now available), technical staff, editing costs.

Criteria to evaluate

- Amount of local knowledge and field pictures in the GIS
- Data model meaningfulness for all participants
- Amount of GIS-based activities to support

More details

- Other tools: maps, spatial mental maps, Website
- PPgis.net: Open forum on participatory use of geo-spatial information systems and technologies http://ppgis.iapad.org (see also maps!)

Group Model Building

PP Phases

Starting Managing Improving

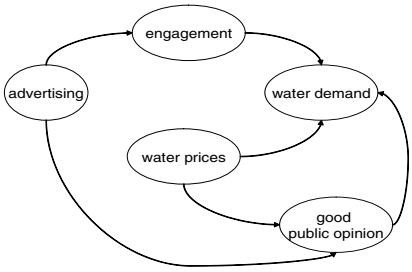
Group Model Building (GMB) is a methodology for facilitating the involvement of a group of individuals in the development of a model, in order to improve group understanding about a particular system, its problems and possible solutions, which will directly or indirectly lead to better management decisions. The product of this methodology is the generation of common understanding among the model builders during the process, rather than the model itself.

Particular functions

To gain system knowledge
GMB allows stakeholders to learn and obtain a better knowledge of the system

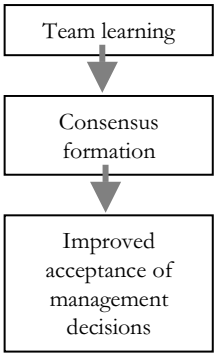
To gain a common understanding
GMB allows for better understanding of the system, the problem and possible solutions

To understand others' viewpoints and constraints.
A common understanding of the problem helps to understand different viewpoints and constraints.



Influence model for estimation of water price (Hare,2003)

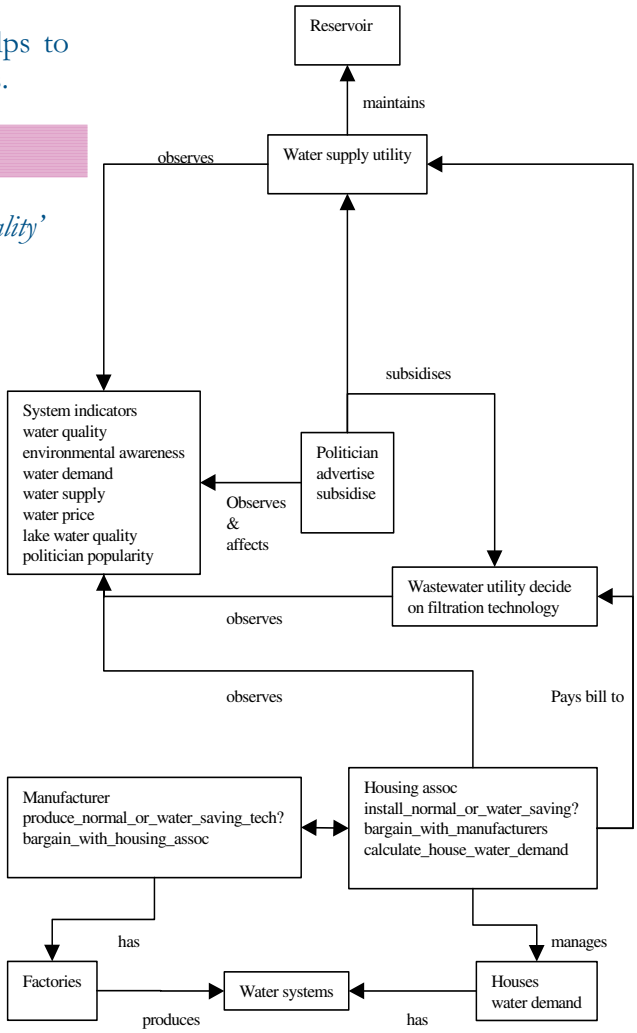
Main Outputs



Development of 'shared social reality'

Development of consensus on problems and solutions

Commitment to chosen path of action



System model for water supply management (Hare, 2003)

Example of use

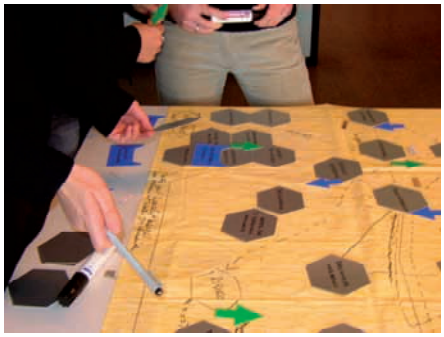
Tools: Group model building + workshop
Finding convergence in problem perception and directions for solutions

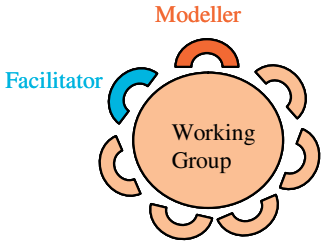
STEPS

Before the workshop
1) Invite participants
2) Set up of workshop setting
3) Clarify workshop rules

During the Workshop
4) Use of tools
5) Facilitate model building and discussion
6) Report outcomes

After the workshop
7) Model discussion





Traps & tricks

⌦ Structure the discussion and make sure that the participants agree with this structure
⌦ Resolve conflict whilst being able to discuss it
⌦ Play devil´s advocate – deliberately question the dominant group wisdom
⌦ Write all generated ideas and comments down both in notes and in cards or flip chart sheets that can be hung on the walls to be used as contemporaneous feedback to the group
⌦ Let the group dictate the content, but challenge their beliefs
⌦ Bring in external expert appraisal and empirical data to verify and validate opinions if possible *(source: Hare, M. 2003, A Guide to Group Model Building, Seecon. HarmoniCOP Report).*

Main costs €

Costs for design, facilitator, reporter and participation costs (travel etc.).

Criteria to evaluate

- Level of involvement of stakeholders
- Level of discussion
- Common understanding

More details

- Other methods: role playing game
- Hare, M. 2003, A Guide to Group Model Building, Seecon. HarmoniCOP Report.

PP Phases

Starting Managing Improving

Maps

Maps are not only a means to communicate end-results. Maps form a model of reality, and thereby serve as a visual language among participants during their discussions.

Particular functions

To identify spatial phenomena
Collect knowledge and arguments on a map of ill-defined problems, e.g. local dryness, diffuse sources of water pollution

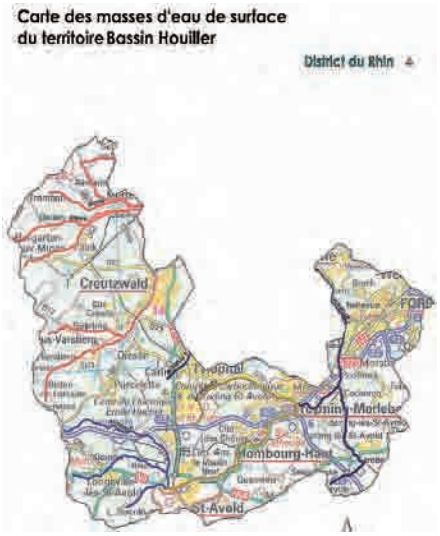
To articulate and specify spatial issues
Put issues on the agenda, e.g. local bottlenecks in drainage systems

To clarify issues and mechanisms
Explain arguments and concerns by localising and describing them with help of map images, e.g. link spatial patterns of water pollution to changes in local land-use

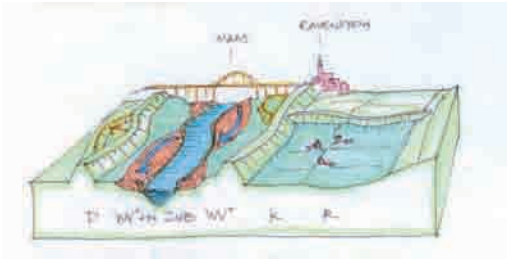
To synthesize arguments and designs
Summarise a design, an analysis result or a viewpoint as an argument in the debate, e.g. argue for more space for water with a map of several flooding scenarios

To consolidate findings, views, options and decisions
Location related decisions and visions become concrete when they are defined and described. Laid out on maps, this knowledge is being fixed and captured in 'black on white'. For instance with the definition of regional river basins

To provide identity for stakeholders
Maps can help to identify stakeholders concerned by the defined area on the maps.



Inventory map:
what happens where ?



Scenario map:
what could happen where, if...?

Policy plan map:
what will happen where ?

Example of use

Tools: Maps + Workshop
Validation of draft inventory of water bodies

STEPS

Before the workshop

1) Maps preparation (A3 format, 1 by sub-basin)
2) Maps duplication (1 by working group)

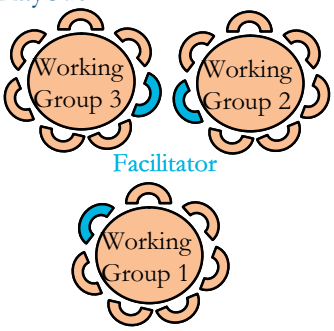
During the Workshop

3) Put maps on the table
4) Facilitator presents the draft status of each water body and collects comments, if any

After the workshop

5) Synthesis report (with all the comments)
6) Maps and report dissemination

Room Layout



Traps & tricks

⌦ Do not limit the map content to technical data from an existing database, introduce local expertise & knowledge. It improves the content and encourages involvement.
⌦ Explain how to read a map (scale, orientation, legend), encourage spatial reasoning (show examples of spatial interactions). It helps participants to better understand interdependencies.
⌦ Produce draft "opened" maps, invite participants to draw, to comment
⌦ Clearly represent the "no-data" or uncertain areas
⌦ Spend time on the legend to build up an understandable visual language

Main costs €

Depends on type of maps. Low costs if drawn from scratch in working sessions.
GIS team's time, input data, duplication cost.

Criteria to evaluate

- Amount of local knowledge in a map
- Legend meaningfulness
- Amount of map-based activities in workshops

More details

- Other tools: GIS, spatial mental maps, Planning Kit
- Public Participation GIS (PPGIS) WebRing http://t.webring.com/hub?ring=ppgis (see also GIS)

PP Phases

Starting Managing Improving

Planning Kit

The Planning Kit has been developed in the framework of river management programmes for the large Dutch rivers Rhine and Meuse. It provides policy makers and river managers with a strong tool to evaluate a large amount of alternative river widening and deepening measures, while taking into account the effects on various aspects, including effects on flood stages, nature, ecology and costs.
A total of approximately 700 measures were defined. For each of these measures, the effect on the flood levels was determined by means of a two-dimensional computational model and the results of these computations are stored in a database.

Particular functions

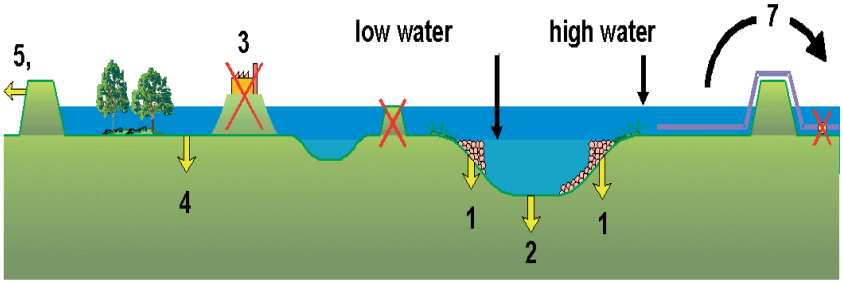
To specify and present measures
Planning Kit allows stakeholders to choose (a set of) river improvement measures and presents the scope of those measures through maps, artist impressions and sketches.

To gain system knowledge
Planning Kit allows stakeholders to learn and obtain a better knowledge of the water system.

To structure discussion and synthesise arguments and designs
Planning Kit supports discussion by providing instant information about measures and their effects.

Visualisation: aerial photo

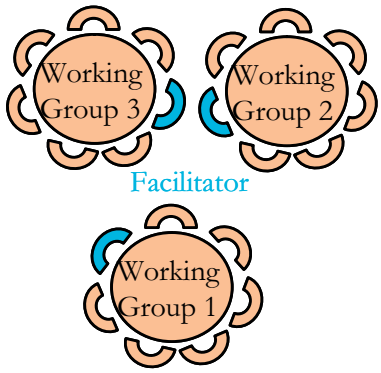
1. Lowering of groynes
2. Deepening low flow channel
3. Removing hydraulic obstacles
4. Lowering flood plains
5. Setting back dikes locally
6. Setting back dikes on a large scale
7. Detention reservoir
8. Reduction lateral inflow



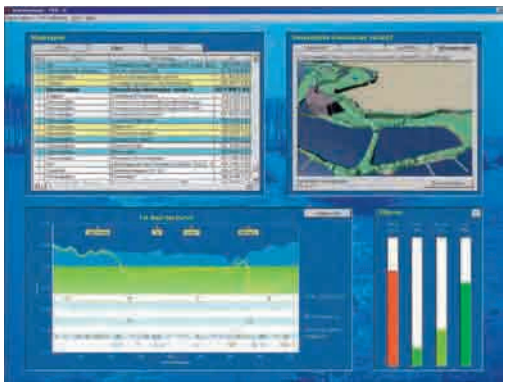
Example of river improvement measures

Example of use

Tools: Planning kit, simulation tools, workshop
Use of Planning Kit to learn about the water system and to structure discussion about selected measures and their effects



User Interface



STEPS

Before the workshop
1) Prepare presentation to introduce the Planning Kit
2) Set up Planning Kit on PC's

During the Workshop
3) Present goals of the workshop
4) Introduce Planning Kit
5) Assist stakeholders in working with the Planning Kit

After the workshop
6) Maps and report dissemination
7) and/or accessibility on the internet

Traps & tricks

- Structure the workshop and make sure that the participants agree with this structure
- Resolve conflict whilst being able to discuss differences in perceptions and opinions
- Write all generated ideas and comments down both in notes and in cards or flip chart hat can be hung on the walls to be used as contemporarneons feedback to the group
- Allow for enough time for participants to understand and discuss the mechanisms and processes in the Planning Kit
- Bring in external expert appraisal and empirical data to verify and validate opinions

Main costs in €

High development costs, but can be made available to large groups of stakeholders at low cost.

Criteria to evaluate

- Encourages discussion
- Promotes understanding
- Active involvement of stakeholders

More details

- Other tools: DSS, simulation tools
- G.E. Kersten et al. DSS for sustainable development.. CRDI/Kluwer Academic 1999, 420 p.

PP Phases

Starting Managing Improving

Role Playing Games

Role Playing Games are a way to foster communication among a set of actors and make explicit their views on the system. It leads the dialogue on a generic level.

Particular functions

To understand others' viewpoints and constraints
Put each player in the shoes of the other one so that they can understand their constraints.

To explain one's own view on a system
Ask players to play their role, as if they were in a given situation, to make them explain how they react in such situations.

To share views on the common system
RPG concentrates on individually and separately known events in time and space, forcing players to acknowledge problems they face collectively

To support dialogue at the rules level
Through the distance induced by the game format, discussions on generic rules are easier to take place, leaving aside private and NIMBY considerations.

Shadoc Role playing game cards:
« opportunities / events » cards
« roles » cards (Barreteau, 2004)

Computer-based interface

Discussion near the flipchart

Example of use

Tools: Role playing game + Workshop
Exchanging views and discussing generic rules on the common systems

STEPS

Before the workshop

1) RPG design (use of computer simulation might help)
2) support material preparation (cards, rooms, dices…)
3) write down game rules for players at the beginning
4) prepare observation (camera, audio record, observers…)

During the workshop

5) Facilitate the game dynamics (ensuring gaming atmosphere)
6) Observe the game and track key interactions

After the workshop

7) Organise collective debriefing about collective decisions concerning real world
8) Individual debriefing with key participants

Traps & tricks

⌦ Leave open the rules to allow players to bring them in their own knowledge
⌦ Give a strong and cautious emphasis to debriefing at the end of the game in order to go from the game analysis to consequences for the real world.
⌦ Be cautious on existing social relations among players so that some players will not feel embarrassed with their role

Main costs €

Low cost in money (but participants might ask to be paid for their time).
High cost in time for role playing game design (but some existing games can be adapted)

Criteria to evaluate

- Discussion generated about real world
- Collective decisions taken at the end of debriefing
- New state of interactions among

More Details

- Participatory modelling
- Simulation modeling
- Barreteau O. et al., 2004. Agricultural Systems, 80:255-275.

PP Phases

Starting Managing Improving

Round Table Conference

The round table conference is an open discussion between participants based on equity. The goal is to share visions and viewpoints and to allow stakeholders to have a voice (i.e. not a vote) in the decision making process. It can be used in the orientation phase of a decision-making process, but also as part of a process focused on reaching consensus among participants and obtaining support from stakeholders.

Particular functions

To explain viewpoints
Participants can explain their views in an open setting.

To share and understand viewpoints
A round table conference allows for better understanding of the viewpoints of other participants.

To understand others' constraints
Put participants in the shoes of the others so that they can understand others' constraints.

To reveal and understand the diversity of perceptions among people
Viewpoints can be compared and discussed, to improve mutual understanding.

Example of round table conference setting

Example of use

Tools: Round table conference + workshop
To make 'divergence' (exploration) and 'convergence' (reach consensus) of opinions known.

STEPS

Before the workshop
1) Invite participants
2) Set up of conference setting
3) Clarify rules for discussion

During the workshop
4) Facilitate discussion
5) Report discussion

After the workshop
6) Collective debriefing
7) Individual debriefing

Traps & tricks

⌦ Create 'open' atmosphere where participants feel free to express their perceptions and Discuss different viewpoints to improve mutual understanding.
⌦ Facilitate the management of comments. Write all generated ideas and comments down, both in notes and on cards or flip chart sheets that can be hung on the walls to be used as contemporary feedback to the group.

Main costs €

Costs for design, facilitator, reporter and participation costs (travel etc.).

Criteria to evaluate

- Level of 'divergence' or 'convergence' in opinions
- Level of (open) discussion
- Level of involvement of stakeholders

More details

- Other methods: role playing game and reframing workshop

PP Phases

Starting Managing Improving

Reframing Workshop

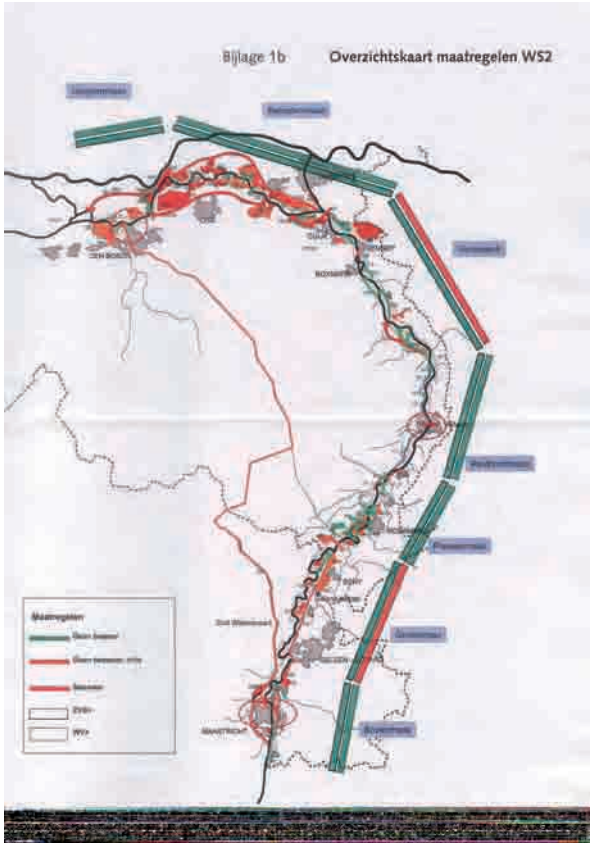
The reframing workshop allows participants to change their problem perception. Using a different analytical framework for structuring the problem may change the way participants perceive the problem. The goal of the reframing workshop is to explore and create solutions that would otherwise not be considered.

Particular functions

To share and understand viewpoints
Reframing workshops allow for better understanding of the viewpoints of other participants

To understand others' constraints
Put participants in the shoes of the others so that they can understand others' constraints.

To reach convergence in problem perception
Viewpoints can be compared and discussed to reach a 'common' problem understanding



Example of map in a reframing workshop to discuss the spatial scope of a problem

Example of use

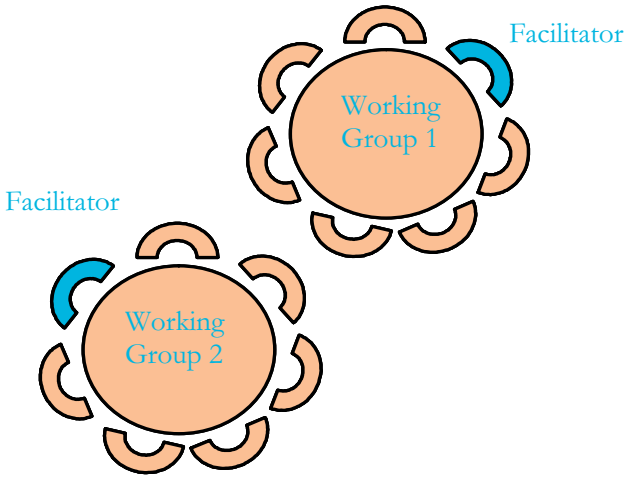
Tools: Reframing workshop + maps
To make 'divergence' and 'convergence' of opinions known.

STEPS

Before the workshop
1) Invite participants
2) Set up of workshop setting
3) Clarify workshop rules

During the workshop
4) Use of tools
4) Facilitate discussion
5) Report discussion

After the workshop
6) Collective debriefing
7) Individual debriefing



Traps & tricks

⌦ Create 'open' atmosphere where participants feel free to express their views and bring in their own knowledge
⌦ Write all generated ideas and comments down both in notes and on cards or flip chart sheets that can be hung on the walls to be used as contemporareons feedback to the group
⌦ Bring in external experts and empirical data to verify and validate opinions if possible
⌦ Use a range of IC tools to structure the information surrounding the problem. Examples are:
* Scenarios to show variety in outcomes of varying assumptions and boundary conditions
* Simulation models to present possible effects of proposed measures
* Maps to articulate spatial issues identified with a problem, and to present spatial phenomena

Main costs €

Costs for design, facilitator, reporter and participation costs (travel etc.).

Criteria to evaluate

- Level of 'divergence' or 'convergence' in opinions
- Degree of 'common' problem perception
- Level of involvement of stakeholders

More details

- Other methods: role playing game, round table conference

Spatial mental maps

Spatial mental maps show how people perceive a given phenomenon (e.g. flooding, river pollution). These maps can be obtained through specific interview techniques.
They are specific to individuals.
They are particularly useful at an early stage in a participatory process.

Particular functions

To reveal and understand the diversity of perceptions among people
Makes tacit, spatial knowledge visible. Thus, the resulting maps can be shown to all participants for comparison and discussion. It improves mutual understanding.

To collect local knowledge
Improves the general knowledge about the water system (biophysical and/or social components).

To aggregate local knowledge over wider areas
Peoples' spatial knowledge concerns local spaces. Putting them together leads to collective mental maps aggregated over larger spaces.

To integrate local stakeholders in the participative process
Gathering several individual representations on a single medium (e.g. a sketch map) strengthens the mediums representativeness, its objectivity and its legitimacy. It helps to increase the acceptance of local stakeholders in the decision making process.

To reveal the "blank" areas about which there is no knowledge
Helps to identify additional participants who know these areas.

How to do it ?

1. Decide the theme to focus on,
2. Choose a technique.

Several techniques:

Enumeration:
Ask lists of names
Identification:
Ask if known / not known
Speech:
Free or semi-directive interview
Graphic production / reconstruction set:
Drawing a map or making a model with a set of items
Estimation:
Ask for estimation (of distances, of intensity, ...)
Qualification:
Describe existing features

Example of use

Tools: Interviews + Map synthesis + Workshop
Analysing actors perception of water release impacts

"The sociological study of water release impacts was interesting because it revealed the diversity of perceptions among people"
Hydroelectric dam manager, 2004

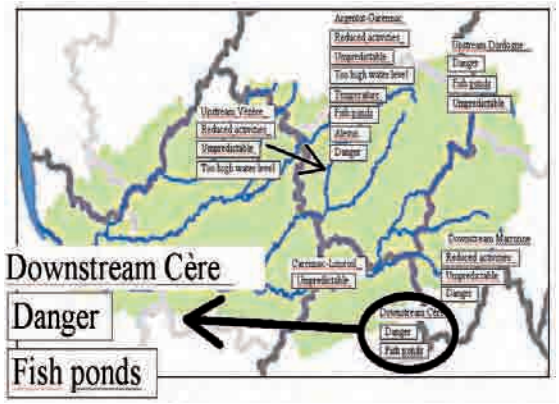
STEPS

Interviews and synthesis map

1) Individual interviews of stakeholders (perceptions)
2) Visualise all perceptions collected on a single map covering the entire river.

"Reframing" workshop

3) All stakeholders invited
4) Interviewer presents and comments the synthetic stakeholders perceptions map
5) Participants exchange views
6) Shared perception of reality



Traps & tricks

- ⌦ The same coding system is needed to be shared between all maps to be able to aggregate and compare them.
- ⌦ Parameters that affect human spatial cognition are complex. Better to hire the services of a skilled social scientist to carry out the survey and to present the results
- ⌦ Several techniques exist: avoid the ones that oblige respondents to draw things themselves. Better for the surveyor to perform semi-structured interviews, after which he or she draws himself the results on a spatial medium
- ⌦ Be sure people talk about the same reality. Ask for factual proofs (e.g., pictures, ...).

Main costs €

Survey study. Social scientist.
Materials used to make maps.

Criteria to evaluate

- Sample representativeness
- Proportion of "blank" areas
- New knowledge
- Collective awareness of difference of perceptions

More details

- Other tools: maps
- Methods: reframing workshop
- 3D modelling
- Kitchin R, Freundschuh S., 2000. Cognitive mapping: Past, Present and Future. London, Rob Kitchin & Scott Freundschuh Eds.

PP Phases

Starting Managing Improving

Website

Websites are often used for one way communication purposes. They allow distant and asynchronous interactions between people. To foster SL, they can also support two-way communication between participants.
Website engagement supports involvement and engagement of those not able to attend meetings.

Particular functions

To identify legitimate stakeholders
- They can declare their interest to participate
- Website high-tech "owners" are likely to play major roles in the process (informational power).

To manage community information capital
Improve archiving, storage, retrieval and display of data/documents shared by the Website community.

To communicate information
- to general public or during participative events for all the phases of a project. Webmapping visual languages improve and stimulate communication.
- Contributes to the Aarhus convention requirements.

To collect and to communicate public's own knowledge, perceptions and comments
In this case, additional functionalities are required to make the website interactive (discussion forum, comments management,...).

To bring people together
Website distributed architecture encourages collaboration shares responsibilities and data management tasks. It supports transparency, mutual understanding and trust.

Ideal functionalities

Data repository
With understandable thesaurus to index and retrieve data.

Data characterisctis
Through metadata (origin, providers, owners, quality, area covered, ...)

Open discussion area
Electronic forum

Intranet/internet
Website access rules defined collectively

User driven interfaces
Different sections according to user communities

Meaningful glossary
Technical and local terms definition

Webmapping
To gain from visual spatial language

Example of use

Tools: Website + online questionnaire
+ public forum.
Exchanging views on water issues
at the district level.

Example Websites for public participation
in French: http://www.touspourleau.fr
in German: http://www.regiowasser.de
In English: http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Traps & tricks

⌦ Avoid monolithic websites. Offer adaptive interfaces and data/document services according to user types (general public, stakeholder groups, project team).
⌦ Bridge the gap with reality as perceived by stakeholders: add field pictures, local stories, spend time in the field to collect data, avoid providing too much technical information.
⌦ Encourage transparency: make the minutes of meeting as accessible as possible. Support communication between representatives and constituencies.
⌦ Manage the Web-site itself in a participative way: co-construction of the thesaurus to index and retrieve data, use an open glossary (people can propose new terms or new definitions), upload/download capabilities

Main costs €

Webmaster, data manager, time spent to answer questions and comments.

Criteria to evaluate

- Two-way communication functionalities
- Thesaurus and glossary meaningfulness
- User driven functionalities
- Level of openness/ transparency
- Number/origin of connections

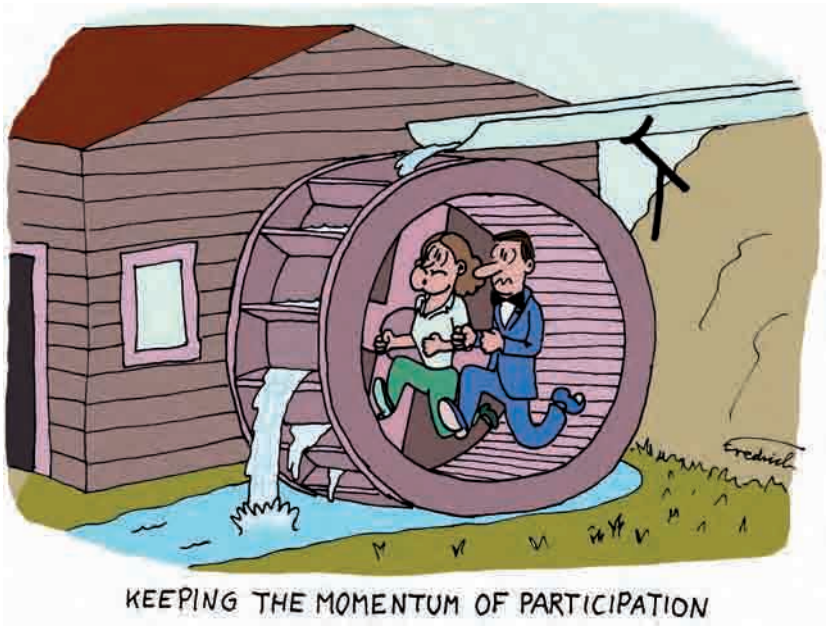
More details

- other tools: maps, questionnaires
- Web-based Public Participation; GIS Research (Manchester University), http://www.ppgis.man.ac.uk/

2.5 Keeping the momentum

Participants come, participants go

Public participatory processes, similar to what happens with media communication, tend to function in cycles. Social attention to particular issues grows, develops and at some point, dies. It is possible to contribute to the creation of a growing trend of awareness over time, but such involvement will always follow cycles of 'voice' (entrance into the process) and the 'exit' of stakeholders. The following checklist summarises issues mentioned in chapter 1 and 2 and helps to reflect upon the chosen process and helps 'spontaneous' and short-term involvement become a more stable longer form of participation:



- Remember that social learning is about human development, not only about solving specific practical problems. Financial and non-financial incentives are needed to strengthen the motives for participation.
- Start thinking about whom are you talking to rather than what you are talking about.
- Keep adapting your ways to local language, manners and habits. Start by understanding local motives, interests, preoccupations and desires in order to make sense of the situation and increase the validity of your – everybody's – results.
- Do not rely solely on electronic tools for communication: it is obvious that participatory processes cannot be carried out only on the basis of electronic resources, although these can be used to complement – not substitute – more interpersonal interaction.
- Remember that not all public participation processes will necessarily lead to social learning. There is no guarantee that public participation will be a successful one. And there is no guarantee that social learning will occur. A well organised public participation

process, however, definitely supports the development of social learning.

- Be open to 'expected surprises'. Try to transform threats to the process into new opportunities for interaction, by integrating the possible conflicts into the process of participation.
- Try to assess the evolution of your own level of knowledge about the ongoing participation and, in particular, by asking yourself what you know or do not know about the diversity of stakeholders, the type of issues to be handled and the possible problems that may occur both from taking action and from not taking it, and how this knowledge changes over time.
- Be aware of the dangers of perversions of a participatory process. Some public participation processes, based on unequal power relationships may even consolidate the present status quo and create even greater barriers to social learning and innovation.
- Do not rush the ending – make time for reflection.

2.6 Information management

Information management for participatory processes deals with two major aspects: the definition of the role of expert knowledge in the process and the problem of guaranteeing transparent information storage.

2.6.1 The role of expert knowledge

The main questions to be asked are:

- What messages are to be selected?
- What types of information need to be provided?
- To whom?
- How? For what reason?

Often less information is better information

Public participation processes aimed at social learning will need a team of facilitators good at dealing with people, and who are able to obtain, select and provide to the stakeholders the latest state-of-the art information about the issues at stake. It is counterproductive to show large amounts of technical data –most of which will not be able to be understood. It is important that complex information is translated into the right language so that it can enhance the mutual learning processes.

Expert language and expert assessment tools can unfortunately be used to exclude people, rather than to include them. Most experts' tools usually deal with large quantities of data and have a specific professional interest. Their scientific language is often not well adapted to communicate the consequences of action – i.e. what is of interest to the public or the stakeholder group. The public tends to be mostly concerned about

concrete measures than in the scientific or technical nature of the problems at stake.

Complexity of provided information depends on type of stakeholder

One procedure to apply is to provide the information in different levels of complexity and depth, adapted to the different stakeholders and public who will participate in the process. In a similar guise this occurs in a visit to a museum – in which both children and adults can find their own messages of varying levels of complexity. For instance, future scenarios resulting from particular planning projects can be visualised simply with some pictures on how the future will look like or else they can be described in writing with a lot of technical detail. As a general rule, all the stakeholders should feel that they have enough information to contribute to the process and feel that this information helped them to make their points – or change them.

There are also risks that experts impose their own definitions of a problem. This could happen, for example when debates are structured solely around experts and therefore leaves little room for public discussion.
Finding a right balance between facts and values and between ideal and realistic options is difficult but necessary. Information must be made concrete for the people. The facilitator supports the experts to adjust the information according to the required level of detail.

Increasingly, public participation facilitators use multi-media and seek recourse in art works in order to invoke emotional responses from the participants. This can compensate for the overemphasis on environmental, technical and expert issues.

Information has an emotionall side too

Finally, the information provided for social learning processes should not only focus on environmental issues, but also contain other social, moral and cultural references. Mapping out the different assumptions, interests and values behind different policy preferences and options can truly enhance the transparency of the whole policy process.

2.6.2 Reporting

Participatory processes result in a lot of data that should be carefully compiled and reported. This can be done in different ways.

Collection and storage of information:

There are several ways of collecting information generated by a participatory process, which will later be needed for the analysis and presentation of results:

- Audio or video recordings of conversations
- Notes taken during the meeting
- Reports and charts created by the participants
- Official decisions and agreements resulting from the participatory process

Two facilitators are better than one

To ease reporting duties, it is always advisable to carry out interactions with stakeholders with at least two facilitators: e.g. one moderator and one note-taker, so that the analysis of the outputs can be checked against each other and are not only the work of one single person. Another usual procedure is to give back the results of the participatory processes to the participants and ask them if they agree with the interpretation of the process and outcomes as presented. This increases the validity of the results.

Reliability and validity:

Tape recording for information collection and storage

It is essential to check the reliability and validity of the results obtained as well as the procedures used in the participatory process. By reliability we mean that the instruments used to gather and later on to analyse the opinions of the participants can really reflect views, and therefore can express what happened during the process. By validity we refer to the fact that such results are representative of the different perspectives held by the participants. In public participation processes where discussions are not tape recorded for latter analysis, reliability is difficult, although this can be (partly) compensated by the writing of a consensus report with the stakeholders. As a general rule final reports should always be made publicly available.

2.7 Outreach

Agreement at the table is not enough

Social learning processes involve different groups of people. First, there are the people who participate actively in the process: the "stakeholder group". They are the motor of the social learning process. However, they are often not in control. The participants usually are representatives of groups and institutions and decision-making power often resides elsewhere in the group or organisation. Moreover, the decision-makers in these groups and organisations do not operate in a void. They need the support of their members or of public opinion and are influenced by their members and by public opinion.

To prevent lessons being lost and to promote the implementation of decisions, the core group thus has to "reach out" to different audiences. Two types of audiences can be identified:

- "Powerful audiences" that have to approve or co-operate, such as political superiors, higher authorities and implementing agencies
- "Influential audiences" who influence public opinion: the general public, the media

Powerful audiences: the representative – constituency relation

The representative-constituency relation can be an issue throughout social learning processes. A spokesperson send as representative to a participatory process should enjoy the full support of all members of the group s/he is representing. In case, mediation may be needed to work on

internal disputes, the clarification of interests and the choosing of a representative.

Choosing the composition of the stakeholder group is a central dilemma: a small stakeholder group increases manageability, but a large stakeholder group can ease the implementation of agreements by the stakeholders' constituencies. In different phases of the process different levels of participation may be needed (information, consultation or active involvement) and not all stakeholders need to or can participate to the same extent and at the same time.

Many other groups are important as well

Extensive participatory processes, e.g. involving negotiation, have complex compositions of constituencies, representatives, audiences, bystanders and observers. They can be present or absent, dependent or nondependent, involved or uninvolved, giving or withholding commentary. They will, however, influence the negotiators choices of tactics and style, because negotiators look for favourable reactions from their respective audiences and the audiences hold their representatives responsible.

Stakeholder representatives need to negotiate on two fronts

The multiparty setting complicates the dilemma of the representatives. They must develop an interpersonal bond with other representatives in order to work together, while at the same time deal with the group dynamics in their own constituency. Building and maintaining both relations with several partners is strenuous.

In order to be successful, representatives need a mandate that enables them to:

- Move away from the position of being spokesperson of the constituency to being autonomous in releasing information;
- Move away from the position of defender of the a-priori constituency bargaining position to being able to create new value options around the table;
- Compromise their position in order to make a deal, something which is especially hard when the interest of ones' own constituency is divided.

Eventually, parties will invent options that satisfy their own interests as well as others'. Outsiders and experts can propose solutions, which also protects representatives from possible repercussions from their constituencies. Agreements in principle that have to be worked out later can help to maintain momentum and achieve a sense of accomplishment.

Promoting implementation

Dedicated structures may promote implementation of decisions

During discussions the issue of implementation should never be forgotten. Assuming the constituencies are persuaded, support from the people who have to implement the plan / agreement is necessary. The people who speak for the organisation often do not have the technical expertise to act.

Dedicated organisations (river basin commissions, steering groups, committees, new or existing empowered groups) can be useful to oversee the implementation of agreements. The stakeholders can agree on a large degree of self-regulation and create long-term structures to support and sustain their collective decision.

The decided organisational structures should make the agreements operational. This may involve lobbying, licensing, contracting, management actions and renegotiation to modify implementation plans. Within the organisational structure also the systems of stakeholder interaction is defined. By systematic reflection on and sharing of information, they can enhance the social learning in the river basin system and increase and retain the knowledge among the stakeholders in the domain.

Reaching out to the "general public"

Learning together to manage together, invariably involves reaching out to the "general public" and getting feedback from them, in ways and formats adapted to the various phases and progress of the project. During all phases, outreach serves to raise awareness of the issues and of the process. Gradually, the theme moves from informing the community about the issues of concern and the selected domain of action towards motivating the community to identify and implement solutions. The cycle closes by feeding back information, reassessing the situation and eventually correcting shortcomings.

International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine
The International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR) offers an example of how specialised organisations can support the implementation of agreements. The ICPR consists of representatives of the different member states of the commission. Member states are obliged to report to the Commission about the implementation of the different Rhine treaties. The Commission functions as a platform to discuss any business concerning Rhine, including, since a few years, the implementation of the WFD. The ICPR got the means to involve the media and reach the general public using a variety of activities and communication tools. For more details see the website: www.iksr.org.

There are many ways to reach the "general public"

Methods and mechanisms of communication and information can vary according to the audience, the message to be conveyed and budgets (bilateral talks, announcements, community meetings, fact sheets, periodicals, news articles, periodicals, festival activities, CD-ROMs, www, emails, radio and television spots, etc.). Below a few examples of outreach products/activities are given:

Initial awareness-raising

- Maps of River Basin Management domain;
- 2-3 page background sheets on issues and project;
- Media kits (maps, background, contact points, news quotes);

- Articles to local media outlets, radio, TV;
- Presentations at community and governmental meetings.
- Discussions

Planning and decision-making

- Articles to media outlets on issues of concern,
- Targeted outreach materials, such as facts sheets and messages relevant to specific audiences.
- General slide shows on the project (geographic scope, documented issues) designed for stakeholders to use in their constituencies.
- Newsletters and list-servers for distribution to the community;
- Displays for libraries, schools, fairs etc.

Action and implementation

- Conduct demonstration projects;
- Initiate (volunteer) monitoring activities;
- Continue general media coverage of activities, implementation progress, program activities, evaluations, reflections and learning issues;
- Hold events to show successes and motivate constituencies to carry out additional efforts.

Involving the media

Raise the profile of the participation process by involving the media

The media are often a key stakeholder to involve in a participatory process. But the question whether they should be involved – and how – should be decided right at the beginning, together with the other stakeholders.

A conflict loaded situation should be settled before the involvement of media.

A nature protection project in Lower Saxony tried to develop examples of combining nature protection goals with agricultural goals resulting in a gain for both sectors. At the beginning of the process, there was much distrust. Farmers were reluctant to be open to the media because they feared that journalists would not present their ideas and interests objectively. In such cases it is necessary that first trust is built. The media can then be involved once joint decisions have been taken.

Media involvement can raise the profile of the process to the wider public. The media can also be a valuable participant, able and willing to contribute important reflections and information about important issues relevant to the region. It is usually better to involve them rather than to leave them out, as actively involving them can usually result in the event, and the wider project in general, receiving more positive media coverage. The facts presented in the media are then more likely to be more accurate and balanced, as opposed to misinterpretations and unrepresentative

accounts. The latter can be very damaging to the project and can discourage under represented stakeholders from participating again.

Media involvement must be accepted by all participants

Often, invited journalists attend only to observe and take notes for their own purpose, contributing little or nothing to the discussions. The other participants may then not feel very comfortable that a journalist from a local newspaper, for example, is noting everything that is being said. This can discourage participants from voicing their opinions and may mean that a great deal of important information is withheld.

To prevent this, the role of the media should be made very explicit at the start, both to the media and to the other participants. The media involvement must be accepted by the other stakeholders. If people do not yet fully trust the participation process and are still uncertain about their own role in it, it is better to leave the media out, at least for the time being.

Keeping good relations with the media can be useful. This can be difficult given the different languages, criteria, timing and corporate reasons under which most current media operate. Media, inevitably, tend to simplify the complexity of policy processes and focus on specific events. Conflicts, visual or surprising actions gain most coverage and participatory processes are not particularly prone to be covered unless the goals and the expected or actual results can be clearly summarised. The facilitators can provide briefings to the media to help journalists in their tasks of communication with the larger constituencies and help to prevent errors.

For public information campaigns, the following four steps need to be taken in each phase:

- Identify the target audiences for outreach.
- Develop the message that will engage them in the objectives. It should be tied to something that the audience values (i.e. conveniences, quality, savings, opportunities, protection).
- Package the message in the best format for the target audience: accessible, understandable and user-friendly.
- Distribute the message: door-to-door, mail, email, phone, handouts, media-outlets, public places, etc..

Outreach is much more than information campaigns

However, please note that outreach is more than an information campaign. To really engage many audiences, they need to be given the possibility to react, contribute and influence.

HOW TO IMPROVE

Chapter 3

This chapter helps in assessing the achievements of a participation strategy. A checklist of questions to be asked in the evaluation of a participation process is presented.

3.1 Monitoring and evaluation

Key questions addressed in this chapter are:

- Why do I need an evaluation of participation aspects?
- How can I organise an evaluation of participation aspects? and
- What tools and methods are available?

3.1.1 Introduction

Evaluation: consider contents, relations and procedures

Three aspects of monitoring and evaluation are discussed in this chapter:

- Monitoring and evaluation of the contents in participatory processes and social learning (what is considered and discussed)
- Monitoring and evaluation of the relations in participatory processes and social learning (who are the actors and how do they interact)
- Monitoring and evaluation of the procedures in participatory processes and social learning (how are things organised)

This chapter addresses the evaluation of the participation process and the contribution that participation has made to the project. It does not address the evaluation of other aspects of the project.

Evaluation is a continuous activity

Monitoring and evaluation of the participation process can play a role in any phase of a project. Monitoring and evaluation of the participation process therefore is a continuous activity during a project.

Evaluation may be a participatory process itself

Monitoring and evaluation of a participation process can be, but not necessarily, organised as a participation process in itself. This relates to the procedures chosen to monitor and evaluate relational aspects.

3.1.2 Why monitor and evaluate the participation process?

Performing an evaluation of the participation process will help to embed the benefits of the project in the memories of all actors involved. This plants the seeds for improved future interactions. Moreover, it will help managers to increase their knowledge of public participation processes. This improves the effectiveness of participation in new projects.

Different ways to conduct the evaluation

In none of the case studies was the evaluation actually performed by the stakeholders themselves.
In the **English case study**, the Environmental Agency commissioned a private company to perform the evaluation.
In the **Dutch case study**, Rijkswaterstaat Limburg (the water agency) performed the evaluation itself.

In the **Hungarian case study,** the Hungarian Dialogue, evaluations were performed after each consultation meeting. The organisers asked for opinions and suggestions from the stakeholders by way of interviews. This practice was kept up during the whole duration of the Dialogue.

The evaluation of the participation process addresses the following questions:

- What was the contribution of participation in achieving the results, outputs and outcomes of the project?
- What was the contribution of participation in improving the relations between the actors?
- What was the contribution of participation in improving the procedures within the project?
- How large are these contributions when compared to the original goals?
- Must the participation practices be adapted, and if so, how?

Lessons learnt from the Flemish case study:
The project dealt with the management of a tributary of the Scheldt basin. The relevance of the lessons learned from the case study and the ways to transfer them to other similar initiatives were discussed with the involved public officers. From this evaluation, recommendations arose, such as:

- before starting a participatory process, a realistic estimation has to be made of what it implies, in terms of human and financial resources.
- the convening administration has to be clear with the stakeholders about the limits of their participation.
- expectations between initiators and external actors have to be tuned, concerning the role and input of each party in the process.
- the public officers in participatory projects in which multiple and conflicting parties are involved, need professional training.

Reasons to evaluate

In other words evaluation covers information on contents, relations and procedures.

Why information on contents is relevant:

- To understand the goals of particular projects
- To assess the feasibility of the undertaking
- To improve the collaborative work.
- To interpret final outcomes.
- To make the results accountable

Why information on relations is relevant:

- Verification that social learning created an added value for the RBM
- Account for the investment of resources
- Promote and publicize the added value of the process
- To better know how to sustain the financial investments
- To get acquainted with related programs and networks
- To assess the capability of networks
- To sustain personal commitments of the stakeholders and the public at large
- Replication: providing a description of actual work can be essential for similar projects or initiatives

- Affirming hard work: monitoring achievements and celebrating even small successes is a way of social validation and to encourage stakeholder participation
- Keeping the RBM visible and conveying an image of collaboration

Why information on procedures is relevant:

- To understand national and local policies, laws and regulations
- To understand history, culture and experiences in past undertakings
- To get acquainted with funding and support systems

3.1.3 Steps in the organisation and execution of monitoring and evaluation

The following steps are distinguished in the organisation and execution of the monitoring and evaluation of a participation process:

1. Establishing the purpose and scope of monitoring and evaluation

- Why is monitoring and evaluation needed?
- When is it needed?
- Is participatory or non- participatory evaluation appropriate? (For an explanation, see below)
- Who should and wants to be involved?
- What are the main reasons for setting up and implementing the monitoring and evaluation to different stakeholders?
- How comprehensive should be the monitoring and evaluation system?

2. Planning

- Who evaluates (stakeholders, researchers or external evaluators)?
- For information gathering and organising, how will the required information be defined, gathered and organised?
- What are the results of a critical reflection on processes and events?
- How will the information gathered be interpreted and used?
- What is the quality of communication and reporting?
- How and to whom should what be communicated?
- What are the necessary conditions and capacities?
- What is needed to ensure the monitoring and evaluation system actually works?

3. Identifying performance questions, information needs and indicators

- What does one need to know in order to monitor and evaluate the project (see next chapter)? Reach agreement on this.
- Agree on the methods, responsibilities and timing of information collection
- Clarify the stakeholders' roles and expectations from the evaluation process

4. Implementation

- Conduct meetings
- Conduct the evaluation
- Collect the information (see section 3.1.5)

5. Analysing

- Analyse the information
- Build a consensus over the results

Lesson from the French case study: take time to analyse!
In the Dordogne, it appeared particularly important that scientists take the time to establish the credibility of a new technical diagnosis, and to obtain a validation of it by reference to local knowledge. In this case the analysis already incorporates its participatory evaluation.

6. Prepare an action plan

- Agree on how the findings are to be used
- Agree who may use the findings
- Clarify if and how the monitoring and evaluation process should be sustained

Common mistakes in evaluation planning

Common mistakes are that it is sometimes assumed all stakeholders will be interested. It may then come as an unpleasant surprise when they do not show up at meetings! Often inappropriate indicators and methods may also be imposed. In addition, it may remain unclear how information will be used, and by whom. Diverging expectations on these matters may lead to frustration and a lack of involvement. Finally, often information collected is not really necessary.

Non-participatory monitoring and evaluation of the participation process

Evaluator may be external

Non-participatory evaluation may be performed by a hired consultant, a researcher or a representative of the initiator of a project. The evaluator determines indicators and criteria by himself, based on the project or evaluation plan. For data collection regarding these indicators he may need to consult the stakeholders.

Advantages of this approach are:

- It is relatively quick and cheap
- It is preferable in situations when there is a high risk that one of the stakeholders will dominate the evaluation and misuse the results for his own ends

A disadvantage is that no broadly defined and supported evaluation method will be developed. Also the initiating organisation may have a bias. Therefore the learning process of the stakeholders will be curtailed, and proper embedding of the results for future projects will be less secure.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation of the participation process

Evaluators are stakeholders

Participatory evaluation provides for active involvement in the evaluation process by the stakeholders in the project. Participating groups meet to communicate and negotiate to reach a consensus on evaluation findings, solve problems, and make plans to improve performance. Views of all participants are sought and recognized. The process is a learning experience for participants on its own. Emphasis is on identifying lessons learnt that will help participants improve program implementation, as well as on assessing whether targets were achieved. Evaluation questions as well as data collection and analysis methods are determined by the participants, not by outside evaluators.

Participatory evaluation should be of flexible design, rather than having a predetermined design. When outsiders are involved in the evaluation, their role should be as facilitators rather than evaluators.

In addition to the general purposes of evaluation, some specific features of participatory evaluation can be indicated. These features are often considered as purposes as well:

- The focus is on learning, rather than accountability as in common evaluations
- They examine relevant issues by involving key players in evaluation design
- They promote stakeholder learning about the program and other stakeholders' view
- They improve evaluation skills
- They mobilise stakeholders and enhance a teamwork and build a shared commitment to act on evaluation recommendations
- The role of stakeholders is to design and adapt the methodology, collect data, share findings and link them to action, rather than to only provide information
- Success is measured by internally defined indicators, including more qualitative judgements, rather than externally defined, mainly using quantitative indicators

Choosing between participatory / non-participatory evaluation

The disadvantages of participatory evaluation may be that it is:

- Viewed as less objective because stakeholders participate
- Time and resources consuming
- Dominated and misused by some stakeholders to further their own interests

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The criteria to decide between participatory and non-participatory evaluation are summarized in the following table.

The ☺ in the table indicates the type of evaluation that is most appropriate for the issue mentioned in the middle column. The left column distinguishes the contents, relations and procedures as explained in chapter 3.1.1.

	Issues	Participatory evaluation	Non-participatory evaluation
Contents	focus on learning by stakeholders	☺	
	focus on accountability		☺
	room for extra evaluation issues, apart from project plan	☺	
Relations	problem solving capacity is important	☺	
	learning by stakeholders for future projects is important	☺	
	risk of misuse by dominant stakeholders is present		☺
	external experts as evaluator		☺
	external experts as facilitator	☺	
Procedures	stakeholders participate in monitoring	☺	☺
	stakeholders participate in defining the scope and goals	☺	
	money and time are limiting		☺

3.1.4 What to monitor and evaluate in the participatory process

The project goals should become evaluation criteria

In the Italian case study, the participation process aimed at:

- Providing support for the decisions to be taken in the Water Infrastructures Plan
- Reducing conflicts and making stakeholders and participants come to an agreement
- Educating stakeholders about the rivers' problems, about the approaches to be applied to the existing legislation and about innovative technologies etc.

These were the goals of the participatory process and at the same time the evaluation criteria. At the end of the process which led to the editing of the Water Infrastructure Plan, it was noticed that all three above mentioned points had been successfully reached.

Describe what to monitor and evaluate in an evaluation plan

The items to be monitored and evaluated should be described in the project plan or the evaluation plan. In participatory evaluations, especially, provisions must be made for new evaluation items. These may stem from unexpected results of the project or from items that are proposed by stakeholders in the evaluation phase.
When the items to be evaluated are agreed upon, indicators for each of them must be chosen. Indicators are easily measurable criteria which provide information about changes in specific conditions. A good indicator is:

Characteristics of indicators

- Measurable
- Precise: defined in the same way by all people
- Sensitive: changing proportionally in response to changes in the conditions
- Easy to use

Selection of indicators is crucial

In participation processes taking place at several scales, it is important to find a balance between locally-relevant factors and more widely-applicable factors.
The chosen indicators for evaluating the process should capture intangible as well as tangible changes, especially in projects that value factors such as personal and social development.

Since evaluators can rarely pretend to know the main issues in advance, it is sometimes good not to identify indicators in advance.
Indicators are often site specific and transitory which means they need to be continually reassessed.

The following table is based on the English HarmoniCOP case study. The criteria upon which the process was to be evaluated were defined at the beginning of the evaluation process. This allowed the best fitting indicators to be chosen, i.e. indicators that can be met more easily. The evaluation may therefore have presented the process more positively than it actually was. The table summarises the criteria and indicators that were used in the evaluation. This example shows how to define criteria or success factors and make them measurable by choosing appropriate indicators.

Criteria/success factors	Indicator
seek involvement of all major sectors, interests and geographic areas	type and numbers of stakeholders reached
	type and numbers of stakeholders involved
effectively communicate the process and role of stakeholders in the process	number of stakeholders reached with information about the process and role of stakeholders
	number of stakeholders that understand the process and their role in it

Criteria/success factors	Indicator
test a range of participation methods	number of stakeholders reached with information about the process and role of stakeholders
	number of stakeholders that understand the process and their role in it
	feedback on lessons and suggestions for improvement
improve the capacity of the stakeholders to make joint decisions	number of stakeholders thinking the process worthwhile
	number of stakeholders thinking their contribution made a difference
	number of stakeholders willing to be involved in subsequent stages
increase the desire of stakeholders to take action in river basin management	number of stakeholders willing to take action
enhance the mutual understanding of the views and positions of stakeholders	level of understanding of others' viewpoints
	way in which conflicts are reported by stakeholders

3.1.5 Methodologies, tools and methods for evaluation of the participatory process

Many tools for evaluation are the same as for other phases

A range of tools and methods can be used for the monitoring and evaluation of participation aspects in a project. Most of theses tools and methods can also be applied in other participation phases and can be made to meet the specific needs of evaluation. A summary of tools and methods and their applicability to different phases in the participation process can be found in Chapter 1 'How to get started'. Some tools and methods are presented in more detail in the form of index cards in Chapter 2 'How to manage'.

Evaluation at an early stage

Expectation and Feedback forms can support monitoring and evaluation at an early stage of the process. To gauge stakeholder expectation of the workshop before the event itself and participant perceptions of the workshop after it is over, they can help in better understanding the unvoiced opinions of the stakeholders.

A usual practice is to deliver an *evaluation sheet* to all the participants just before the end of the process to provide the participants with the opportunity to assess the process. Such questionnaires contain questions

about the strengths and pitfalls of the process, suggestions for improvement, and evidently, also ideas or invitations for taking part in a follow-up process.

Show how the results are used

It is decisive that participants are also engaged in a follow-up process, e.g. by commenting on the validity or relevance of the results, and how they can be enhanced or improved upon in the future. Stakeholder feedback or responses can also be obtained via *web sites* and telephone or personal *in-depth interviews*. However, to avoid disappointment or conflict, it is wise not to ask for more information from stakeholders than one can realistically deal with given the human, financial and time resources available. It is pointless to open a participatory web-site without the guarantee that the necessary staff will be available to organise and classify all the comments and reactions which it may provoke. A usual outcome of the follow-up stage is an acknowledgement of the insufficiency of available resources to guarantee the necessary level of representation, competence and fairness for all the relevant stakeholders. Thus, more resources need to be deployed in improving the participatory process.

Regardless of what is said during the workshop, opportunity should still be provided for participants to express their opinions outside the workshop.

Further reading:

www.Harmonicop.info/_files/_down/PoolOfQuestions.pdf

3.2 Evaluation checklist

One of the first questions to be answered in an evaluation is whether social learning has occurred, and how it shows itself. An indication that social learning has taken place is when:

- Knowledge of participants has increased regarding causes and effects within their problem domain
- The attitude of participants has changed leading to more acceptance of different opinions
- The skills of participants to acknowledge the perspectives of others have been enhanced
- Joint interventions have successfully taken place

On the next page a list of elements is presented, which can be used for the evaluation of particular components of social learning or for an in-depth overall assessment.

What relational activities occurred?	✓	Which problem-solving activities took place?	✓
Getting attention and awareness of stakeholders		Sharing perspectives on issues	
Mobilizing actors: commitment to collaborate		Defining common issues and identifying resources	
Legitimating stakeholders and organisers		Generating and sharing information	
Exploration of diversity		Exploring alternative options	
Connecting stakes and interests		Selecting an intervention strategy	
Negotiating roles and identities		Planning concrete action steps	
Guaranteeing commitment of participants and their represented organisation		Implementation	
Aligning efforts and agreements		Evaluating outcomes	

The list of questions on the following pages may additionally help with the evaluation of social learning. A distinction is made between elements related to the process and elements related to the product or outcome of the process. The questions do not allow a clear yes or no. However, the more questions that can be answered positively, the more successful the process has been.

Process

The evaluation of the process should start with an assessment of how far the ground rules were respected (c.f. with section 2.2.1). Such a quick assessment protocol should be created after each workshop session. These protocols can then be summarised and can provide an overview of the process development in general.

- Have all relevant stakeholder groups been targeted in the initial phase of the process? (c.f. section 1.5)
- What were the reasons for not including certain groups?

- Have "all interested parties" been involved in accordance with Article 14 of the WFD?
- What have been the experiences with the timing of the participation? Were stakeholders involved too early or too late in the process?
- Have appropriate roles been assigned to each party involved?
- Is there sufficient information about the resources, capacity and interests of the different stakeholder groups?
- To what extent are the different groups committed to the actual process? What are possible reservations? Are there any limitations in terms of available resources? (c.f. section 1.7)
- How could different views and interests be characterised? What is their potential for hampering the process?

What is known about the stakeholders involved in the process?

- Are the identified stakeholders well defined, organised, internally homogeneous and do they have their representatives in the process?
- Do stakeholders know and accept each others' legitimacy claims?
- Do stakeholders dispute others' legitimacy. If so, is mediation by third parties needed and available?
- Are there important parties that stay out or have been left out, that may challenge the outcomes?
- Are there procedures to support the introduction of new partners?
- Are there procedures for the exit of stakeholders?
- In which ways are representatives of stakeholders mandated in the deliberations and what autonomy and authority do they have?
- Have there been communication problems or conflicts between the representatives and their constituencies and if yes, how was it solved?

Scope

- To what extent has the process so far contributed to the delineation of the problem? Is there clarity and agreement among all parties involved about what will be discussed?
- Are the requirements from the WFD being sufficiently taken into account?

Is there agreement on the problem definition

- Are all actors invited to give their views on the nature of the problem?
- Are there certain problem definitions, issues or aspects that come up and that are systematically ignored or denied by others?
- Do the stakeholders clearly understand the priority concerns of the project?
- Is there sufficient agreement in how the parties define the major issues, such that all parties find their interests represented?
- Do all parties recognise mutual interdependence of actions and desired outcomes?

Does the organiser/facilitator fulfil his or her leadership tasks?

Does the organiser clearly define the role and strategic objectives for the program?

- What power base is the organiser/facilitator working from: formal authority, reputation, trust, expertise, experience, personal influence?
- Does the facilitator have the necessary skills i.e. identification of stakeholders, organisational skills, a sense of timing, knowledge of context and an ability to create the proper context…?
- Is the facilitator able to (re)frame, articulate and manage interdependencies between the stakeholders?
- Is the facilitator able to remain impartial?

Do stakeholders "own" the process and feel committed towards it?

- Do stakeholders perceive that collaboration is the best way to further their interests?
- Do all parties see that it is possible to reach a fair agreement?
- Is there relative equality among stakeholders, or is some balancing of resources needed?
- Is there clarity about the agenda and how key decisions are being reached?
- Do representatives of partners understand their roles and mandates?
- Is attendance of meetings kept under review?

- Does the group work with enthusiasm, energy and determination to achieve success?
- Is their a feeling of ownership for the solutions by different actors and organisations?

Does the participation strategy allow participation of the general public?

- Does the stakeholder group monitor broad public involvement and voluntary sector participation in its processes?
- Is there a strategy for public involvement?
- Is there a RBM strategy for community/citizen involvement?
- Has RBM become more sensitive to the perspectives of the public as a result of the project?
- Has the general public developed improved skills in the areas of advocacy such as use of information, leadership and problem solving?
- Does the public feel that they have an increased influence on decision making in RBM?

Have an appropriate working style and transparent and effective management been applied?

- Do working methods take into account the different perspectives and contributions of all partners?
- Are procedures flexible enough to enable participation by all key people?
- Does the stakeholder group fund or sponsor participation in stakeholder meetings and other activities?
- Does the stakeholder group consider alternative ways of meeting the needs and aspirations of the public?
- Has the stakeholder group adopted new working practices as a result of lessons learnt from participation?
- Is there enough freedom for parties to develop their own identity and role with regard to an issue, or do the others force them into stereotypes?
- Are controversial and complex negotiations handled in a win-lose bargaining style ("I am right, you are wrong") or in an interest-bargaining style (joint exploration and problem solving of differences)?
- Is there an actor facilitating the process who is calling attention to the relational aspects; looking at how parties deal with each other and caring that they stay involved?
- Do senior decision makers / experts have experience in working partnerships?
- Do higher authorities support stakeholders working on local issues?

- Can all partners freely express their interests and needs, even when they differ from the others?
- Is accountability for RBM performance and outcome identified and reviewed?
- Does the stakeholder group have a clear way known to all parties of reaching agreement and decision-making with a possibility to appeal decisions?

Communication

- Have responsibilities been assigned for communication?
- Are reports and presentations easily accessible for stakeholders?
- Is an agreed communication strategy available?
- Do leaders communicate RBM policy and strategy to all stakeholder parties?
- Does the stakeholder group regularly share progress reports with stakeholders' organisations?
- Are resources allocated to Information and Communication Tools (IC-Tools) infrastructure and traditional forms of communication?
- Does the stakeholder group review the impact of reporting to ensure that language and content are understood by all?
- Is there time to reflect and talk about the collective experience and the actual processes of the program?

The following text box presents an example of the use of a questionnaire (tool) in an interview setting (method) for the evaluation of a stakeholder dialogue process in Hungary.

Independently if questionnaires are used in an interview setting or are distributed by mail/email and send back by participants to the interviewers: the testing of the questionnaires and accordingly the adjustment of the questionnaire to the test results are indispensable.

Experiences in evaluating a stakeholder dialogue process from Hungary

The public participation process of the Hungarian Dialogue on the implementation of the WFD in Agricultural Water Management was evaluated mostly during the specific sessions of four regional and one national level Dialogue meeting. The conclusions have been also discussed by the Communication and Public Relations Section of the Hungarian Hydrological Society and the Council of the Global Water Partnership Central and Eastern Europe.

In the meetings, the participants were asked about the key questions in relation to the WFD, and the opinions were summarised by the organisers. The second part of the meetings was focused on their proposals and remarks about the public participation process, in general, and, specifically, in the implementation of the WFD. This questionnaire was based on the questionnaire formulated by the leading institutions of the Global Dialogue on Water for Food and Environment.

Objectives of these sessions:

•To discuss the role and advantages of social learning in the implementation process of the WFD;
•To gain first-hand experiences on the opinions of the stakeholders regarding the organisation of the Dialogue procedure;
•To estimate the awareness of the participants for involving the general public and their level of recognition regarding the importance of public involvement;
•To evaluate and discuss together the lessons learnt during the previous Dialogue meetings and to exchange ideas for the solutions of problems.

To get additional experiences and to evaluate the Dialogue process in more detail, a questionnaire was elaborated based on the "Pool of Questions" of the HarmoniCOP project (www.harmonicop.info/download).
The Pool of Questions serves as a guide when preparing to interview stakeholders, to observe meetings, to consult archives or to evaluate ICTools. After the selection of the adequate questions and the adaptation of them to the circumstances of the Dialogue, some of the most active partners were visited and interviewed. The first idea was to send the questionnaire to the water management authorities' representatives via email or mail by the help of the organisers. However, this method is not efficient because of the lack of personal contact and uncertainty whether the competent person can answer the questions correctly without additional information from the interviewer or not.

Product / Outcome

The most important outcome is whether or not social learning has taken place, as explained in the first paragraph of this chapter. To evaluate this in further detail the following questions will provide ideas.

Strategic development priorities

- Does the working agenda reflect the interests of all stakeholders?
- Does the RBM identify and prioritise local concerns?
- Are local stakeholders involved in decision making and strategy formulation?
- Does the RBM use techniques/procedures to involve locals in decision making?
- Does the project link with wider government policies?

Information management and evaluation of achievements

- Do stakeholder groups engage in joint information search activities?
- Do stakeholder groups have the capacity to carry out evaluations or to help monitor progress?
- Are there agreed criteria to assess information used to support decision making and process reviews?
- Does the RBM have an agreed monitoring and evaluation framework to guide the focus of evaluation activities?
- Is information gathered from local stakeholders being used?
- Does the RBM undertake impact assessments of policy to determine potential benefits and costs?
- Is information checked for clarity and ease of interpretation before being disseminated?
- Does the RBM have a clearly defined and agreed information and knowledge management policy?
- Are stakeholders and the public able to access and understand the information required to make RBM decisions?
- Is policy or strategy modified in line with review findings?

Managing (financial) resources

- Has the overall level of resources available been agreed upon by all stakeholders?
- Are some aspects of RBM contributors' work funded through pooled budgets?
- Are mainstream budgets within contributor organisations allocated to reflect partnership priorities?
- Do capital and programme expenditures reflect partnership priorities?
- Does planning identify short/medium/long term financial implications?

Selection of tools/methods

- How well do the methods/tools chosen for participation fit the actual situation? What are their possible shortcomings? Are information and communication tools integrated in the approach and how well are they accepted by the stakeholders? (see section 1.6)
- Is there a common strategy to use information technology?
- Have stakeholder groups attempted to use ICTools?
- Is training in ICTools assessed and included in personal training/development plans?
- Does the organiser/facilitator give a lead to stakeholder parties and local groups to develop integrated IC Tools capability?
- Do IC Tools and the way they are used increase the sharing of information, the exchanging of points of view and the development of a shared language?

Establishing new relations

- Can community representatives influence RBM decisions that affect their community?
- Has the RBM developed appropriate relationships with other relevant networks?
- Have local stakeholders mobilised their own resources to work together to tackle issues?
- Has the RBM reviewed forms of active citizenship as part of its local involvement strategy?
- Does the stakeholder group remain motivated to take part in joint action?
- Are policy and strategy revisions subject to the approval of the whole RBM community?
- Have partnerships learned how to manage conflicts in a constructive way?

Create added value: joint planning

- Are appropriate participatory methods used to stimulate active stakeholder engagement in planning?
- Has the stakeholder group assessed the capability of contributors to undertake the proposed activities?
- Are stakeholders priorities aligned to national, regional and local interests?
- How satisfied are the actors and the public at large with the plans and actions?

Regular monitoring

- Are short term impacts and long term outcome targets identified and measured for all aspects of the process?
- Is the organiser/facilitator effectively monitoring the development, attainment and performance of the program?
- Does the organiser/facilitator regularly review its progress against targets success factors and indicators for each key subgroup program identified and measured?

Appreciate people and their knowledge: develop new skills of RBM staff

- Do RBM managers have access to multi-disciplinary training in collaboration skills?
- Do RBM managers seek the view of staff / experts on stakeholder relationship issues?
- Are interests, knowledge and skills taken into consideration when tasks are assigned?
- Are training and development needs reviewed against organisational objectives of contributing organisations?
- Is the stakeholder group encouraged to take up educational opportunities?
- Has the stakeholder group increased their understanding of how other contributing organisations work?
- Do actors, involved in activities, report an increasing awareness of interdependency?
- Do actors involved report changed relational qualities in terms of openness, trust and understanding?

Support innovation & feedback

- Are there procedures in place to ensure sharing of good practices between contributors?
- Is the stakeholder group encouraged to innovate and develop their roles in working with locals?
- Has the organiser/facilitator agreed upon procedures for assessing potential tools, techniques and technologies?
- Have structures, procedures and working forms been adapted as a consequence of the ongoing processes?

Evaluate outreach

- Evaluate your outreach efforts: whom did you reach and how? Was the provided information appreciated? Develop feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement during the conception of your outreach activities.

References:

Young, S. R. (1996). *Promoting participation and Community-based Partnerships in the context of Local Agenda 21: A report for practitioners.* Manchester University.

WFD CIS *Guidance Document Nº 8. Public Participation in relation to the Water Framework Directive*

HOW THE HANDBOOK WAS DEVELOPED

HarmoniCOP was funded under the 5th European RTD Framework (1998-2002) in the thematic programme "Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development" and its key action "Sustainable Management and Quality of Water". The project itself started in November 2002 and ended in October 2005.

The main objective of the HarmoniCOP project was to increase the understanding of participatory river basin management in Europe. River basin management can only be effective and sustainable if the actors at each level and in each phase and sector become engaged in a social learning process. Together, they have to increase their understanding of the river basin, their uses of the basin and their impact on the basin. They have to realise their mutual interdependence and learn to handle their differences constructively. HarmoniCOP is about social learning and social learning is about a new management style.

The project developed an approach to social learning in combination with tools and methods meant for supporting such social learning processes in water management. Different European experiences were collected and analysed, HarmoniCOP partners worked on nine case studies and eventually all these data and experiences got compiled, analysed and discussed in a scientific report.

The present handbook is meant for practitioners and therefore the content differs substantially from the scientific report. From the very beginning of the project, in November 2002, a working group gathered project results relevant for the handbook. It was the intention of the project to lead to the accumulation of human and social capital within the network of researchers and stakeholder groups. For the work on the handbook, it can be claimed that this ambition succeeded: not only individual knowledge increased and networks developed - the handbook development was a social learning experience in itself.

The project tried to adapt the scientific results to the real needs of those that would like to use the book. At the start, this group was very large: from the academic world to land use planners to people working in international river basin commissions. The project had to realise that they could not fulfil everybody's wish. The following listing depicts some major steps in defining the requirements for the handbook and its further development (see document for more details).

1. An online questionnaire was put on the HarmoniCOP website to get a first feedback on whether there was a need for such a handbook and which form it should take as well as who would be interested in it. The first analysis made clear that the reader

group must become much smaller than planned and the content more specific than the HarmoniCOP project anticipated.

2. A needs assessment was conducted. This assessment was composed of a questionnaire design and test phase before conducting the semi-structured interviews in our European partner countries. About 40 practitioners working on regional to national level of water management got interviewed. Again results got evaluated: a reader profile became clearer as well as the requirements for the handbook. The group of external advisors to the HarmoniCOP project – the 'HarmoniCOP stakeholder group' got confronted with these results during the workshops on the handbook development.
3. Storyboarding was used to define the structure and first levels of the book. The storyboarding method made it possible that the handbook structure and major contents could represent a participatory group output.
4. A first prototype of the handbook was developed and there was a workshop to revise structure, content and format.
5. A last workshop, in which a 2nd draft was presented, was used to collect suggestions for improvement from the whole HarmoniCOP team and its stakeholder group. An interactive feedback session on selected handbook items helped to focus the comments.
6. The final editing and layouting phase produced this handbook.

The approach, that is, to write a handbook with 15 project partners and the stakeholder group, was certainly a very ambitious task. Everyone (partners and stakeholders) was involved in the structuring of chapters and writing of the contents of the book. The advantage was to create, among the writers, exactly the kind of ownership and identification with the process outcome (i.e. the handbook) that is a product of successful social learning. But the writing also demonstrated our personal weaknesses: instead of respecting our joint agreements and write our contributions from the viewpoint of the project and the predefined contents of chapters and sections, we often wrote from our own personal point of view which ignored decisions taken in the group before. These problems are typical for participation and social learning processes: even if understanding of the interests and perspectives of others is achieved and a group viewpoint is built up, it is very hard to maintain this viewpoint during implementation, when working alone, away from the group.

It can be concluded that the working groups should have met more regularly; core groups should have been created as soon as too many people began to be involved; feedback sessions after each meeting should have be given more attention and we would have needed external facilitation too! ... It is hard to live up to your own principles. But now it is time for the readers to develop their own social learning processes and start learning together to manage together. The HarmoniCOP team wishes you all the best.

Glossary

The glossary is based as much as possible on the text of the WFD and the interpretations by the drafting group on Public Participation in order to enhance the practical relevance of the eventual results of the project. However, like a dictionary, it also gives alternative meanings of the different terms.

A Active involvement: Any level of public participation above consultation. Active involvement implies that the interested parties participate actively in the planning process by discussing issues and contributing to their solution. Essential to the concept is the potential for participants to influence the process. It does not necessarily imply that they also become responsible for water management.

B Broad public: See general public.

C Case study/ experiment: A case study is detailed original research on a specific case, in the HarmoniCOP-project a participatory process. Where the researcher plays an active role in the process (e.g. acts as advisor or facilitator), the term "experiment" is also used.

Consultation: Level of public participation. The government makes documents available for written comments, organises a public hearing or actively seeks the comments and opinions of the public through for instance surveys and interviews. "Consultation" in art. 14 of the WFD refers to written consultations only. Preamble 14 and 46 and Annex VII refer to consultation in general.

Communication, in a strict definition is *a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs or behaviour.*
From a SOCIAL LEARNING perspective, communication can be defined as *social interaction through messages. This is much more than the exchange of information, but also a mean to reflect and reinforce social relations or "communities". New communication patterns can help to build up new communities. Within these communities, new representations of reality and new "meanings" can develop.*

D Delphi Technique This "Delphi technique" is rather a family of techniques than a single clearly-understood procedure, but the typical features of a Delphi procedure are an expert panel; a series of rounds in which information is collected from panellists, analysed and fed back to them as the basis for subsequent rounds; an opportunity for individuals to revise their judgements on the basis of this feedback; and some degree of anonymity for their individual contributions.

E Experiment: See case study / experiment.

F Formal Public Participation: In a strict sense public participation that is prescribed by law. In a more loose sense all public participation that is organised by government or atleast recognised by government. Informal participation refers to all public participation that is not prescribed by law or organised by government.

G General public: Unorganised members of the public, as opposed to stakeholders in a narrow sense. In the WFD the term is used loosely in relation to water users and then seems to refer to general public and the stakeholders (preamble 46 WFD,cf. preamble 14). This is also the meaning given to the term by the Guidance Document, but this meaning seems to run counter to ordinary usage. The guidance document uses the term "broad public" to refer to the non-stakeholders.

Gantt chart A Gantt Chart (or logframe technique) is a planning tools that helps in defining and visualising a plan including its goals, subgoals, activities, measurable outputs and their indicators – all with a proper timing and defined requirement of resources.

I An **Information and Communication tool** (IC-tool) as defined in this handbook is a material artefact, device or software, that can be seen and/or touched, and which is used in a participatory process to facilitate Social Learning. It supports interaction between stakeholders (including scientists) and with the public through two-way communication processes. Its use can be controlled directly by the stakeholders or through a facilitator. E.g. : maps, interactive webGIS, software for the management of comments, ...

2nd choice) An Information and Communication tool (IC tool) as defined in this handbook is a material artefact, device or software, that can be seen and/or touched, and which is used in a participatory process to facilitate Social Learning. These tools can take on many forms such as for example maps, Geographical Information Systems (GIS), software for the management of comments, etc. They supports interaction between stakeholders through two-way communication processes. The use of IC tools can be controlled directly by the stakeholders or through a facilitator.

Informal Public Participation: See Formal Public Participation.

Interested party: Term from art. 14 WFD. Considered to be synonymous with stakeholder in a broad sense.

L Logframe Technique: See Gantt chart

M A **method** (from Greek *methodos*, from *meta* with + *hodos* way) is a procedure or process for attaining an object : a) a systematic procedure, technique or mode of inquiry employed by or proper to a particular discipline or art. b) A way, technique, or process of or for doing something: a body of skills or techniques. Compared to an IC-tool, a method does not have a physical/material reality but it can include tools and (group animation) techniques to perform technical tasks in a specific order. E.g. : stakeholder analysis, prospective conference, scenario building ...

2nd choice) Compared to an IC-tool, a method does not have a physical/material reality. A methods is a way, technique, or process of or for doing something. They can include IC-tools and techniques to perform technical tasks in a specific order. Examples are stakeholder analysis, brainstorming, scenario building, etc.

N **NGO:** Non-governmental organisation

P **Public Involvement:** See public participation

Public participation (PP): Direct participation in decision-making by stakeholders and the general public. In a narrow sense public participation refers to the general public only and is then contrasted with stakeholder participation. Direct participation includes for instance consultation and public discussions, but it excludes voting, as this is an indirect form of participation. Information provision to the public on its own is not participation, but it is a precondition for it. The WFD uses the term participation (by the general public) only once and distinguishes at several places between (active) involvement and consultation. (preamble 46; preamble 14 and art. 14) Note that some authors use the term public involvement as generic term and distinguish between public consultation and public participation.

Public: "One or more natural or legal persons, and […] their associations, organisations or groups." (Arhus Convention, SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) Government bodies are usually not considered to be part of the "public".

R **River Basin Management Planning (RBMP):** The planning process as prescribed in art. 14 of the WFD, including all preparatory activities and implementation activities.

S **Social learning:** Learning in and by groups to handle shared issues. The groups might be small groups, organisations or society at large. Shared issues are issues in which all group members have a stake, such as the management of a catchment or river basin. Except in small groups, social learning takes place at different levels and involves mechanisms of representation. The concept has positive connotations,

but these are only justified when social learning is "inclusive", that is, involves all actors that have a stake in the issue concerned.

Stakeholder: Any person, group or organisation with an interest or "stake" in an issue, either because they will be affected or because they may have some influence on its outcome. Stakeholders may include other government bodies. Sometimes, the term is reserved for well-organised and active groups and organisations, thus excluding the general public.

Stakeholder Participation: See Public participation

W

WFD: Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC).

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LEARNING TOGETHER TO MANAGE TOGETHER

IMPROVING PARTICIPATION IN WATER MANAGEMENT

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