Public/stakeholder information, education and participation in decentralised water management

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What is public participation?

“Public participation encompasses a group of procedures designed to consult, involve, and inform the public to allow those affected by a decision to have an input into that decision”.
Public participation in the WFD

1. Member States shall encourage the **active involvement of all interested parties** in the implementation of this Directive. For each river basin district, they **publish and make available for comments to the public**:
   a) a **timetable and work programme** for the production of the plan, at **least three** years before the beginning of the period;
   b) an interim **overview of the significant water management issues**, at least **two years** before the beginning of the period;
   c) draft **copies of the river basin management plan**, at least **one year** before the beginning of the period.

   **On request, access shall be given to background documents and information** used for the development of the draft river basin management plan.

2. Member States shall allow **at least six months to comment in writing** on those documents in order to allow active involvement and consultation.
In other words...

shall be ensured

shall be encouraged

Source: CIS Guidance Document 2003
What will you find in the guidance?

- **Steps** of River Basin Management Planning (RBMP)
- **Forms of PP** in different steps of RBMP
- **Role of the public and stakeholders** in implementing WFD
- **Reporting and evaluating** PP results
- **Factors for success**

What will you NOT find in the guidance?

A **blueprint on performing PP** as it does not exist.
Learning objectives

• Develop understanding of key concepts and principles of stakeholder engagement
• Explore benefits, approaches and techniques for public participation
• Obtain overview of process of and methods for designing engagement activities
• Gain first-hand experience in using methods for planning effective public participation
Lessons learned at the 1\textsuperscript{st} training workshop

- There is no \textit{one size fits} all but common challenges;
- The key to effective public/stakeholder participation is asking the right questions when planning these activities;
- Participants have a lot of practical experiences to share!
Ambition for the 2\textsuperscript{nd} training workshop

• Establish a common understanding of key concepts and principles of stakeholder engagement;

• Explore benefits, approaches and techniques for public participation using illustrative case studies;

• Share and discuss experiences to identify challenges and key factors for success!
Session plan

PART 1
Presentation (30 min): “Information, education and participation in decentralised water management: When, why and how?”
Breakout session (45 min): “Experiences with public/stakeholder information, education and participation in decentralised water management” Participants brief, discuss and conclude in two groups.
Plenary session (30 Minutes): Rapporteur of the groups brief on the conclusions made in the groups

Part 2
Public/stakeholder information, education and participation in decentralised water management – challenges, success factors and practical experiences – PART 2
Breakout session (45 minutes): “Practical experiences with public/stakeholder information, education and participation - How to make it work?”. Participants brief, discuss and conclude in two groups.
Plenary session (30 Minutes): Rapporteur of the groups brief on the conclusions made in the groups
Information, education and participation in decentralised water management: When, why and how?”
Public participation – WHY?

**Normative**
„Everyone who is affected by a decision should be involved.“

**Substantive**
„Planning decisions are better, if we incorporate the public’s views and knowledge.“

**Instrumental**
„By involving the public, decisions will be more easily implemented.“

**Social learning**
„Participation allows stakeholders and authorities to better understand and accept the different views and expectations“
Stakeholders vs. the public – WHO?

Any individual or group...

1. Who has the **power to affect** actions, decisions, policies and practices or goals or a plan or project?

2. Who **can affect or is affected** by the actions, decisions, policies and practices or goals of a plan or project?

3. Who **has an interest** in the actions, decisions, policies and practices or goals of a plan or project?

Narrow or broad definition?

A stake: an interest of share in an undertaking

   Spectrum: Interest to legal rights
Possible stakeholders

- **Professionals** – public and private sector organisations, professional voluntary groups and professional NGOs (social, economic and environmental). Local authorities and government departments, statutory agencies, conservation groups, business, industry, insurance groups and academia.

- **Local Groups - non-professional organised entities** operating at a local level. It usefully breaks down into:
  - **Communities centred on place** – e.g. residents associations and local councils.
  - **Communities centred on interest** – e.g. farmers’ groups, fishermen, football clubs, hunting groups.
  - **Communities centred on identity (age, gender, religion, politics)** e.g. women’s groups, school groups, church groups.

- **Individual citizens, farmers and companies** representing themselves. E.g. key individual land owners or local individual residents.

Source: CIS Guidance Document 2003
Options for stakeholder engagement – HOW?

Arnstein’s ladder

An alternative view: „Form follows function“
Form follows function

**Increasing level of public impact**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement goal</th>
<th>Inform</th>
<th>Consult</th>
<th>Involve</th>
<th>Collaborate</th>
<th>Empower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engagement goal</strong></td>
<td>To provide balanced &amp; objective information to help public understand problems, options, solutions.</td>
<td>To obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives, decisions.</td>
<td>To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns &amp; aspirations are understood &amp; considered.</td>
<td>To partner with public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives &amp; identification of preferred solution.</td>
<td>To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promise to public</strong></td>
<td>We will keep you informed.</td>
<td>We will keep you informed, listen to concerns &amp; aspirations, &amp; provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</td>
<td>We will work with you to ensure your concerns &amp; aspirations are directly reflected in options developed, &amp; provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</td>
<td>We will look for your advice in formulating solutions &amp; incorporate your input into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.</td>
<td>We will implement what you decide.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Example techniques</strong></td>
<td>Brochures Web sites Exhibitions</td>
<td>Public comment Focus groups Public meetings</td>
<td>Workshops Scenario planning</td>
<td>Advisory committees</td>
<td>Citizen juries Ballots</td>
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</table>

Source: International Association for Public Participation 2007
Selecting appropriate methods & tools

...based on level of engagement sought.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>CONSULTATION</th>
<th>DIALOGUE</th>
<th>PARTNERSHIPS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information sharing</td>
<td>Questionnaire surveys</td>
<td>Multi-stakeholder forums</td>
<td>Joint ventures</td>
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<td>Employee training</td>
<td>Focus groups</td>
<td>Advisory panels</td>
<td>Local sustainable development projects</td>
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<td>Project bulletins and letters to targeted audiences</td>
<td>Workplace assessments</td>
<td>Leadership summits</td>
<td>Multi-stakeholder initiatives</td>
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<td>Company brochures and reports</td>
<td>Ad hoc stakeholder advisory meetings (e.g., community consultations)</td>
<td>Virtual engagement on intranets and the Internet</td>
<td>Alliances</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internal and external newsletters</td>
<td>Standing stakeholder advisory forums</td>
<td>Online feedback and discussion forums</td>
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<tr>
<td>Web sites</td>
<td>Tours</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical briefings</td>
<td>Press releases, press conferences, media advertising</td>
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Selecting appropriate methods & tools

...based on phase/purpose of process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES</th>
<th>PHASES OF THE PARTICIPATION PROCESS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Categorised by main support and by aim or method.</td>
<td>Starting Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>INTERNET - WEB</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Interactive Geographic Information Systems (Web GIS),</td>
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<td>- Interactive Web Site</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Informative Web Sites, polls via internet.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Tools for self-evaluation (Web Site, virtual information centre).</td>
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<tr>
<td>«CLASSICAL» COMMUNICATION TOOLS</td>
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<td>- Tools for passive information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Tools for active information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Collection of comments by poll or interviews.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GROUPS MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS</td>
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<td>- Public audience.</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td>- Group for actors analysis.</td>
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<td>- Group for „Participatory Rapid Appraisal“</td>
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<td>- Group for „Evaluation of the Citizens Values“</td>
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<td>- Thematic Round table</td>
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<td>- Prospective Conference</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td>- Workshop for participatory conception of solutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Participatory follow up and evaluation</td>
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Source: CIS Guidance Document 2003
Group discussion

What are your experiences with public/stakeholder information, education and participation in decentralised water management?

• What was the context?
• Who was involved?
• How were they involved?
Documenting your experiences

How would you characterise the activities in terms

- Level of participation?
- Types of ‘public’ involved?

Based on your experiences

- Were they fit for purpose?
- What might some of the challenges have been?

Broad public

Stakeholders

Information

Active involvement
Practicalities

- Two groups
  - Melanie Muro (English)
  - Eric Mino (French)
- Nominate one rapporteur
- Document results to report back to plenary
Practical experiences with public/stakeholder information, education and participation – How to make it work?
Is participation an effective tool?

Why?

- Capture local knowledge / identify local issues / problems
- Promote consensus / coalitions
- Identify achievable objectives / solutions
- Facilitate early trade-off debates
- Educate / inform
- Identify key personalities, stakeholders, and interest groups who may help or hinder the project.
- Involve stakeholders before they involve you!!

Why not?

- Reactive planning
- Closing the expert - layman gap
- Variability of commitment
- Danger of sensitising the community
- Dominance of entrenched power structures
- Turf wars
- Cost & resource burden (important if process is non-statutory)
- Raising unrealistic expectations
- Delay decision making process
- Undermining role and authority of elected representatives
A ‘best practice’ participation model?

Unlikely .................

What little empirical evidence there is available suggests that what ‘works’ in practice is dependent on the ‘who’, ‘what’, ‘why’, and even ‘where’ of the scheme.

A point by point schedule of actions appropriate for all cases at all times is perhaps an illusory goal.

Guidance on principles, process and a list of do’s and don'ts might be of more use.
Same same but different....

Project: Institutional development for stakeholder participation in local water management

— An analysis of two Swedish catchments
Kävlinge River Project

- The main goal was to create 300 ha of wetlands and 200 ha of buffer zones in the catchment based on voluntary participation of the farmers.
- A clear leadership from some of the municipal representatives during the initial stage was important for the establishment of the new project.
- The scope and planned activities of the Kävlinge River Project implied a shift compared to the Kävlinge River Water Association, towards diffuse nutrient leakage and active management by planning for mitigation measures.
- The formal organization of the project included: a project board represented by politicians from all municipalities; an advisory committee represented by officials from all municipalities; a consultancy as implementer; work groups and a reference group representing universities and other concerned stakeholders.
- The constituting rule by which the project was based upon was the collaboration contract which guaranteed that the municipalities jointly financed the project based on area (municipalities funded about half of the costs and most of the remaining funding came from national government and EU subsidies).
- The operational level involved mainly farmers who executed the action plan, and the consultancy that assisted farmers with both practical and administrative support in realizing the creation of wetlands and buffer zones.
- The participation was strictly voluntary and started with the dissemination of information about the project to all farmers.
- Interested farmers then replied and an evaluation onsite at the farm was performed assisted by the consultancy. A negotiation of municipal leasing contract of the land to be converted to wetland and appropriate compensation for the construction cost were the next step in reaching an agreement of the realization of the wetland.
- The outcome of the Kävlinge River Project was considered successful since the creation of wetlands and buffer zones even exceeded the goals and also lead to improvements in recreation and biodiversity. Hence, the project managed to involve local stakeholders and resulted in the implementation of measures to reduce nutrient leakage.
Success factors

Kävlinge River Project

The realization of the project was due to at least three main factors:

First, the horizontal cooperation based on the inter-municipal agreement which enabled shared financing of the project.

Second, an organization with a distinct division of responsibilities and appropriate links bridging them: the political board, to the advisory committee of officials and the consultancy bridging the municipal level and the farmers “on ground”.

Third, the character of the participation process as voluntary. The institutional development in KRC illustrates an adaptation to an increasing concern and awareness of water quality problems, through an altered scope – from point source pollution to diffuse nutrient leakage, new activities such as wetland creation, and a new enabling organizational and institutional structure.
In RRC, the proposed action plan lead to the establishment of a working group consisting of representatives from the key municipalities in the catchment and one representative from the agricultural sector, with the aim to coordinate actions and find financial resources for the proposed plan.

However, the attempts did not lead to new institutional arrangements or the realization of the project.
Challenges

- According to the consultancy a lack of leadership to operate the new action plan, and a lack of consensus to invest in the project among the representatives in RRC contributed to that the plan was never realized. Also a lack of interest from the industries and some of the high polluting municipalities in RRC hampered the development towards the fulfilment of the new management plan.
- Hence, the willingness to invest in implementing the common water quality plan as in Kävlinge River Catchment was weak in RRC.
- Moreover, the organizational structure of Rönne River Committee remained mainly unchanged despite the altered scope and planned activities.
Group discussion

Public/stakeholder information, education and participation in decentralised water management – challenges, success factors and practical experiences
How to get it right

Checklist for effective participation

Were the objectives clear?
Were the participants representative of all of the interests?
Was the method appropriate to the objectives to be achieved?
Was it clear to participants how their participation could contribute to the decision process?
Was the timing and location of events appropriate for people?
Was adequate time provided for discussion and debate?
Have you increased your understanding of people’s concerns?
Have majority and minority views been sought and acknowledged in the outcome?
Have participants been able to influence the decision?

(Source: after Gray et al., 2003, modified)
Factors for success

• Change of attitude of public authorities;
• Changes in procedures;
• Political commitment and resources;
• Capacity building and representation of stakeholders;
• Reaching beyond stakeholders to individual citizens and enterprises;
• Demonstration objects.

Key messages

• Form follows function!

• Getting the right stakeholders to the table can be challenging.

• Designing a good engagement strategy requires a good understanding of people’s interest, motivations and capacities.

• Agree on the rules of engagement → manage expectations.

• Listen and be respectful → agreement is not a must.

• Tailor activities to engagement objectives, target groups and context.

• Be aware that it takes time and resources.