



## Discussion Minutes

### B2 – Participatory Planning and Local Governance

**Chair:** Patricia Romero-Lankao

**Speakers:** Aiko Endo, Pauline Macharia, Karen Meijer, Kees de Jong, Willington Ortiz

**Minutes:** Juan Felipe Ortiz-Riomalo

### Discussions after each presentation

#### **Aiko Endo - Human-Environmental Security in Asia-Pacific Ring of Fire - Water-Energy-Food Nexus**

- Audience: Could you provide more information regarding the stakeholders you have been working with throughout the project?
- Aiko Endo: According to each stakeholder's field of expertise and the objectives of each stage of the project, different types of stakeholders were called to participate in the activities and workshops organized. Especially authorities from the local government and the water sector were involved. When required, the national government also attended.

#### **Pauline Macharia - Energy use for water treatment in drinking water utilities: opportunities for optimization**

- Audience: Why has been difficult to improve the indicators of energy consumption in water production projects in Kenya?
- Pauline Macharia: Lack of funding for new systems and infrastructure has been the main underlying reason. In most of the cases, resources available become money pocket allocated to fund minor expenses and not for investment in infrastructure or new efficient technologies.

#### **Karen Meijer - From water hyacinths to biofuels in Kisumu, Kenya. An innovative way to achieve sustained change**

- Audience: What is the stage of the process of assembling the trust fund? Has it been already established?
- Karen Meijer: Currently, local actors are deciding how to create the trust fund—some main issues: Who is/are going to own it? Which legal framework will frame it? How is going to be decided how and how much to spend?
- Audience: How is it going the process of producing the briquettes and distributing them to the households? Is the project sustainable?
- Karen Meijer: Currently they are produced at large scale, mostly for factories' consumption. Its size and characteristics are being adjusted to let households being able to acquire them and produce large quantities for their use—currently, its size is too big for home use.



- Audience: Hyacinths are also used as nutrients for fishes in the lake. Thus, removing them all could not be convenient for fishing.
- Karen Meijer: That is definitely an important point to consider—and which the project has not been aware of previously. It might not be convenient to remove all the hyacinths—its alternative uses and importance have to be permanently assessed.

**Kees de Jong - Participative Watershed Management to improve local governance and adaptation to climate. Honduras and Nicaragua, 2013 – 2016**

- Audience: How was the relationship between the project and the local water resource authority?
- Kees de Jong: It was love and hate relationship. In the beginning, they were partners in the project but throughout its development, the quality of that relationship gradually waned. Recently it has improved. Nevertheless, its involvement was critical for the legitimacy of the process alongside with communities' participation. The knowledge regarding which actors to involve is something that improves, and it is gradually acquired in the implementation of the project.

**Willington Ortiz - Family farming systems – Spaces for the sustainable management of the water-energy-food Nexus**

- Audience: To what extent the integration of the three type of knowledge—transformation, target, and systems knowledge—could support farmers' empowerment (and transition towards sustainable production systems)?
- Willington Ortiz: The integration of the three types of knowledge (through participatory research) allows the farmers to participate actively in the generation of the information required to characterize their farming systems. That is how they visualize their own alternatives (to move towards sustainable farming systems).
- Audience: What are you exactly referring to when you talk about non-nexus communities?
- Willington Ortiz: I am just referring to communities which are not involved or aware of the conceptual definition or the academic discussion on the Nexus.

## General discussion

Patricia Romero-Lankao presented the 'ladder of participation' initially introduced and discussed by Arnstein (1969). Based on her framework, and recognizing in first place the difficulties associated with motivating people to participate and effectively empowering the citizens involved in different projects and interventions, she posited to the audience and speakers the following questions:

- What is participatory planning?
- Which is the relation of participatory planning and participatory approaches, in general, with the social imperatives (derived from the objective) of sustainably managing the Nexus?



- Most of the stakeholders participation, is located in the information and consultation stages?
- What happens with the actors involved in the projects once the interventions are finished?
- How is measured both the degree of participation in a particular project and the impacts achieved?

**Willington Ortiz:** From the transdisciplinary literature and the lessons derived from the different waves of participation there is a bunch of lessons and conclusions that should be recalled. This is an ongoing debate (that has to continue and be permanently enriched by new insights and contributions).

**Nicolas Jager:** Participation is not a linear process neither in all cases nor in all stages of the processes and interventions. Delegation in democracy still plays a role. At the same time, accountability and monitoring are stages where participation could also take place. In the field, participation can be deployed in several ways, according to the specific conditions of the context.

**Karen Meijer:** Our intervention (“From water hyacinths to biofuels...”) put all concerning actors to work together on the design and implementation of the project. In this case, nothing could be done without them. The project was not externally imposed but rather built with the people in the field, taking into account their needs, expectations, and knowledge of the context.

### **References**

Sherry R. Arnstein (1969): A Ladder Of Citizen Participation, Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 35:4, 216-224