
Ensuring successful stakeholder engagement in environmental management

Stakeholder engagement can result in new and creative solutions to solve real world problems in environmental management if it is approached in the right way.

What are the research findings?

Research has shown that stakeholder engagement will only be effective if:

- Views from all relevant stakeholders including land owners, government organisations, private companies and third sector organisations are represented.
- Stakeholders have all the information they need, in an appropriate form.
- Stakeholders are properly empowered and can have real influence on outcomes.
- Power dynamics within groups are effectively managed.

How can these be applied in environmental management?

More beneficial outcomes will result if:

- A diverse range of stakeholder participants is carefully selected.
- Participation is made easy and attractive, taking into account time constraints etc and linking into current policy processes.
- Relevant information is provided and participants have real decision-making power.
- Appropriate language is used throughout and locations are suited to the participants.
- Trust is fostered among participants, using existing networks/relationships.
- A professional independent facilitator is engaged to stimulate participation using structured methods.
- Participants have long term commitment to the process and there is realistic economic support for outcomes.

Further information:

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- de Vente J, Reed MS, Stringer LC, Valente S, Newig J (2016) How does the context and design of participatory decision-making processes affect their outcomes? Evidence from sustainable land management in global drylands. *Ecology & Society*
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