



## \textbf{Methodological background of the stakeholder involvement in the frame of Danube FLOODRISK project}

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The Danube FLOODRISK project (DFRP) focuses on the most cost-effective measures for floodrisk reduction: risk assessment, risk mapping, involvement of stakeholders, risk reduction by adequate spatial planning. The overall objective of the project is to develop and produce high quality, stakeholder oriented flood hazard and floodrisk maps for the trans-national Danube river floodplains to provide adequate risk information. The key objective is achieved by intensive trans-national co-operation and stakeholder integration. The goal is to link scientific progress in harmonization of approaches and data with practically oriented stakeholders and end user involvement. The potential target groups are: international organizations, national and regional spatial planning authorities, regional development agencies, communities in flood areas, water management authorities, NGOs, private bodies, businesses, farmers, emergency management, etc. It was, therefore, necessary to identify regional and local stakeholders to be involved in the process of map production from the beginning of the project.

The word stakeholder refers to anyone significantly affecting or affected by someone else's decision-making activity. It has been widely accepted that the implementation of new laws, governmental initiatives or projects depend on the active support of the affected people, a process which is also described by the term "ownership". Ownership of processes means that stakeholder see these as part of or supplement to their own livelihood strategy.

The entire notion of clearly defined stakeholder groups is a model, which helps to reduce complexity for planning. People belong to many different groups (economic, social, ethnic, religious, age, etc.), and the individual mix of interests, and economic objectives can never be exactly the same between two persons. However, stakeholder analysis assumes that there are common denominators of people belonging to the same stakeholder group. These denominators can be determined only in consultation with the stakeholder groups.

The stakeholder analysis (SA) is the first step in identification of stakeholders/stakeholder groups. SA should be an iterative, action-oriented exercise. If not revised during the project management cycle, a SA matrix may become obsolete.

Three attributes of stakeholder typology can be identified: (a) *legitimacy*, which means the normative appropriateness; (b) *power*, which is defined as ability to influence the actions of other stakeholders and to bring out the desired outcomes; and (c) *urgency* or *attention-getting capacity*. This is the ability to impress the critical and pressing character of one's claims or interests, goals that are time-sensitive and will be costly if delayed.

Based on these attributes, eight different types of stakeholders can be identified. For public participation, *dominant* and *definitive* stakeholders are the groups a project needs to co-operate with, their ownership of the activities have to be won. The capacity of *discretionary* and of *dependent* stakeholders to participate needs to be built up, and any programme for participation needs to monitor activities of *demanding* and *dangerous* stakeholders. Their impact on project results needs to be mitigated. *Dormant* stakeholders need to be brought on board, while the group of *non-stakeholders* is outside of the project's framework.

Stakeholder involvement in the processes is important for several reasons:

- to assure that the decision addresses as many different stakeholder interests as possible;
- to increase the probability of a creative outcome;
- to build broad-based support for the decision made by the negotiating group; and
- to facilitate implementation of the decision.

When involving stakeholders and using a consensus-based process, conveners face a major challenge: how to

select a group of stakeholders who will be seen as inclusive and representative, and will be clear on their roles and prepared to work effectively together on the problem.

In order to establish a successful collaborative process, at least four issues related to stakeholders should be addressed:

- clarifying appropriate levels of participation by different groups and establishing mechanisms for that participation;
- deciding on the composition of the negotiating or decision-making group;
- specifying the desired characteristics of participants in the group; and
- deciding how representatives will be selected.

The process of the flood risk management may be categorized according to phases and according to level of addressing. Thus, stakeholder involvement will be different at the different phases, and at the different level of the process. According to the EU Floods Directive the process of flood risk management consists of the following phases:

1. Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment;
2. Flood Hazard Maps and Flood Risk Maps;
3. Flood Risk Management Plan.

The DFRP deals only with the Flood Hazard and Flood Risk Mapping. With regard to addressing, four major levels of the stakeholder involvement can be identified:

1. international level;
2. national level;
3. regional level;
4. local level.

Though, the potential stakeholders show similarities, the weight of the organizations vary from phase to phase, and from level to level. These weights can be estimated using Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA). Overall, MCA relies heavily on input from experts and stakeholders, these inputs are solicited and synthesized to arrive at a collective decision, or choice.

The stakeholders' evaluation method is based on a Venn diagram that includes the three attributes of stakeholder typology. The Hungarian Project Partners developed an evaluation model, based on characteristics and sub-characteristics, and their respective weights for evaluation.

For starting, a preliminary list of stakeholders is established. Using the evaluation model, the initial type of each stakeholder is defined, and this helps to rate the stakeholders. In first gathering of the stakeholders, the initial list is discussed and revised. Gradually, stakeholders already involved will also participate in the newer round of evaluations, and thus, a consolidated list of stakeholders can be established.

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