



Spanning policy, operational and research boundaries for catchment managing

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This paper sets out lessons learned from a three year boundary spanning role that set out to increase awareness and integration of policy, operational and research efforts in catchment management and introduces a new bridging role linking policy makers with researchers at the national scale. Integrating Water and Agricultural Management (IWAM) was a coordination activity (2007-2010) for a government department in England and Wales (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs). The aims of IWAM were to: 1) provide a think tank to critically assess the 'evidence base'; 2) highlight the uncertainties and gaps in our knowledge and 3) encourage interdisciplinary science, interactions between the social and natural science communities and integrated science between the science and policy communities.

During this innovative role we tried and tested several approaches to stakeholder participation. These ranged from science and policy driven facilitated workshops, field based knowledge exchange events, self organising science domain hubs and a web portal and blog. In this paper I will critically reflect on when and why participatory approaches worked and did not work in the context of IWAM.

One key driver for stakeholder participation in hydrology is the need for greater levels of the co-production of knowledge. This requires researchers to understand policy and operational needs and ways of working, developing social capital and trust through effective communication and delivery. Researchers need to be able to adapt to the rapidly changing needs of policy and operational staff and have the time to deliberate what is required from stakeholder participation.

Lessons learned during IWAM will inform a new boundary spanning role for the Scottish Government: Centre of Expertise for Waters (CREW). The aims of CREW are to build networks between science, policy and practice, create new capacity to carry out leading edge research and increase the impact of Scottish science in the global knowledge economy. Proposed activities include scoping and prioritisation in year 1, then development of a postgraduate college, international fellowships and secondments to policy and operational groups. To enable this we are establishing a virtual hub linked to a facilitation team who will encourage and assess participation at the interfaces between science, policy and practice.