

EGU21-10969

<https://doi.org/10.5194/egusphere-egu21-10969>

EGU General Assembly 2021

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## Improving participation for the German search for a nuclear waste repository site: an interactive map as a transdisciplinary approach

Lucas Schwarz<sup>1</sup> and Paula Bräuer<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Freie Universität Berlin, Otto Suhr Institute of Political Science, Environmental Policy Research Centre, Berlin, Germany (lucas.schwarz@fu-berlin.de)

<sup>2</sup>Kiel University, Department of Computer Science, Kiel, Germany (p.braeuer@zbw.de)

The political and social debate on nuclear energy in Germany has been characterized for many decades by a high potential for conflict and dissatisfaction. Especially the controversies surrounding the Gorleben salt dome gained international attention and changed the relationship between citizens and political decision-makers from the local to the national level. With the Repository Site Selection Act of 2013 (StandAG, first amendment in 2017) a new approach was chosen to implement a participative, inclusive and transparent search process for the best possible repository for high-level radioactive waste in Germany. In this context, a self-learning process was proclaimed, based on a white (unbiased) map, which should give citizens an active role. However, the first interim report of the Federal Company for Radioactive Waste Disposal and the publication of the colorful map, in which geologically suitable areas were identified on a large scale, already revealed a massive potential for conflict. Many citizens and activists who were already protesting against the Gorleben salt dome criticized in this early phase of the process, the lack of transparency and opportunities to have a say on the possible sitting regions.

To address this criticism, we want to provide an interactive map as an online platform that presents existing geographic data, that enables people to contribute spatially-located information (geological, on-surface), and thus a possibility for people to interact and participate regarding the possible siting regions. Therefore, we collect existing spatial data that is relevant to the ongoing process, such as possible siting regions (declared by the Federal Company for Radioactive Waste Disposal), nuclear power plants (active/inactive, research facilities, etc.), storage facilities (on-site, central, interim, etc.), historically relevant locations (places of protest, uranium enrichment & processing facilities, etc.) as well as basic data for orientation. We implement two possibilities for participatory interaction: (1) adding spatially-located notes that contain own experiences or local knowledge (e.g. reports, concerns, suggestions) and (2) initiating a platform for a spatially-located discussion. Against the background of transdisciplinary research, in an iterative process, we want to evaluate the participatory value of this application by consulting civic as well as scientific actors. We, therefore, employ focus groups with a transdisciplinary support group of citizens beforehand and surveys after using the application. For this panel we want to present our primary results from a first test with the aforementioned focus groups.

Aside from testing the suitability of such a mode of participation, we aim to analyze where problems emerge, and which information is necessary and/or might lead to conflict. Finally, we want to gain insight into how such modes of participation influence the quality of dialogue and how it contributes to the overall perception of a procedurally just process.