Stakeholder involvement in risk communication

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Stakeholder involvement in risk communication

Why should stakeholders be involved?

When should involvement start?

How should it be organized ?

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What is risk?

Expert definition: the product of probability and the consequence of an undesired event (often also called “scenario”). The total risk is the sum of all products of probability and consequences of these events.

In spite of the limitations in completeness, ability to assign probabilities and consequence analysis, **the quantitative risk assessment (QRA)** has enjoyed great success in nuclear safety.

QRA is best suited to large technical systems where the failure probabilities of the components in the system can be estimated with relatively large certainty. QRA can then be used **for risk-informed decision-making**

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What is risk?

However QRA cannot be the only source of information for decisions on a political level, e.g. concerning the use of nuclear power as opposed to other energy sources, or the siting of reactor power plants. Other dimensions in a more comprehensive risk assessment which takes into account social and societal factors then appear on the scene.

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rationality

The German sociologist Max Weber distinguished between “value rationality” and “instrumental rationality”

Instrumental or scientific rationality looks at the consequences of various actions and carries out cost-benefit types of assessments - the working methodology for experts and scientists

Value rationality is broader - behavior consistent with a particular value position. A rational decision-making process obviously must include both these types of rationality

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What is risk?

Values are relatively stable - contrary to emotions which sometimes govern individual decision-making

People´s risk perception is a mixture of different rationalities and emotions. The factors behind them are well known.

Societal risk management cannot only rest on experts risk assessment – this is a form of narrow framing

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a scenario we don't want

1. enthusiasm and **narrow framing** in early days of technology developemt
2. concerns, negative events, media debates, conflicting interests, frustration, and the framing found irrelevant at later stages
3. **fragmentation** by interest groups
4. backlash, and the decision making system gets paralyzed

Narrow framing, such as focus only on QRA, is a serious problem which, however, can be avoided by **stakeholder participation**

Fragmentation can be made more difficult by early and proactive awareness building **by stakeholder participation** processes

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when should stakeholders be involved?

To avoid narrow framing and to build trust – as early as possible

In all phases of decision making – policy, programmers and projects

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Example - Swedish site selection programme final repository for spent nuclear fuel

In 1992 SKB announced a new phased site selection process based on municipality voluntariness at all steps, 8 municipalities were proposed for feasibility studies

A stepwise site selection process – see next page

In June 2009, SKB announced Östhammar to be the chosen site

In March 2011 SKB submitted a licence application. Now follows a review process with the Radiation Safety Authority, Environmental Court, Municipality (veto right), Swedish Government

Site selection programme

- 1992. Eight municipalities proposed for feasibility studies. Two of them stepped out after referenda
- 2000. Three municipalities proposed, two agreed. Östhammar and Oskarshamn
- 2002-2008 Site investigations with deep drilling
- 2002-2010. Formal EIA Process by SKB
- 2009. SKB announced Östhammar to be the chosen site
- 2011. SKB License application 2011

The "safe spaces"

(initiating body in red text)

- Simulated license application - the "Dialogue project" (regulators)
- Oskarshamn model, EIA-Forum, 1994 –2007 (municipality)
- RISCOM Model +safe space idea
- SKI/SSI hearings on site selection , 2001 (regulators)
- Transparency programme, 2006 – 2010 with RISCOM Hearings (Nuclear Waste Council)
- SKB Reference Group for copper corrosion, 2010 (SKB)

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There are many processes and tools for stakeholder involvement

Citizen Advisory Group, Citizens' Jury, Citizens' Panels, Consensus Conference, Delphi Survey, Focus Groups, Partnership, Mediation forum, Opinion Polls, Public Hearings, Safe space (RISCOM Process), Roundtables, Scenario Workshop, Seminar, Surveys ,,,,,

See e.g. http://toolbox.ippaproject.eu/index

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How to organize stakeholder involvement?

Alternative 1: Decide, Announce and Defend (DAD)

Relies on information ("we know best – you only need to be informed")

Cannot work

- There are many information senders, people have infinite access to information, but the individual has limited attention span.
- Who can you trust?
- Stakeholders frame and fragment the issues to the benefit of their goals, the individual may use only the information senders he/she trusts

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How to organize stakeholder involvement

Alternative 2: Let the stakeholders and the public take part in the decision making itself

Relies on involvement and the assumption that stakeholders can agree

It is supposed that citizens think that involvement is worthwhile

Has limitations and obstacles

Practical limitations: The individual has not enough time and attention span left for participation. Participation exercises become dominated by "processional" stakeholders (NGOs). Normal citizens don't take part, solutions may not be acceptable to regulators and politicians

Democratic problems: If involvement in partnerships would give agreed solutions – what is then the role of our elected representatives?

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How to organize stakeholder involvement?

Alternative 3: Existing decision making processes and democratic institutions

Relies on representation (and sometimes referenda)

Has problems

- Long time from plans to operation - election periods are about 4 years
- Complexity - technology, science, economy, socioeconomic consequences, national policies, ethical issues. Benefits and risks
- Stakeholders frame and fragment the issues and make their cases visible, some are more successful than others – how to create clarity?

BUT this is what we have - we should do our very best to create clarity and awareness to enhance robustness and quality in DMP

How to organize stakeholder involvement?

Alternative 4: stakeholder involvement to support existing decision making processes and democratic institutions

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The participation ladder (Arnstein ladder)

Joint decision making

Collaborate

Dialogue

Consult

Inform

It has often been supposed that the higher up on the ladder, the better, the more democratic etc.

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shared decision making versus autonomy

Joint decision making

Collaborate

Dialogue

Consult

Inform

The higher up on the ladder:

- **The more influence**
- **The more shared responsibility**

The higher up on the ladder:

- **The fewer can take part**

e.g. a regulator needs to be free, a community or an NGO may need to maintain its autonomy

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challenges for stakeholder involvement

Possible reasons for stakeholders and NGOs not to take part in informal approaches to public participation:

1. The results of these procedures may not be binding for decision makers – not regarded as meaningful

2. Local level stakeholders and NGOs may want to maintain their autonomy, they don't want to be part of developers process

3 Lack of trust in the process or its organizers

Any public participation processes must take these challenges into account to be trustworthy and meaningful

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the safe space

The idea is to support the normal political decision making process

Arenas for clarification of issues and for enhancing the understanding between stakeholders about their arguments and positions, while safeguarding their integrity, thus maintaining their independence in the legal and political decision making processes

Our method for establishing a safe space (e.g. in the EU IPPA Project) is the RISCOM Process.

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One way to structure stakeholder involvement initiatives

Consensus shaping

Stakeholders agree to jointly develop solutions

Safe space approach

An active dialogue in which different stakeholders together increase their awareness and understanding of the issues and also of their respective views without being committed to find common solutions

Consultation

The public and stakeholders are asked to give their views and concerns

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Examples of stakeholder involvement processes and events

Basic approaches	Processes	Events
Safe space	Safe space process with reference group Simulation	Safe space (RISCOM) hearings Focus Groups
Consensus shaping	Partnerships	Consensus conferences Citizen juries
Consultation	EIA consultations	Interactive web sites Surveys

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One example – the safe space process

The safe space (RISCOM) process is designed for enhancing awareness and clarity in active dialogue between different stakeholders. The stakeholders together form the process on the basis of agreed principles.

1. Working group – ”pre understanding” and organization

2. Reference group with stakeholders (e.g. industry, communities, academia, authorities, NGO:s) – Formal agreement

3. The reference group sets the agreed principles in action

4. Knowledge building activities
5. Hearings with “stretching”
6. Documentation

The approach has been implemented in different sectors and in different other countries (Czech Republic, Poland)

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What to do - factors to take into account

Who you are

(determines what you can do, who can participate, etc.)

What is the aim of participation? What do you want?

(Don’t promise more than you can keep!)

Signals you send

(funding, chairperson, secretariat, venues , etc.)

Trust – the process stands and falls with trust

PLATENSO

Building a platform for enhanced societal research related to nuclear energy in Central and Eastern Europe

An FP 7 project

Some results from Work Package 1 – remaining governance research issues

PLATENSO work packages

No	Work package title	Lead participant	Country
1	Lessons learned	Karita Research	Sweden
2	Research infrastructures	Institute of Sociology	Czech Rep.
3	Science, politics and ethics	SCK.CEN	Belgium
4	Forming a research strategy	REC	Slovenia
5	Implementation and case studies	Nicolaus Copernicus University	Poland
6	Networking activities	Merience + Karita	Spain + Sweden
7	Dissemination	REC	Hungary
8	Project management	Karita Research	Sweden

Governance issues

Mostly local and regional social issues in the nuclear waste arena. There do not seem to be many similar efforts in the nuclear. In spite of all efforts to implement stakeholder participation we see a number of challenges such as:

- Lack of trust in government bodies
- Lack of government interest
- Dialogue is seen as just another way of providing information
- Regulators are often seen as proponents of nuclear power
- Sometimes stakeholders don't want to participate

These challenges have to be addressed when developing research programmes in cooperation with stakeholders. They are topics for research, and thus part of research strategies.

Governance issues

One major conclusion from WP1 is that something is missing – namely a more detailed analysis of what the obstacles are and how they can be overcome. Such an analysis should include all phases of decision making, address when and how e.g. regulators and NGOs can participate, clarify the links between informal processes (such as the RISCOM process and partnerships) and the "real decision making" by governments, local authorities and courts and help to be more pragmatic. Institutionalization of participatory processes should be considered in the research.

Governance issues

Participation processes need to be tailored to the specific situations at hand (phase of decision making, aim of participation, institutional prerequisites, cultural characteristics, etc.). More research needs to be done to improve knowledge and understanding about principles and practical solutions for such tailoring.

One challenge for future research is to identify principles and concrete solutions as to how effectiveness and robustness of decision making processes with different modes of public participation can be secured whilst taking political realities, such as short election cycles, as compared to the time frames of nuclear programmes and projects, into account.

Governance issues

Governance research has to deal with the complexity of the varying roles of the state, the market and civil society and the fact that different areas show different combinations of their respective influences. Also nuclear energy governance research will take place within the overall societal context and must take these major developments into account.

The special conditions within those New Member States which had a previously Communist regime need to be analysed.

The current state-of-the-art needs a fundamental expansion to include all types of nuclear installations

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Welcome to the SENIX Conference

Stockholm, June 13-15, 2016

The Role of Social Sciences in a Low-Carbon Energy Mix

This is the second conference in a series (SENIX 1 was held in Stockholm , May 25-27, 2015)

“Radiation risks can be a topic. Abstracts can be submitted and special sessions can be proposed and organized by the proposer.

www.delegia.com/senix2016

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Thank you for your attention!