# Institutionalising participation and people-centered processes in natural resource management

## Research and publications highlights

Michel Pimbert

**Institutionalising Participation Series** Series Editor: Michel Pimbert

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Michel Pimbert

The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) is an independent, non-profit organisation promoting sustainable patterns of world development through collaborative research, policy studies, networking and knowledge dissemination. Through its Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods (SARL) Programme, IIED works to develop more effective and equitable forms of agriculture and natural resource management.

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# 1. Research highlights

## Introduction: A historical perspective

State involvement in natural resource management has been a process of growing institutionalisation and bureaucratisation, both in Europe and in countries subjected to colonial rule in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Historically, the state has extended its control not only over territories, but also over the resources on which people depend for their livelihoods, such as water, land, forests, minerals and biodiversity. Vernacular and local forms of natural resource management have been brought under the control of state-owned national, regional, or local political and administrative entities. As the state has institutionalised, citizens have become less and less involved in natural resource management, with state employees taking on key policy and operational functions.

But in this age of globalisation the State – and especially its public administration – is challenged both from above, for example by transnational corporations, and from below, by citizens and communities. In response to these new challenges, the state has often seen 'participation' as key in mediating conflicts and relationships between its own administration, civil society and the private sector.

Not surprisingly, 'participation' has become a central concept in the sustainability debate (Schanz, 1999:59-82). For the last three decades, there has been renewed interest and emphasis on peoples' participation in development, environment and governance. It is argued that with local knowledge, capacities and priorities as the basis for learning, action and decision-making, 'participation' enhances diversity, effectiveness and equity in meeting human needs and sustaining the environment.

Participatory approaches and methodologies based on deliberation and inclusion have thus been increasingly used in policy processes, projects and programmes in a variety of settings throughout the world. A rich array of innovations and experimentation have led to their use in a broad range of activities, including:

- village-based planning and watershed management to action research and farmer-led, participatory research and technology development (Chambers, 1997; PLA Notes 13; Hinchcliffe et al., 1996; Van Veldhuizen et al., 1997);

- the adaptive management of ecosystems and the co-management of natural resources (Berkes and Folke, 1998; Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2004; Pimbert and Pretty, 1998; www.resilience.org);
- participatory policy processes, agenda setting and risk assessments based on the use of deliberative and inclusionary processes (DIPs) (Holmes and Scoones, 1999; Pimbert and Wakeford, 2001; Stirling, 2001); and
- the monitoring and evaluation of development and conservation programmes (Guijt, 1998; Abbot and Guijt, 1998, PLA Notes, 1998).

With few exceptions, however, these participatory efforts have been limited to the local level (for examples see PLA Notes, 1988-2001). And, more recently, the focus on the micro has given way to attempts to adopt and apply these participatory approaches on a large scale. For example, many large agencies, both public and private – including government departments, development agencies, non-governmental and civil society organisations, research institutes – now seek to spread, scale up and mainstream participation in both rural and urban contexts. Embedding and situating 'peoples' participation' at the heart of policy decisions, organizational procedures and resource allocation has thus become a fundamental challenge.

In these initiatives, the term 'institutionalisation' describes the process whereby social practices such as participation become regular and continuous enough to be described as institutions. The dynamics of 'institutionalising participation and people-centred approaches' imply long-term and sustained change, which in turn recognises the conflict between different sets of interests, values, agendas and coalitions of power. In practice, this process of institutionalising participatory approaches emphasises several interrelated areas of change:

- Spreading and scaling up change from the micro (e.g. project/local) to the macro (e.g. policy/national) level
- Scaling out from a single line department or sector or initiative, to catalyse wider changes in both organisations (e.g. government and donor agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil society groups and federations, private corporations) and policy processes
- Changes in attitudes, behaviour, norms, skills, procedures, management systems, organisational culture and structure as well as policy change
- The inclusion of more people and places through lateral spread, from village to village, municipality to municipality, district to district and so on

The actors involved in these participatory approaches are, to varying degrees, aware that they need to change and move away from current practices. However, the main reasons given for policy change, professional reorientation and organisational transformation vary and are not necessarily the same for all actors. Indeed, different priorities are usually emphasised in efforts to institutionalise participation.

These diverse understandings and agendas are consistent with the history of participation. For example, in the 1980s participation was defined as a process by which participants or client groups influenced the direction and execution of development programmes to enhance well-being in terms of personal growth, income, self-reliance or other values (Paul, 1986). Using an empowerment perspective, Rahman (1993) described participation as a collective effort by people concerned, stimulated by their own deliberations, the creation of free and independent organisations, voluntary pooling of efforts, sharing of risks, responsibilities, resources and benefits. People's main aims were self-development and gaining a say in decisions. These value-laden views on participation have led to the development of two overlapping, and at times conflicting, approaches. The first sees participation as a mechanism to increase efficiency and effectiveness. It assumes that if people participate, they are likely to agree and support the policies, programmes, technologies, projects and services being offered to them. The second views participation as a fundamental right and a process in which community members and other citizens mobilise for collective action, empowerment, institution building, inclusive deliberation and politically negotiated processes. A third and distinct approach to participation is advocated by the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and transnational corporations (Nair, 2003). In this newly emerging view of societal participation, citizens are seen as clients or consumers and are asked to participate by paying for goods and services provided by the market and the more economically efficient actors.

## A growing rationale for 'participation'

Despite these diverging views on participation, the following developments are increasingly important catalysts for change. Taken together they offer strong rationales for shifts towards participation and people-centred processes in a variety of settings:

**A crisis in governance.**

In many countries representative democracy has been heavily criticised for its inability to protect citizens' interests. Marginalised groups in both the North and

South rarely participate effectively in such representative democracy. The poor are often badly organised and ill-served by the organisations that mobilise their votes and claim to represent their interests. The crisis of legitimacy faced by institutions in the eyes of poor people (and a growing number of middle-income citizens) is now widely documented. Drawing from participatory research in 23 countries the recent 'Consultations with the Poor' report, prepared for the World Devlopment Report 2001, concludes:

> *From the perspectives of poor people world wide, there is a crisis in governance. While the range of institutions that play important roles in poor people's lives is vast, poor people are excluded from participation in governance. State institutions, whether represented by central ministries or local government, are often neither responsive nor accountable to the poor; rather the reports detail the arrogance and disdain with which poor people are treated. Poor people see little recourse to injustice, criminality, abuse and corruption by institutions. Not surprisingly, poor men and women lack confidence in the state institutions even though they still express their willingness to partner with them under fairer rules.* (Narayan et al., 2000).

Some countries, particularly in the North,[1] are beginning to look for ways to open up policymaking by moving beyond representative democracy and traditional forms of consultation to give the historically excluded a voice. The current concerns of donors for 'good governance' and the strengthening of civil society also contribute to increasing interest in the use of inclusive forms of participation in policymaking.

Civil society organisations in both the North and South have also been demanding that citizens' voices be heard during the formulation of government policies to meet human needs in environmentally sustainable ways. Many of these social actors argue that citizen deliberation and inclusion have the potential to improve the quality of decision-making, ensuring that the policy process is more legitimate, effective, efficient and sustainable (Fung and Wright, 2003).

**Failures of conventional development and conservation.**

Conventional, top-down development and conservation largely neglects local people, their indigenous knowledge and management systems, their institutions and social organisation, and the value to them of local assets (natural, physical, cultural, etc.). The so-called 'blueprint' approaches, which evolved in the context of large-scale

1. In this volume we adopt the definition of Northern countries as being those most industrialised nations that are members of the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

infrastructure development programmes in the 1960s, have proved to be ineffective in promoting sustainable development. However, their assumptions and procedures continue to dominate most environment and development programming and provide the core of management practices and training curriculum (Korten, 1984; Chambers, 1993). In much of development, for example, the early project process is dominated by engineers and economists, with a strong focus on infrastructure, budgets, schedules and quantification. Technologies and models of intervention developed in particular historical settings are transferred to completely different contexts with little or no regard for the receiving environments or people. Bureaucratic structures that rely on top-down, command and control approaches to management are more responsive to feedback and direction from special interests than to the diverse needs, priorities and knowledge of the end-users of services, technologies and policies. When a management approach does not work, the response is often to make slight adjustments that merely increase the control costs. The underlying cause of the performance decline and/or the mis-match between the centrally planned development intervention and context-specific local needs are usually not addressed.

Mirroring much of development, conservation problems have been widely agreed upon by professionals: soil erosion, degradation of rangelands, desertification, loss of forests and the destruction of wildlife. All of these problems have appeared to require intervention to prevent further deterioration, and local misuse of resources has been/is consistently defined as the principal cause of destruction. Policies and practice have, therefore, sought to exclude people and so discourage all forms of local participation. Such top-down, imposed conservation all too often results in huge social and ecological costs in areas where rural people are directly dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods. On occasions local communities have been expelled from their settlements without adequate provision for alternative means of work and income. In other cases local people have been restricted in their use of common property resources for gathering food, harvesting medicinal plants, grazing, fishing, hunting, and collecting wood and other wild products from forests, wetlands and pastoral lands. Forest plantations and national parks established on indigenous lands have denied local people rights to resources, turning them practically overnight from hunters and cultivators into ‘poachers’ and ‘squatters’. Moreover, the current styles of natural resource management usually result in high management costs for governments, with the majority of benefits accruing to national and international external interests (Ghimire and Pimbert, 1997).

This deep crisis of development and conservation has led to the search for alternative approaches that offset biases, decentralise, encourage diversity, put people before things, and put poor people first of all. Widespread participation, inclusion and

deliberation are seen as key for achieving and sustaining this paradigm shift (Chambers, 1993; Pimbert and Pretty,1995; Rahman, 2004).

**More critical perspectives on professional expertise and science**

The growing public mistrust, cynicism and perception of declining legitimacy regarding professional and scientific expertise is also undermining the credibility of many national policy processes and development schemes. This is particularly the case in countries where the lack of trust in government institutions is associated with the growing link between the state and scientific expertise in policymaking. Western science plays a central role in determining much of the content of policies and practices that shape people–environment interactions. Science has thus become increasingly drawn into policymaking as experts (scientists, foresters, agronomists, rangeland specialists, economists, etc.) make decisions about social, economic and environmental issues to provide policymakers and resource managers with options. This involvement of scientific expertise has tended to remove decisions from democratic politics, allowing instead more opaque technocratic decision-making to prevail in many cases.

Trust in scientific expertise has been further eroded in the eyes of citizens because:

- People in industrialised and post-industrialised countries no longer view science as representing certain knowledge (Irwin, 1995; 2001). Citizens are faced with a wide range of opinions from experts and counter experts in major scientific controversies. This undermines the positivist view of knowledge with its claims that any group of experts faced with the same problem should arrive at the same conclusions.
- The public understanding of science has also been increasingly informed by radical critiques which present science as *an embodiment of values* in theories, things, therapies, systems, software and institutions. And all these values are part of ideologies or world views, with scientists immersed in the same cultural and economic conflicts, contradictions and compromises as ordinary citizens (Levidov, 1986; Levidov and Young, 1981; Young, 1977).
- The divide and estrangement between ordinary people and professionals is growing today as the places where scientists and other normal professionals[2] work are privatised, with partnerships between the public sector and corporations

2. Normal professionals are found in research institutes and universities as well as in international and national organisations where most of them work in specialised departments of government (forestry, fisheries, agriculture, health, wildlife conservation, planning, administration, etc.). The thinking, values, methods and behaviour dominant in their profession or discipline tends to be stable and conservative (Chambers, 1993).

becoming the norm. Many increasingly believe that normal professionalism is deeply problematic in this emerging context as it generally 'values and rewards "first" biases which are urban, industrial, high technology, male, quantifying, and concerned with things and with the needs and interests of the rich' (Chambers, 1993).

- Citizens feel themselves 'at risk' from science-based social and technological developments. For example, the recent crises in European countries over BSE and GMOs have seriously undermined public confidence in scientific expertise. This has been compounded by evidence of collusion between some key government scientific experts and the commercial interests of industry. Citizens are increasingly sceptical of scientific solutions when 'experts' have contributed to creating the public health, social and environmental crises in the first place.

In both the North and South, solutions to overcoming low public confidence in government institutions and professional scientific expertise have often emphasised a more deliberative and inclusive form of debate, policymaking, agenda setting and management of resources and assets (financial, physical, natural, human, etc.). The value of formal science is recognised, but so is the importance of citizens' perspectives as alternative ways of framing issues and setting agendas for research (Mirenowicz, 2001; Pimbert, 1994; Satya Murty and Wakeford, 2001). Advocates argue that more inclusive participatory processes involving citizens and 'lay publics' allow multiple perspectives into debates, thereby generating better understandings of the uncertainties of science–policy–management questions (Stirling, 2001).

**Increasing complexity and uncertainty**

*All* policy processes, projects and programmes involve making decisions without being able to fully predict the effects of different courses of action. As the problems and systems being dealt with become more complex and unstable, levels of uncertainty increase significantly (IDS, 2003). Environmental uncertainties and technological risks are particularly noteworthy in this regard. For example, dynamic complexity and variation within and among ecosystems is enormous. Daily, seasonal and longer term changes in the spatial structure of ecosystems are apparent at the broad landscape level right down to small plots of cultivated land. Environmental dynamics and effects are usually complex and long term. Uncertainty, spatial variability and complex non-equilibrium ecological dynamics emphasise the need for flexible responses, mobility and local-level adaptive resource management in which local resource users are central actors in analysis, planning, negotiations and action (Gunderson et al., 1995; Berkes and Folke, 1998; Röling and Wagemakers, 1998).

Local co-management bodies or platforms are often well placed to monitor environmental change and deal with the unpredictable interactions between people and ecosystems as they evolve together at different spatial and time scales. Adaptive management is, after all, iterative, and based on feedback and continuous learning. Policies and practices for adaptive co-management are thus dependent on local actors and other citizens having the spaces to deliberate, arbitrate and act on feedback from the environment (Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2004).

Biophysical processes, such as climate change or interactions between genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and the environment, are often characterised by non-equilibrium dynamics and high levels of instability. Predicting the long-term impacts of releasing new types of industrial waste (e.g. nanoparticles) and endocrine disrupting chemicals into the environment is fraught with uncertainties. The traditional approaches of risk management and cost–benefit analysis are inadequate 'when we don't know what we don't know' and where 'we don't know the probabilities of possible outcomes'. Given such uncertainty in the face of complexity, 'experts' are seen as no better equipped to decide on questions of values and interests than any other groups of citizens (Irwin, 2001; Stirling, 2001). Perceptions of both the problem and the appropriate solution are value laden and differ enormously within a society. Under conditions where there is uncertainty and ignorance, there is an increasingly strong case for more inclusive forms of participation and citizen deliberation in the science–policy process and the management of environmental risks.

**Increased advocacy for human rights, social justice and local empowerment.**

New social movements and peoples' coalitions throughout the world are now reaffirming the importance of human rights over economics and the rule of market forces (Amin and Houtard, 2002; Le Monde Diplomatique, 2004). For them, human rights, justice and democratic accountability are enhanced when the formulation of policies, the design of technologies and the management of systems involves inclusive deliberation and broad public participation. Inclusive deliberation potentially allows men, women, the old and children to exercise their 'human right' to participate – as citizens – in decisions about society, the environment and the organisation of economic life. People are no longer viewed as mere users and choosers of policies, they become active makers and shapers of the realities that affect their lives (Cornwall and Gaventa, 2001). Much of this argument draws its legitimacy from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This vision of participatory democracy also resonates with longstanding political traditions in which citizen empowerment and direct action are seen as the central objectives of a just and free society that celebrates diversity, empathy, cooperation and mutual aid (Woodcock, 1975).

## The rush to scale up and spread 'participation'

All of the above trends provide an increasingly strong rationale for widespread expansion of participation in policy processes and projects for environment and development. They are giving a new urgency and legitimacy to efforts that seek to make participatory learning, action and decision-making the norm throughout society.

However, the rapidity with which many participatory processes are being scaled up is both remarkable and worrying, particularly in the field of natural resource management and rural livelihoods. In June 1995, for example, the Government of Indonesia decreed that a four-day Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) training programme should be conducted in over 60,000 villages, all in less than a year. In India, some 300 trainers were trained in four months so that they could go on to train 12,000 field staff to implement a large-scale programme of participatory watershed management. In Uganda, training in participatory methods and follow-up are proposed for 14,000 parishes for community capacity-building and implementation of the new government's Five-Year Plan. In Vietnam, an agriculture project supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) conducted 350 activities described as 'PRAs' in only six months. In many countries of Europe, the use of participatory processes such as citizen juries and consensus conferences to assess environmental policies and technological risks has significantly increased during the last five years.

Such ventures offer tremendous scope for sustaining natural resources, improving environmental governance and expanding the active involvement of local people and other citizens in the social and ecological dynamics that have a direct bearing on their livelihood security and well-being. But there is also a serious danger that these initiatives may be misapplied and abused in the rush to scale-up and spread the new innovations, with no real shifts in power relations. This, in turn, could lead to widespread disillusionment with these people-centered approaches and result in the discrediting of the very concept of 'participation'. To help ensure that 'participation', deliberation and inclusion do not become yet more passing fads, there is clearly a need to learn more about the dynamics of institutionalising participatory approaches and people-centered processes in different contexts.

**The 'Institutionalising Participation' project: Seeking transformation**

Large-scale participatory policy processes and programmes for natural resource management often include national governments, large NGOs, civil society organisations and donor agencies as major actors/stakeholders. A participatory dynamic that includes more people and places constantly challenges these large

organisations to become flexible, innovative and transparent. More specifically, the emphasis on diversity, decentralisation and devolution of decision-making powers in the policy process and the management of natural resources implies procedures and organisational cultures which do not impose 'participation' from above through standardised practices.

How can bureaucracies facilitate and support the participation of local actors throughout an inclusive whole – from deliberations, appraisals and preparing for partnerships, through planning and developing co-management agreements, policymaking, negotiating resource allocation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, to reviewing and revising the means and ends of the participatory process? What policies enable – or constrain – the spread and mainstreaming of participatory and people-centered approaches in environment and development? Under what conditions can bureaucracies and other organisations be refashioned or transformed to ensure that their outcomes (policies, programmes, resource allocation and projects) actually facilitate, rather than inhibit, participation and the adaptive management of natural resources? How do roles, rights, responsibilities and the distribution of costs and benefits need to change among actors in civil society, government, and the private sector? What kind of training, capacity strengthening and follow up is necessary to create the right 'skills mix' for staff of public agencies to employ participatory approaches effectively on a large scale? What incentives (e.g. economic, professional, social, etc.) act as catalysts for the spread and mainstreaming of participation? How do the attitudes and behaviour of officials and professionals change when they become involved in the use of participatory approaches, and what are the factors that encourage or bring about these changes? What is the impact of institutionalising participatory approaches on the social dynamics, livelihoods and well-being of low-income rural and urban groups and local organisations? And on the status of natural resources, environmental conditions and knowledge on people–environment interactions?

To focus on these issues and questions, IIED and IDS initiated a collaborative action research programme with national partners in India, Indonesia, Mexico and Senegal, and also drew on the experiences of a wider community of researchers. The overall objective of this international effort was to carry out comprehensive analyses of the dynamics of institutionalising participatory approaches and people-centred processes in natural resource management. In the language of sustainable livelihoods, the research partners focused on the relationship between *'livelihood outcomes'* and the role of *'transforming structures and processes'* such as organizations, institutions, laws and policies that transform assets (natural, physical, financial, human, social, cultural…) into those outcomes (Carney,1998; Bebbington, 1999).

In this action research a clear distinction is made between institutions and organisations. Strictly speaking, organisations are not the same as institutions. Institutions are 'the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction…they structure incentives in human exchange, whether political, social or economic…Institutions reduce uncertainty by providing a structure to everyday life…Institutions include any form of constraint that human beings devise to shape interaction' (North, 1990). Land tenure rules and other rules regulating access, use and control over natural resources are examples of institutions. Although they embrace them, institutions are not organisations; they are best understood as a set of informal and formal rules that are administered by organisations. Organisations are thus 'groups of individuals bound by some common purpose to achieve objectives' (North, 1990). Organisations operate within the framework – the rules and constraints – set by institutions. Examples include government departments or local beekeeper associations which administer sets of formal and informal 'rules of the game'.

Historically, the purpose of establishing institutions has been to reduce uncertainty by routinising certain preferred norms and forms of social interaction. Institutions have been structured around the physical and social needs, capabilities and political interests of those who designed them in the first place. Institutions thus tend to reflect and reinforce the interests of more powerful groups within and among societies: men before women, adults before children, rich before poor, strong and healthy before the weak and sick/disabled, urban before rural people, transnational corporations before national interests. Institutionalising participatory processes and approaches to natural resource management is oriented towards reversing these trends to ensure more equitable outcomes.

The emphasis of the current IIED–IDS action research is thus on mainstreaming and routinising democratic participation in decision-making and gender–equitable forms of social interaction. Institutionalising participation in this context also means limiting the possibilities for choosing discriminatory forms of social organisation that undermine local livelihood security and sustainable natural resource management.

## Methodological overview

### Research teams and case studies

Partner organisations and case study sites were identified through selective and purposeful sampling. No attempt was made to seek fully representative samples across all natural resource management (NRM) sectors (e.g. forests, wetlands,

**BOX 1: MAIN CASE STUDIES**

- People-oriented conservation and an ethnography of The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
- Institutionalising community integrated pest management in Indonesia
- Mainstreaming participation in the Gestion des terroirs approach in Senegal
- Institutionalising participation in the Mexican regional sustainable development programme
- Participatory watershed management in India

watersheds, rangelands, agriculture, protected areas and wildlife). Potential research collaborators, partner organisations and advisors for the case studies were identified through discussions with key practitioners, researchers and donors supporting this initiative. Some of the case studies incorporated process sequences for organisational learning and transformation, while others were chosen because they concentrated more on critical elements of the institutionalisation process. A total of five main case studies were selected by country research teams and the IIED-based coordinator (see Box 1).

## Framing assumptions and research boundaries

Evidence of the extent to which participation and people-centered processes have been institutionalised in natural resource management was triangulated by examining three areas of change:

- Policy reforms at national and local levels
- Social and environmental impacts of large-scale participation in a variety of local settings
- Organisational changes within government bureaucracies, large non-governmental organisations and other support agencies

The choice of methods for analysis was guided by underlying assumptions that reflected the researchers' collective understanding of the processes under study. The following assumptions in particular informed the research methodology:

### Policy narratives

- Policy narratives embody beliefs, values, knowledge and power. Competing narratives understand 'nature', environmental 'problems' and 'solutions' in very different ways, and serve different social and institutional interests.

- Competing policies are promoted by policy communities that cut across organisational boundaries.
- Policy development is mediated by internal and external institutional structures.

**Field projects**

- Field projects are seen as carriers of dominant conceptions of nature, people and natural resource management.
- Outcomes are often unpredictable, and only partly and indirectly related to natural resource management policies. They are mediated by structure/agency interactions.
- Both project personnel and populations who are affected use projects creatively for their own ends.

**Organisations**

- Organisations are institutionalised structures of power, knowledge and control.
- Organisations are not monolithic.
- Organisational patterns and change are products of an interplay between agency and structure.

In addition, approaches such as the Environmental Entitlement Framework (see Leach et al., 1997), the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Framework (see Carney, 1998) and Social Auditing (see Gonella et al., 1998) helped further guide the choice of methods for analysis.

## Learning Groups

In each study context, the research teams facilitated the establishment of gender-inclusive, interdisciplinary and inter-organisational *Learning Groups* capable of acting as catalysts for organisational learning and the lateral spread of innovations and change – at both local and external-support institution levels.

The National Learning Group (NLG) was interdisciplinary and inter-organisational, consisting of key agency staff, academics, development practitioners, civil society representatives and donors. These people were from varied backgrounds and interests, for example rural development practitioners, supporters of low external input and/or organic farming, adult education specialists, land reform activists,

advocates of fair trade and gender mainstreaming, academics and government staff. The NLG's role was to:

i. guide and contribute to the action research;

ii. help discover organisational and field-level needs that demand new approaches and methods;

iii. assist in developing and refining these approaches and methods, and supporting the scaling up of their use; and

iv. facilitate an action-oriented and dynamic process of critical reflection, accelerated learning and innovation for policy and organisational change.

Whilst an NLG was set up in each study context, some case studies benefited from the existence of both an NLG and local learning groups (LLGs). Local learning groups were primarily made up of natural resource users, villagers and external professionals (NGO staff and academic researchers) acting in a support role. LLGs played a similar and complementary role to the NLGs in the action research.

Through regular meetings, Learning Group members participated in the planning, conduct and review of the analysis and studies carried out by the research team. Depending on the context, some individual NLG or/and LLG members also worked jointly with researchers to conduct:

**Policy analysis.**

To gain insights into the policy processes that influenced the dynamics of institutionalising participation in NRM, key policy actors were interviewed and policy documents analysed. Members of the NLG and core research team facilitated the historical analyses of key policies and their effects on the institutionalisation and scaling up of participatory and people-centred approaches. The main aim of this analysis was to better understand how government policies either facilitate or inhibit participatory and people-centred processes.

**Organisational analysis.**

Key organisations involved in processes of institutionalising participation were analysed by:

- 'mapping' their institutional norms, operational procedures and organisational structures;

**BOX 2: A METHODOLOGICAL OUTLINE FOR ORGANISATIONAL ANALYSIS**

- History and organisational biographies: Compare and contrast different organisations' histories over the last 10 to 20 years.
- Relationships with other actors: Venn diagrams, network diagrams and flow charts to get different actors' perceptions on how the organisation relates to other organisations and groups, including the corporate sector.
- Qualitative dimensions: Semi-structured interviews and focus groups to understand perceptions of different actors on organisations' quality of participation and operational procedures. Look at (a) staff within organisations (different categories of staff, all hierarchical levels included in building perception map) and (b) local villagers and farmers (rich, poor, excluded, men and women...)
- Individual biographies: Look at: (a) case studies of champions of change and the networks and coalitions they are part of; and (b) case studies on the lives of ordinary officials and other professional staff (both within government as well as NGOs involved). Focus on their livelihoods, family pressures, salary and remuneration, career histories and constraints.

- reviewing important strategy documents, policy papers, consultants' reports and evaluations of activities prior to, during and after adoption of participatory approaches; and
- conducting stakeholder analyses and interviews of key decision-makers, practitioners and local people.

Box 2 presents an example of a methodological outline for organisational analysis used in some of the case studies.

**Impact analysis.**

The effects of participatory NRM on the assets (human, social, natural, physical and financial) of different groups were assessed and analysed. The impact analysis focused in particular on the livelihoods of vulnerable groups, such as women, low-income people, migrants and landless or near-landless people, who are frequently marginalised by large-scale development initiatives. Focus group discussions and participatory methods (e.g. PRA/PLA) were used in different methodological sequences, depending on the context and issues explored.

## Diverse ways of knowing

The methodology was not prescriptive and each country research team was able to adjust the overall approach to suit local circumstances. Different research styles were also allowed to co-exist in the IIED–IDS project. For example, the Indonesia study

**TABLE 1: RESEARCH APPROACHES**

| | Empirical–analytic inquiry | Interpretive inquiry | Liberatory Inquiry (e.g. Participatory Action Research) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Purpose** | Experimental science in search of causal explanations and laws in order to make predictions | Interpretive science in search of subjective meanings and understanding in the world of lived experience | Liberating (humanising) science to create movement for personal and social transformation in order to redress injustices, support peace and form democratic spaces. |
| **Nature of reality** | A unique, real, social world exists to be studied by independent observers. Recognition is given to distinct, positive facts and observable phenomena. | Pluralistic and relativist (multiple realities dependent on individual's perceptions). People make purposeful acts based on their perceptions of feelings and events and so shape their realities by their behaviour. | The social world is humanly and collectively constructed with and within a historical context. People are active subjects in the world and are constantly in relationships of power: with the self, with others, with nature. |
| **Nature of knowledge** | Objective truth exists. Objectivity (detached neutrality) and value-free science is possible and desirable. Logical, deductive, rational findings. Knowledge is an end in itself. | Knowledge is a social, subjective construction. Language contextualises the meaning of data. The method used justifies the knowledge produced. | People can change their levels of consciousness through learning. Objectivity does not exist. Fundamental human needs drive the process of inquiry. Holistic dimensions of knowing |
| **Methods** | Experimental. Begins with a hypothesis. Validity and reliability are important. Defined time frame. People are 'objects' of study. Quantitative data produced. Frequently dependent on complex statistics. Theory and practice are not directly related. | Interactive, sometimes close, processes between researcher and subjects are needed to obtain meaningful data and insights into human behaviour. Qualitative data produced. Examples of methods: interviews, participant observation, case study, grounded theory | Dialectic of praxis (action–reflection process) within the historical and social context. Participants are active with ownership over questions, objectives, process. Many different, often creative methods, e.g. interviews, drama, songs, PRA methods, video |
| **Knowledge produced** | Technical, instrumental | Interpretive, interactive | Critical, spiritual |
| **Values reflected** | Deterministic application: people are prepared for a given form of social life. Concerned with 'maintenance or evolutionary change of status quo'. Greater efficiency and control over behaviour and the environment. | Humanistic application: 'growth metaphor with self-actualisation of individuals within meritocratic forms of social life' | Transformative process. Belief in people's capacity to work together for equitable decision-making and fair distribution of resources. Authentic commitment over the long term is needed to achieve individual and group–community empowerment. |

*Modified from Smith et al, 1997.*

was grounded in participatory action research whilst the Senegal and Mexico studies drew on the traditions of interpretive inquiry (see Table 1). Overall, this resulted in different countries adopting a variety of methodologies which generated a divergent yet rich array of findings that have been combined to form this report.

## Building a larger picture: Complementary studies

Participants in the mid-term review workshop of this IIED–IDS research (Pasteur, 2000) felt it necessary to complement case study work with an analysis of the wider political ecology that increasingly influences natural resource management and local livelihoods.

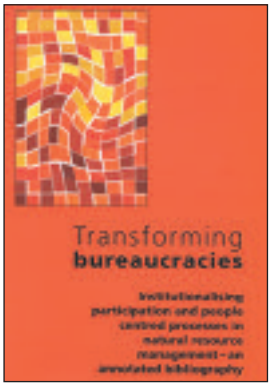
Thematic discussion papers were thus commissioned to analyse the potential conflicts between national policies that work for people and sustainable NRM and global policies/institutions that frequently work against them. (e.g. trade liberalisation, privatisation and property rights). The barriers and bridges between the parallel experiences of gender mainstreaming and the institutionalisation of participation were also explored in an invited discussion paper.

A series of papers was also commissioned to critically reflect on the impacts of knowledge on people–environment interactions. How does environmental knowledge interact with organisational culture, policies and practices to either deny or encourage diversity and popular participation in natural resource management?

In addition to exploring these themes, the IIED–IDS research contributed to – and benefited from – action research on the use of deliberative and inclusive methods in participatory policy processes.

The next section of this report contains highlights of all the publications in the Institutionalising Participation Series, the majority of which are already in print, and a summary of each. All these publications are available to download free from **www.iied.org**.

# 2. Publications highlights




*Transforming Bureaucracies. Institutionalising Participation and People Centered Processes in Natural Resource Management: An annotated bibliography*, by Michel Pimbert, Vanessa Bainbridge, Stephanie Foerster, Katherine Pasteur, Garett Pratt and Iliana Yaschine Arroyo. IIED and IDS Institutionalising Participation Series, IIED, London, 2000

## Transforming Bureaucracies: An annotated bibliography

This bibliography includes nearly 390 references, most of which are annotated. The selection (and omission) of references was based on the desire to highlight different strands of the debate on the issues raised by organisational change and the institutionalisation of participation in natural resource management. An interdisciplinary range of references is offered to bring down the barriers between different traditions of knowledge, experience and disciplinary domains.

There are seven overlapping themes in the bibliography:

- conceptual issues and theories of organisational change for participation
- learning organisations
- gender and organisational change
- transforming environmental knowledge and organisational change
- nurturing enabling attitudes and behaviour
- policies for participation
- methods for institutional and impact analysis

Each theme is introduced by a brief overview that points the reader to major issues in the literature and areas where questions remain unanswered.

*People-Oriented Approaches in Global Conservation: Is the leopard changing its spots?* by Sally Jeanrenaud. IIED–IDS Institutionalising Participation Series, IIED, London, 2002

# People-Oriented Approaches in Global Conservation: Is the leopard changing its spots?

This case study focuses on the world's largest conservation organisation – The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) – and examines the dynamics of mainstreaming people-oriented approaches in the conservation of biological diversity.

Whereas local people were once considered a threat to nature and were often removed from protected areas, global conservation organisations like (WWF) now promote a wide range of people-oriented conservation approaches, such as integrated conservation and development projects (ICDPs), community-based conservation, collaborative management, etc. But despite these changes, this case study suggests that it is important to exercise caution in claiming that 'participation' has been mainstreamed in WWF's global conservation programmes.

An analysis of people/conservation narratives identifies contrasting ways in which 'nature', 'problems' and 'solutions' are framed, revealing competing sets of moral values and scientific approaches within WWF. A review of forest project interventions in the 1990s indicated that while some 75 per cent had social as well as conservation objectives, people were generally considered a resource for conservation ends defined by experts. An exploration of organisational structures and processes reveals some of the institutional dynamics that influence the uneven uptake of participatory approaches within WWF's programmes.

Based on a review of 35 years of field and policy documents, an analysis of over 2000 WWF projects since 1961, an evaluation of 150 contemporary forest conservation projects, seven field case studies and a wide range of interviews, this case study argues that there has not been a paradigm change within WWF policy and practice. Rather, WWF has been adroit at co-opting the rhetoric of participation and people-centred processes without significant organisational change and realignments of political, scientific and bureaucratic powers. In contrast to earlier coercive conservation styles, many new projects and policy processes do provide people with more room for manoeuvre in environmental decision-making. In many cases, projects and local people manage to negotiate a middle ground of shared interests. However, the very means for improving conservation practices may also reproduce subtle ways of co-opting local people.

This case study explores the idea that change is conditioned by complex, reflexive relations between dominant conservation narratives, western environmental values, and fundraising and organisational structures, which can all work against transformation for participation and people-centered processes.

# Community Integrated Pest Management in Indonesia: Institutionalising participation and people centred approaches

*Community Integrated Pest Management in Indonesia: Institutionalising participation and people-centered processes*, by Mansour Fakih, Toto Rahardjo and Michel Pimbert, IIED–IDS Institutionalising Participation Series, IIED, London, 2003

Integrated pest management (IPM) emerged in Indonesia in the late 1980s as a reaction to the environmental and social consequences of the Green Revolution model of agriculture.

A cooperative programme between the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the Indonesian government centered on Farmer Field Schools (FFS) – schools without walls. The FFS aimed to make farmers experts in their own fields, enabling them to replace their reliance on external inputs, such as pesticides, with endogenous skills, knowledge and resources. Over time the emphasis of the programme shifted towards community organisation, community planning and management of IPM, and became known as Community IPM (CIPM). This study assesses the extent to which Community IPM has been institutionalised in Java (Indonesia).

The impacts of scaling up and institutionalising CIPM have been remarkable. Over one million paddy farmers are now involved in this national programme in Indonesia. Through its emphasis on farmer-to-farmer training, action research, policy dialogue and other participatory processes, CIPM has transformed livelihoods through security of income, food supply, health and a more invigorated rural civil society. It has also strengthened social assets by supporting farmers' efforts to build associations and networks, giving them a stronger voice and improved means of collective action and mutual aid. Beneficial environmental impacts include significantly reduced pesticide use, increased biological and genetic diversity, and a more holistic approach by farmers to maintaining the complex ecological balance of rice agroecosystems. The degree to which gender issues have been taken into consideration in large-scale CIPM is not clear cut, however.

The research examined the role of external support organisations in the spread and scaling up of CIPM. While farmers' organisations or farmers' groups have been key for the spread of CIPM, many external organisations have also played a role, especially the FAO Technical Support Unit. Part of the success of this Unit was its emphasis on learner-centred and process-oriented approaches, rather than on fixed blueprints driven by targets and indicators imposed from above. It also practised its deep belief that 'farmers can do it' and thus pursued farmer-led processes.

However, the research found little evidence that the culture and practice of participation in the Community IPM Programme has fundamentally influenced the higher levels of government bureaucracies, which are still top down in their approach to development. Enduring state-level corruption and technocratic resistance to change has meant that the spread and scaling up of the CIPM programme was only made possible because champions of change acted on the assumption that farmers alone can 'institutionalise' FFS activities, and that the adaptive management of complex agroecologies needs, first and foremost, a community-level focus.

*Institutionnalisation de la gestion des terroirs au Senegal: cas de la région de Thies,* by Serigne Mansour Tall and Bara Gueye, IIED–IDS Institutionalising Participation Series, IIED, London, 2003

# Mainstreaming Participation in the Management of Village Resources in Senegal (in French)

This case study analyses a multi-stakeholder-driven process that seeks to institutionalise participation in the management of village resources (*gestion des terroirs*) in Senegal. The implementation of this participatory approach depends on the formation of learning groups and is based on the assumption that the capacity that local organisations have to learn and adapt to change is key for the sustainability of development interventions.

After analysing the learning process and its context, the authors draw the following lessons from this study:

- Learning is more effective when situated in a context of dialogue and exchanges that focuses on how to successfully implement actions.
- A management plan for the *gestion des terroirs* is not an end in itself; it is a way of linking natural resource management with the dynamics of local development.
- The learning groups' critical reflections highlighted a significant gap between what is needed for successful participatory processes and the imperatives and constraints of state administrations.

Local learning groups in particular offer effective spaces for community reflection, dialogue and action around participatory natural resource management policies and projects in Senegal. The authors present evidence suggesting that local resource users' empowerment partly depends on transformations, including:

- strengthening the capacity of local people to plan, monitor, evaluate and negotiate new rules of the game
- ensuring that outside professionals who work with local resource users learn to shed biases and prejudices in order to engage in an honest joint learning process;
- sustaining a process of confidence building among resource users; and
- ensuring that external support organisations view attitudinal and behaviour change among their staff as an indicator of organisational growth and actively promote shifts in staff behaviour.

Despite high staff turnover rates, there is some evidence that technically oriented state departments are developing procedures that aim to better integrate participatory approaches to natural resource management in their daily activities.

# Of Dreams and Shadows: Seeking change for the institutionalisation of participation for natural resource management

*Of Dreams and Shadows: Seeking change for the institutionalisation of participation for natural resource management. The case of the Mexican regional sustainable development programme (PRODERS)* by Jutta Blauert and Kristina Dietz, IIED–IDS Institutionalising Participation Series, IIED, London, 2004

Between 1996 and 2000 the Mexican Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Fisheries (SEMARNAP) developed and implemented an innovative programme for regional sustainable development (PRODERS). This programme was designed as the anchor for Mexico's sustainable development policy, and was founded on the principles of participation, decentralisation and integrated development. With its objectives of reducing rural poverty, enhancing social wellbeing and halting the environmental degradation that characterises many of the priority regions, the programme was a new effort to challenge social and environmental deterioration. PRODERS also sought to establish the basis for a new institutional framework and for new forms of cooperation and coordination between different actors to promote sustainable development.

This report is one of four country studies of attempts to institutionalise people-centred processes and participatory approaches for natural resource management. The research gathered different stakeholders' views on PRODERS' performance between 1996 and 2000. Participatory policy analysis was used to understand the successes and shortcomings of institutionalising participatory approaches in government and civil society organisations working in natural resource management at the local, regional and national level. The main objectives were to identify bottlenecks and opportunities for such institutionalisation, and to provide lessons at these three levels for organisations trying to tackle poverty and achieve sustainable natural resource management.

While PRODERS encountered many challenges, and in many ways failed to live up to expectations, the experience raises some interesting lessons about implementing a national public policy of sustainable development and participation:

- Implementation at the regional level helps create visions and alliances, as well as spaces for regional debate and planning.
- Strategies for coordinating different departments and ministries for integrated and inter-sectoral institutional activities are essential.
- Efforts must be made to change the attitudes and behaviour of those responsible within public and social sector institutions.
- The personal experiences and background of the team involved in policymaking, institutional change or organisational learning are critical: field-based, participatory practical experience is indispensable.
- The different scales of decision-making and management must be linked, and anchored at regional level: community transformation needs to be linked with an institution at the regional level for decision-making and management, set within a framework of national coordination.

*People, Policy, Participation: Making watershed management work in India* by Farhad Vania, Bansuri Taneja, IIED-IDS, Institutionalisation Participation Series, IIED, London 2005

# People, Policy, Participation: Making watershed management work in India

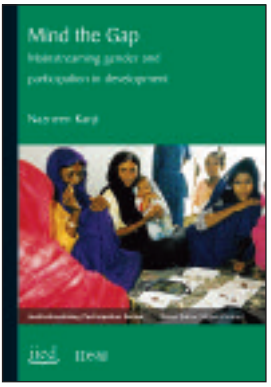
With its history of Gandhian people power and reputation for labyrinthine bureaucracy, a study of the ways in which India has tried to institutionalise participation, particularly in the context of poverty alleviation and resource management, is an important part of the IIED-IDS action research project, 'Institutionalising Participation and People Centred Processes in Natural Resource management'. This report aims to give the reader a detailed understanding of the process that led to the birth of the groundbreaking 1995 Guidelines that first introduced community participation into watershed development in India, and an overview of the guidelines that succeeded them. We then look in detail at how the 1995 Guidelines performed in terms of institutionalising participation, and highlight the issues and challenges that remain. When this project was conceived, ideas around participation and natural resource management were at a certain stage of development, and a wide range of perceptions existed among policymakers (government and donors), researchers (academics, trainers) and practitioners (communities, NGOs, government functionaries). India's first two country-wide experiments with participation in natural resource management are widely known: Joint Forest Management (JFM) and Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM). These processes are ongoing and continue to evolve, but this study looks at India's major effort to combine poverty reduction with natural resource management in the 1990s: watershed management. Unlike JFM and PIM, watershed management proved to be a unique instance of a bureaucracy moving normatively towards a process of institutionalising participation as the movement to participatory modes of functioning originated in policy statements from the centre, as different from the ways in which PIM and JFM policy came about – as generalisations following experiences of the government on the ground.

# Mind the Gap: Mainstreaming gender and participation in development

This discussion paper draws out lessons from gender mainstreaming work for those who seek to institutionalise participation. The author begins by discussing the shift from Women in Development (WID) to Gender and Development (GAD) and the conceptual frameworks which contributed to this process. The strategies used to mainstream gender, and the achievements and challenges are then examined. The tensions between gender mainstreaming and participatory development are explored and ways of bridging the gaps between 'gender' and 'participation' are suggested.

It is noteworthy that in both arenas – gender and participation – more organisations and individuals have moved on from a focus on individuals – 'essentialised' groups (such as women, 'the poor') – and local action to a greater recognition of the importance of social relations and power. There is indeed evidence that the shift from 'women in development' to 'gender and development' is mirrored by a shift from 'participation' to 'governance', with a greater focus in both on a relational perspective, policy processes and institutions. However, conventional approaches to 'gender mainstreaming' often ignore differences between women and stereotype men, while conventional approaches to 'participatory development' tend to homogenise communities and ignore a range of differences between people. Moreover, both run the risk of over-emphasising the technical aspects of mainstreaming, thereby depoliticising issues and failing to address more directly power and powerlessness, as well as difference and increasing inequality.

The author argues that renewed alliances with emerging movements and more critical perspectives are required to prevent the cooption of visions and weakening of values which underpin efforts to mainstream both a gender perspective and participatory approaches to development and social change.




*Mind the Gap: Mainstreaming gender and participation in development*, by Nazneen Kanji, IIED–IDS Institutionalising Participation Series, IIED, London, 2003

**FORTHCOMING IN 2007**

*Property Rights and Participation* UNRISD and IIED Discussion Paper, by Solon Barraclough and Michel Pimbert

# Property Rights and Participation

Participatory approaches to natural resource management require that local communities have well-defined, secure and equitable rights and duties regulating their control over and access to land, water, genetic and other natural resources as well as the present and anticipated benefits derived from them. These rights and duties define the relations among members of the communities and also those with outsiders such as the state, private individuals and corporate entities in the use of natural resources. This means that property rights constitute a central issue for participatory natural resource management. As such the issue of property rights is highly contested by widely opposing forces, both within and outside national borders. This discussion paper analyses recent global trends that influence the policies of national governments that regulate access to and use and control over water, land, forest, genetic and other natural resources. Global trends in intellectual property rights over genetic resources, privatisation of rights to water and land, as well as other examples are related to the country case studies chosen for the IIED–IDS action research (Indonesia, India, Senegal) and related examples. The paper explores the impacts of these trends on the spread and institutionalisation of participation.

# State versus Participation: Natural resources management in Europe

*State versus Participation: Natural resources management in Europe*, by Andréa Finger-Stich and Matthias Finger, IIED–IDS Institutionalising Participation Series, IIED, London, 2003

The authors of this discussion paper analyse and discuss how participation occurs – or does not occur – in the management of forest and water resources at various institutional levels in European contexts. The participation of the public, local communities, indigenous peoples, and various other stakeholders in natural resources policymaking, planning and/or management has been increasingly promoted in international and national policies, especially as a follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. However, participation is still being practiced in quite haphazard ways, and the institutional implications of such approaches is not being considered seriously.

A critical analysis is given on how the state has, over time, strengthened its own development interests by removing decisions over the management of natural resources from local users and communities' hands, and today tends to instrumentalise peoples' participation for its own legitimacy purposes. This evolution is considered in light of two more recent trends, namely the globalisation of economic interests on one hand and the demands for democratisation, decentralisation and accountability on the other. The authors describe the strategies various state agencies use to control the scope and timing of participation in decision-making processes relating to forest and water resource management.

The authors argue that newly emerging global actors – in particular transnational corporations (TNCs) – increasingly seek to instrumentalise the state for their own commercial purposes. TNCs want the state to give them lucrative business opportunities by delegating operations without, however, delegating the risks. Moreover, TNCs want the state to become a simple executor of 'policies', which the TNCs have defined among themselves largely above and beyond states' control. One example of this is the new global technical, environmental, and social standards, which TNCs have set amongst themselves (e.g., ISO standards) and now want states to enforce within their jurisdictions, taking advantage of their legitimacy. Last, transnational companies do remain very interested in the defence and policing function of the state, as well as in its reparation function. They need the former to protect their property, their operations, and their policymaking processes (World Trade Organisation meetings, etc.) and the latter (reparation function) to take care of the problems that are created, such as unemployment and environmental degradation.

Transformation towards more decentralised governance systems is needed for the adaptive and participatory management of natural resources. This implies some de-institutionalisation of the state. Decisive measures are also needed to ensure that TNCs and other powerful groups cannot promote their vested interests at the cost of wider society and the environment.

*A Global Look to the Local: Replacing economic globalisation with democratic localisation*, by Colin Hines. Joint publication of the IIED Institutionalising Participation Series and IIED's Reclaiming Diversity Series,London, 2004

# A Global Look to the Local: Replacing globalisation with democratic localisation

This discussion paper seeks to identify the forms of economic organisation that might best support the institutionalisation of participation and people-centred processes in environment and development.

The author begins by briefly looking at 'corporate globalisation', the adverse effects of which have led to rising global opposition. This process is defined as the ever-increasing integration of national economies into the global economy through trade and investment rules and privatisation, aided by technological advances. The result has been a reduction in barriers to trade and investment and a concomitant undermining of democracy and economic control in nation states and their communities. The process is driven by the widespread lobbying of governments by large corporations and is occurring increasingly at the expense of society, the environment, labour conditions and equality worldwide. A clear distinction is then made between corporate globalisation and the global flow of technology, ideas and information which can rebuild sustainable local communities (a supportive 'internationalism').

The paper argues that 'localisation' is a comprehensive alternative to economic globalisation. Using food systems as a unifying example, the author shows how localisation reverses the trend of corporate globalisation by discriminating in favour of the local. This approach to organizing economic life has local self-reliance and the potential to increase self-determination at its core. A set of mutually reinforcing policies that can potentially increase control of the economy by communities and nation states are described, including:

- the reintroduction of protective safeguards for domestic economies;
- a site-here-to-sell-here policy for manufacturing and services domestically or regionally;
- localising money such that the majority stays within its place of origin;
- local competition policy to eliminate monopolies from the more protected economies;
- introduction of resource taxes to increase environmental improvements and help fund the transition to localisation;
- increased democratic involvement both politically and economically to ensure the effectiveness and equity of the movement to more diverse local economies; and
- reorientation of the objectives of aid and trade rules such that they contribute to the rebuilding of local economies and local control.

The result should be an increase in community cohesion, a reduction in poverty and inequality, and an improvement in livelihoods, social infrastructure and environmental protection, and hence an increase in people's all important sense of security and well being.

Localisation has the potential to foster and help institutionalise democratic participation in its broadest sense. For example it is anticipated that 'economic democracy' will occur via involvement in increasingly diverse national production. More 'electoral democracy' is likely since people have a greater incentive to vote when local and national governments have greater control over their own economies. Forms of direct and participatory democracy can also spread and become institutionalised under a localisation approach that introduces a guaranteed citizen income and re-affirms a commitment to self-determination.

# A Critique of Work: Between ecology and socialism

*A Critique of Work: Between ecology and socialism*, by Françoise Gollain, IIED Institutionalising Participation Series, IIED, London

This discussion paper is devoted to critical thinking on waged work as the dominant organising principle of our lives and of the social body as a whole.

Historically, work was the chief means by which the Promethean conquest of nature was effected and humanity's destiny fulfilled; it provided the promise of plenty and even a hope of human liberation and the basis for a new society. All these directive utopias are today turning into nightmares. Ecological processes are deteriorating to an unprecedented degree and new forms of scarcity are being produced in various fields (including a scarcity of time).

There is a direct relationship between the vast increases in productivity achieved through re-engineering, downsizing and total quality management *and* the permanent exclusion of high numbers of workers from employment, both in industry and the service sector. This erosion of the link between job creation and wealth creation calls for a more equitable distribution of productivity gains through a reduction of working hours, and for the provision of alternative opportunities and spaces for the generation of use values rather than exchange values.

In this critical essay dedicated to Ivan Illich, the author argues for the construction of a new modernity in which the centrality of waged work would be greatly diminished. Civilising globalisation implies not only a re-localisation of the economy but also the fostering of a variety of social bonds outside the market, of alternative social practices that will diminish the importance of the wage relationship and create new production and consumption models. The best strategy for moving beyond the wage-based society lies in a synergy between three types of measure – a reduction of working hours, a guaranteed income, and the development of alternative activities to wage labour and to the practices of a composite economy. The author also justifies the shift from an emphasis on reduced working time to one of material security, with or without a job. Different forms of guaranteed income or material security have pride of place in this strategy because they help prioritise activities that have an intrinsic value, therefore narrowing the sphere of economic value creation. The author sees the setting up of a guaranteed citizen income as essential to a global eco-socialist project and could constitute a rallying point in the fight against corporate-led globalization and ecological dislocation.

This invited paper draws extensively on French, German and Italian debates on the future of wage work. Whilst clearly utopian in its orientation, the paper does nevertheless identify important structural changes needed for the institutionalisation of democratic participation and sustainable development. Participation in civic affairs and decision-making largely depends on transformations that allow people to reclaim control over time, space and resources. From this perspective, the author puts forward a number of suggestions for the provision of material security that might be valid for different regions of the globe.

*PLA Notes 40: Deliberative democracy and citizen empowerment.* Guest editors: Michel Pimbert and Tom Wakeford, IIED, London

# PLA Notes 40: Deliberative democracy and citizen empowerment

Democracy without citizen deliberation and participation is ultimately an empty and meaningless concept. This understanding of politics, and many people's desire to supplement the representation that they receive from elected politicians, is often the starting point for a growing number of experiments and initiatives that create new spaces for citizens to directly influence decisions that affect their lives.

This special edition of *PLA Notes* focuses on how to engage civil society in policy formulation and the assessment of technologies. The issue draws together current thinking around public participation, using a range of methods and approaches known as deliberative and inclusionary processes (DIPs), for example citizens' juries, consensus conferences, scenario workshops, multi-criteria mapping, and visioning exercises. Critical reflections are offered on how to institutionalise processes in which non-state-led forms of deliberative democracy can help shape policy and regulatory frameworks. Key contributions include:

- *Overview: 'Deliberative democracy and citizen empowerment'*, Michel Pimbert and Tom Wakeford
- *'Bridging the Gap: Citizenship, participation and accountability?'*, Andrea Cornwall and John Gaventa
- *'Focus groups and public involvement in the new genetics'*, Sarah Cunningham-Burley, Anne Kerr and Steve Pavis
- *'Citizens' juries: Reflections on the UK experience'*, Clare Delap
- *'Farmer foresight: An experiment in South India'*, Satya D. Murty and Tom Wakeford
- *'Scenario workshops and urban planning in Denmark'*, Ida-Elisabeth Andersen and Birgit Jaeger
- *'The Danish consensus conference model in Switzerland and France: On the importance of framing the issue'*, Jacques Mirenowicz
- *'Participation and governance in the UK Department of Health'*, Jo Lenaghan
- *'Inclusive deliberation and scientific expertise: Precaution, diversity and transparency in the governance of risk'*, Andy Stirling
- *'Citizen engagement in science and technology policy: A commentary on recent UK experience'*, Alan Irwin
- *'Participatory environmental policy processes: Experiences from the North and South'*, Tim Holmes and Ian Scoones
- *'Reclaiming our right to power: Some conditions for deliberative democracy'*, Michel Pimbert

# Reclaiming Knowledge for Diversity

**FORTHCOMING IN 2007**

*Reclaiming Knowledge for Diversity*, Michel Pimbert (editor), IIED and Earthscan, London

Knowledge about environmental processes shapes society not only through technology and natural resource management, but also through values and assumptions which motivate human beings and inform national policies.

Dominant views on the dynamics of living systems and people–environment interactions give rise to, and legitimate, particular organisational procedures, policies, technologies and professional practice that either deny or encourage diversity and popular participation in natural resource management. For example, many of today's global narratives on people–environment interactions blame the poor, women, coloured people and ethnic minorities for social and environmental ills. This silent violence is mediated through dominant organisational cultures (beliefs, norms, explanatory models) and the policies and interventions they give rise to.

This book examines how recent findings and conceptual breakthroughs in the life sciences and environmental knowledge challenge the received wisdom that informs contemporary developments in biotechnology as well as the management of ecosystems and natural resources at different scales. Some of the main contributions to this volume include:

- *Introduction and overview*, Michel Pimbert
- *Forest–people interactions and deforestation crisis narratives*, Melissa Leach and James Fairhead
- *On non-equilibrium and nomadism: Knowledge, diversity and modernity in drylands*, Sian Sullivan and Katherine Homewood
- *The dynamics of soil fertility change in Africa: Challenges for policy and practice*, Ian Scoones
- *Biodiversity–people interactions*, Michel Pimbert
- *The Malthusian Paradigm in contemporary development thinking*, Eric Ross
- *Gene–environment interactions and the new genetics*, Mae Wan Ho
- *Ecosystem dynamics, resilience and the management of landscapes*, Steve S. Light
- *Dynamic diversity and health*, Brian Goodwin
- *Freedom and necessity in nature*, Murray Bookchin

The aim of this book is to offer citizens new insights and evidence that can help debunk disempowering myths embedded in knowledge and organizational cultures – exposing their origins, history, inequities and enduring consequences on people and the land. A focus on transforming knowledge is central to reclaiming diversity and democratic participation in the management of natural resources on which local livelihoods and culture depend.

**FORTHCOMING IN 2007**

*Seeking Transformation. A synthesis report of the action research project 'Institutionalising participation and people centred processes in natural resource management'.* IIED and IDS Institutionalising Participation Series, IIED, London

## Seeking Transformation: A synthesis report

This report presents a critical overview and synthesis of the IIED-IDS action research on institutionalising participatory approaches and people-centred processes in natural resource management.

The background and rationale of this action research are first described together with the methodological approach used in different settings. The main research outcomes are highlighted next. This is followed by an analysis and discussion of the changes and enabling dynamics for the spread and institutionalisation of participatory approaches in natural resource management. Enduring and newly emerging global constraints to participation and large scale people centred processes are then considered. The final section of this report offers policy makers, donors and citizens an agenda for institutional transformation.

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**The *Institutionalising Participation* project examines the dynamics of institutionalising people-centered processes and participatory approaches for natural resource management. How can organizations facilitate and support the participation of local actors throughout the participatory management process? Under what conditions can bureaucracies be refashioned or transformed to ensure that their outcomes (policies, programmes, resource allocation and projects) actually facilitate, rather than inhibit, participation and the local adaptive management of natural resources? How do roles, rights, responsibilities and the distribution of costs and benefits need to change among actors in civil society, government and the private sector?**

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This report presents the background and rationale for the IIED-IDS action research on institutionalising participatory approaches and people centred processes in natural resource management. The methodologies used in the different case studies (India, Indonesia, Senegal, Mexico and other settings) are then introduced, along with the complementary studies undertaken in this collaborative research programme.

The last section of this report contains highlights of all the publications in the Institutionalising Participation Series, and a summary of each.

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