

# PARTICIPATION IN SPATIAL PLANNING for ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING & NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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*Participation means different things to different people !*

## Why Local-Level, Participatory Spatial PLUP?

### Rationale behind Participatory Planning, -PLUP, Community-based NRM

Typically, the arguments used in support of local-level / community-based / participatory land use planning (PLUP), or, of environmental & NR management, are usually one or more of, or an adaptation of, the following

- ?? Democratic decision-making has an **equity** component.
- ?? Therefore, local **accountability** is enhanced.
- ?? The Economic and Technical **efficiency** of project implementation can be improved.
- ?? Utilise local **resources** better, i.e. *mobilise* the under-utilised local physical, human, institutional, and knowledge resources.
- ?? Policy impact (**effectiveness**) should be improved because of better feedback – policy implementation, and the policy itself, can be more adaptive and responsive to changed internal conditions.
- ?? Strengthen the regard for, and the adaptation to, local **variability** in natural ecosystems and in social – cultural systems.
- ?? There is more potential for the stability of policies and programmes, and there is more commitment to **sustainable** management.

## Characteristics of Decentralised Local-level Planning

**Decentralisation** can be used at four conceptual levels.

- ?? Bureaucratic - De-concentration of administrative authority.
- ?? Functional - Delegation of decision-making authority.
- ?? Political - Devolution of decision-making powers.

And:

- ?? De-institutionalise- Transfer public functions outside of govt. authority to non-governmental or private sector bodies, i.e. privatise; or disengage to NGOs; or, devolve to local authority bodies.

## DEGREES OF DECENTRALISATION

	Deconcentration	Delegation	Devolution	De-Institutionalise	
				Participation	Privatisation
<b>RATIONALE</b>	Administrative Bureaucratic efficiency	Functional De-centralise Implementation	Politically De-centralise Decision-making	De-institutionalise Public functions	Higher efficiencies in private sector
<b>ORGANISATIONS and INSTITUTIONS</b>	Regional, Local administration	Public corporations , Functional authorities, IRDPs	Local government; Regional Councils; Municipalities	Co-ops; NGOs; Voluntary organisations; Unions	Private companies; Co-operatives
<b>PRACTICE</b>	Deconcentrate administrative authority	Delegate decision-making	Devolve powers	Hand over to NGOs	Privatise or commercialise

### Participation in Planning

#### 3 Phases of 'Participation'

The history of **participation strategies** in the post-war 'development era' shows that the strategy types have passed through a series of three phases:

At first (1960s-1970s), "participation" was interpreted in practice as:

**"Self-help" schemes**

i.e. the labour inputs of local people in road-building or land clearing, tree planting, ditch digging, etc. - the "blood & sweat" of the people.

Later (late 1970s-1980s), "participation" came also to include:

**Needs assessment**

and, problem identification and problem prioritising by local people.

In the late 1980s-1990s, it has come to incorporate:

**Identification of potential solutions** by local people (thus, including indigenous technical knowledge)

## Intensities, or Degrees of 'Participation'

Four intensities can be distinguished, from the least, to the most, 'participatory' level.

1. **Information Sharing,**  
One-way or two-way communication between outsiders and local people, [<sup>1</sup>] primarily concerning technical information, such as in needs assessment. The topics / issues are pre-determined by the outside agencies. Likewise for most of the information-gathering techniques. [<sup>2</sup>]
  2. **Consultation**  
The outsiders refer certain issues to local stakeholders, for further details, or refinement, or e.g. for prioritising. External agents pre-define the salient problems, before consultation; thus most of the analysis is controlled by outside.
  3. Involvement in **Decision-making** by all actors.  
Internal (local) and external actors jointly engage in setting the development agenda, identifying priorities, analysing current status, assessing and selecting alternative 'solutions, implementation, and etc. "Participation is seen as a right, not just the means to achieve project goals". (Catley 1999)  
A 'weaker' version of this degree of intensity is that at least local people are involved in key areas of decision-making or policy-setting.
  4. **Initiating Actions**  
Independent Initiatives from, and 'owned' by, local people who are empowered.  
E.g. the self-mobilisation of people to perform community activities – this is completely different from simply implementation with their own labour inputs.
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5. **Sharing of Benefits** is sometimes also considered as a form of participation.  
Participation which results in receiving material goods & services, e.g. 'food-for-work', as incentives. Further, they may not be only material goods, but also political clout or power

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<sup>1</sup> The *relevant* local people may also be known as the "target group", or the "intended beneficiaries", or the "local stakeholders", or the "insiders" -- as contrasted with the "outsider" agencies or NGOs or institutions who are seeking to develop some participation.

<sup>2</sup> cf. discussions on RRA, PRA and P-RRA techniques. e.g. Surveying Social and Environmental Conditions in Communities using Rapid Rural Appraisal and Participatory Appraisal (McCall 2001).

In political economy terms, the history and the intensities are related to basic differences in the *goals or objectives of (community) participation*. [<sup>3</sup>]

### 'Participation Ladders'

As above.

Other examples:

Ingles, Musch & Qwist-Hoffmann (1999) p. 4.

Leach, Mearns & Scoones (eds) (1997) p.76.

### Objectives or Purposes of Promoting 'Participation'

The historical phases and the intensities of 'participation' can be related to fundamental differences in the underlying **purposes** or **intentions** of the agencies (external or internal) that are promoting the participation ('pushing' participation as a strategy).

The following three concepts are critical interpretations of the underlying purposes or reasons why participation is 'promoted', usually by agencies such as govt. departments or NGOs, from outside. (McCall 1987)

#### **FACILITATION**

"Participation" is promoted in order to make it easier to introduce an outside project/ programme:

for the **FACILITATION** of "external" projects.

- To improve external project efficiency
- To facilitate & lubricate outside interventions
- To co-opt communities into supporting an outside project
- To pass (a share of) the burden of costs onto the "beneficiaries"

#### **MEDIATION (COLLABORATION)**

"Participation" is promoted in order to make links between outside projects and local people and their priorities:

in order to **MEDIATE** (COLLABORATE) between "external" purpose and "internal" demands.

- To increase project/programme effectiveness

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<sup>3</sup> Many analysts unfortunately do not distinguish between the different 'intensities' and the different 'purposes' of participation.

E.g. Catley (1999) [adapted from Pretty 1994 & Cornwall 1996] identifies 7 "types of community participation" which are a mix of the reasons for promoting participation, and the methods for carting out the promotion:

1) Manipulative P. (co-option). 2) Passive P. (compliance). 3) P. by Consultation. 4) P. for material Incentives. 5) Functional P. (Co-operation). 6) Interactive P. (Co-learning). 7) Self-Mobilisation (Collective action).

Biggs (1989) earlier distinguished 4 types of participation in the context of agricultural research: 1) Contractual, 2) Consultative, 3) Collaborative, and, 4) Supporting farmers' research.

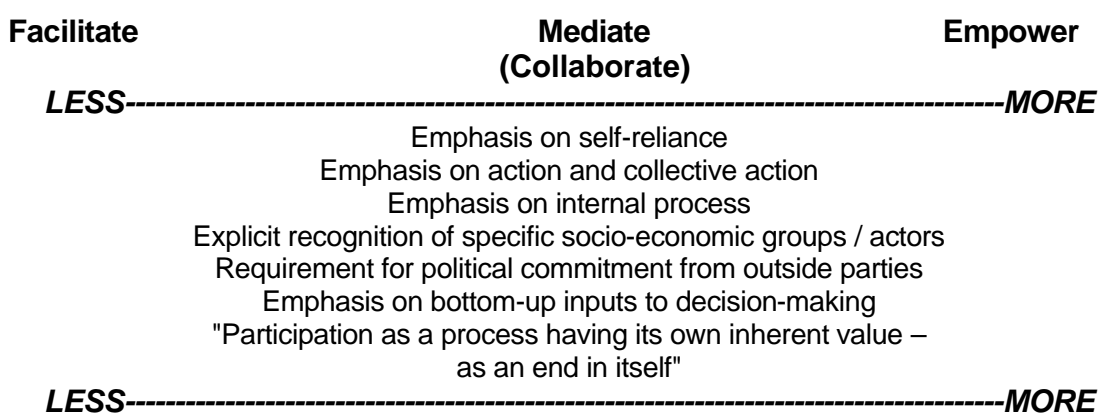
- For co-production
- To build up capacity of local beneficiaries
- To modify, guide or redirect outside interventions towards local needs, aspirations, resources.

### **EMPOWERMENT**

Participation is promoted in order to encourage and reinforce local decision-making and local responsibilities:

to lead towards eventual **EMPOWERMENT** of local peoples.

- As moves towards more equitable social redistribution.
- To empower weak groups in access to, and control over, resources [4]
- To promote people's initiative



## **Good Governance in LUP - Goals & Measures**

Challenge is to interpret Concepts of Governance as operational Measures or Indicators:

### **Accountability**

"Accountability is part of the very definition of .. 'good governance' (van Kersbergen & van Waarden 2001) Accountability can be expressed in terms of the transparency and visibility of government (decisions, policies, etc.); accountability mechanisms; and the responsiveness to lower levels. 'Ownership' of the process (LUP, NRM etc.)

Accountability can be expressed in terms of:

- o transparency, or visibility, or clarity, of decisions and influential policy-setting, etc. (who made 'final' decisions?, who else was involved?, in what sequence?).
- o Good communication between 'outsiders' and 'insiders'.
- o ownership of information.

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<sup>4</sup> Korten calls this "generative or creative power", as opposed to only the "distributive power" of promoting and employing participation towards equity ends through the redistribution of benefits &/or resources. The positive feedback of "Generative power" should expand the totality of benefits for all.

- degree of devolution or decentralisation (subsidiarity principle) (see above)
- responsiveness to lower levels; community involvement.

But 'accountable' for what? - accountability in terms of: legitimacy, respect for rights, equity (not simply equality), and competence (including efficiency).

#### ☞☞ **Legitimacy** – of the governing over the governed:

Close connection between legitimacy and accountability - "... legitimacy converts power into authority - Macht into Herrschaft - and, establishes simultaneously an obligation to obey and a right to rule." (van K. & van W. 2001)

- selection process and democratic procedures; recall & re-selection procedures;
- representativeness of regional, ethnic, tribal, class, religious, age, gender interests.
- attention paid to '**participation**'. 'Legitimacy means participation at all stages'.
- performance monitoring, etc. (c.f. Accountability)

#### ☞☞ **Respect for** - by the governing for the governed:

- basic human rights - women's rights, citizens' rights, civil liberties, workers' rights, working conditions, cultural group and regional rights;
- **indigenous (technical) knowledge**, and indigenous spatial knowledge
- laws, property rights – fairly and impartially enforced
- 'local problem'-driven
- working at the appropriate scale for local interests.

#### ☞☞ **Equity** (a distribution issue) - within and, between governing and governed.

- Important focus on gender equity
- distribution of government services, take-up rates, relative to disadvantaged groups and individuals in society.
- degree of access to public and to private services, degree of open access to market
- laws, property rights, etc. impartially enforced for all individuals
- process (of LUP etc.).manageable at the local level.

#### ☞☞ **Competence** (an efficiency issue) – of the governing (w.r.t. the governed)

- efficiency; - and - effectiveness in delivery of govt. services; and in policy implementation. administrative competence.
- degree of stability in implementation (of government, etc.)
- strategic vision (long-term time horizon); and, therefore a degree of predictability.

## **Gender and Participation in Environmental Management/NRM** <sup>[5]</sup>

Gender includes the relations between men and women in social, economic, political, cultural, religious terms. Gender relations are power relations at household, family, community, group, clan, village, tribe, social, etc. levels.

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<sup>5</sup> Based on: Levy (1992); Leach; Vandana Shiva, et al.

### **Considerations and Myths – Women Land Users:**

*“Rural Women are a homogeneous category.”*

‘Rural women’ must be disaggregated into categories of: economic class, social status, caste, age, ethnicity, tribe, (and education level, male relations, ..) etc.

*“Women are the Problem”* - because of environmental damage caused by their roles as reproducers, supporters of the household, etc. e.g. in woodfuel and NTFP collection.

OR: *“Women are the Victims”*

This myth denies the history of women's active participation environmental conservation, protection, coping strategies, survival, etc. (e.g. Chipko- India; Green Movement-Kenya)

#### ***“Women are the Carers”***

Because of the recognition of women's ITC and major role in subsistence and food production, etc. they are therefore seen as bastions of rural household survival.

But beware of any "addition of environment to the long list of women's caring roles"... and so to further exploitation of women's time.

#### ***“Women are the natural Custodians of Nature”***

“Eco-feminism” has seen women idealistically as maternal Gaia figures, in harmony with nature, creative & succouring the life forces, vis-à-vis (masculine) destructive forces, etc.

But: gender needs to be seen as a socially constructed relation, there is not a unique, universal correspondence between women and natural world.

### **‘Desirable’ Characteristics of Local, P-LUP – Some Strengths**

- ?? It is an Iterative, continuous, adaptive, process. (There is no “final plan” to produce).
- ?? Efficiency - Faster results, linking of plans and implementation. (Though ‘participation’ can be very slow.)
- ?? It is a Flexible process; adaptive to changes: whether in the information base, or changes in substantive conditions, or in perceived needs, etc.
- ?? People’s Participation is promoted at all stages, in: problem identification, information surveys, prioritising needs, solution identification, decision-making, design, implementation, evaluation, etc. -
- ?? so long as there are practical opportunities for discussion forums.
- ?? Local accountability and Legitimacy. – Local-level is Closer to the target population (than are the central planners & decision-makers.)
- ?? Potential for Integrating parties *within* the local community, and *between* local and higher-level institutions.
- ?? Greater potential for sectoral integration
- ?? Potential for Aggregation of activities linked in economic space - not single dispersed projects.
- ?? Mobilise local resources - people, labour, physical resources, institutions, and IK.
- ?? Utilise indigenous decision-making fora and mechanisms and policy instruments.
- ?? Seeking out, and building on, existing indigenous (technical) knowledge & secondary information. Strong local knowledge of highly variable environment and resources, problems, potentials, etc.
- ?? Gender-aware surveys and gender-sensitive analysis and decision-making.

- ?? Aggregate experience & expertise of NGOs, CBOs, and VOs - their local knowledge, activities, project experience, etc.
- ?? Potential of a greater permanency of local Government agencies (than of NGOs, CBOs) – thus continuity in human/ institutional capacity-building.

## Outputs & Outcomes of Participatory LUP & NRM

Before proceeding with the processes, procedures, and more principles of participatory (landuse & NRM) planning, - what are the actual concrete outcomes and outputs of P-LUP? Local-level participatory approaches in landuse planning should lead to substantive planning outputs :

- ?? Set up a substantive Plan of Action
  - A phased programme with Activities, (with objectives, input requirements, outputs, indicators, etc.)
- ?? Assist with the Identification of Activities
  - Ameliorations, mitigations, improvements.
- ?? Specific 'sustainable' Land Use activities:
  - e.g. soil erosion controls, bunding / terracing, grazing controls, SALT technologies, tree-planting, integrated pest control, etc.
- ?? Development of physical Infrastructure & Facilities
  - If necessary – possibly making use of local 'participatory' labour resources in e.g. check dams, terracing, forestry, roads, markets, flood control.
- ?? Utilisation of Indigenous Knowledge (ITK)
  - not only in the identification and prioritising of 'needs', but also in the identification and utilisation of possible 'solutions'.
- ?? Specification of existing and/or potential Resource Rights, Obligations, etc.
  - Management Agreements
    - e.g. landowner–tenants relationships; Joint Forest Management
- ?? Recognition of Customary Laws
  - Indigenous Laws & Rights & Entitlements supported by modern legal &/or legislative status.
- ?? Use local (indigenous or national) policy instruments.
  - e.g. land zoning, management agreements, regulations, incentives, etc
- ?? Steps towards Empowerment
  - Strengthen the capacities, capabilities and activities of local CBOs & VOs.
- ?? Creation of alternative Future Scenarios to assist in local policy-setting.

In addition, the expectation is that participatory LUP or NRM will alter the “**institutional environment**” of planning and decision-making :

- ?? A better Understanding of all parties' Needs, Potentials, and Constraints.
- ?? Improved Communication between all Stakeholders.
- ?? Inclusion of more stakeholders, (esp., women in the community)
- ?? Institutional strengthening, or establishment of local institutions
  - e.g. strengthen Village Committees, Women's Committees, Watershed committees.
- ?? Increased Planning capacity, skills, knowledge, etc.
  - of, not only the professionals, but also para-professionals, and the public.



- ?? Comprehension by all parties of the need for Flexible, Adaptive Planning approach.
- ?? Steps taken towards Conflict Resolution.

## **Typical Obstacles to Implementing Participation in E&NRM.**

- ?? external high-level political resistance to 'real' local empowerment (and devolution).
- ?? internal local holders of power will not give it up.
- ?? breadth of needs, priorities, opinions, etc. between actors in the local community is too wide.
- ?? women especially are frequently excluded from early stages of decision-making, etc.
- ?? minorities - e.g. ethnic groups, castes, tribes, nomads - are frequently excluded.
- ?? there is an absolute scarcity of resources to be shared - and, overall poverty.
- ?? unequal distribution of access to power - ultra-poor, elderly, children, handicapped, refugees, inarticulate.
- ?? serious time constraints involved in the processes of participation.
- ?? participation may be costly.

## **Indicators for Assessing / Evaluating Participation**

These are some basic indicators; they would still have to be operationalised into practical measures, i.e. 'means of verification'. Most of the verification would itself have to use participatory techniques, e.g. group discussions, semi-structured interviews, participatory observation.

### **Target Groups' (Beneficiaries') Role in Problem Identification, Design, Planning**

- ?? Degree of P. in preparing the proposal [<sup>6</sup>]
- ?? Degree of P. in project planning
- ?? Indigenous knowledge used in problem identification; and in prioritisation
- ?? Distribution of P. within or amongst target groups

### **Target Groups' (Beneficiaries') Role during Implementation**

- ?? Financial contributions - cash or kind
- ?? Labour contributions
- ?? Indigenous technical (or social ) knowledge used in identifying possible solutions
- ?? Or, Dependency on outside expertise
- ?? Degree of organisation of target groups
- ?? Distribution of P. between target groups

### **Beneficiaries' Role in On-going Continuation**

- ?? Degree of P. in maintenance & operations.
- ?? Continued use of ITK; or, continued dependency on external expertise.
- ?? Degree of local ownership and control.

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<sup>6</sup> This indicator, and many of the others in this listing, can be measured quantitatively (e.g. number of meetings), or qualitatively (e.g. attitude changes).

- ?? Flow of income from project.
- ?? Local initiatives for new projects, and proposals.

## **Tools and Instruments for Participation**

Instruments for Facilitating Participation and / or Mediating Participation.

### **"Top-Down" - Information Sharing**

Untargeted, one-way dissemination of information:

- ?? Mass media, information dissemination
- ?? Public meetings, public exhibitions (e.g. as in EIA)

### **"Top-Down" - Consultation + Information Sharing**

Instruments aimed for more targeted, partially two-way, information flows.

- ?? Public hearings
- ?? Local Community meetings
- ?? Village workshops
- ?? RRA methods

### **"Two-way" - Consultation + Information Sharing**

Instruments for 2-way information flows, community ↔ external agency, and vice versa.

- ?? Public Fora
- ?? PRA methods
- ?? Focus groups, Interest groups.
- ?? E-Consultations, (e-governance)

### **"Bottom-up" - Decision-Making + Consultation + Information Sharing (+ Initiating Actions)**

Instruments for supporting effective participation *within* the local group.

- ?? Advocacy planning
- ?? Petitions; Elections
- ?? Civil Action; Demonstrations
- ?? PRA activities

### **"Stand Alone" - enabling conditions for Initiating Actions**

Instruments for promoting / supporting Empowerment - implementing Participation within a community.

- ?? SARAR (Self-esteem of community, strengths within the Association, Resourcefulness, Action planning, Responsibility for follow-up)
- ?? Social Mobilisation; animateurs, etc.
- ?? PAR, PTD methods
- ?? **Participatory Planning**
- ?? Joint Resource Management

## Organisations & Institutions at Community & Local Levels in Participatory Planning for EM/ NRM [7]

- ?? National and regional NGOs operating at the local level -: specialising in environment & development issues.
- ?? Local Voluntary Organisations (VOs & CBOs): functional-specific, or general development issues, usually oriented by locality/ caste/ gender/ religion/ resource types.
- ?? e.g. CBOs related to common property resources, or common territory and customary rights.
- ?? e.g. Women's organisations – dealing with NRM or women's property rights, etc.
- ?? e.g. local-level general environmental awareness/ training NGOs usually centred around key environmental issue, such as dam or mining or lumbering proposals.
- ?? Households. Individual Households must be involved in PLUP – obviously this is easier and more effective if the households are organised, to some degree, by VOs or CBOs.
- ?? Producers' Co-operatives – for PLUP issues, especially Agricultural or Natural Resource Production Co-ops (or Communes).
- ?? Trade Unions and Farmers' and / or Workers' organisations.
- ?? Consumers' and multi-purpose co-ops may represent other relevant stakeholders.
- ?? Small-scale merchants & businesses [in local associations].
- ?? Commercial Private Sector businesses - larger-scale national, or multi-national, but operating at local level.
- ?? Educational institutions – local schools, colleges, adult education, ...
- ?? Research institutions - universities, research stations
- ?? Media & Cultural institutions to disseminate information, raise awareness and promote PLUP issues - newspapers, TV, radio, artists, cartoonists, folk theatre, popular music,
- ?? Professional organisations - service clubs (e.g. Rotary, Lions), professional associations, chambers of commerce.
- ?? Lawyers, and Public Service Legal agencies. Vital element of PLUP is disseminate knowledge about land & property rights, and strengthen people's capacity to recognise, claim, struggle for their rights or entitlements. Understanding and using the law is key.
- ?? Consumer organisations: NGOs represent “downstream stakeholders” in LUP issues.
- ?? Local Government : whether elected or appointed or advisory - at District, Municipal or Parish Council, etc. level.
- ?? Ruling Political parties must be either spontaneously involved or co-opted – to improve the likelihood of successful PLUP.

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<sup>7</sup> **Organisations** are structures of recognized & accepted roles, formal or informal, short-term or fairly permanent. They are more than mere groups.

**Institutions** are more than organisations, they have a special status & legitimacy, they form a complex of norms and behaviour serving a collectively-valuable purpose, stable over time, likely to be legally recognized and rule-oriented, possibly fossilised.

- ?? "Green" political parties are likely to have their own spontaneous interest in PLUP.
- ?? District or sub-district Departments of the Central Government - Line agencies. Likewise, Parastatal bodies - utilities, transport services, at local level.
- ?? Inter-governmental agencies at local level – e.g. Dist. Development Co-ordinating Committee; IRDP; District Environmental Committee; etc.

## Weaknesses of Local, Community Participatory Planning Institutions

### Homogeneity of Groups (or Organisations) as Stakeholders? -

Stakeholders / Parties have a certain degree of homogeneity – in as much as self-distinctions can be made between *inclusion* ("us/we") and *exclusion* ("the other[s]").

However, it is easily misleading to assume too much social and political homogeneity or unity of interests and purpose within local communities, villages, etc. The social groups may actually be very 'fuzzy', due to multiple social-cultural identities or nesting of smaller units within bigger ones of e.g. clans, chiefdoms, tribes.

- ?? Local-level, (participatory) planning organs are probably not in a policy-setting position; therefore difficult to advise policy-makers.
- ?? They may be easily swayed by local elites and politicians – although this is less likely as participation becomes deeper and more intensive.
- ?? The limited Capacity of local govt. staff – w.r.t. calibre, commitment, (corruption), and continuity. (4C's).
- ?? Skill resources of both govt. staff and NGO cadre are usually less developed at the local level - for analysis, planning, etc.
- ?? Local govt. or private sector officers are normally subordinate to their central ministries or head offices.
- ?? Ethnic, religious, caste, language & regional conflicts are often found within the local level, and are very common between the periphery & centre.
- ?? There is a national requirement to support & promote national & supra-regional goals and policies, even when these may be not in the direct interests of the local population, and therefore are locally unpopular. (e.g. production of ForEx-earning crops, dispersal of polluting industries, land use rules within frontier or nationally-sensitive zones)
- ?? Similarly, there is a need to efficiently allocate limited national resources amongst local areas.

### Identification / Selection of 'Stakeholders' - pertinent questions:

- What process should be used for selecting 'stakeholder groups',/ parties?
- Should they all be chosen on a consistent variable? – e.g. number of people involved, or economic power and/or economic vulnerability, or level of knowledge, or political influence?
- Do parties identify and select themselves? – or they "obvious" in the CAM-S/H process?
- How do the categories of parties change with the geographical scale of the analysis?
- There are also arguments for the necessity for proactive, positive discrimination to support weaker, less articulate actors in the CAM process.

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**See: READINGS IN PARTICIPATION (including Indigenous Knowledge, & some PRA). M.K. McCall, May 2002**

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