



# Multi-Stakeholder Processes and Innovation Systems towards Science for Impact

Shaping the Research, Education and Capacity  
Development agenda around  
Multi-Stakeholder Processes  
within the Life Sciences

Critical Reflection Day for  
Wageningen UR Researchers

Hof van Wageningen,  
Wednesday 24 September 2008

Seminar Report  
With Open Space discussion notes

Organised by Capacity Development and  
Institutional Change Programme  
Wageningen International

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## Table of Contents

1.	Background.....	3
1.1	Introduction.....	3
1.2	Purpose.....	4
1.3	Key questions .....	4
2.	Presentations: Food for Thought.....	5
2.1	Bram Huisman: Opening and Background .....	5
2.2	Frank Wijnands: Farming with Future (Telen met Toekomst).....	6
3.	Sharing of experiences and tips for the agenda.....	7
3.1	Background .....	7
3.2	Agenda setting and group work .....	8
3.3	Tips and the agenda proposals.....	8
4.	Reflection of the day: Lessons learned .....	10
Annex 1.	Short group Notes (not exhaustive).....	11
Annex 2.	Participants Wageningen UR & Other organisations .....	27
Annex 3.	Participants of the MSP Course 2008 .....	29

## 1. Background

### 1.1 Introduction

Multi-stakeholder processes (MSPs) have become an important phenomena in the work of many of the Science Groups and knowledge units of Wageningen UR. To realise 'science for impact' it is increasingly recognized that stakeholder engagement is a critical element. The MSP concept is closely linked with the ideas of social learning, transition management and innovation systems that are also related to the goal of more effectively linking research, policy and practice. The MSP approach is also an important dimension of linking technological and institutional innovation.

There are different roles that Wageningen UR (or any knowledge institute) can play in relation to stakeholder processes:

- initiating them as part of the research processes;
- participating as 'experts' in processes established by others;
- providing advice to others on how to initiate and facilitate processes;
- taking a direct facilitation role;
- researching stakeholder processes;
- and integrating the development of MSP understanding and skills into educational and capacity development curriculum.

Taking on these roles raises questions of capacity, focus and legitimacy that need careful consideration.

While MSPs are increasingly seen as a critical aspect for tackling complex, high risk and high consequence societal problems, such as climate change, overcoming endemic poverty or reducing pollution levels, they are not a 'silver bullet' nor a panacea. Much remains to be understood about their role and effectiveness in a wider context of politics, governance and societal change.

There is clearly value to be gained from the efforts of Wageningen UR wide sharing and critical reflection processes. The CD&I programme, Wageningen International, hosted this Critical Reflection Day, building on existing and past initiatives such as Own experiences, the Transition lab and deepening of Communities of Practice of action learning and 'Telen met Toekomst'. The Critical Reflection Day was part of the three-week international course on 'Facilitating Multi-stakeholder Processes and Social Learning' attended by some 30 participants from all over the world. They facilitated and actively took part in the Critical Reflection Day, coached by the MSP facilitators Simone van Vugt and Jouwert van Geene.



## 1.2 Purpose

To provide an opportunity for those from across Wageningen UR working on stakeholder (and dialogue) processes to share and reflect critically on their experience with the aim of shaping future research, education and capacity development agendas.

## 1.3 Key questions

Some key questions like the following, were being posed in order to give direction to the discussions:

- How do we use MSPs within our work?
- Why is MSP important for Science for Impact?
- How do we link theory and practice in an innovative way to make MSPs effective?
- What are key challenges, questions and dilemmas?
- What are the implications for the future research, education and capacity development agenda?



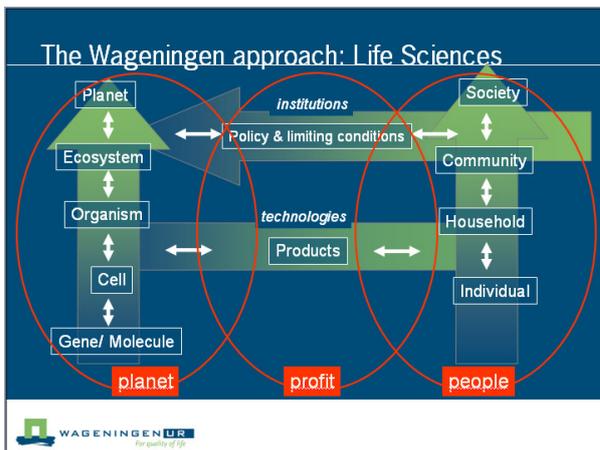
## 2. Presentations: Food for Thought

### 2.1 Bram Huisman: Opening and Background

Bram Huisman, director of Wageningen International opened the seminar and gave an introduction to the concepts of Multi-stakeholder processes. He linked the demand for MSPs to the domain of Wageningen UR: planet, profit and people (PPP). Wageningen UR deals with all the different scales of the planet (from genes/molecules to ecosystems), people (from individual to societies) and value addition (technologies and institutions).

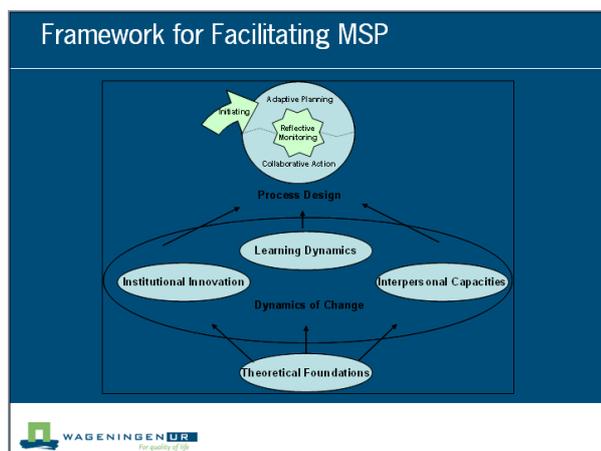


Mr. Huisman also emphasised that Wageningen UR is active in the complete knowledge chain: from fundamental research to applied research, academic education and vocational training, life long learning. At Wageningen UR innovation around the PPP occurs both from theory to practice and vice versa. But it always should be aimed at science for impact.



MSPs respond to 'wicked problems' such as climate change, competing claims (e.g. biofuels discussions) and food insecurity: problems with causes separated of space and time, different scales and interests and opinions that are often value laden. The approach of Wageningen International to MSPs is to promote a process design that is based on a theoretical foundation (e.g. systems thinking, complexity, governance, power and conflict) and takes into account the dynamics of change (institutional innovation, interpersonal capacities and learning dynamics).

Mr. Huisman posed that for MSPs we need to move from theory to practice to theory through Action learning, consciously using conceptual models in MSP to reflect on practice; building on experiences across different sites, regions, sectors and ; drawing generic lessons from experience. He also proposed that the elements for a future agenda on MSPs for Wageningen UR could include: research on the quality and effectiveness of MSP in the economic, political, social & environmental arena's; mainstreaming MSP in relevant WUR curricula; fostering MSP skills and approaches of mid-career professionals, and; building awareness on and commitment to MSPs in originations across different sectors and countries by showing MSP results.



## 2.2 Frank Wijnands: Farming with Future (Telen met Toekomst)

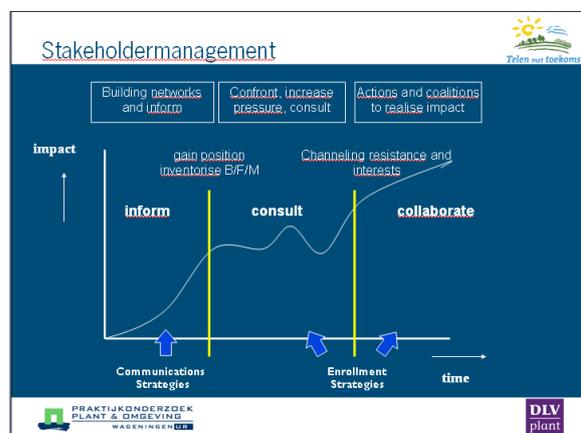
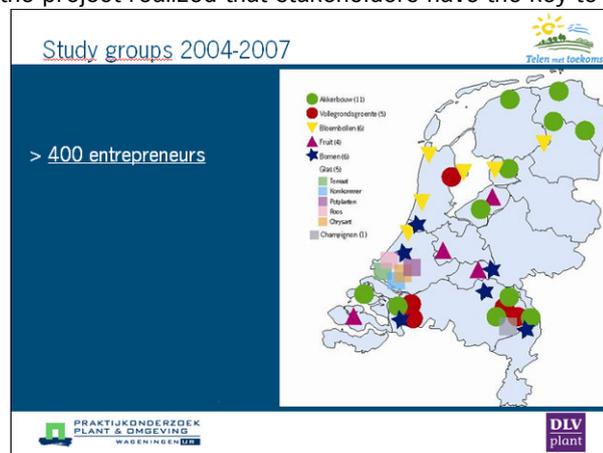


Mr. Frank Wijnands introduced the MSP case of Farming with Future (Telen met Toekomst). This project started in 2000 and is now in its second phase (until 2010). The project of Wageningen UR (Applied Plant Research) and DLV Plant (advice organisation, former extension service) is funded by the Ministry of LNV. The objective of 'Telen met Toekomst' is to stimulate and facilitate the application of more sustainable production techniques in crop protection and fertilization in the broad Dutch agricultural practice (all plant production sectors).

Main activities are testing and improving promising new techniques together with farmers and stakeholders. It uses study groups and, individual farms for sharing experiences and knowledge. Furthermore there is dissemination of the new techniques together with the stakeholders in the agricultural network such as producers and traders in pesticides and fertilizers, farmers organizations etc.

After the first phase of Telen met Toekomst the project realized that stakeholders have the key to the sustainability that was aimed for by the project. Their potential is large in terms of possible actions. But the question remained: how to transform this potential, how to make it work? This was only possible if stakeholders *want* to make it work, which is the priority given to the sustainability interest.

Mr Wijnands explained how the project has changed its focus from looking for and transferring the sustainable innovations to looking for the conditions that can make innovation happen: the attitudes of stakeholders. The key strategies in stakeholder management to create impact for Telen met Toekomst were moving from informing, to consulting, to collaboration. The real impact can only be reached by 'enrollment' of different stakeholders like the policy makers, farmers and traders in the programme by adopting the ideas ( Telen met Toekomst has been supported by Berenschot and Wageningen International in the case of stakeholder management ).



Some of the insights on Telen met Toekomst shared by Frank Wijnands were that stakeholder management organizes pressure on the system via diverse mechanisms such as creating insight (need, urgency etc), seduction (look what others are doing...) and pressure (what is your contribution, why not, can we communicate that...); you should always focus on creating social dynamics and reflection with the stakeholder, let him express himself in diverse social settings, and; use the confronting diverse perspectives of your range of stakeholders to open up new perspectives.

Mr. Wijnands concluded that Stakeholdermanagement focusses on the final impact , to be realized by the stakeholders themselves. There is a need to look for and find the window of opportunity while the stakeholder manager needs a mandate or legitimized role in the stakeholder process.

### 3. Sharing of experiences and tips for the agenda

#### 3.1 Background

The Seminar used the Open Space Technology for the further deliberations of the day. Open Space is a self-organizing practice of a group of people. It establishes a marketplace of inquiry, reflection and learning, bringing out the best in both individuals and the whole.

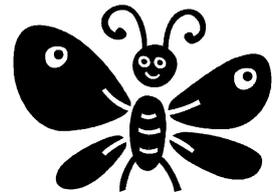
Open Space Technology enables groups of any size to address complex, important issues and achieve meaningful results. It functions best where more traditional meeting formats fail: in situations involving conflict, complexity, diversity of thought or people, and short decision-times. People have used it in widely diverse situations, from designing aircraft doors at a large aircraft-manufacturing company to engaging street kids in defining a sustainable jobs-program. The tool has been developed in 1985 by Harrison Owen 1985 has ever since been used all around the world in many different situations (see: <http://www.openspaceworld.org/>).

The four principles of Open Space are: 1) Whoever comes is the right people; 2) Whatever happens is the only thing that could have; 3) Whenever it starts is the right time, and ; 4) Whenever it is over, it is over. Furthermore Open Space uses the *Law of Two Feet*, which means that 'When you are not contributing nor learning, take your feet and go to something you care about'. Moreover there are different types of participants:



- **Bumblebees:** take law very serious, constantly fleeing from one meeting to the next. Large & direct contribution, pollinate and cross-pollinate, lending richness and variety to the discussions.

- **Butterflies:** often never go into any meeting. They do very little and in that lies their contribution. Every so often somebody will stop by and maybe conversation will occur. If it does, it almost inevitably ends up being significant.



Furthermore, be prepared to be surprised. For when old agendas depart, new ideas may emerge.

### 3.2 Agenda setting and group work

At the beginning of the Open Space, participants were invited to share their emerging questions, topics or examples around the Seminar's purpose with the group. These topics were then briefly clarified and a 'bulletin board' was put up where participants could sign up to take part in different topics over the course of two Open Space rounds. The following topics were discussed per round:



Round 1.	Round 2.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Frame Negotiability</li> <li>2. Stakeholder Management</li> <li>3. Beta-Gamma Integration in development oriented research: How to reach equal partnership and impact.</li> <li>4. Getting MSPs to work</li> <li>5. New area development as closed networking</li> <li>6. Visionaries and their roles in MSPs</li> <li>7. Who decides who is a stakeholder?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How to deal with the wish to plan the unplannable</li> <li>2. Influence of Multi-nationals and their interests</li> <li>3. Does the institutional / organizational embedding of the MSP facilitator matter?'</li> <li>4. How optimal land use planning can work in the tropics</li> <li>5. Community of practice and closed networking</li> <li>6. Does a MSP facilitator requires a thorough background in the sector/subject?</li> <li>7. Power and MSPs</li> </ol>

Each discussion took place at different tables in the meeting room, and had its own discussion facilitator and note-taker (participants of the international MSP course). Notes (not exhaustive) of each discussion can be found in **Annex 1**. After each of the Open Space discussion rounds, a short presentation of the insights was given in the plenary.



### 3.3 Tips and the agenda proposals



At the end of the day the participants reflected per table on the work and presentations in the Open Space. The following tips and proposals for the future agenda of research, education and capacity development on MSPs were made:

#### **Agenda of education, research and capacity building**

- About MSP effectiveness and tools
  - Clarify at what situation MSP is useful. Determine the approach, suggest tools per aim
  - Deepen understanding of MSPs in conflict resolution
  - MSP should bridge the gap between the project design, M&E and practice
  - Developing new tools in emerging situations for the MSP
  - Articulating/making explicit legitimization factors for MSP facilitators
  - When is Science more important than impact? Is it better to have no MSP than a pseudo-MSP to fulfill the research requirement?
- About coordination and sharing on MSPs:
  - Building a community of practice on MSP around the world – CD&IC of Wageningen International is starting such a group (GALI) and will inform the others the moment this will really take shape.
  - Document MSP experiences and organize workshops – Perhaps CD&IC of Wageningen International could play a role in this.
  - Capacity development of the science groups of WUR on incorporating MSP
  - Build learning capacity within the programmes
- About integration:
  - Improved integration of Bèta-Gamma research starting with Bèta
  - Encourage inter and cross disciplinarily
  - Private sector MSP in social programmes
- About Mainstreaming MSPs in Wageningen UR
  - Integrating MSP in research, education and capacity development programmes
  - Mainstreaming MSP in academic curricula and research initiatives
  - Maintaining MSP in academic curricula and research initiatives
  - MSP into research for policy-making
  - WUR policy should focus and organize the MSP
  - Create space for MSP in financing structures
- About the MSP Course of Wageningen International
  - Assist MSP-course participants in action research, e.g. To do a research on evaluating the quality of MSP in urban development projects and their impact on local governments in India
  - Measuring impact of WUR MSP courses around the world

- About the facilitation role in MSPs:
  - Responsibility is the key word for closed system and MSP
  - Facilitator should look inside as well as outside the group processes
  - Handing out the facilitation role in the MSP remains an issue
  - Differentiation between commitment to objectives and to the actors in MSP should be taken into consideration

#### 4. Reflection of the day: Lessons learned



It was foreseen to end the day with a discussion using the fishbowl method and focusing on the key questions posed at the beginning of the day. Unfortunately there was no time left for this activity which effected in an exchange between participants per table concerning the proposed agenda points (see 3.3).

Another process recommendation would be to have the key questions more leading in the Open Space discussions per subject in the two rounds. In that way there would have been have a more clear implication for the agenda setting.

One learning was that the integration of the Seminar in the MSP course was very beneficial. There was good sharing between Wageningen UR participants and MSP course participants, which grounded the discussions in real MSP practice.

It also it became clear that the MSP practice and thinking should really become part of the whole research, education and capacity development agenda of Wageningen UR. There is a real need for sharing and learning among the researchers, practitioners and policy makers throughout Wageningen UR and other related institutes.

Finally, Wageningen International (CD&IC Programme) proposes to take the lead in continuing this discussion on Multi-stakeholder processes.

## **Annex 1. Short group Notes (not exhaustive)**

These are the notes taken by MSP course participants during the Open Space group discussions. The notes are varying in quality and comprehensiveness since it was part of the learning exercise of the MSP course. However, all notes carry some insights for the Seminar participants.

### **Topics in the Open Space discussions:**

#### **Round 1.**

1. Frame Negotiability
2. Stakeholder Management
3. Beta-Gamma Integration in development oriented research: How to reach equal partnership and impact.
4. Getting MSPs to work
5. New area development as closed networking
6. Visionaries and their roles in MSPs
7. Who decides who is a stakeholder?

#### **Round 2.**

1. How to deal with the wish to plan the un-plannable
2. Influence of Multi-nationals and their interests
3. Does the institutional / organizational embedding of the MSP facilitator matter?
4. How optimal land use planning can work in the tropics
5. Community of practice and closed networking
6. Does a MSP facilitator requires a thorough background in the sector/subject?
7. Power and MSPs

# Round 1

## 1. Frame Negotiability

OBJECTIVE: Who sets the frame and can it be renegotiated?

Topic Owner: Art Dewolf

Participants: Lusine, Aswandi, Art Dewolf (Social Science group), Rhiannon (KIT) PJ, (Social Science group). Eunice

Facilitator: Guru

Note taker: Lusine

Art briefly explains the issue:

1. Who sets the frame for the MSP? What is the main focus etc.
2. Is there any possibility to renegotiate and reconsider the frame once it was set. however, for making progress it is sometimes very crucial to make possible the negotiability.

Explains on the flipchart.

1. frameselling (selling the initial definition to the others, accept the problem definition etc)
2. frame filling (provide answers to the questions, which are actually already within the boundaries, which are reconfirmed)
3. frame negotiation (it is the ability to reshape the frame, reorient the whole thing to another issue).

his feeling is that a lot of things are stopped to move since the borders are unable to be changed.

the assumption is that you can go further into the meaningful way rather than stop.

What is the reason for renegotiation, and is it about the issues and the objectives.

The frame is always the knowledge and the knowledge is always about the people, so changing the framework might mean that you will have to leave out the others.

there are the constraints- institutional, personal etc.

the whole paradox is that you start with something but on the other hand, within the logic of the MSP it should be elaborated by the stakeholders themselves. That is the cause of being confronted with the necessity of either renegotiation or quitting the whole process in general.

The bigger question is what is more important: the process or the objective?

Guru proposes to switch on more experiential level.

The whole framework of MSP has the idea of acting reflecting and then adding the new experience on the initial stage of the whole cycle. The goal is important (the change wanted, the impact).

Art adds that generating commitment is quite important.

is it commitment to the other actors? or to the objective?

if the frame is renegotiated it may mean that several stakeholders are cut out, and how we decide who?

If the frame changes, then lots of other things change too. The goal including. and the actors might be unwilling to shift their commitment to the new one. However, the frame change can occur when the commitment declines.

It is also important whether we design the whole process. If you are doing it with the stakeholders, the level of their commitment will be quite high.

Eunice shares her experience about the farmers. They produce crops without the access to the market. a paper is written to different organizations asking for the need for research. then the donor was found. the stakeholders consulted the markets. then a common meeting was organized. microfinance was organized. a discussion was organized. then after that, the each group came up with their own list of their questions.

what is the commitment of their process?

in the beginning the farmers were grouped and then special stakeholders were found for the each group.

here we see an example of quite a very strong vision.

the problem is also how to connect the visionary group and actors group.

Framing is mostly considered as a part of the learning process. however, its also about negotiation and about the power and exclusion. also about the positioning.

after the lines are set the topic is set.

the power hierarchy will be also made within the old frame. in the new frame the transition might be quite difficult.

The main insights

- Thinking in phases. At which point the boundaries are set.
- Whether the boundaries are the necessary precondition to learn.
- Commitment to the objectives or to the process.
- the frame are not the actors, is about the meaning. whereas the actors bring a lot of institutions and values which makes it hard for the new people to come in.

## **2. Context /Theme: Stakeholder management**

### **Contributors:**

Peter Gildermacher, Ina Pixsterhuis, Sibsibie Mohammed, Jouwert van Geene, Karén Verhoosel (Facilitator) and Collins Osae (Note taker)

**Question/Case:** How do you share responsibilities in MSPs i.e. what are the best practices for sharing responsibilities. Who does what and how? How do you balance the management roles? The question was posed by **Ms Ina Pixsterhuis**.

### **Objective:**

The objective of the discussions then became how to identify best practices for sharing responsibility in the MSP process.

Frank's presentation on stakeholder management and sustainability with respect to the *Telen met Toekomst project* set the tone for discussions. Discussions, however, covered MSPs in general.

### **Issues/Questions:**

Issues that emerged from the discussions included the following:

- Who are the critical stakeholders?
- Who's agenda do you pursue? Should it be the facilitator agenda or stakeholder agenda?
- Who sets/defines the theory of change
- Who sets the goals?
- How do you make sure others take over when phasing out of an initiative?
- There's the need for an institution/somebody to the process
- What dynamic aspects can stop/endanger the process?
- Should MSPs continue or can they end?
- Financing MSPs – Financier/funding agency may be reluctant to support due to difficulties associated with measuring progress

- What are the roles of public institutions?

**Convergence (Insights):**

The discussants came to a conclusion that by asking the following guiding questions responsibilities within MSPs could be shared.

<b>Objective:</b>		
How do you share responsibilities in MSPs i.e. what are the best practices for sharing responsibilities		
Guiding questions		
<b>Start (Lots of engagements)</b>	<b>How?</b>	<b>End</b>
- Responsibility for the direction? Equal participations? - Starts with theory of change and think of end in mind (how do phase out)	- Institutionalizing MSPs could be one strategy to make it sustainable - MSPs can be applied in a new project or an existing system - There will always be the need for an institution or somebody to keep the process moving - Research activities are also crucial	- Phasing out of the initiative - Self organizing o somebody else takes over the facilitation role? - Shared responsibility can also bring together resources
<b>Who?</b>		
- Multi-nationals are now taking social responsibility seriously but what are the roles of public institutions? - Can public/private hand over to private/public- is it value free? - Incorporate MSP as corporate social responsibility		

**Reactions from the floor**

**Question:** Where do you start?

**Response** (by Dr Ir H.E. Wielinga): Somebody must start. And it falls on visionaries. But there are change agents to take ideas along and move with it. In addition tot the change agents are the gate keepers who open the door for change agents. In addition, however, there ought to be a facilitator to guide the process.

**3. Beta-Gamma Integration in development oriented research: How to reach equal partnership and impact.**

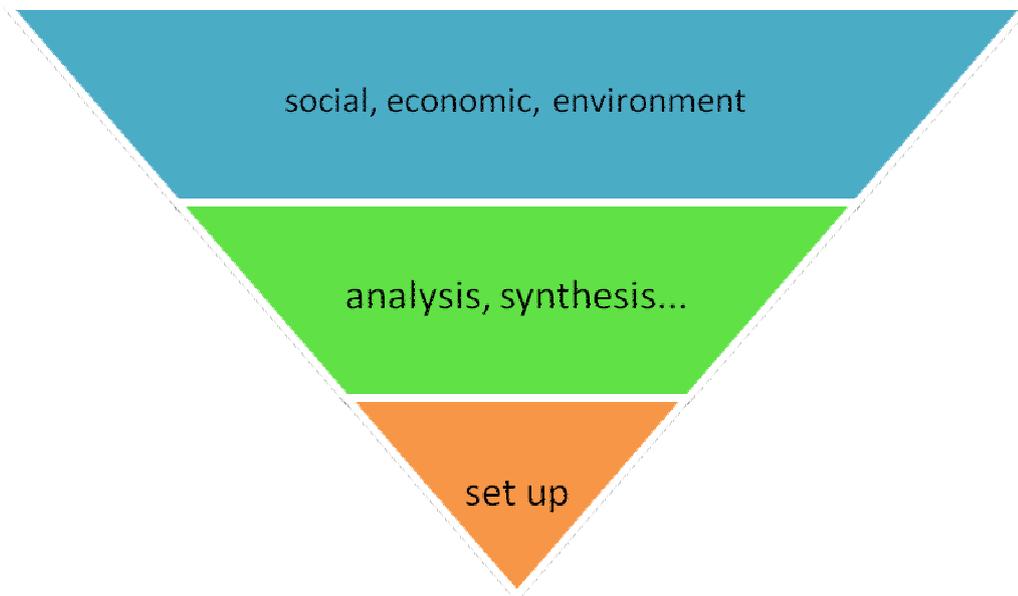
Proposed by Jacintha Vigelanzoon

- Research at Surinam (Country), doing research that is not introducing from outside
- Partnership: Problem with EU, local institution, and local farmers
- Beta = technical studies
- Jacintha: accept only ..., farmers don't want tree in their fields, old, cultural tree but partnership did not accepted it
- Expectation = feedback on practical equal partnership and impact
- Institution block farmers, and everything including WI, and want only output of research, work top-down, farmer institution is not changed
- Participant 1: How to apply social implementation in a farm

Solution

- Identify stakeholders, and level of participation
- Working in another way, talk with local directly

- Learn a bit more MSP, and use it to support ideas
- Use MSP with research partnership
- Find interest person to support ideas; lobbying
- Set up common goal (Combine things from different interested parties), principal, design action plan, mobilize resources together



Reference: Lilian Na Alessa, Melinda Laituri and Michael Barton (2006). An “All Hands” call to the social science community: establishing a community framework for complexity modeling using agent based models and cyberinfrastructure. Journal of artificial societies and social simulation (JASSS). Vol.9, No.4. <<<http://jasss.soc.surrey.ac.uk/9/4/6.html>>>

#### **4. Getting MSPs to Work**

##### **Introduction**

When we use learning alliances to ensure research is applied, we tend to focus on the larger theoretical questions and stakeholders may not get involved and many of the smaller issues are equally important. We have been trying to move from a fragmented vision to shared vision but somehow this often doesn't happen.

##### **Objective**

What are the 'things' that make MSPs' work? How do we move from talk to practice?

- Energy + inspiration = magic mix
- Hot issues – tapping the energy from issues which motivate people. But hot issues can be negative as well as positive.
- Consensus, cohesion, shared values, common aim and goals
- Energy management is important i.e. so that creative energy is generated from a hot issue is used well.
- Very practical tips are needed to get MS platforms working, otherwise the theory sits on the table and nothing happens.
- Can media play a role in making MSP work? There's limitations to internet access in some areas
- How can the common vision and goal be defined between stakeholders? By building trust?
- You can get people together but how do you keep them together? You could build in small incentives e.g. training, sitting allowances?
- Tools and techniques can be used to stimulate interest e.g. Public Expenditure Tracking (PETS)

- The facilitator is critical i.e. someone who is committed, permanent and very good. The facilitator should be transparent and open as no one can be unbiased
- A champion is needed to 'open the door'
- People often think in terms of needing a leader when a facilitator would be more appropriate for the task
- Access to public information as a result of increasing computerization could stimulate MSPs
- Too much structure forces the process in one direction and the process can stop. Is the logframe a 'lockframe'? Logframes impose time boundaries/constraints
- What are the enabling and constraining factors for MSPs to work?
- Process spin offs e.g. from people being inspired by an activity or issue is a more organic process but less coordinated
- There are big tensions between donor driven processes and open-ended MSPs because the realized outcomes might be in conflict/different with the original aims
- How do you do M&E of MSPs and how to use it? What to measure? Use of most significant change technique in this respect – would this be accepted by donors? Donors want e.g. numbers of trainees to justify expenditure
- Could/would donors support an open space approach to development? You need room for experiment and failure. When you ask people what they want, it may not fit into the donor agenda. There is need to engage donors in the learning process.

### **Conclusions**

Triggers needed to get the process going

- Process map (common vision and objectives)
- Safe learning environment
- Very good facilitation, transparency/open approach
- Appropriate tools and techniques are necessary
- Find yourself a niche where there is room for flexibility

Constraints

- Business as usual attitude of donors
- How outcome and impact are measured in terms of: logframe approach and donor requirement and as a written document

## **5. New area development as closed networking**

### **Participants**

Chitra – Facilitator

Akwasi – Note-taker/recorder

Paul Kersten – Alterra (WUR) – Presenter/Opener

Attached to the WUR Applied Science Department on Policy Analysis Planning; also involved in a lot of activities with stakeholders

Tycho Vermeulen – WUR Glastuinbouw

### **Objective/focus of discussion:**

The focus of this discussion was to get an insight into an emerging process – closed networks

### **Content**

Trends in regional developments in the Netherlands and Europe for that matter are geared towards openness with all stakeholders. However, there is an emerging tendency to closed networks involving people who matter most and contribute to local development.

There is thus a shift or change from the period of strategic developments developed by the central government, handed over to local authorities to a more regionally/locally based development by clusters of closed networks. Evidence of this process can be found in the Netherlands where the government appoints regional managers for area developments. These managers have mandates to finance projects for new developments.

The design is an open communication system, however, some form of networking is involved for one to find a way through. In terms of goal setting, this is done as the process is on-going or being carried out. Currently closed networking is gaining the support of most experts.

**Conditions for implementation of process**

- There should be an emancipated social environment to make this kind of closed network function
- There should be a self-steering effort/responsibility taking from the stakeholders involved in closed networking for common interest
- A closed network should build a new regional identity removing all the existing negative elements. People should be interested in a new area development to promote a regional identity.

**Comparison with MSP (based on the whole discussions)**

<b>Closed networking</b>	<b>MSP</b>
Closed system	Open system
Possible in High tech clusters	
Possible only in socially emancipated societies	
Goals are set during the process	Goals are set in the initial stage
All involved are experts; need not consult each other	Need consultation from outside
Stakeholder participation is flexible; stakeholders can participate if they are interested	Stakeholder participation is a necessity and has to be ensured; difficult to organize, time and energy consuming
Self steering, responsibility is a key word	
Closed networking is going to be the future agenda	MSP will lose its value within next 20 years

MSP is an open process involving all stakeholders and time bound; goals are set at the on-set. However, in closed networks goals are developed along the process with trusted members or partners.

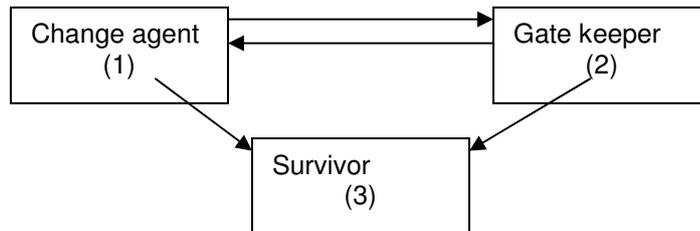
MSPs need to identify new tools to adjust to new / emerging situations otherwise in future MSPs would change to closed networks where people are emancipated to engage in new areas of developments with using new technologies for developments.

**6. Visionaries and their role in MSP**

Characteristic of a visionary: a person who should guide the visioning process, make a picture of a situation or express positive idea, who have an idea to make things changed, moved.

- Start with those people who have a vision, take freedom to do things. Assumption: energy should come from people who want to change things. Take ideas come out from the meeting.
- Must be possible to reach consensus, pick out few things – take up to the higher level.

- 3 different roles:
  - o Change agent: start, have sufficient energy (as a visionary), willing and able to take risk.
  - o Gate keeper: play very important role.
  - o Survivor: (should have techniques to involve survivors)



**Key insights**

- Don't put them all in the same room. Dialogue should first take separately.
- Need democratic process
- Should allow things to happen: facilitator should ensure that they provide space to make things happen at the disadvantaged groups.
- Role of gate keeper: can open or close the door, facilitators' role – gate keeper to open the door.
- Facilitators should empower those who want things change (change agent)

## **7. Topic: Who decides who is a stakeholder; who invites /decides to invite?**

Question Bringer: Willem – Al Terra

Facilitator: Zaina

Note Taker – Obi

Question bringer is involved in MSP of sorts – large scale sustainable dairy farming. The feeling is that up-scaling of the production is leading to serious environment tensions and creates the needs for establishing more sustainable practices. But the situation of the multi-stakeholder membership is quite dynamic – fluid. Members have multiple objectives and sometimes the membership is fluctuating and steering the whole process is a challenge and not very clear where the focus should be and the problem is that the genuineness of interest is difficult to determine and it is not easy to know and measure the level of commitment etc. Some members are interested in animal welfare, some focus on profit, some economics, and some environmental concerns. Determining the appropriate timing for consultation with the divergent interests and opinions is not easy, when to communicate and who to communicate and what to communicate to the different groups is proving a challenge.

Now operating in the north of the country. Requested subsidy from provincial government and the case was made but a group raised the issue of animal welfare. The subsidy was received and permit was obtained but the worry is that when the permit comes up for renewal, this case will come up again and that is a concern.

### **Key insights:**

Issues:

1. When to involve farmers/ stakeholders
2. When or who to communicate with?
3. Up-scaling as a trend in the Netherlands
4. Current system is bursting at the seams and needed to be re-designed
5. So the group needs to re-define goals – need to invite goals definers
6. There has to be different ways of defining stakeholders and determining who is what and who does what.
7. Those who do reconciling or known as bridgers are important in defining the new way of moving.
8. This also requires that some harmonization of the timing must be done and that also links up with the definition of the ownership of the process.
9. The bridgers must also be careful not to be seen to hijack the process
10. So who are the key drivers – continue the same old way of farming including social acceptance e.g. animal welfare issues, and also continue to focus on profit.

## Round 2

### 1. How to deal with the wish to plan the un-plannable

Participants: Lusine (note taker), Guru (facilitator), Marike Boekhoff, Mary, Eveline PPO, Anna

The change always has a direction, more or less explicit. e.g. improving env. quality farmers need to work differently. you want to do something to achieve the change. the process actually defines where you will end up. how to approach this?

every project is defined by an institution who want to see some change. the change is set. suddenly we find out that the process goes another way. sometimes it is impossible to predict what will happen in the end of the process. it deals with what we anticipate, and at the same time not to be rigid. MSP is planning, acting, developing experience, reflecting and then integrated it in the new phase of the cycle. from that point of view, it is not a problem, it is a challenge.

the scientific approach it is not that easy, since it should be very clearly understood where the process is going and what the methodology is. different disciplines bring different methodologies and this is the most challenging part. working in another discipline is like moving into another country.

being projected on our question, it can mean that you might be just unaware of the unplanable aspect. e.g. the dutch ministry required the sustainable stables by 2015 and wants to have it planned.

the most important thing is to have a common goal, under which all the stakeholders subscribe.

having planned everything and then trying to invite people can cause much trouble. in the MSPs, in the ideal situation, you actually invite people to plan and chose their goal.

not planning is actually a problem to the financing institutions.

international governments set goals very long. term plans, e.g. conserving biodiversity by 2015 etc, and it is very difficult to convey this message to the people.

we have a dream/vision. it may have a lot of goals. the question is how to sustain their commitment of the stakeholders. as a conscious facilitator should be conscious about this.

connection with the frame negotiability was found and probably, reframing is the answer.

connection with closed networks.

ending up at some point is a wish of every stakeholder.

example of Columbus, expedition-type of approach. unplanned, but anticipated.

#### Insights:

- reframe
- approach as an expedition
- be a good listener, trace all kind of energies
- in the initial stage, anticipate what can go wrong

## 2. Influence of Multi-nationals and their interests

### Contributors:

- Edwin Nssoko
- Ina Pinxterhuis, Senior Researcher, Organic animal production, WUR
- Derick Du Troit
- Daniel Knoop
- Tycho Vermeulen, Economics and Management Research Officer, WUR
- Karén Verhoosel (Facilitator) and
- Collins Osae (Note taker)

### Context/Case:

Most developing countries are endowed with resources such as land, oil, gold and other minerals. Local communities that own the lands within which these resources are discovered tend to receive little benefits from the outcomes of the explorations by multinational companies. Their participation MSPs pertaining to such projects are limited. Examples were sighted from South Africa and Ghana.

**Derick Du Troit** was the proponent of the case.

### Objective

The objective was discussion was to find out whether local communities could effectively negotiate benefits from such resources through effective participation in an MSP. And which institution could initiate such MSPs.

### Emerging Issues:

- Local communities often the capacity to negotiate. Rich multinationals are too powerful,
- There's a lot of money involved in such explorations and so multinationals step in with profit motives.
- Government also has interests
- Corruption public officials usually do not seek the interests of their locals whom the represent
- multinationals deal with the national governments and so might not be interested in dealing directly with locals initially,
- There are often negative impacts on communities, such as environmental pollution,
- But how can we generate positive maximum impacts on communities through MSPs?
- International pressure groups could be engaged in the MSPs to ensure that multinationals fulfil their social responsibilities

It is very much about values among communities. Some corrupt public officials do not support their communities

### Convergence

The discussants agreed that there are three main stakeholders with varied interests. These are

1. Multinational companies — aim at maximize profits
2. Local communities — maximum benefit from resources
3. Government— perceive these resources as channels of financing national development projects

### Issues

- Corruption among public officials and low capacity of local people to “fight” multinationals are two basic problems to deal with,
- There is also the question of how negotiable the profits of the multinationals are,
- MSPs dealing with multinationals are often unclear about what the objectives are. In this

### Drivers for change

- Public pressures on multinationals that are not in the public eye do not face that kind of pressure and may therefore be left off the hook. However, more visible ones such as Shell face a lot of pressure and are likely to comply.
- Justice is a critical pre-condition. If there legislations that seek to protect the rights of locals to benefiting from naturally endowed resources, and these legislations are enforced, then results could be achieved.

### MSP options/solutions

There is the need to build the capacities of locals/communities participatory process in order to hold governments accountable for use of resources

**Question:** Is there any strategy?

Setting the objective of the MSP could be an option. But there is no overall solution in this case.

### 3. Does the institutional / organizational embedding of the MSP facilitator matter?

Subject Owner: Rhionna Phynne (KIT). Note taker – Jouwert van Geene (WI). Participant: Art Dewilde

Objective was to explore the are the factors that you need to consider about if the facilitator of an MPS can have institutional/organizational ties with an MPS.

In general it is perceived that as an independent consultant you can be more independent in MSPs, not tied to agendas. However a key question is:

**Where is the commitment as a facilitator → with the goal or with the actor(s)?**

The following dimensions exist:

- Is he/she outsider / insider in the domain?
- Does he/she have process knowledge / skills?
- Is he/she connected to one of the stakeholders (already a stakeholder with specific interest)?
  - o As an employee
  - o As a hired/contracted
  - o As a visionary/passionate/heart

For any facilitator it counts that there may be a need to build credibility with the stakeholders, through demonstration skills, experience in the sector. How does a facilitator build credibility? By demonstrating the ability to think and deal with issues neutrally, and not chasing the vested interests, to transcend perceived biases. You have to be able to critically reflect and ask questions.

#### Some examples shared in the group

*Example value chain development* → if value chain development does not work in a certain area, to have a facilitator from within the system may not be helpful since solutions may have to come from the outside.

*Example of SNV – education sector in Southern Africa (Jouwert van Geene)*: SNV facilitates Multi-stakeholder platforms at district level as external facilitators. They try to hand over the facilitation roles to the local 'natural' owner of the process (local government). A key is to build the facilitation capacity in the platforms to facilitate the processes and make the role rotate in the platforms. However this is not easy and vulnerable to local dynamics.

*Example Games / simulations (Art)* – there is often no official facilitation role; different stakeholders are active in the simulation (govt, ngos, farmers) but only rarely a local actor could take up the facilitators role and balance it with a stakeholder role (own interests). So if it is a stakeholders, managing the two roles is difficult.

*Example KIT (Rhionna Phynne)*: KIT is facilitating learning alliances around value chains (Mango/sesame) in Mali → learning alliances to bring actors together and start learning, which is very value free. KIT is facilitating this, but a local actor may also do this since the topic / goal is not too much determined on beforehand.

### **Conclusion:**

It is very contextual and conditional, depending on the room to maneuver. The choice of facilitators is often very intuitively done. There is need for a contextually articulated rationale to argue why someone is the facilitator. Make it more explicit, even when a facilitator has already been assigned to a Process. This should include a discussion on the needed attributes of the facilitator. Ties to a stakeholder also has to be explored and agreed upon as positive or negative.

It is not possible to get all the needed attributes in one person. So maybe you may need champions, some other person to be recognized/knowledge in a sector and a skilled facilitator. Sometimes the embeddedness can also be good to have the expertise behind you.

## **4. How optimal land use planning can work in the tropics**

### **Introduction**

How to balance what is necessary from a biophysical point of view with the socio-economic aspects? Suitability of land for various uses is only one issue; other issues include e.g. the various and divergent interests of stakeholder groups. Increasingly peat lands are being drained by big companies to grow oil palm for food and bio-fuel and this interest conflicts with the water reservoir use of land. How to incorporate different stakeholders from biophysical and stakeholder point of view?

**Objective:** How to design and implement an MSP towards optimal land use

- In Indonesia there used to be many more forest areas compared to plantation areas but plantain areas grew. There is national commitment to stop this trend, but land use planning has become stagnant despite efforts since 2000 to revive this.
- Upland, middle and lowland topography, culture, environments are different; the contexts are different. There is need for a forum to bring these stakeholders together in order to share knowledge on these different areas, to promote shared understanding.
- Stakeholders made rich pictures showing how they defined their ideals for different land uses in the area. This tool gave an idea about the different ideals, the commonalities and conflicts. Research will be required to determine the short, medium and long term impact of these choices.
- Context analysis is important using various tools e.g. the importance/influence matrix + venn diagram, tendency analysis/trends/stories for change and the power cube. It would be important to investigate the power dynamics to get an understanding behind the land use choices made by stakeholders.
- It is very important to identify the stakeholders from the point of view of the stakeholders themselves.
- An MSP could be started by just 'doing' something; dealing with a practical issue. Through dealing with a practical/hot issue, common understanding can be generated and common vision and objectives developed

### **Conclusions**

- It is important to have an MSP from the start of the planning process
- Various tools can be used for the context analysis: rich picture, community map, power cube, importance/influence matrix, venn diagram, tendency analysis spider tool for SWOT analysis
- Research results should be communicate to policy makers

## **5. Community of practice and closed networking**

### **Participants**

Chitra – Facilitator

Akwasi – Note-taker/recorder

Paul Kersten – Alterra (WUR) – Presenter/Opener  
Attached to the WUR Applied Science Department on Policy Analysis Planning; also involved in a lot of activities with stakeholders  
Dini  
Esther  
Florence

**Objective:** Discussion on the concept of community of practice

### **Explanation of concept**

Community of practice involve a group of people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour: a tribe learning to survive, a group of engineers working on similar problems. Usually, should have been practised by a community prior to closed networking. It shares a lot of common tools with MSP.

### **Theoretical background**

It was invented by a computer systems organiser by name H.N. Werger. The process involves four learning processes:

- Learning by meaning: Members share a common meaning in the process.
- Learning by practice: Members of a community of practice are practitioners. They develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems—in short a shared practice
- Learning by identity: It has an identity defined by a shared domain of interest. Therefore, membership implies a commitment to the domain.
- Learning by bonding (community): Members engage in joint activities and discussions in pursuing their interest in their domain; build relationships that enable them to learn from each other.

According to Wenger, it is a combination of these elements that constitutes a community of practice. A facilitator must develop these elements in parallel to be effective or make an impact.

### **System dynamics**

Operation is based on a rhythm of closed and open phases. There is the closed phase when the group is constituted and the next stage is the open phase in which members reach out or share their experiences with others. Members can always come back to the closed phase for more insights, reflection on how to improve upon their performance. A facilitator has to learn to operate in this boundary of open and closed system.

### **Application/Link with MSP**

An element of community of practice forms part of an MSP process.

- In MSP people come together for a shared interest which is also embedded in community of practice. For example, participants in the MSP course will share their experiences with colleagues and stakeholders in their fields of endeavour on their return home.
- In MSP the system can close and open accordingly to the need of the process and the interest of the stakeholders.

## **6. Does a MSP facilitator requires a thorough background in the sector/subject?**

Q: What are the requirements for a MSP facilitator?

- Communication skill
- Negotiation skill
- Leadership skill

- Flexible, conflict management skill.
- Be able to motivate people
- Neutral
- **Be able to understand the problem.**

Q: Does a MSP facilitator requires a thorough background in the sector/subject?

- Important to know the background/general knowledge of the topic to understand the problem and facilitate the MSP but not necessarily to have professional expertise on the topic.
- Can use the knowledge of stakeholders during facilitation process.

## 7. Power and MSPs

Question Bringer: PJ – Social Science Group, WUR

Facilitator: Zaina

Note Taker – Obi

Participants:

Interest in knowledge configuration – this is by definition multi-stakeholder processes. There are multiple pieces of puzzles which have to be known for effectivity. The best type of knowledge process is value-free. This has to be seen in the context of power relations as they affect the process of learning and knowledge production.

### Key Issues

1. How does a certain power structure affect knowledge generation and utilization and what is the role for MSP?
  - The power cube can be used to analyze the relationships on this subject. People occupy different spaces.
  - Power is not always negative because it also empowers for knowledge acquisition.
  - But the quality of the knowledge process can be affected by power differences.
  - Power differences are important to expedite the process of knowledge transfer. Where there is equal power levels, then there is exchange. Then there is circulation of knowledge. Then there is co-innovation or co-creation. But there has to be a great deal of trust.
  - There is some thinking that more equality promotes flow of knowledge.
  - Trust seems to be an important variable.
  - Use of knowledge for policy development
  - In Africa there is the saying that “Knowledge is Power”.
  - Competitive power arises as well but can be constraining although it also leads to another level
  - What about knowledge leading to business power
  - The safety level of the environment of knowledge creation also affects trust which again affects the knowledge process.
  - Superiority is important to spread knowledge, but this can lead to abuse of the knowledge power.
  - Respect and compassion will help us to enlarge trust.

### Discussion

It became a heated debate. A group of experts came together to apply MSP. But they need to create the knowledge. MSP is not completely power-free. Brainstormed from the most simple (unbelievable!!) where (Obi) suggested that if there is a lot of power then you can transfer power. But it was thought that equality is more important for knowledge creation and transfer. There was no particular success in working out a complete solution to the issue.

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