



European Sediment Research Network

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Acronym: SedNet

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Key action: 1.4.1 Abatement of water pollution from contaminated land, landfills and sediments

Workpackage 1: Coordination, synthesis, dissemination and stakeholders panel

1st Workshop "Sediments and Stakeholder Involvement"
held in Rotterdam on the 18th and 19th of December 2003

Executive summary, Februari 2004

Introduction

The workshop **Sediments and Stakeholder Involvement** was the first workshop organized by workpackage 1 of the **European Sediment Research Network (SedNet)**.

Article 14 of the Water Framework Directive (WFD)¹ stresses that: "the success of this Directive relies on close cooperation and coherent action at Community, Member State and local level as well as on information, consultation and involvement of the public, including users." Although sediments are not specifically mentioned in the WFD, the clear link with sediments and water quality cannot be denied. The involvement of stakeholders (from different EU countries) is of great importance when we want to reach sustainable sediment management.

The reason for the involvement of stakeholders is that decision makers are confronted time and again with the same problems, for instance

- delays in the process as individual actors exercise their 'power to hinder';
- the crumbling of public support;
- the negative impact of these factors on the quality of investment.

With these trends in mind, **the goal** of the workshop was to discuss the "state-of-the-art" on stakeholder involvement with respect to sediment issues and to generate a way to solutions, and cutting-edge research recommendations to be addressed by the European Commission.

The workshop was attended by 17 participants from 7 different countries; presenting 5 keynote lecturers.

Key point summary

The workshop was focused on five issues concerning sediment (management):

1. Who are the stakeholders?
2. Why to involve them?
3. How to involve them?
4. What are the pitfalls and constraints if stakeholder were to be involved?
5. What recommendations for research can be made?

Next to these issues also the future development of SedNet was discussed.

In different workshop sessions the participants discussed these points.

¹ DIRECTIVE 2000/60/EC

Who are the stakeholders?

An extensive list can be drawn, covering the stakeholders who are involved already, those who should be involved because of their work and those who are not interested yet. It was decided that SedNet should aim for the first two categories.

Based on this premises the workshop-participants came up with the following list. A distinction was made between three types of stakeholders:

1. Organizations and people that have a *great* impact on decision-making concerning sediments. This group included: harbor authorities, shipping companies, dredging companies, industries using water and/or dumping their wastewater, farmers, water authorities, water cleaning companies, regulators on the local, regional, national and international level concerning water issues and subjects of environment, agriculture and safety, conventions such as Ospar and Helcom, maritime organizations, international river committees, organizations maintaining natural defense, water managers and owners of nature areas.
2. Organizations/people that can have *some* impact on decision-making. This group covers citizens, landowners, homeowners, insurance companies, NGO's such as Greenpeace and the WWF, scientists, drinking water companies, bird protection acts (Habitat).
3. Organizations and people who have little impact on or decision-making and are only indirectly affected by Sustainable Sediment Management (SSM): this group consists of all the other users of the waterway, fisheries, people enjoying their leisure time at the banks/beaches.

The list that was drawn does not claim to be complete, because with different sediment issues, different stakeholders are involved, but it clearly shows the diversity of interests concerning sustainable sediment management.

Why to involve stakeholders?

Not only the need for public participation that is mentioned in the WFD was a reason for the participants to see the added value and importance of stakeholder involvement. The participants first of all stressed the impact on the quality and quantity of sediments that the stakeholders could have. They mentioned other reasons as well:

- Involving stakeholders can be effective because it counteracts obstructive power, and creates support for solutions;
- Stakeholders can come up with better solutions and opportunities;

- To change practices and to create support for these changes and transitions;
- To make everyone part of the issue and raise awareness – to get the stakeholders 'on board';

The stakeholder that one should involve depends on the specific issue of sediments at hand.

How to involve stakeholders?

The EU already published a guidance document on public participation in relation to the WFD. In addition to this document and focused on sediment issues the participants formulated the following points on involving stakeholders.

- Some pressure on stakeholders to participate in sustainable sediment management can be created by the 'polluter pays principle'. But also other drivers can be thought of: access to the EU and its legislative procedures and other gains from joining the process;
- Raising awareness concerning sediments and creating a sense of urgency;
- An attempt should be made to make the subject of sediments understandable, for instance through clear examples, scenarios or societal cost and benefit analysis.
- Discuss sediment issues with existing organizations dealing with sediments, or make a new organization and create an arena for this issue.

SedNet could play an important role in this last strategy.

What are the pitfalls and constraints if stakeholder were to be involved?

The participants expressed the need to focus on a number of issues that should be kept in mind when involving stakeholders.

- There are cultural constraints – cross-border, but also cross-disciplines and cross-stratifications. The differences in cultures should be examined and (partly) adapted;
- People that are not taken seriously will be disappointed and pull out;
- Knowledge could be used by the involved stakeholders as a weapon. Not everyone possesses the same amount of knowledge. This should be kept in mind and effort should be put into providing a common ground of information for everyone;
- Not everyone involved wants to work together to take the process further. Some people

might have an hidden agenda and will aim at delaying the process;

- It should be understood that extreme views might be presented in the group of stakeholders. Those views do not necessarily reflect the view of other people;
- Time can be a pitfall. Often, the first stages of the process are rushed, while some stakeholders need time to acquire knowledge and try to understand the way the process is working;
- An important constraint is that there isn't much legislation in Europe covering sediments. This is a problem when there is a need to deal with an issue quickly.

Keeping these pitfalls in mind can improve the process of the involvement of stakeholders,

What recommendations for research can be made to the European Commission?

One of the most important issues in the workshop was the identification of 'gaps' in the current knowledge concerning stakeholder involvement related to sediments. The participants formulated the following research questions:

- What are the differences between cultures in European countries when it comes to stakeholder involvement?
- How can we overcome barriers between stakeholders and policy makers?
- Are there any issues that people care about and in which sediments plays a role? This to raise more awareness and a sense of urgency.
- What can we learn from the way environmentalists got their issues on the public agenda since the mid-70's?
- What are the criteria for good participation?
- What makes organizations committed to the involvement of stakeholders?

The participants suggested that to make a start in answering these questions SedNet should make an inventory of the practice of stakeholder involvement (dredged material etc.). It should include good practices and pitfalls from real life examples.

More specifically Work package 1 should make an overview of the following information:

- What rules do exist (for instance from the EU with the WFD) on how to deal with stakeholders with SSM
- Are there any recommendations on how to do it?;
- What can we learn from the way in which the Environmental Protection Agency is dealing with sediments?

Development of SedNet after 2004

Because of the fact that the EC funding of SedNet will not continue after 2004, the future of SedNet was discussed.

In the opinion of the participants after 2004 SedNet should be an 'umbrella organization' working at a river basin scale through the organization of workshops and issuing of guidance documents. It should be an association of stakeholders and it expand towards the east (the new member states) and south of Europe. To reach this ambition some important points have to be addressed, besides the ongoing search for funding of such an organization.

One issue in the development of SedNet is the question how to bind other organizations and people to SedNet. To do this, the output of SedNet and the impact in Brussels should be more visible and clear. A suggestion to do this was to point out the influence of SedNet more specifically in e-mails, news-letters and announces of actions that will be taken by Brussels based on SedNet input. Another option to get people actively involved is to stress the opportunity to bring both scientists and practitioners together.

Another important issue for the future of SedNet, which is closely linked to the previous issue, is how to activate the 800+ SedNet participants. According to the workshop-participants this could be done by providing products that will attract the attention and by improving the communication of SedNet output, for example issue press releases after each workshop and customize the press releases to the target groups, for instance port authorities, journals etc. The Journal of Soil and Sediments should be used more often as a forum for SedNet output. Also other non-scientific journals should be used. Finally it is only possible to activate people if it is clear who they are and what they are interested in. Therefore a 'who is who' database is currently being set up to allow people to find interesting contacts.

The participants agree that a SedNet Public Relations group will be formed and this group should focus on the communication and appearance of SedNet. This group will consist of the PR expert of the Port of Rotterdam, two consultants from TNO, and mr. W. Salomons, from the Free University (VU), Amsterdam. A 'learning session' concerning PR will be attended by the

SedNet coreteam and will be given by the PR-expert of the Port of Rotterdam.

Next to the network- function of SedNet the most important goal of SedNet is to realize a guidance document. The workshop-participants suggested that this document should (at least) cover the basic principles, which are unchangeable principles. They include SSM, risk assessment, understanding the system consisting of an ecological, social and economical dimension. Next to these basic principles examples and scenarios, which have to be adapted to local situations (therefore: not unchangeable) should be

included. Finally comprehensive information about how sediments are dealt with in different European rivers – in both biophysical and socio-economic settings - such as information about the different rationalities and cultures should be included, both good and bad practices, so that SedNet members can learn from these practices.

The conclusion of the participants was that the issues important for the future of SedNet should be used as input for the final SedNet conference in Venice in the fall of 2004.

2nd Workshop: Warsaw, Poland 18th and 19th of March 2004

Societal Cost-Benefit Analysis and Sediment Management

Introduction

Societal Cost-Benefit Analysis (SCBA) is a tool to 'quantify' the economic and social impacts of certain options in dealing with an issue. So more than a 'valuation' tool as it is often described, it is more an 'evaluation' tool.

Because there is a strong need to 'evaluate' sustainable sediment management options, and thus create a way of communicating about the impacts of certain options to decision makers and stakeholders, WP 1 organizes a workshop to create insight in Societal Cost-Benefit Analysis and Sediment Management.

Objectives

The main objectives of the workshop are to answer the following questions:

- Is a societal cost-benefit analysis applicable to the evaluation of sediment management options? And if so, are there specific points of attention that should be kept in mind?

- How can we deal with the different societal values of sediments?
- What is the state of the art concerning SCBA?
- Which research questions can we identify concerning SCBA aimed at sediment management?

To answer these questions the programme of the workshop will include a presentation on SCBA, dealing with questions such as: what an SCBA *is*, but also what it is *not*. What do you need to perform an SCBA? What are the results from an SCBA, and how can they be used: possibilities and limitations. To go beyond the theoretical discussions on the subject of SCBA and to look at what insight current practices can bring, the workshop will put the tool of SCBA in the context of a number of cases (Ebro and Schelde).

For registration, more information and questions about this workshop please contact Gerald Jan Ellen (ellen@stb.tno.nl)

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