

# Stakeholder Communication on Sediment Issues – A Waste of Time?

## Experiences from the Elbe Estuary

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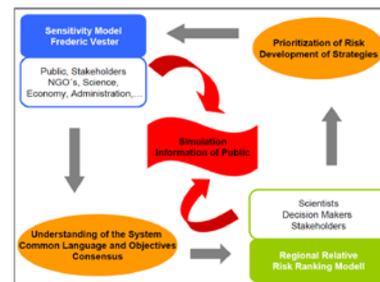
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**Introduction:** The Lower Elbe River from the mouth of the river to the weir in Geesthacht is often called the lifeline of the Metropolitan Region Hamburg. Since the Early Middle Age shipping traffic and trade have been playing an important role for the development of Hamburg and the area around. But the Elbe Estuary is more than a waterway. In such a highly used area big efforts are undertaken to manage the multiple pressures on the estuary. Different management plans from different disciplines (e.g. WFD, Natura 2000, FD, sediment management) are developed and implemented here. The integration of all objectives is complicated by the fact that the work is carried out by various administrations and stakeholders in three different federal states. The sediment management in the Elbe Estuary and the planning of the 9<sup>th</sup> Elbe deepening are examples how extremely important effective communication management and real participation processes are for the success of such a complex and critical task. In the German case study of the EU funded project ARCH perception of the communication management and stakeholder processes so far will be analyzed and it will be tested if the implementation of a communication and planning tool could help in the process.

**Methods:** Based on the European Awareness Scenario Workshop methodology as a participatory policy making method that involves stakeholders, policy makers and scientists in a joint process of generating and selecting policy options, the communication and planning tool SIMACLIM, that has been developed in the diPol-project, will be used in workshops held at the case site. Figure one shows the structure of SIMACLIM which consists of two models. The Sensitivity Model from Frederic Vester [1] is a tool for analysing complex, socio-economic-ecologic systems by using the principles of fuzzy logic and pattern recognition. This model will be used for public participation and will be carried out with representatives of different interest groups, such as NGO's, scientists, members of administration and citizens. The second model is the Regional Relative Risk Ranking Model (4RM) originally developed by Landis and Wiegiers [2]. The 4RM is a model for ecological risk assessment which is used to assess

and prioritize risk by a relative ranking process. Application of the 4RM allows a transparent prioritization of risks. Therewith strategies and measures can be developed and results of measures can be visualized.



**Fig. 1:** Structure of the communication and planning tool SIMACLIM.

**Results and discussion:** Interviews with stakeholders and first workshops are planned for April/May this year. As preparation of the workshop organizers, an extensive “state of the estuary” paper has been prepared, which describes the present and historic socio-economic and environmental situation of the tidal Elbe. Extracts from this report will be used to prepare participants and to start the discussion.

In this presentation, results of the stakeholders’ interviews and of the first workshop will be presented with regard to the perception of sediment issues and successful communication processes in the Elbe Estuary. These results will be discussed with regard to current management practices and management policies in the tidal Elbe River.

**References:** [1] Vester, F. (2007) Die Kunst vernetzt zu denken - Ideen und Werkzeuge für einen neuen Umgang mit Komplexität; ein Bericht an den Club of Rome, dtv, München, [2] Landis W.G. et al. (1997) Hum.Ecol.Risk.Assess. 3 :287-297