



**European Sediment Research Network**  
**Acronym: SedNet**  
**EC contract No.: EVK1-CT-2001-20002**  
**Key action: 1.4.1 Abatement of water pollution from contaminated land, landfills and sediments**

**WORKSHOP REPORT**  
**Workshop Sediments and Stakeholder Involvement**

of

*SEDNET Work Package 1*

Hosted by the Port of Rotterdam,  
December 18th – 19th 2003, the Netherlands

AUTHORS: Adriaan Slob, Lasse Gerrits, Gerald Jan Ellen, TNO, The Netherlands. email: gerrits@stb.tno.nl

DATE: January 2004

Pages:

### **Introduction**

This is the report of the SedNet workshop Sediments and Stakeholder Involvement, held on December 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. This workshop was organized by TNO (Gerrits and Slob) and hosted by the Port of Rotterdam. 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.

### **Participants**

The following persons participated in the workshop:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Country</b>
Brils, Jos	TNO / SedNet	The Netherlands
Bruk, Stevan	UNESCO	France
Edelenbos, Jurian	Erasmus University Rotterdam	The Netherlands
Eisma, Marc	Port of Rotterdam	The Netherlands
Ellen, Gerald Jan	TNO	The Netherlands
Faire, Stacey	CEFAS	United Kingdom
Gerrits, Lasse	Erasmus University Rotterdam/ TNO	The Netherlands
Hahn, Tobias	IZT	Germany
Harosi, Tibor	Renewable Energy Club	Hungary
Laws, David	MIT	United States of America
Leenaers, Henk	TNO	The Netherlands
Rijnveld, Marc	TNO	The Netherlands
Salomons, Wim	IVM / SedNet	The Netherlands
Seuntjes, Piet	VITO	Belgium
Slob, Adriaan	TNO	The Netherlands
Veen, Johan van	TNO	The Netherlands
Vellinga, Tiedo	Port of Rotterdam	The Netherlands

### **Structure of the workshop**

For this workshop various presentations on subjects concerning stakeholder involvement were used as input. Questions about stakeholder involvement that were left over from the working session at the conference in Venice (September 2003) were also discussed in Rotterdam. This means that following questions concerning stakeholder involvement were central:

- Who are the stakeholders?
- Why to involve them?
- How to involve them?
- What are the pitfalls and constraints?
- What recommendations for research can be made?

The workshop was an excellent opportunity to bring people together from various backgrounds and discuss this issue. The results of this workshop will be published in, among others, a chapter in one of the SedNet books.

The program consisted of three parts. The first day started with presentations from people from both science and practice. In the afternoon, the participants were divided into separate subgroups where three themes were discussed (see below). The second day was spent on a wrap-up of the discussion in the subgroups and the implications for research recommendations and the work package of SEDNET.

### **Presentations**

The morning session of December the 18<sup>th</sup> presentations by several speakers were given. The slides of most of the presentations are attached in the appendix.

The session started with an introduction by Jos Brils, explaining the structure and goals of SedNet. Next was Adriaan Slob (chairman of the meeting). He presented the program and explained the goals of this meeting (as stated above).

Then a number of stakeholder related presentations followed.

First was David Laws from MIT (United States of America). He gave an overview of the stakeholder involvement in practice, in the United States around several policy issues, with a focus on sediments.

Next was Lasse Gerrits from Erasmus University Rotterdam (The Netherlands). He showed some of the pitfalls of stakeholder involvement.

Following this presentation came Tibor Harosi of the Renewable Energy Club (Hungary). He told about the situation concerning the Danube (the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros system), where there is a shortage of sediments rather than a surplus. Also interesting was that different sediment management actions had a strong cultural/political aspect in Hungary.

After Tibor Harosi, Stevan Bruk, UNESCO, (France) explained the UNESCO International Sedimentation Initiative.

Tobias Hahn, IZT (Germany) laid out a framework showing the incentives for stakeholder involvement by using the principle of reciprocal behaviour.

Finally Gerald Jan Ellen (TNO) gave a presentation about the different perspectives on sediments.

### **Afternoon sessions**

In the afternoon, the main questions were discussed in small groups, headed by Gerald Jan Ellen, Adriaan Slob and Marc Rijnveld. The questions that were dealt with in each group were the following.

- Who are the stakeholders?
- Why to involve them?
- How to involve them?
- What are the pitfalls and constraints?
- What recommendations for research can be made?

The accents of the different groups however were different.

<b>Group 1:</b> <i>How to involve stakeholders?</i>	<b>Group 2:</b> <i>What are pitfalls of stakeholder involvement?</i>	<b>Group 3:</b> <i>Who to involve? (Seen from three perspectives)</i>
Brils, Jos	Bruk, Stevan	Ellen, Gerald Jan (moderator)
Edelenbos, Jurian	Faire, Stacey	Hahn, Tobias
Eisma, Marc	Gerrits, Lasse	Laws, David
Harosi, Tibor	Slob, Adriaan (moderator)	Leenaers, Henk
Rijnveld, Marc (moderator)	Veen, Johan van	Salomons, Wim
	Vellinga, Tiedo	Seuntjes, Piet

#### **Group 1: how to involve stakeholders?**

This group had to focus on the question ‘how to involve stakeholders’ but also discussed other issues.

##### *Who are the stakeholders?*

The group drew a picture of a river and its environment to see what parties could be affected by the river. It appeared that this includes a very big group and a definition was made: stakeholders are all those people or organisations that are affected by or have an effect on the sustainable management of sediments. These include: States, European Commission, river basin organisations, pressure groups, navigation sector, port authorities, industries, drinking water companies, gravel extraction companies, agriculture, construction industry and citizens. Knowing who the stakeholders are calls for the next question: why should they get involved with the sustainable management of sediments?

##### *Why involve stakeholders?*

First, it was mentioned that stakeholders often invite themselves to the process. They do this because of their own interest. Other motives to involve stakeholders were;

- To achieve goal of good ecological practices.
- To change practices and to create support for these changes and transitions.
- To make everyone part of the issue and raise awareness – to get them on board.

##### *How to involve the stakeholders?*

So there is a need for stakeholder involvement. How should it be done? The following was mentioned:

- Some pressure 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 and creating a sense of urgency.
- An attempt should be made to make the story understandable, e.g. through stories or social cost and benefit analysis.
- Discuss the problem with existing bodies or make a new one and create an arena for this issue. SedNet could play an important role in this strategy.

### *Pitfalls and constraints concerning stakeholder involvement*

With regards to the involvement of stakeholders, the following pitfalls were mentioned:

- Stick to what is already there: a lot of research has been carried out already and sometimes gets lost, or is out of the frame of people.
- Be aware of the historical controversies of a site. There is more at stake than you can see.
- Participants might only participate if they know what's in it for them. This should be made clear.
- Another pitfall is the unawareness of the general public of the sediment issue. This means that we as a community should not be hurrying things and take some time to explain the issue. Don't be too ambitious.
- Note that different countries have different needs. Western Europe might be concerned about the environmental impact of polluted sediments, developing countries are more concerned about earning money.

### **Group 2: what are pitfalls of stakeholder involvement?**

This group discussed the pitfalls of stakeholder involvement and put this into practice for SedNet itself. Obvious, SedNet has stakeholders as well and the things connected to stakeholder involvement that were mentioned in the presentations do apply to SedNet as well.

#### *Who are the stakeholders?*

First the question who the stakeholders of SedNet are. An extensive list can be drawn, covering those 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. Because of the limited time available, it would not be very efficient to try to persuade people who are not interested to join anyway.

#### *Pitfalls and constraints*

The pitfalls of SedNet currently are:

- There is too much emphasis on the deliverables and not enough emphasis on actual networking.
- SedNet currently depends on too few people and too few sponsors. SedNet should develop a businessplan to counter the problems that come with this issue.
- A very active core team causes a non-active network. A promotion team should create awareness and promote the activities. It should also try to get more people actively involved in the network.

#### *Use of knowledge*

This group also discussed the use of knowledge. There are still difficulties in using the available knowledge. An important issue is to get practical and useful information from practitioners from the EU. Other items that were mentioned:

- Examples should be used to demonstrate good practices. The examples should cover research and regulations and the use of knowledge about practices in scientific research.
- A summary should be made to explain how to disseminate knowledge, that can be applied by SedNet.
- A case study could be used to study the use of the guidance and to use the feedback to refine the case study. The guidance should also be peer-reviewed.
- A learning process between practitioners and researchers should be established. Attention must be paid to the translation issue.

### **Group 3: Who to involve?**

This group paid especially attention to the perspectives Mr. Ellen had laid out in his presentation.

#### *Who are the stakeholders concerning sediments?*

The group first discussed the question 'who are the stakeholders' and came up with a long list.

They made a distinction between three types of stakeholders:

1. organisations/people that have a direct impact on sediments. This group included: harbour 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 Oskar and Helcom, maritime organisations, international river committees, organisations maintaining natural defence, water managers and owners of nature areas.
2. organisations/people that have an 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. last but not least those who have an indirect impact on or are 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.

#### *Why should stakeholders get involved with SSM?*

First, because they have an impact on the quality and quantity of sediments and because they can have an impact on the decision-making process. But there are 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.

But, the group added, the stakeholder that one should involve depends on the specific aspect of sediments.

#### *How to involve the stakeholders?*

- Start with the process when the issue starts, not when the issue is solved already.
- Build a stakeholder-platform around a site.
- Determine what level of participation applies to the involvement of stakeholders in a particular case (the levels being information, consultation, advising, co producing and co deciding). Don't change this level without notification during the process.
- Leave the process open for other people who want to join – it must be based on an organic solidarity.
- Set a time-frame. Different issues have a different time-frame. Often, there is more time needed than expected.
- There is a need for a responsible and independent chairman and processmanager.
- Set up a joint-fact finding process.
- Use stakeholders to identify other stakeholders, like a snowball effect.
- Aim for a staged process rather than one process as to make things manageable.
- It also depends on the focal actor.

#### *Pitfalls that were identified included:*

- There are cultural constraints – cross-border, but also cross-disciplines and cross-stratifications. Cultures should be examined and (partly) adapted.
- People that are not taken seriously will be disappointed and pull out. Listen to all the relevant people.
- 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 collaborate to take the process further. Some people might just aim at the delay of the process.

- There are different levels of power, that should be kept in mind.
- Also should be understood that extreme views might be presented in the group of stakeholders. Those views do not necessarily reflect the view of other, less vocal, people.
- Time can also 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.
- Some vocal participants are able to hijack the agenda. This must be avoided. A chairman or session leader can also do this, although often without intention to do so, by for example, cutting off dialogues and being unaware of issues that are not solved yet.
- An important constraint is that there isn't much legislation in Europe covering sediments. This prevents from dealing with it quickly.
- Virtues can become pitfalls!

#### *Questions for further research*

Apart from the above-mentioned issues, the group also came up with questions for further research. They are mentioned here briefly.

- There is need for an analysis of the different cultures in Europe when it comes to stakeholder involvement.
- It's also not clear how to overcome barriers between stakeholders and policy makers.
- Are there any issues that people care about and in which sediments play a role? This to raise more awareness and a sense of urgency.
- What can we learn from the way environmental agents got their issue on the public agenda since the mid-70's?
- What makes for good participation?
- What makes organisations committed to the involvement of stakeholders?

The groups concluded the day by writing down their discussion on sheets.

## Day 2: conclusions and agreements

The second day started off with presentations of the outcome from the different groups mentioned above. One member of each group presented the findings of their group and explained why certain choices were made. After the presentations a plenary discussion followed, led by Mr. Slob, to see which conclusions could be drawn. Below you can find the result of this final discussion:

### ***The development of SedNet***<sup>1</sup>

With regards to SedNet, many recommendations have been made. Since the EU sponsorship of SedNet will stop by the end of 2004, the continuation of SedNet after 2004 is an issue. All were convinced that SedNet should be continued beyond 2004, but there is still a lot of work to do.

*Arguments to bind other organizations and people to SedNet include:*

- Influence in Brussels, which should be shown more effectively by emails, newsletter, announcements of actions being taken in Brussels.
- The opportunity to bring both scientists and practitioners together.

*How to activate the current 800+ participants of SedNet?*

- Provide them with a product that will interest them and specify the products to different target groups.
- Improve communication through newsletters etc. For example issue press releases after each workshop. Customize the press releases to the target groups, e.g. 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, for example SedNet could also publish in the TNO magazine.
- Connected to this: the products of SedNet should be specified for the specific target groups. Instead of being generic, the products should be tailor-made.
- Develop the 'who is who' database so to allow people to seek for contacts. Also make people aware that the 'who is who' can be used. There must be strong links to the people and their profession.

*Agreement:* A PR group should focus on the communication and appearance of SedNet. This group will consist of the PR expert of the Port of Rotterdam, two people from TNO Netherlands and mr. W. Salomons. A 'learning session' around PR will be attended by the SedNet coreteam and will be given by the PR-expert of the Port of Rotterdam.

*What should SedNet look like beyond 2004?*

- SedNet should be working at a river basin scale through the organisation of workshops and issuing of guidance documents ('umbrella organisation')
- It should be an association of stakeholders.
- It should be expanded towards the east and south of Europe, bearing in mind the ascension of the new countries to the European Union.

*How to fund SedNet beyond 2004? There are currently too few sponsors.*

- By binding the participants, as said above
- By 'in kind support' from the participants
- By donations

*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.
- Address the question: in what stage of policy making concerning SSM are we currently?

---

<sup>1</sup> With stakeholder involvement in mind.



- Make an inventory of the different approaches with stakeholder involvement in different areas.

### ***Development of the SedNet guidance document***

The SedNet guidance document should (at least) cover the follow issues:

- Basic principles, which are unchangeable principles. They include SSM, risk assessment, understanding the system consisting of an ecological, social and economical dimension.
- Examples and scenarios, which have to be adapted to local situations (therefore: not unchangeable).
- Comprehensive information about how sediments are dealt with in different European rivers – in biophysical and socio-economic settings. Also information about the different rationalities and cultures. Both good practices, and examples where it didn't go well should be included so that SedNet members can learn from these practices.

The basic principles of SSM were discussed as well. Things that were mentioned included:

- Understanding the system is important; it includes the river, the natural, the economic and social environment
- Risk assessment
- The connection between sediments in rivers and the coastal areas and seas.
- The trade-offs between sediments and other issues.
- The guidance should be flexible, i.e. can be changed when conditions change.
- Attention must be paid to the sustainability principle (profit-planet-people).

### ***Need for a Process manager***

The discussions in the groups also covered the issue of the process manager. There clearly is a need for such a manager. What should this manager be like? After a long discussion the group came to the conclusion that the manager should at least:

- be paid through a joint fund in which all parties contribute;
- report to all stakeholders;
- ensure a transparent process and be responsible for it;
- understand the cultural context;
- be accepted and respected by the stakeholders;
- have knowledge about facilitation techniques;
- act as a motivator and interpretator;
- be a trustful person;
- and have experience with complex situations.

### ***Raising awareness and interest with the stakeholders***

- Look at the interests of the stakeholders concerned and tailor the products according to those interests.
- Translate the problem to the language of the stakeholders
- Use arguments that are meaningful for the stakeholder (perspectives)
- Develop a story that is easy to understand by the stakeholders
- PR: Tools to reach stakeholders; develop a communication strategy
- Add to the list of stakeholders with the first group of stakeholders

### ***Issues on the next conference***

The participants to this workshop also made some suggestion for the next conference that will be held in Venice, Italy. It is agreed that the core team will take this recommendations into account when planning the Venice conference.

- An important theme of the next conference should be “how to ‘please’ the different stakeholders?”
- A field trip
- A division between scientists and stakeholders. E.g. have a scientific discussion first, and then invite stakeholders the other day. Or vice versa. This to avoid that people feel that not enough time is spent on their topic.
- On the final day: give an overview for the stakeholders and hold a press-conference.
- Use and look for examples of the involvement of stakeholders in the scientific discussion.
- Look for organizations willing to fund SedNet beyond 2004 – other than the obvious ones.

### ***Work to be done by WP1***

There were also some questions left that WP1 has to address in the near future. They are:

- Are there any rules (e.g. 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 EPA?

### ***Final remarks***

A few final things were mentioned that are not easy to categorize.

- What is the influence of infrastructure such as bridges and dykes on sediments?
- Bigger boats call for more dredging. From the point of view of SSM, this is unsustainable. There doesn't seem to be an end to this development.

Mr. Slob finished the discussion and thanked everyone for their contribution to the workshop, and especially the Port of Rotterdam for their hospitality. He also invited the participants to join the next workshop, which will be held on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2004 in Warsaw, Poland.