

Minutes of the International Seminar Making NFPs work: Procedural Aspects and Supporting factors: Working Group Meeting of Working Group 1 in Vienna 15-16 September 2003

Place: BOKU University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences

Participants: Johan Barstad (Norway), Jean Coursel (France), Pedro Ochoa de Carvalho (Portugal), Antonio Morcillo, Zhijian Cai (Germany), Karl Hognl (Austria), Josef Hackl (Austria), Michael Pregernig (Austria), Noel Lust (Belgium), Dimitros Trakolis (Greece), Heikki Pajuola (Finland), Ilpo Tikkanen (Finland), Olav Gislernd (Norway), Margaret Shannon (USA), Sven Svensson (Sweden), Tamas Sverdlak (Hungary), Pocus Stamiszech (Poland), Ilpo Tikkanen (Finland), Heinder Schanz (Netherlands), Evelien Verbij (Netherlands), Ine Neven (Netherlands)

Time: Tuesday, 16 September 08:30-15:30

Minutes by: Josef Hackl & Ine Neven

Agenda: Social learning and iterative processes

1. 08.30 – 09.00 Opening an adoption of the agenda
2. 09.00 - 10.00 Presentation and discussion theoretical aspects:
 - ❖ Johan Barstad (Norway): Iterative processes and social Learning in regional planning
3. 10.00 – 10.20 Coffee break
4. 10.20 - 11.20 Presentation and discussion practical aspects:
 - ❖ Margaret Shannon (USA): What can we learn about processes of learning experimentation? Case Oregon
5. 11.20 – 12.30 Content - & process evaluation of the WG1 results
 - ❖ Ine Neven (Netherlands): How to keep our network alive? Signing up experiences & relevant subjects for future research and formulate conclusions and report of WG1
5. 12.30 – 14.00 Lunch
6. 14.00 – 15.00 Plenary session
 - ❖ Ine Neven (Netherlands): reports results of WG1 161103.

Opening an adoption of the agenda

Ine Neven welcomes the participants and opened the meeting of WG 1. The provisional agenda was discussed and fixed with slight amendments. Josef Hackl was volunteered to contribute to the minutes.

Presentation and discussion theoretical aspects: Johan Barstad (Norway): Iterative processes and social Learning in regional planning.

Johan Barstad presented a model, mainly developed on experiences at local levels (see paper). The challenge for social learning and/or regional capacity building is to integrate public, private interest and civil society. The spiral of learning process, in which Johan presents eight steps, starts with small ambitions but never from zero, there is always a historical background. Evolving the learning process is related to building trust. The presented model could be seen as precondition for success at least at local levels. However, success depends on learning to navigate in the process, getting to know other actors and building of trust. The personal internalisation of the process is a precondition for learning and increasing / creating new knowledge. Related to the step of creating common visions ("a united picture of the future") it was stated that ideally the group itself develops their own vision and strategy. Besides it is easier that each person / interest group itself develop strategy, agreements on procedural steps and transparency throughout the process are necessary as a collective action. To put strategy into actions prioritisation is needed (incl. resources positioning for work and benefits). To pin efficiently the responsibilities to actors, reflection within the represented organisation / institution / group is urgently needed. To exploit experiences gained during the process, an evaluation is useful. New learning and creation of new knowledge may follow. This comprises normally conflict mastering. Johan end with a statement: *the more fixed, the less successful a process is*

The **discussion** during and following the presentation addressed questions like: How to break trough fixation in the beginning? When is the process successful? How much time is needed for a learning strategy? What are the research and transition – costs? How to manage responsibilities in action contracts? What is degree of fixation in the process that makes it possible to build thrust and what kind of process rules are needed to be sure that the process is not hindered? What balance between divergence and convergence is needed to commit actors to common visions? How is reflection built into the process? And what should actors do to learn? Furthermore the question was discussed how long a momentum can be kept in a process.

Barstads experience related to processes of 6-12 months duration. Related to NFPs this could mean that it would be better to devide NFPs into sub-processes. It seems to be practical to meet 6 days a year, not more. Time and human resources are limiting factors, especially when a learning process with the organisations of the representatives is included. It was stressed that the cost-benefit relation is an extremely important issue (how to deal with resources and transaction costs?).

Presentation and discussion practical aspects: Margareth Shannon (USA): What can we learn about processes of learning experimentation? Case Oregon

Margaret Shannon's states that social learning is (a) to take information and (b) to do something, this means change behaviour!. In her definition of social learning different aspect are important like: it occurs (within relationships), it is about communication (dialogue creates new information), it is about new understanding (possibilities to better

work and change strategies to create visions and actions), it is about reflection (leading principle of learning). Single loop learning is about how the means are working, trial - and error approaches to monitoring and change strategies to better work. Double loop learning means questioning the goals and the organization and activating actors. Therefore strong leadership, engagement in society, re- imagination of future vision and re- defining goals are requested,

Margareth shows us several maps and background information on forest ownership structures of (national) forests in USA and tells us about the experiences with the planning of use of public forests in Oregon. It is a long term example of a 12 year process with different levels and many actors involved. Starting point of the demonstrated process in Oregon was knowledge - building on critters (Spotted Owl, salmon) and their endangerment respectively. *Science was driving the policy process* in which expert judgements were used to develop a change from island structures to habitats in a special planning structure and in which risk analysis were used to calculate the consequences for economy. Harvesting of forests on public land has been changed since then. Scientific based new spatial regional planning for scenarios for land-use has been initiated after a great flood in the Willamette Basin. The reduction of timber harvesting on federal land e.g. has consequences for timber price, employment, regional economy etc. Several key organisations have been involved in the process. Once more it seems obvious that iterative learning is a permanent process in which communication is of great importance.

The **discussion** during and following the presentation addressed questions like: In what way is science or can communication be the driving force in policy? Are there processes without social learning? Is social learning is dependant on a crisis and can this fact be a problem for getting NFPs started to work? And if there is a crisis (e.g. forest fire catastrophe), who has to learn? What positive and negative incentives are useful tools in a learning process? In her answer Margaret says that it was important in this process to see the shift from an analytical focus to incremental learning and reshaping behaviour. Transformation of landscape is not a social process! In her processes she creates issues if there are now accidents at hand. Especially the politicians and the mass media have to learn and become aware of the need for sustainable forestry. It is very good to notice that at this moment landowners stand up and built new relations to work on sustainable forestry.

Content - & process evaluation of the WG1 results

Ine Neven (Netherlands) asks the members of working group one to give their own perception on the following questions, to write them down on the white, green and blue papers and to put them on the wall. After that everybody could paste three stitches per subject to the most significant contribution of this evaluation. The most significant where the ones with the most stitches. These most important perceptions were discussed and presented in the report of WG 1

The first subject of evaluation: **What research questions are important for the near future as a follow up for cost- action?**

The most important answers:

- Relationship between scientific and practical knowledge
- Are NFP's the only solution? What might be the alternative?
- A quite theoretical but fruitfully approach of the core elements
- Positive milieu for information shearing

In the discussion it was relevant to point out that members were disappointed that the results were too small to act in FP6, but the members think that we are making a great chance that the results of WG 1 will play an important role in the trial for a joined proposal for the theme of Governance. Other perceptions written down:

- Questions about symbolic actors and mandated actors
- Future topics legitimating and representation;
- role of communication (means and methods in NFP's)
- How does NFP impose change on local level? Does local level relate to NFPs at all?
- To what extent can NFPs mediate between global/ local arena's ?
- Are NFPs still the appropriate policy strategy as the forest sector shrinks/changes?
- Do NFP's require central direction vs multiple loosely linked policy processes?
- A wide range of topics were dealt with; more informed about NFPs
- Lacking "state of the art" from public and regional planning
- Is it always forest sector that will lead such NFP- alike processes?
- Input in MCPFE/Vienna – timing!!
- Can social learning be an instrument to promote NFP?
- Future research on cross sectoral impacts; policies Who has read the report really?
- Do you see any impact nationally?
- How does a structure based on 4 essentials look like?
- Which disciplines could contribute to NFPs process in which stages?
- Bring rational actor + communicative theories together

The second subject of evaluation: **How to keep our network alive?**

The most important answers:

- Network was very trans-disciplinary – that good!!!
- Good possibility for younger researchers to get into networks
- Network the most important outcome
- Openness & feel at home
- Keep homepage in operation!!- up-dated (think of spiral)
- No hierarchy in the WG1

In the discussion it was relevant to point out that even members who are outsiders of the forest sector, could feel at home, because openness and democratic style of the process of WG1. Other perceptions written down:

- Good basis for future co-operation (partnership)
- Dissemination towards and involvement of different context groups is needed
- Embracing outsiders
- Institutional and .. Matters absent (future network)
- Possibility to enter European forest policy network
- New research questions/ locations/
- New research partners for writing
- Working groups setting was oke – more coordination between groups needed
- What happened with the people in Italy?
- network

Third subject of evaluation: **What are your perceptions and feelings about working in groups and subgroups**

The most important answers:

- Combination theoretical consideration and practical evidence leading to propositions – good
- Commitment of most of us !!
- Challenging to work with this new process design of making propositions and statements
- Makes it successful to come to a policy-advice
- High degree of communication; many good presentations (theory and practice)
- Good feeling

In the discussion it was relevant to point out that it was very important that this working group discussed a lot about a lot of presentations and research and most of all about how to come to a policy advice. It challenges to reformulated knowledge into a management tool, in doing things. Other perceptions written down:

COST-Action E19: "National Forest Programmes in a European Context"
Working Group 1: Elements and procedural requirements of NFPs

- More communication between the meetings
- Contact with colleges
- Interactive innovative good basis for future co-operation
- Adequate working groups found
- Productive in smaller groups more efficient than large groups
- Positive climate in wg1
- Interesting mix of biology , technical and social science input
- To long for finding approach

Ine Neven
Chairmen, Working Group 1

Josef Hackl
Keeper of the minutes

Wageningen, 15 December 2003