

The Effectiveness of Multi-stakeholder Dialogues on Water

Reflections on experiences in the Rhine, Mekong, and Ganga-Brahmaputhra-Meghna river basins

Patrick Huntjens, Louis Lebel, and Brian Furze

Abstract

Multi-stakeholder dialogues aim to create and support spaces, in which meaningful conversations can take place among diverse stakeholder groups. A key notion is that dialogues can inform and help shape more formal negotiation and decision-making processes by bringing in a wider range of perspectives on needs, impacts and options, and having them deliberated openly. We studied three dialogues about water resources management and development issues in three parts of the world: the Rhine, Mekong, and Ganga-Brahmaputhra-Meghna river basins. In each case, the primary unit of analysis was a particular dialogue or cluster of closely related dialogues, each triggered by different factors (context related) and usually part of a larger process. A set of shared questions covering initiation, format, content, and outcomes was used to guide the analysis of each case. Effectiveness was evaluated in terms of evidence of meaningful conversations, shared understanding, and influence on negotiations or decisions. Effectiveness of dialogues clearly depends not just on the quality of participation and facilitation, as is widely recognized, but also on preparation by conveners and follow-up actions of participants around main events. It also appears that contextual factors may modify substantially the forms and effectiveness of common dialogue strategies, which deserves further systematic exploration. This study shows that it is possible to draw comparative insights about the dialogues by using relatively simple questions about principle events.

Keywords

Water resources management, water governance, negotiation, decision-making process, sustainable development, effectiveness, multi-stakeholder dialogues, social learning



The Effectiveness of Multi-stakeholder Dialogues on Water

Reflections on experiences in the Rhine, Mekong and Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna river basins

Patrick Huntjens, Louis Lebel, and Brian Furze

About the Authors

Dr. Patrick Huntjens is head of Water Diplomacy within the Conflict Prevention Program at The Hague Institute for Global Justice, The Netherlands. He has led a variety of international projects on water and climate diplomacy and governance in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, eastern Europe, and Africa. Eighteen years of experience includes more than forty countries and issues related to water governance and diplomacy, climate security and justice, mediation and negotiation, institutional strengthening, conflict prevention, governance of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. Huntjens focuses on strengthening the conceptual foundations and practical value of adaptive approaches to water management and water governance in changing environments and has written for more than fifty publications.

Dr. Louis Lebel is the current and founding director of the Unit for Social and Environmental Research (USER) at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University, Thailand. Currently a member of the international steering committee of the Earth System Governance Project, Lebel is on the editorial board of several journals including *Ecology & Society*, *Global Environmental Change*, *Mountain Research and Development*, and *WIREs Climate Change and Sustainability*. His interests include global environmental change, livelihoods, public health, development studies, aquaculture, water consumption, and water governance. He has led several comparative studies and contributed significantly to research networks in the Southeast Asia region, among them the Mekong Program on Water, Environment and Resilience (M-POWER) and the Sustainable Mekong Region Network (SUMERNET).

Dr. Brian Furze is senior technical advisor for South Asia at the IUCN India Office in New Delhi, India. Dr. Furze comes with many years of experience both in the field as a practitioner (predominantly in South Asia) and as an academic (mostly in the Australian University system). His main focus has been on the socioeconomic and political dimensions to natural resource management and use, from local to national and transnational levels. Over the years, he has worked in projects focused on river-basin management, adaptation and resilience to climate change, forestry, protected area management, ecotourism as an integrated conservation-development-livelihood security strategy, pastoralism, and landscape-biodiversity conservation.

**The Hague Institute
for Global Justice**
Sophialaan 10
2514 JR The Hague
The Netherlands

t +31 (0)70 30 28 130
e info@TheHagueInstitute.org
w TheHagueInstitute.org
t @HagueInstitute

Acknowledgments

Louis Lebel thanks John Dore for sharing his experiences and expertise with multi-stakeholder platforms, and the International Fund for Science for support for an earlier workshop on dialogues that inspired the analysis in this paper. Patrick Huntjens thanks the following persons for sharing their experiences: Jos Pierey (the moderator of the planning process from 2004 to 2006), Arjen Otten

secretary of the IJsseldelta South project), Nico Butterman (Municipality of Kampen), Hans Brouwer (Rijkswaterstaat), Chris Griffioen (Water board Groot Salland), Mr. S. van der Bruggen (Vereniging Streekbelangen Kamperveen). Brian Furze thanks the E4L teams of Bangladesh and India, who were crucial in facilitating the E4L approach and its outcomes, and Dr. Bob Fisher for his ever-useful comments and discussions.

<http://www.TheHagueInstituteForGlobalJustice.org/working-paper-10>

About The Hague Institute for Global Justice

The Hague Institute for Global Justice is an independent, nonpartisan institution established to undertake interdisciplinary policy-relevant research, develop practitioner tools, and convene experts and policymakers to facilitate knowledge sharing. Through this work, the Institute aims to contribute to and further strengthen the global framework for preventing and resolving conflict and promoting international peace.

About The Hague Institute Working Paper Series

The aim of the Hague Institute working papers series is to provide an outlet for authors to make original, rigorous, and policy-relevant research available publically. Each Hague Institute working paper is peer reviewed by at least two experts, one internal to and one external to The Hague Institute.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this paper are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Hague Institute for Global Justice, any other individual, or any other organization.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Multi-stakeholder dialogues or platforms aim to create and support spaces, in which meaningful conversations can take place among diverse stakeholder groups. A key notion is that dialogues can inform and help shape more formal planning, negotiation and decision-making processes by bringing in a wider range of perspectives on needs, impacts, and options, and having them deliberated openly. Dialogues themselves need not result in consensus, but—when well conducted—should help manage conflicts, empower disadvantaged groups, and support social learning.¹

Multi-stakeholder dialogues vary in format, but usually include facilitated face-to-face meetings. Who participates is a significant design and analytical issue. A stakeholder can be defined to include all persons, groups, and organizations having or showing an interest in an issue. Conveners and actors may exclude others by narrowing the definition: for example, considering only individuals directly affected by a proposed project or those who can formally influence an outcome. Stakeholders may include individual citizens and companies, economic and public interest groups, government bodies, and experts. Some formats are only suited to small numbers of individuals, so issues of representation need to be addressed; others can handle much larger number of participants, but often at the expense of lower levels of interaction.²

Another important format issue is how facilitation, meeting structure, and venues influence the openness and multidirectionality of conversations that can take place. In practice, interaction between stakeholders, or between public and government, can be managed many ways.³ However, more meaningful participatory processes involve social learning and an exchange of information between stakeholders that is linked to management decisions.⁴ Successful mechanisms in this respect include the use of interactive techniques, such as workshops,⁵ focus groups and group model building,⁶ and scenario development.⁷ In each of these mechanisms, social learning is facilitated, and information flows between different stakeholders are multidirectional.

1 Cees Leeuwis and Rhiannon Pyburn, *Wheelbarrows Full of Frogs* (Asseb: Koninklijke Van Gorcum, 2002); Jeroen Warner, "More Sustainable Participation?" *Water Resources Development* 22, no. 1. (2006): 15–35.

2 Hilary Coulby, *A Guide to Multistakeholder Work*, The Water Dialogues, May 2009.

3 Dave Huitema, Marleen van de Kerkhof, Erna Ovaa, and Leontien Bos-Gorter, "Innovative Approaches to Public Participation in Water Management," in *Water Policy in The Netherlands: Integrated Management in a Densely Populated Delta*, ed. Henk Folmer and Stijn Reinhard, 225–48 (Washington, DC: Resources for the Future Press, 2009); Gene Rowe and Lynn Frewer, "Public participation methods: A framework for evaluation," *Science, Technology & Human Values* 25, no. 1 (2005): 3–29.

4 Lindsay C. Stringer, Andrew J. Dougill, Evan Fraser, Klaus Hubacek, Christina Prell, and Mark S. Reed, "Unpacking 'participation' in the adaptive management of social-ecological systems: A critical review," *Ecology and Society* 11, no. 2 (2006): 39.

5 For example, Carl Walters, Josh Korman, Lawrence E. Stevens, and Barry Gold, "Ecosystem Modeling for Evaluation of Adaptive Management Policies in the Grand Canyon," *Conservation Ecology* 4, no. 2 (2000): 1.

6 Patrick Huntjens, *Water Management and Water Governance in a Changing Climate* (Delft: Eburon Academic Publishers, 2011); Patrick Huntjens, Bouke Ottow, and Ralph Lasage, "Participation in Climate Adaptation in the Lower Vam Co River Basin in Vietnam," in *Action Research for Climate Change Adaptation: Developing and Applying Knowledge for Governance*, ed. Arwin van Buuren, Jasper Eshuis, and Mathjis van Vliet (London: Routledge, 2014).

7 Garry S. Peterson, Graeme S. Cumming, and Stephen R. Carpenter, "Scenario planning: A tool for conservation in an uncertain world," *Conservation Biology* 17, no. 2 (2003): 358–66; Pahl-Wostl 2002; van den Belt 2004.

The knowledge content of a dialogue is also critical—what topics and issues are covered and what knowledge participants draw on in forming their arguments. This often depends on access to scientific and experienced-based knowledge.⁸ At the same time, deliberative opportunities—time to question, seek clarification, discuss assumptions, and examine arguments—are thought to be critical for dealing with contested knowledge claims, and to explore alternatives and poorly known risks and interests.⁹

In the field of water resources development and management, multi-stakeholder dialogue has become popular. The World Commission on Dams was a particularly large dialogue.¹⁰ Many other organizations have convened similar events.¹¹ Expectations from such dialogues are often higher than achievements, especially once participants demand more than just sharing of information and improved understanding.¹² It is not clear whether such demands were because dialogues were poorly conducted, or because circumstances and other factors were in some way lacking. Multi-stakeholder dialogues need to be reflected upon more critically.

One apparent risk to the effectiveness of these dialogues is a high degree of “overcrowding” of each (formerly autonomous) policy sector as stakeholders from other policy communities demand and gain entry.¹³ Overcrowding increases complexity, shown by examples during implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive.¹⁴ Britta Kastens and Jens Newig find that participation structures were developed that included too many participants to make constructive work possible underlining the need for additional studies to find viable pathways for institutionalized stakeholder participation.¹⁵ A consequence of this overcrowding might be that far-reaching stakeholder processes do not have the envisaged or expected influence on higher governance levels or implementation of measures at the local scale.¹⁶ Hence, there is a need for improved understanding of how long-term stakeholder participation can encourage the achievement of sustainable development goals. Policy communities and networks may become linked in a rather messy and unpredictable chain of actors, who do not know each other well and who do not speak the same “language.”¹⁷ Of special importance is that they may bring quite different policy frames to the table, that is, they have very different policy or cultural frames through which they view the real world.¹⁸ Such large and diverse collections of stakeholders may be a network only in the very loosest of senses. They inhabit the same policy area or domain but only minimal interaction occurs.¹⁹

8 Minu Hemmati, *Multi-stakeholder processes for governance and sustainability: Beyond deadlock and conflict* (London: Earthscan, 2002); Huntjens, *Water Management*.

9 Hemmati, *Multi-stakeholder processes*; Huntjens, *Water Management*.

10 World Commission on Dams 2000; Minu Hemmati, “The World Commission on Dams as a multi-stakeholder process,” *Politics and the Life Sciences* 21, no. 1 (2002): 63–66.

11 John Dore, “Multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPS): Unfulfilled potential,” in *Democratizing water governance in the Mekong region*, ed. Louis Lebel, John Dore, Rajesh Daniel, and Yang Saing Koma, 197–226 (Chiang Mai: Mekong Press, 2007).

12 Warner, “More Sustainable Participation?”

13 Jeremy Richardson, “Government, Interest Groups and Policy Change,” *Political Studies* 48, no. 5 (2000): 1006–25.

14 Britta Kastens and Jens Newig, “Will participation foster the successful implementation of the water framework directive? The case of agricultural groundwater protection in northwest Germany,” *Local Environment* 13, no. 1 (2008): 27–41.

15 *Ibid.*

16 Tomas M. Koontz and Jens Newig, “Cross-level information and influence in mandated participatory planning: Alternative pathways to sustainable water management in Germany’s implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive,” *Land Use Policy* 38 (2014): 594–604.

17 Richardson, “Government, Interest Groups and Policy Change.”

18 Donald A. Schön and Martin Rein, *Frame Reflection. Toward the Resolution of Intractable Policy Controversies* (New York: Harper Collins, 1994); Neil Fligstein, “Social Skill and Institutional Theory,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 40 (1997): 397–405.

19 Richardson, “Government, Interest Groups and Policy Change.”

1.2 Research Objective and Design

In this paper, we adopt a broad definition of multi-stakeholder dialogue, accepting at face value the claims of conveners that they aim to create and support spaces in which meaningful conversations can take place among stakeholder groups. Our main objective was to evaluate how a dialogue is initiated, structured (format), informed (content), and followed up (outcome) in order to help explain its effectiveness.

The study focused on three series of multi-stakeholder water dialogues (

Table 1. Selected dialogue processes

). In each case, the main unit of analysis was a particular event or cluster of closely related events, usually part of a larger process. The dialogues were chosen to represent a mixture of relatively state-led and dominated processes and others with greater civil-society engagement and control. Their geographical scope varied from small areas within one country to a multicountry region.

The *IJsseldelta* case in the Rhine Basin focuses on two important periods when public participation and stakeholder participation took place (2005 and 2006 respectively) while developing the master plan for IJsseldelta South, in the Overijssel province of the Netherlands. The area was confronted with a number of spatial challenges in water management, infrastructure, transport, urban extension, recreation, and nature conservation.

The *Mekong* case focuses on a regional event held in Lao PDR 2006, which was convened in response to a need for greater public consultation on several plans of multilateral agencies to expand investments in water infrastructure in the Mekong River basin. The dialogue was an alternative platform to those convened by the international organizations at the regional level, and was intended to influence how water governance and basin development planning were proceeding.

The *Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna* (GBM) case focuses on a series of dialogue events convened by IUCN within the Ecosystems for Life: A Bangladesh-India Initiative project (E4L), which promoted better understanding of the management of natural resources in Bangladesh and India. The focus in this paper is on the work undertaken on conservation of the important fish Hilsa. The Hilsa example highlights the E4L dialogue processes as stakeholders moved from identification of issues, to collaborative joint research, to policy-engagement, and ultimately to policy change and its implications.

<i>Dialogue</i>	<i>Geographical scope</i>	<i>Focal year events</i>
Design sessions for the master plan for IJsseldelta	The delta of the river IJssel in the western part of Overijssel province of the Netherlands	2005 and 2006
Exploring Water Futures Together: Mekong Region Waters Dialogue	Mekong Basin (Lao PDR, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, China & Thailand)	2006
Ecosystems for Life: An India-Bangladesh Initiative—Hilsa conservation	Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna Basin, in particular the transboundary region between India and Bangladesh.	2013 through 2014

To guide the analysis of the dialogues, we agreed on a set of shared questions (see table 2). These consider the triggers and preparatory activities leading up to the events that are the focus of the case study as well as the follow-up activities and contributions to outcomes. The primary data sources were documents about the dialogue events and interviews with participants, or conveners involved in their preparation, implementation, and follow-up. In all three cases, the authors were also in some way involved in the dialogue process, whether as facilitator, researcher, or expert consultant.

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Analytical questions</i>
Initiation	What triggered the dialogue? What was the stated purpose? Who convened? How was support mobilized?
Format	Who was invited to participate and who attended? Who spoke or wrote? What venue? What was the format of sessions? What was the structure (agenda) of the event? What kind of organizational and presentation formats were used? How were exchanges between participants facilitated?
Content	What information was made available to participants beforehand? Was it relevant? Was there enough time to review the input materials? Which issues and topics were addressed during the dialogue? Which were excluded or avoided? What kinds of evidence and arguments were used? Which assumptions were challenged and on what issues was their wider agreement? Did participants learn useful things from each other?
Outcome	How did conveners and participants follow up? How did the dialogue influence negotiations or decisions?

Evaluating the performance or the effectiveness of a dialogue is challenging. Identification and attribution of specific outcomes is often confounded by other social and political processes that surround dialogue interactions. In this study, we distinguished between procedural and outcome effectiveness, drawing on methods for assessing public participation.²⁰ For the procedural dimension, we focused on evidence that design and activities encouraged meaningful deliberation of alternatives.²¹ For outcomes, we emphasized evidence of learning by participants and influence on negotiations and decisions.

²⁰ Rowe and Frewer, "Public participation methods."

²¹ Dore, "Multi-stakeholder platforms."

2 Initiation

The three dialogues had distinct beginnings, each characterized by either specific triggers or windows of opportunity, which some actors were prepared for and used to launch or engage in a dialogue. We first look at each of the dialogues individually and then draw some brief comparisons related to initiation.

The IJsseldelta dialogue was triggered by a new policy. In December 2003, the minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment (VROM), invited all provinces to identify sample or pilot projects to be included in the National Spatial Strategy (Nota Ruimte).²² This strategy articulated a policy shift from “imposing restrictions” to “promoting developments” and decentralized spatial planning. At the same time, it consolidated water management as a fundamental principle of spatial planning. Less detailed regulation by central government meant fewer barriers and greater latitude for other levels of government, members of the public, and the private sector to influence development planning. Early 2004, the province of Overijssel took the opportunity offered by Nota Ruimte to launch the IJsseldelta project. The project comprised two subprojects: National Landscape IJsseldelta and IJsseldelta South. This paper focuses on the multi-stakeholder dialogues of IJsseldelta South. The labeling as a pilot project explicitly articulated the wish to develop a master plan together with stakeholders, covering usually distinct issues of urban extension, infrastructure development, and water management. The project was launched in 2004.

The Mekong dialogue was triggered by draft strategies and plans of multilateral organizations, which appeared to usher in a new era of large-scale water infrastructure development but without adequate public consultation. In July 2006, the World Conservation Union, the Thailand Environment Institute, the International Water Management Institute, and the Mekong Program on Water Environment and Resilience (M-POWER), convened in Vientiane, Laos, the conference Mekong Region Waters Dialogue: Exploring Water Futures Together.²³ The regional platform was organized to “provide an opportunity for high-quality, multi-faceted debate and learning that will contribute to improving water governance in the Mekong Region.” A key part of the meeting asked participants to evaluate the role and performance of the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and the Mekong River Commission in basin development with a focus on the Mekong Water Resources Assistance Strategy²⁴ and the Mekong River Commission’s draft strategic plan. The idea was not to replace any public consultations but to begin an exchange of views on their content, the roles of these international organizations, and other critical water governance issues in the region.

The E4L initiative contains a process of dialogues to first scope, through joint research and policy engagement, mutually identify challenges or concerns. In the case of *Hilsa* conservation, a dialogue identified the importance of the fish to livelihoods, for export earnings and culturally, especially for the regional Bengali and Bangladeshi populations. Stakeholders were identified and invited to the dialogue based on the project’s extensive existing networks and partners. Participants with a variety of expertise—not only in technical aspects of *Hilsa* conservation—were engaged.

22 VROM, *Nota Ruimte—Ruimte voor ontwikkeling* (Den Haag: Ministry of Spatial Planning, Housing and the Environment, 2004).

23 IUCN, TEI, IWMI, and M-POWER, “Exploring Water Futures Together: Mekong Region Waters Dialogue,” Report from Regional Dialogue (Bangkok: World Conservation Union, Thailand Environment Institute, International Water Management Institute, Mekong Program on Water, Environment & Resilience, 2007); “Exploring Water Futures Together: Resource Papers from Regional Dialogue” (Bangkok, 2007).

24 World Bank, “Mekong Water Resources Assistance Strategy” (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2006).

Each of the dialogues arose in a particular context where some key actors were prepared and waiting for an opportunity to bring together various other actors to discuss issues they considered critical. Thus an alliance of actors in the Mekong region was already cooperating to lift the standard of constructive engagement in the public sphere about significant water decisions before the planning of the regional dialogue. In November 2004, several members of this alliance helped set up and then participated as keynote speakers and facilitators in a half-day roundtable in Bangkok *Using Water, Caring for Environment: Challenges for the Mekong Region*. The session was attended by almost fifty development donors and senior government officials (ministers) from Mekong region countries and was co-hosted by the Thai minister of Natural Resources and Environment and the IUCN. In the IJsseldelta, stakeholders realized that it was no longer possible to find a solution to various water management and planning challenges using sectoral approaches.²⁵ The launch of a new policy on special planning projects created a platform meeting a real need. In the E4L case, the context of the dialogue was framed by two considerations. First was the joint research that had been undertaken and was to be disseminated with policy recommendations. Second was that before the meeting the government of West Bengal had issued notifications about a change to the ban period for Hilsa fishing.

In summary, dialogues were convened in response to a combination of triggers and background activities. The immediate triggers were different; a new policy, a legal requirement, a drought and investment plans, and a change in regulations coincident with availability of new research findings. As subsequent sections make clear, the initiation of multi-stakeholder dialogues had important consequences for format, content, and outcomes.

²⁵ Peter van Rooy, Ab van Luin, and Emile Dil, *Nederland Boven Water—Praktijkboek Gebiedsontwikkeling* (Gouda: Habiforum, 2006), 85.

3 Format

The basic issues in dialogue format are who participates and how participation is structured and facilitated.

3.1 Participation

Convening power is important to success of a dialogue because it influences who accepts invitations to participate and what effort they put into making it work. This is typically an outcome of the initiation process.

The process of developing the master plan for IJsseldelta South included two important periods of public and stakeholder participation. In the first (from April 7 to May 14, 2005), six weeks of public participation unfolded in three stages: information supply, discussion (public hearing and debates), and opinion. During the information supply phase, project staff presented five scenarios to the public. Citizens and stakeholders were able to provide feedback during the public hearings, which included ample time for discussion, including individual and group debates, and questions from the audience. The end of the first period was marked by the submission of the sixth scenario, which was developed by citizens of the town of Kamperveen and nearby areas, with support from experts provided by the project group. The second period was from February to March 2006, when the so-called design sessions (*ontwerpsessies*) were organized. The main objective of design sessions was to further develop the master plan, based on the building blocks and sixth scenario developed previously. This phase took almost two months, including preparation, implementation, evaluation, and reporting activities, though the design sessions themselves took only one full day.

Although the province of Overijssel plays a major role in the project in helping direct the planning process, it very much depends on others. In fact, the plan for the IJsseldelta was developed in close cooperation with stakeholders, such as the municipalities, neighboring provinces, water boards, and regional nongovernmental organizations. The municipality of Kampen, the water board Groot-Salland, and the province of Flevoland are the most important partners. The national government has a decisive position in the project as well, however. Involved national ministries include the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment; the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality; and the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management. Last but not least, the public was mobilized to participate.

In the Mekong dialogue, nonstate actors from local communities, academia, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector participated in discussions with government officials and representatives of multilateral agencies.²⁶ The main dialogue lasted two full days and was held in Vientiane. Participants with a base in either Thailand or Laos made up 64 percent of the participants, and altogether 86 percent came from the Mekong River basin countries.

The E4L regional policy dialogue included participants representing researchers and experts, the fisheries departments of both West Bengal and Bangladesh, fisher communities from both West Bengal and Bangladesh, media from both countries, and communications professionals from West Bengal. Experts were an integral part of the processes. For researchers, their research was applied to both policy-advocacy and livelihood security. Experts external to the research team were used in peer review processes, in dissemination dialogues, and in policy-

26 IUCN et al., "Resource Papers from Regional Dialogue."

advocacy dialogues. The dissemination and policy dialogues brought experts together with policymakers, community stakeholders, and others so that research was grounded both in terms of taking forward policy engagement and of community relevance.

The dialogues shared some features in composition. Formal presentations by national government officials in the Mekong dialogue were relatively low, less than 20 percent. Women made up about 30 percent of the participants in the Mekong and E4L dialogues, but a much smaller proportion of speakers in the Mekong. In dissemination and policy advocacy dialogues, women's representation was even lower, approximately 20 percent. Another limitation identified in the E4L process was that consumer groups were not represented—an important omission given that consumers have a significant responsibility in the conservation of Hilsa.

3.2 Structure

The first period of the IJsseldelta dialogue shows two clear shifts in communication: from one-way during information supply to multidirectional during public hearings and debates, then back to one-way during stakeholder questionnaires and letters to the project group. The second period was characterized by multidirectional communications throughout. In general, interactions were characterized by open dialogue, with parity of voice across all the key stakeholders based on jointly developed plans (such as planning scenarios and building blocks), and cooperation based on mutual respect and mutual benefits.

Key to the Mekong format were one-hour sessions with pairs of keynote speakers: one from the main regional agency, the other an analyst. Breakout sessions on the second day looked specifically at the plans of the three targeted agencies. Other breakout sessions looked at more specific water governance issues—such as hydropower, irrigation, and fisheries—and different ways to improve water governance.²⁷ One challenge and weakness was that the main language was English, which was not the first language of many participants. Simultaneous translation services might have allowed more diverse group of participants to attend and changed the balance of contributions in discussions, though facilitators were aware of the challenge and made substantial efforts to give all around the many tables an equal chance to speak.

The E4L dialogue was structured so that its first session focused on the research and the second on the implications of the research in terms of the policy changes. In the context of managing dialogue processes, the second session was particularly insightful. People were assigned to tables to ensure a healthy mix of government officials, fishing community representatives, researchers and experts, and communications professionals. Each table was asked to identify implications of the policy recommendations and how an awareness campaign could be developed that focused on civil society actors.

3.3 Facilitation

One indicator of quality of a dialogue is multidirectional conversation. Participants in the IJsseldelta dialogue remarked on the shift between the first and second periods from one-directional to multi-directional. Breakout sessions and smaller roundtables generally gave participants substantial opportunities to contribute in the Mekong dialogues, much more so than was usually possible in plenaries. Public hearings and debates provided some opportunities for two-way conversations. Submissions by stakeholders in parts of the IJsseldelta process were obviously more one-way, however. The IJsseldelta dialogue involved

²⁷ IUCN et al., "Report from Regional Dialogue."

more discrete iterations of interaction among participants than the other dialogues. This allowed new ideas to be introduced, argued through, and eventually accepted. In much shorter or largely one-off interactions, these possibilities are far more constrained. At the same time, this difference between dialogue cases is partly an artifact of where in time the boundaries of a dialogue are drawn. In the Mekong dialogue, several stakeholders had interacted with each other before and after the regional event in other venues, underlining that lobbying, negotiation, and learning are often ongoing.

Several of the dialogues had special ways to deal with experts. During the second period in the IJsseldelta dialogues, four design groups with stakeholders and citizens were created, each including at least one spatial planner or urban developer or architect per group able to visualize the inputs. At the same time, a separate group that included only experts could be consulted by the design groups to answer questions. This group of experts was also created to prevent the design groups from being dominated by experts. In the lead-up event to the Mekong dialogue, specific roundtables were allocated to high officials with planned seating arrangements and facilitators. A similar strategy was used in one of the follow-up workshops, where scenarios were built with participants of the north-south economic corridor project. In the E4L case, interactions needed to be facilitated carefully to ensure that experts did not dominate the dialogue.

The dialogues were facilitated by either E4L staff members or members of its Project Advisory Committee and thus reflected the broader experiences of E4L and its processes. The connection between the dialogue and the project goals was therefore clear, and when stakeholders came together they saw familiar faces.

Evaluation of the dialogue processes by participants varied. In the IJsseldelta dialogue, participants were quite positive about the multi-stakeholder process because it created more understanding for each other's positions and interests. They were also appreciative of the carefully planned input of knowledge and information by thematic experts. In the Mekong dialogue, participants concluded that it was a suitable place to "inform and be informed" but also complained about lack of time to engage fully with complex issues. A few participants, including the conveners, were concerned that the event might "legitimize the draft strategic plans of MRC, ADB, and the World Bank." The conveners wrote formal letters to these organizations indicating that the dialogue should not be considered a replacement for a more extensive public consultation on their plans.²⁸ E4L's experience was a combination of the IJsseldelta and the Mekong. Participants appreciated the opportunity to discuss, share, and learn, something that required some facilitation in the policy dialogues. However, time was a constraint. A balance was needed in the dialogue between research presentation and policy advocacy discussion, and time management for the more formal presentations was a challenge.

In summary, the role of the facilitator and the structure of the dialogue was extremely important to the procedural effectiveness of all three dialogues. Despite attention and diversity of formats, a recurrent challenge was preventing domination of conversations by particular individuals and ensuring adequate time to consider complex information and arguments. The process of selecting participants is clearly very important to which issues are likely to be addressed; the quality of facilitation, in turn, is important for how well those issues are deliberated.

²⁸ Ibid.

4 Content

Content refers to the information supplied to participants, issues or topics addressed, and the kinds of arguments made. The three dialogues studied dealt with different water-related management or development issues.

The spatial planning challenges in the IJsseldelta are complex and potentially conflicting. Because of this complexity, the moderator of the process introduced five planning models (scenarios) project staff were developing at the time. During development, a large group of stakeholders was already involved as a feedback group. The models were a starting point for interaction during the multi-stakeholder process. Some professionals felt their interests were not being represented clearly, but the approach was well received by most. The moderator was convinced that such an interaction would yield a better plan. During the early information sessions, considerable resistance against the proposed plans arose. In reaction, the province—notably Deputy Rietkerk—supported inhabitants who wanted to develop other plans. Inhabitants of Kamperveen submitted an alternative (scenario 6), because the river bypass in the other scenarios affected their local community. Scenario 6 gained support in the press and wider community. During the later sessions, ideas were discussed, experts consulted, and maps constructed. The maps from each group were presented, and a high level of consensus for certain solutions emerged.

The Mekong dialogue examined the roles and regional strategies of the Mekong River Commission (MRC), Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank. It also provided opportunities for alternative perspectives on water resources development to be articulated and other critical water governance issues in the Mekong region to be raised. The final working session focused on ways to improve water governance in the region. The knowledge inputs were collected and published as a set of resource papers; some contributions were in the form of power point presentations and others were short analytical essays.²⁹ A key draft document—the Mekong Water Resources Assistance Strategy—was released to the public only shortly before the dialogue.³⁰ Many participants complained that it should have been available earlier so that it could have been properly studied before the dialogue.

The two key dialogues for Hilsa conservation within the E4L process were related to research dissemination and policy advocacy. The dissemination dialogue provided a mechanism by which the research, its findings, and its policy recommendations were “ground-tested” by local people. Additionally, by the time of this dialogue, the government of West Bengal had already issued a notification that, in essence, made West Bengal’s ban period on Hilsa fishing more similar to that of Bangladesh. As a result, it was possible to take these discussions into specific directions—the need for livelihood security in the context of ban periods or ways to raise awareness of the ban periods, for example—so this dialogue was able to draw very clear policy and practice implications.

In each of the dialogues, expert knowledge played an important role, but how much expert knowledge was contested varied from dialogue to dialogue. In IJsseldelta, knowledge and information played an important role during the process and was at some points even crucial to making principled decisions. Knowledge input came from the twelve involved governments (often thematic experts) and a dozen consultancy firms and knowledge institutes. Even so, some believe that “the way knowledge is provided during the process

29 IUCN et al., “Resource Papers from Regional Dialogue.”

30 World Bank, “Mekong Water Resources Assistance Strategy.”

might be more important than the knowledge itself.”³¹ In each dialogue, knowledge about citizens and non-conventional bureaucratic or academic experts was important. In IJsseldelta dialogues, local residents contributed directly. In the Mekong dialogue, however, participation by civil society groups was high and raised awareness about the interests and rights of various marginalized livelihood groups, in particular, fishermen and small-scale farmers. In the GBM case, representatives of fishermen’s cooperatives and communities participated in dialogues dealing with the scoping of issues, research dissemination at national and regional levels, and the policy-advocacy dialogues. In these events, they were able to engage with other fishing community representatives, experts and government officials from both India and Bangladesh.

Conveners, in declaring the purpose of a dialogue and through the agenda and facilitator instructions, have a large influence on what topics can be effectively addressed. In the IJsseldelta case, the focus on building consensus around a plan also served as a strong filter on discussions. In the Mekong sessions, the framing was more through the topics covered by keynote speakers and the tasks set for discussion groups, such as analyzing the roles of a multilateral organization and its strategic development plan. In the GBM case, the focus was on research dissemination and policy advocacy. The main constraints here were to ensure that research was grounded meaningfully in local communities, and that policy implications were discussed in a positive and open, collaborative environment.

In summary, the content of a dialogue matters as much as the process for whether meaningful conversation takes place, and stakeholders really learn about each other’s perspectives on critical issues. To do so requires access to and effective use of scientific and experience-based knowledge. Preparing adequate background information for participants well in advance of key events, and providing ways of accessing additional information during them—through keynote talks, question-and-answer sessions, wandering experts, or documentation exhibits—all have a large influence on the quality and substance of the discussions. Participants evaluate the timeliness and quality of information organizers provide before, during, and after dialogues. Substantial effort is often needed to satisfy the information expectations of diverse participants in a multi-stakeholder process.

31 Arjen Otten and Jan Bakker, personal communication.

5 Outcomes

The potential pathways to impact for a dialogue depend on the plans of conveners and how participants choose to follow up on their interactions.

The sixth scenario was probably the most remarkable outcome of the IJsseldelta stakeholder dialogue. It was also, according to some of the participants, including the convener, also the most interesting learning experience. In IJsseldelta South, there was no way of knowing beforehand, based on the five planning scenarios, which one of them would appear on top. “That is how genuine stakeholder participation should be,” a moderator noted. The key output of the dialogue was a widely supported master plan completed in 2006. Within the master plan, the six spatial challenges in the area—housing, infrastructure, leisure, nature, agriculture, and river bypass—are combined and integrated. The result had become more than the sum of its parts. The master plan was broadly supported by the public because it was based on a draft of the bypass (the sixth scenario) made by the public (mostly farmers, assisted by planners and professionals). In 2007, an agreement was signed by eleven governmental organizations, the intention being to work together to implement the master plan, which eleven nongovernmental organizations supported. Recently, the spatial plans of the provinces of Overijssel and Flevoland were reviewed, a process that included a strategic environmental—impact—assessment (SEA). Within this SEA, several alternatives for the master plan were studied and the decision-making process that followed led to several modifications. The current plan resembles in almost every aspect the most environmentally friendly alternative of the SEA.

The initial outcomes of the Mekong dialogue were collected in a pair of reports that summarized the meeting findings and the resource papers.³² The dialogue contributed to the downplay and eventual disappearance of the Mekong Water Resources Assistance Strategy. It also triggered further interest in multi-stakeholder dialogue process, nationally and regionally. Follow-up meetings included a participatory scenario building exercise focused on exploring the Asian Development Banks’ plans for the north-south economic corridor as organized by M-POWER.³³ IUCN also organized several national-level follow-up activities. The Cambodian Water Working Group held twelve meetings and two study tours that emphasized irrigation and its interactions with other water users.

A key cross-cutting theme of the Mekong dialogue was the need for greater transparency and stakeholder participation in basin development planning.³⁴ The demonstration effect of the dialogue and follow-ups was important to phase 2 of the MRC’s Basin Development Plan, which was beginning to place much greater emphasis on multi-stakeholder engagement.³⁵ MRC organized the first regional stakeholder consultation forum on the second phase of the BDP program in Vientiane, Laos, on March 12–13, 2008.³⁶ Members from the water governance network M-POWER provided design and facilitation support and suggestions on the draft agenda to ensure adequate discussion of important topics. The key messages from the consultation, reaffirm the shift towards greater participation: “through an open BDP

32 IUCN et al., “Report from Regional Dialogue”, “Resource Papers from Regional Dialogue.”

33 Tira Foran and Louis Lebel, “Informed and fair? Water and trade futures in the border regions of mainland southeast Asia” (USER working paper WP-2007-02, Chiang Mai University, 2007).

34 IUCN et al., “Report from Regional Dialogue.”

35 MRC, *The MRC Basin Development Plan: Stakeholder Participation*, BDP Library Volume 5 (Vientiane: Mekong River Commission, 2005).

36 MRC, “Stakeholder Participation and Communication Plan for Basin Development Planning in the Lower Mekong Basin,” *Basin Development Plan Phase 2 Consultation Proceedings*, March 12–13, 2008, Vientiane, Lao PDR (Vientiane: Mekong River Commission, 2009).

process the MRC has earned greater trust and confidence from stakeholders and is committed to building ownership through genuine participation” and “developing workable participatory processes is more important than delivery of a Basin Development Plan at a specific point in time.”³⁷ Among many issues mentioned, the trade-off between hydropower development and fisheries was highlighted.³⁸ Climate change was also signaled as an issue that needs to be taken into account when exploring future water availability. A second regional stakeholder consultation forum, modeled on the first but with the MRC more firmly in control of agenda and facilitation, was held in mid-October 2009.

In *Ecosystems for Life*, by the time of the dialogue on policy, the government of West Bengal was issuing notifications, effectively aligning their actions for the conservation of Hilsa with that of Bangladesh, which was an important part of the policy recommendations of the joint research. Importantly, E4L was also able to facilitate ongoing dialogues between the two fisheries departments, resulting in the development of a Hilsa research center by the government of West Bengal.

The links between the dialogue and political process thus varied in important ways across the three case studies. In E4L, the link between the research dissemination and policy-advocacy dialogues was direct. Importantly, the rationale for the joint research approach ensured research was *joint*—that is, neither Indian research nor Bangladeshi research—and the policy recommendations it contained were both national and joint.

In the IJsseldelta case, the province and state, respectively, as convener was also in control, but the content of deliberations and influence on decisions was less predictable and dependent on stakeholder input. The close and relatively direct links to the political process, resulted in clear influence on plans and strategies. The Mekong case differs from the others, in that it is in a transboundary setting in which regional institutions are relatively weak compared with national-level arrangements. In the Mekong dialogue, the lack of direct and immediate links to decisions was important for sensitive topics to be raised and discussed. Intergovernmental discussions would not have been able to make much headway on some topics.

In summary, the products and other outcomes of a dialogue in the short and medium-term are enhanced by timely and quality follow-up by organizers, especially where the post-dialogue process is not already strongly institutionalized. Leadership, important in initiation, is also crucial to securing clear outcomes. Outcomes need to be assessed against the purpose of a dialogue, and expectations of organizers and participants. Expectations often exceed outcomes, especially after post-event enthusiasm has passed, suggesting that care is needed not to oversell the significance of dialogues in the wider political process. Transparency with respect to the boundary or relationship between the dialogue events and negotiations or decisions should be emphasized from the beginning but also be allowed to evolve as a consequence of dialogue interactions.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ See Richard Friend, Robert Arthur, and Marko Keskinen, “Songs of the Doomed: The Continuing Neglect of Capture Fisheries in Hydropower Development in the Mekong,” in *Contested Waterscapes in the Mekong Region: Hydropower, Livelihoods and Governance*, ed. Francois Molle, Tira Foran, and Mira Käkönen, 307–32 (London: Earthscan, 2009).

6 Discussion

Dialogues vary in how effectively they enable meaningful conversations among stakeholders, and what impact they have on policy or decisions. This paper has looked at three very different case studies to highlight how design and practice issues that arise in initiation, format, content, and outcomes influence effectiveness.

How and the context in which dialogues are initiated lay the foundations for what subsequently can be achieved. The immediate trigger for dialogue varied, but this in itself was not especially important to effectiveness because in each case some actor groups were prepared beforehand and could mobilize to use the space created. The notion of a perfectly neutral facilitator is a myth. The identity of the convener affects stakeholder perceptions of legitimacy, credibility, and independence. The actions of the conveners, including key design decisions, such as format or who was invited and who got to speak. All conveners drew on foundations of trust that enable an atmosphere of goodwill, even where issues discussed are contentious.

The dialogues, however, differed in the diversity of interests of those engaged in the conversations and thus the level of contested knowledge. Participants in the E4L dialogue had a common interest in conservation of Hilsa, even if stakeholder reasons to conserve or sustainably manage it differed, and thus range of interests was modest. The Mekong case was also transboundary but the breadth of interests and views on what constitutes desirable water resources development were large, and these differences were a key reason for dialogue in the first place. In both Mekong and E4L dialogues, the IUCN had an important role as co-convenor or facilitator and was able to create space for discussion, questions, and debates in an international context. Even so, a recurring challenge was providing fair opportunities for different participants to contribute; for instance, language was a major issue in both the Mekong and the E4L dialogues.

What issues are covered, and how well-informed and reasoned debates are in a dialogue is treated here as content. Most reflections on dialogues have focused on process issues, and not considered content issues as closely; we suggest that the quality of information provided to participants in all stages is also critical to effectiveness. Providing quality information requires preparation. For controversial topics that include contested knowledge claims, commissioning briefing papers or presentations from each side may help tease out the strongest arguments and key differences from the start. For less controversial issues, participants appreciate having access to experts to clarify basic information and understanding about relationships. Managing the flow of technical information through a dialogue process can help lift the quality and substance of debates by allowing focus to move from points of shared understanding and agreement to more difficult issues related to differences in assumptions, interests, and values.

As noted earlier, attributing particular policy or decision outcomes directly to a dialogue is often impossible given the myriad social processes at work around water resources development and related management issues. On the other hand, more immediate outcomes can be secured and identified in follow-up activities of conveners or organizers and sometimes also of participants. One of the challenges for conveners and supporters of multi-stakeholder dialogues is to set realistic expectations with respect to outcomes. On the one hand is a temptation to over-promise, so as to gain stronger contributions and enthusiasm for participation; on the other hand, doing so can create false hopes and lead to post-event disappointment.

Leadership is regularly identified as an important ingredient in successful dialogues. At the same time, it creates tension for deliberative objectives if leadership results in domination or too strong an effort to build consensus because key issues remain off the agenda and differences remain unresolved. Outcomes secured in these circumstances may be insecure. How tensions in leadership, facilitation, and meaningful participation are resolved is key.

Individuals often played an important role in securing interest in dialogue, keeping a conversation moving forward constructively, and securing decisions and next steps through proper follow-up. In the IJsseldelta case, according to Hans Brouwer from the Rijkswaterstaat, Provincial Deputy Rietkerk was able to keep things together and push the process forward. In the Mekong case, John Dore, then with IUCN Asia's Water and Wetlands Program and chair of the M-POWER network, used his social capital to secure participation of a diverse group of stakeholders that otherwise might never have met.

In GBM, the IUCN was able to leverage its honest broker and nonpolitical capital in both Bangladesh and India to bring together a range of stakeholders and government representatives. The dialogue itself, as in the M-POWER case, came after several years of research, during which the conveners had built extensive networks.

In IJsseldelta, the most important breakthrough was the way in which citizens and policymakers became committed to the project. The moderator of the process, Jos Pierey, reflected, "I have learned that people can be really motivated by letting them actively participate in the development of images or visions (e.g. the planning scenarios) of how the end result should look like." During the process, the citizens expressed on many occasions their frustration about not being taken seriously in the past by either the national or the provincial government, which some citizens called fake consultation rounds. This skepticism and lack of trust was considerable, and it took the moderator considerable effort to win the hearts and minds of these citizens. A sense of interdependency can be a powerful motivation for collaboration among stakeholders. In the IJsseldelta case, a participant noted "we need each other to achieve our goals."

Informal actor networks were visibly important in some dialogues but less so in others. Networks can connect actors in different ministries and countries and between government, private, and not-for-profit organizations. Networks were important in all phases of dialogues, including preparation and timely responses within an often-tight frame around key events as well as in follow-up.

The quality of participation is a function of many factors, including venues, session formats, how agendas are set, time and quality of briefing materials, and facilitation. It is still common practice for governments to sell predefined plans and call it participation or consultation (sometimes called a Decide and Defend approach. Facilitators and conveners have crucial roles in determining the meaningfulness of participation and depth of deliberation.

The line between facilitating engagements, convening negotiations, and advocating a particular interest is fine and sensed by others. Facilitators of learning exercises need to be ethical, honest, and respectful of other views, and to encourage similar values among participants. Helping stakeholders figure out for themselves what they need to know more about, is a key task for facilitators. As in other structured conversations, facilitators often

must work hard to encourage constructive debate and understanding and to avoid domination by individuals or small groups.³⁹

The capacity, influence, and power of stakeholders affects the ways they engage. Open, interactive, planning with numerous stakeholders requires a certain attitude and competencies. These competences include the ability to give and take, to wheel and deal, to go beyond its own stake or out-of-the-box thinking, to decide on outlines without knowing all the details, to compromise, to trust, and so on. But there are limits. In the IJsseldelta dialogue, conveners also felt that deadlines were important to increasing the speed of the process and to moving forward. The exercise could not be sustained for too long or citizen engagement would wane. The dilemma is that complex water problems may take considerable time for different parties to weigh and resolve. Who bears the costs of participation is thus a major design issue that depends on purpose and other incentives available.⁴⁰

This study had several important limitations. Only three cases were examined. The cases were compiled after the fact, and though in each case the authors were somehow either involved in the dialogue process or were able to carry out interviews with those who had been, the collection of data for different projects limited the depth of possible analysis. For simplicity, we selected as units of analysis, one or a tight cluster of closely related events as a focus of our analysis of dialogues. In practice, all of these cases were part of a much larger and less coherent collection of activities, meetings, and networking that might constitute a dialogue process. A more historical, long-term analysis of individual cases was beyond the scope of this paper, but undoubtedly would reveal further insights about building trust, the dynamics of relations, and changing understandings of the actors involved. Another important limitation was that effectiveness was not systematically assessed. Strong conclusions about the design of dialogues are thus not possible without more work.

This study demonstrates that it is possible to draw insights about the effectiveness of dialogues by using relatively simple questions to compare focal events across case studies. Effectiveness clearly depends not only on the quality of participation and facilitation, as is widely recognized, but also on the preparation by conveners and follow-up actions by conveners and participants. In addition, important contextual factors affect the effectiveness of common dialogue strategies and deserve further systematic exploration through comparative analysis. Other scholars have pointed out the importance, for example, of culture in water management.⁴¹ In the Mekong case, the constraint was a culture of government, in which key international organization and national governments were accustomed to deliberating with each other and international consultants, but not with a wider group of local stakeholders. In IJsseldelta, residents were initially mistrustful because central government agencies had not listened to them in the past, but when given a genuine opportunity to contribute, they were fully committed. In the GBM case, the project's logic in relation to evidence-based policymaking, as well as the a-political role of the IUCN, were clearly important to the success of the dialogue processes, not only in Hilsa conservation but in other project activities as well. More research about contextual factors and how they influence

39 Wouter Schaap and Snehangshu Nandi, "Beyond PRA: Experiments in facilitating local action in water management," *Development in Practice* 15, no. 5 (2005): 643–54; Eva Wollenberg, David Edmunds, and Louise Buyck, "Anticipating Change: Scenarios as a Tool for Adaptive Forest Management" (Bogor, Indonesia: Center for International Forestry Research, 2000).

40 Huitema et al., "Innovative Approaches."

41 Claudia Pahl-Wostl, David Tabara, Rene Bouwen, Marc Craps, Art Dewulf, Erik Mostert, Dagmar Ridder, and Tharsi Tailieu, "The importance of social learning and culture for sustainable water management," *Ecological Economics* 64, no. 3 (2008): 484–95.

mobilization of citizens, and the effectiveness of different dialogue formats and tactics is needed.

7 Conclusion

Engagement in water governance issues takes place at different levels and across different distances, from formal decisions to negotiations over plans, strategies, and allocation of benefits and risks. In water resources management and development, the luxury of consensus is rare, but willingness to cooperate and desire for integration is growing. Multi-stakeholder dialogues are a promising complement to more conventional top-down ways of exploring water management and resource development options, establishing rights and responsibilities, and working toward agreements on plans, strategies, and allocations. Consistently making dialogues more effective is an outstanding challenge. Critical and reflective comparative research on experiences with water dialogues could further improve water governance practices.

Works Cited

- Coulby, Hilary. *A Guide to Multistakeholder Work: Lessons from The Water Dialogues*. The Water Dialogues, May 2009. <http://www.waterdialogues.org/downloads/new/Guide-to-Multistakeholder.pdf>.
- Dore, John. “Multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPS): Unfulfilled potential.” In *Democratizing water governance in the Mekong region*, ed. Louis Lebel, John Dore, Rajesh Daniel, and Yang Saing Koma, 197–226. Chiang Mai: Mekong Press, 2007.
- Fligstein, Neil. “Social Skill and Institutional Theory.” *American Behavioral Scientist* 40 (1997): 397–405.
- Foran, Tira, and Louis Lebel. “Informed and fair? Water and trade futures in the border regions of mainland southeast Asia.” USER working paper WP-2007-02, Chiang Mai University, 2007. http://www.mpowernet.org/download_pubdoc.php?doc=3730.
- Friend, Richard, Robert Arthur, and Marko Keskinen. “Songs of the Doomed: The Continuing Neglect of Capture Fisheries in Hydropower Development in the Mekong.” In *Contested Waterscapes in the Mekong Region: Hydropower, Livelihoods and Governance*, ed. Francois Molle, Tira Foran, and Mira Käkönen, 307–32. London: Earthscan, 2009.
- Hemmati, Minu. *Multi-stakeholder processes for governance and sustainability: Beyond deadlock and conflict*. London: Earthscan, 2002.
- Hemmati, Minu. “The World Commission on Dams as a multi-stakeholder process.” *Politics and the Life Sciences* 21, no. 1 (2002): 63–66.
- Huitema, Dave, Marleen van de Kerkhof, Erna Ovaa, and Leontien Bos-Gorter. “Innovative approaches to Public Participation in Water Management.” In *Water Policy in The Netherlands: Integrated Management in a Densely Populated Delta*, ed. Henk Folmer and Stijn Reinhard, 225–48. Washington, DC: Resources for the Future Press, 2009.
- Huntjens, Patrick. *Water Management and Water Governance in a Changing Climate—Experiences and insights on climate change adaptation from Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia*. Delft: Eburon Academic Publishers, 2011.
- Huntjens, Patrick, Bouke Ottow, and Ralph Lasage. “Participation in Climate Adaptation in the Lower Vam Co River Basin in Vietnam.” In *Action Research for Climate Change Adaptation: Developing and Applying Knowledge for Governance*, ed. Arwin van Buuren, Jasper Eshuis, and Mathjis van Vliet. London: Routledge, 2014.
- IUCN, TEI, IWMI, and M-POWER. “Exploring Water Futures Together: Mekong Region Waters Dialogue.” Report from Regional Dialogue, Vientiane, Lao PDR. Bangkok: World Conservation Union, Thailand Environment Institute, International Water Management Institute, Mekong Program on Water, Environment & Resilience, 2007. http://www.mpowernet.org/Knowledge_Bank/Key_Reports/PDF/Dialogue_Reports/Mekong_Region_Waters_Dialogue_July_2006.pdf.
- . “Exploring Water Futures Together: Mekong Region Waters Dialogue.” Resource Papers from Regional Dialogue, Vientiane, Lao PDR. Bangkok: World Conservation Union, Thailand Environment Institute, International Water Management Institute,

- Mekong Program on Water, Environment & Resilience, 2007. http://www.mpowernetwork.org/Knowledge_Bank/Key_Reports/PDF/Dialogue_Reports/Mekong_Region_Waters_Dialogue_Resource_Papers.pdf.
- Kastens, Britta, and Jens Newig. "Will participation foster the successful implementation of the water framework directive? The case of agricultural groundwater protection in northwest Germany." *Local Environment* 13, no. 1 (2008): 27–41.
- Koontz, Tomas M., and Jens Newig. "Cross-level information and influence in mandated participatory planning: Alternative pathways to sustainable water management in Germany's implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive." *Land Use Policy* 38 (2014): 594–604.
- Leeuwis, Cees, and Rhiannon Pyburn, eds. *Wheelbarrows Full of Frogs*. Assen: Koninklijke Van Gorcum, 2002.
- Mekong River Commission (MRC). *The MRC Basin Development Plan: Stakeholder Participation*. BDP Library Volume 5. Vientiane: Mekong River Commission, 2005. <http://tnmckc.org/upload/document/bdp/2/2.5/05-Stakeh-particip.pdf>.
- . "Stakeholder Participation and Communication Plan for Basin Development Planning in the Lower Mekong Basin." Basin Development Plan Phase 2 Consultation Proceedings, March 12–13, 2008, Vientiane, Lao PDR. Vientiane: Mekong River Commission, 2009. <http://www.mrcmekong.org/assets/Other-Documents/BDP/SPCP-Final-July-2009-Final.pdf>.
- Pahl-Wostl, Claudia. "Participative and stakeholder-based policy design, evaluation and modeling processes." *Integrated Assessment* 3, no. 1 (2002): 3–14.
- Pahl-Wostl, Claudia, David Tabara, Rene Bouwen, Marc Craps, Art Dewulf, Erik Mostert, Dagmar Ridder, and Tharsi Tailieu. "The importance of social learning and culture for sustainable water management." *Ecological Economics* 64, no. 3 (2008): 484–95.
- Peterson, Garry S., Graeme S. Cumming, and Stephen R. Carpenter. "Scenario planning: A tool for conservation in an uncertain world." *Conservation Biology* 17, no. 2 (2003): 358–66.
- Richardson, Jeremy. "Government, Interest Groups and Policy Change." *Political Studies* 48, no. 5 (2000): 1006–25.
- Rooy, Peter van, Ab van Luin, and Emile Dil. *Nederland Boven Water—Praktijkboek Gebiedsontwikkeling*. Gouda: Habiforum, 2006.
- Rowe, Gene, and Lynn J. Frewer. "Public participation methods: A framework for evaluation." *Science, Technology & Human Values* 25, no. 1 (2000): 3–29.
- Rowe, Gene, and Lynn J. Frewer. "A typology of public engagement mechanisms." *Science, Technology & Human Values* 30, no. 2 (2005): 251–90.
- Schaap, Wouter, and Snehangshu Sekhar Nandi. "Beyond PRA: Experiments in facilitating local action in water management." *Development in Practice* 15, no. 5 (2005): 643–54.
- Schön, Donald A., and Martin Rein. *Frame Reflection. Toward the Resolution of Intractable Policy Controversies*. New York: Harper Collins, 1994.

-
- Stringer, Lindsay C., Andrew J. Dougill, Evan Fraser, Klaus Hubacek, Christina Prell, and Mark S. Reed. "Unpacking 'participation' in the adaptive management of social-ecological systems: A critical review." *Ecology and Society* 11, no. 2 (2006): 39. <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss2/art39/>.
- van den Belt, Marjan. *Mediated Modeling: A System Dynamics Approach to Environmental Consensus Building*. Washington, DC: Island Press, 2004.
- VROM. *Nota Ruimte—Ruimte voor ontwikkeling*. Den Haag: Ministry of Spatial Planning, Housing and the Environment, 2004.
- Walters, Carl, Josh Korman, Lawrence E. Stevens, and Barry Gold. "Ecosystem Modeling for Evaluation of Adaptive Management Policies in the Grand Canyon." *Conservation Ecology* 4, no. 2 (2000): 1. <http://www.consecol.org/vol4/iss2/art1/>.
- Warner, Jeroen F. "More Sustainable Participation? Multi-Stakeholder Platforms for Integrated Catchment Management." *Water Resources Development* 22, no. 1 (2006): 15–35.
- Wollenberg, Eva, David Edmunds, and Louise Buck. "Anticipating Change: Scenarios as a tool for adaptive forest management." Bogor, Indonesia: Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), 2006.
- World Bank. "Mekong Water Resources Assistance Strategy (MWRAS)." WB/ADB Joint Working Paper on Future Directions for Water Resources Management in the Mekong River Basin. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2006. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2006/06/6919704/mekong-water-resources-assistance-strategy-mwras>.