



The general framework for effective NGO/ stakeholder Involvement in the development of sustainable river and lake basin management plans

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Regional workshop

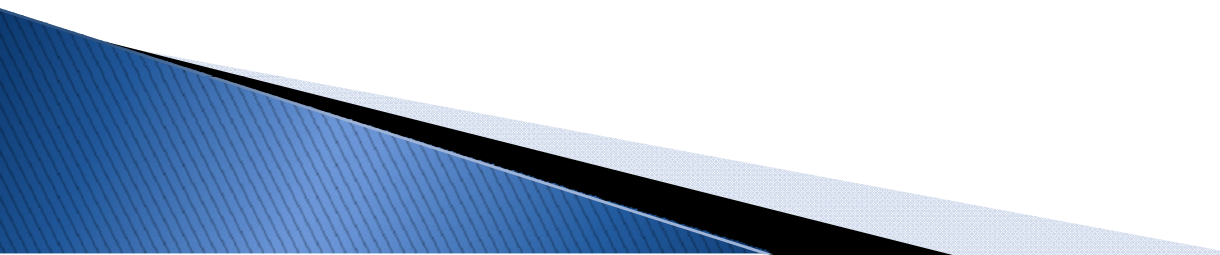
*“Sustainable management of river and lake basins: Empowering NGOs for a
coordinated effective involvement”, Ohrid, 4th November 2010*

Background

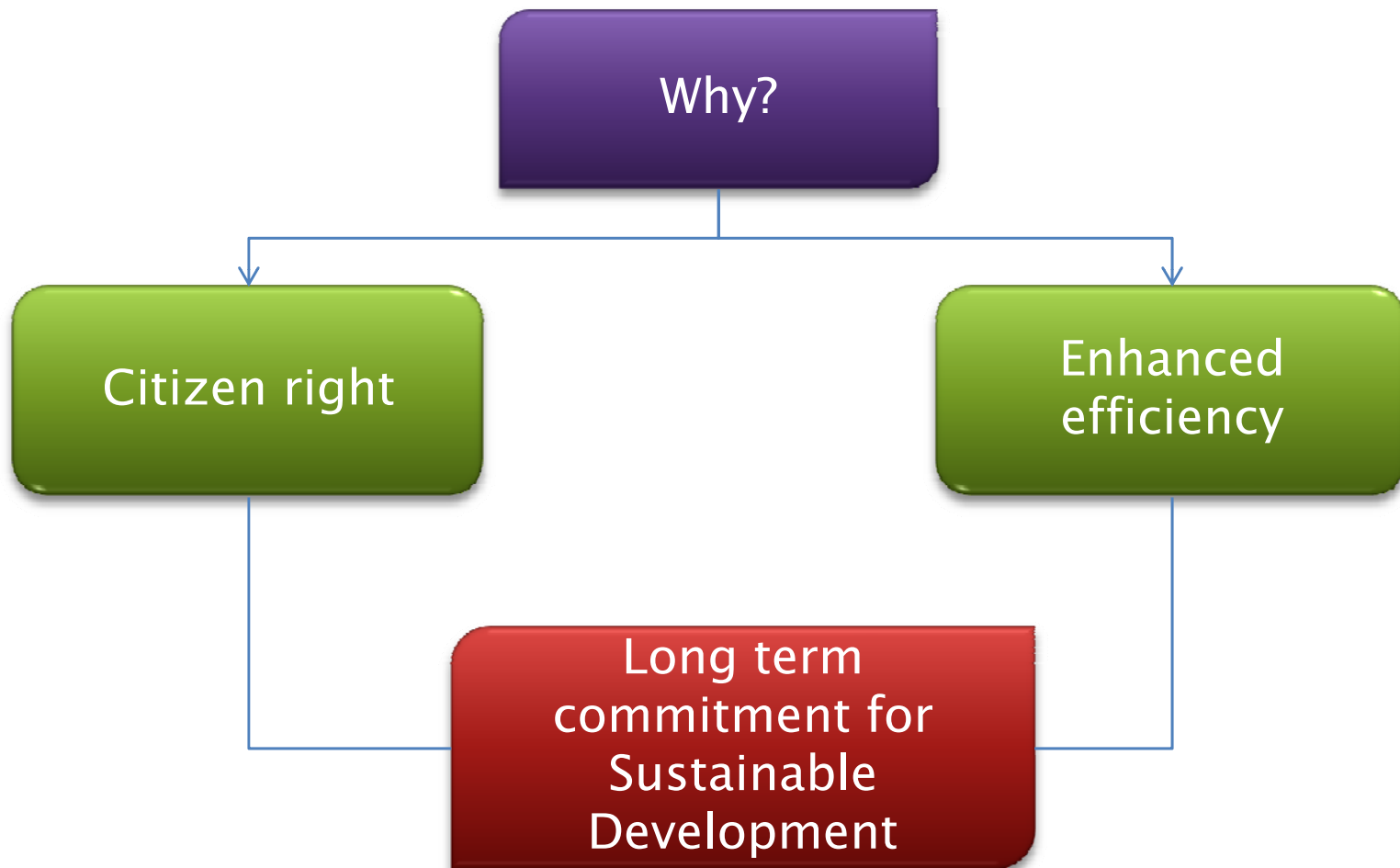
NGOs within the wider civil society sector play an important role in promoting sustainable water resources management.

This includes their active participation at local, national and transboundary level in all phases of watershed management planning and implementation (design, implementation in the field, operationalization, monitoring and evaluation).

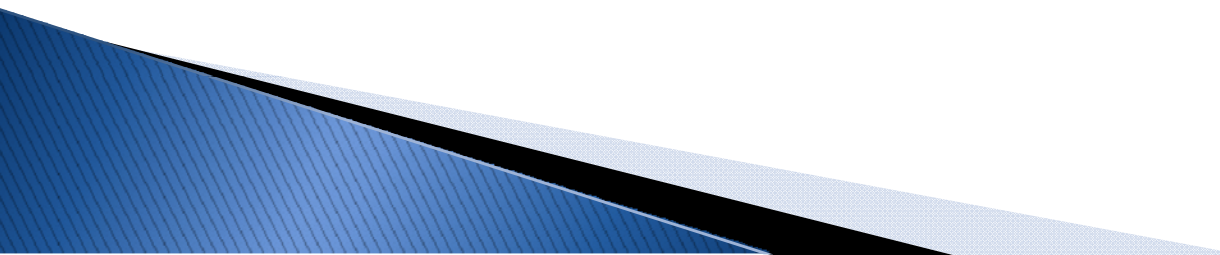
In order to ensure a meaningful, coordinated and effective participation of NGOs in the above mentioned cycle, there is a need to enhance their abilities and capacities to act throughout these processes in transboundary initiatives.



Why? Justification of Public Participation



Potential benefits from public participation

- ▶ Increasing public awareness of environmental issues
 - ▶ Making use of knowledge, experience, initiatives of different stakeholders and thus, improving the quality of plans, measures, policies, etc.
 - ▶ Public acceptance, commitment and support / consensus building
 - ▶ More transparent and creative decision-making
 - ▶ Less misunderstandings, litigation, delays, and more effective implementation and in the long term, safeguarding and reinforcing of democracy.
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Who?

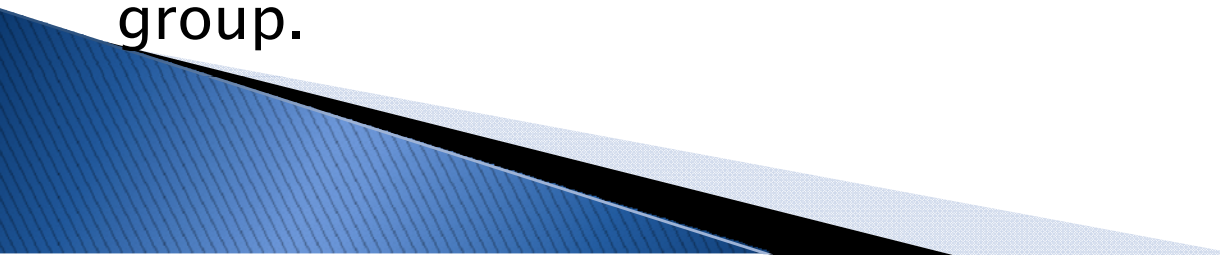
Civil Society

In 1992, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) or Earth Summit, Governments agreed on the following definition of Major Groups: farmers, women, the scientific and technological community, children and youth, indigenous peoples and their communities, workers and trade unions, business and industry, **non-governmental organizations** as well as local authorities.

NGOs

refers to civil society organisations (CSOs) in a wider sense, including community based organisations (CBOs).

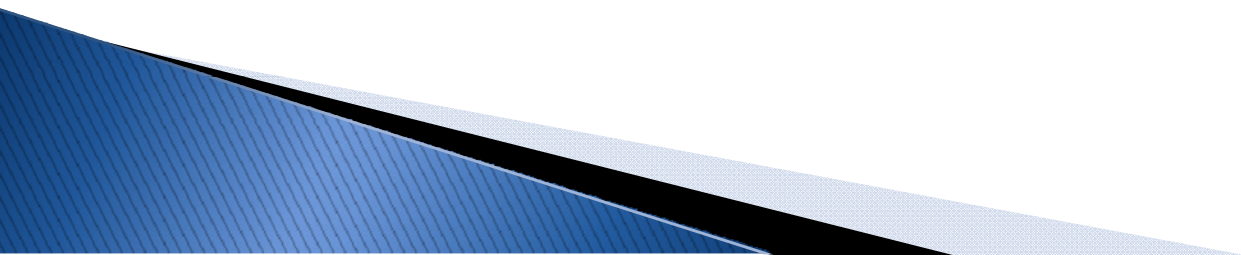
the term NGO applies to local, national, regional (Mediterranean) or international organisations that are non-profit and have a non binding affiliation to any government, political party or religious group.



Where to participate?

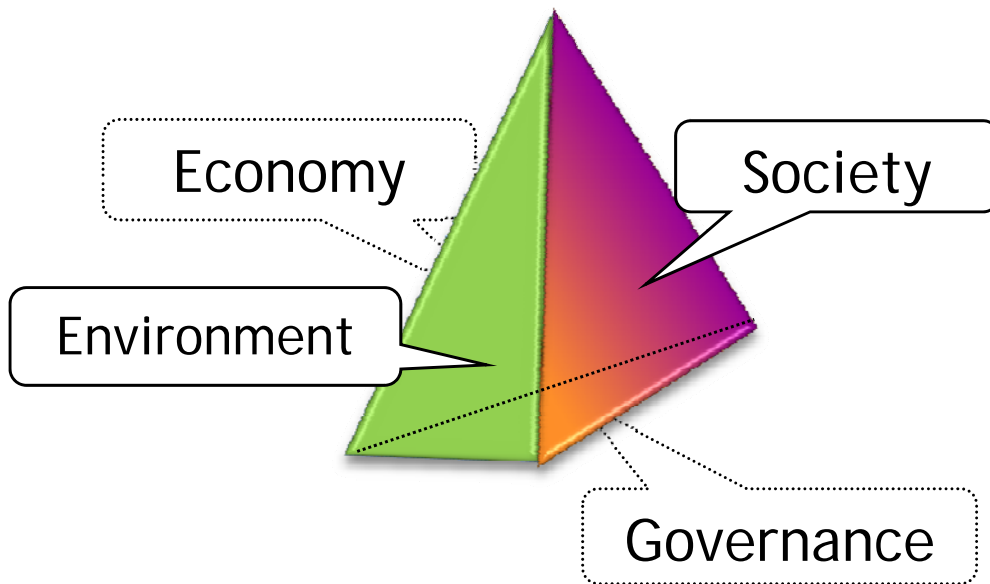
In Governance

In all tools related to it, aiming to obtain
Sustainable Development

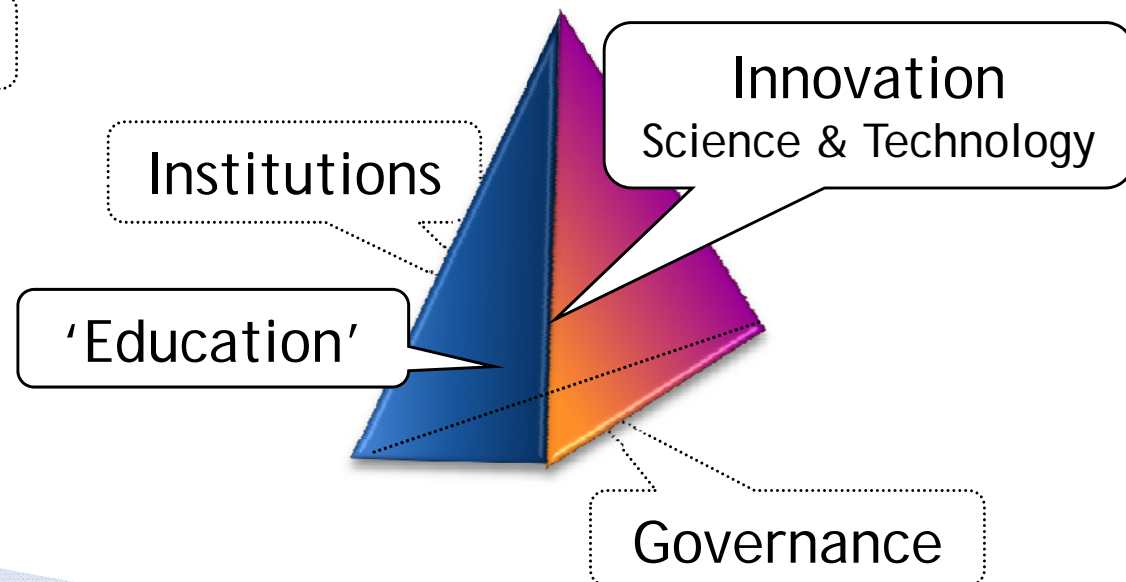


Sustainable development with Public Participation

Key principles of Sustainable Development

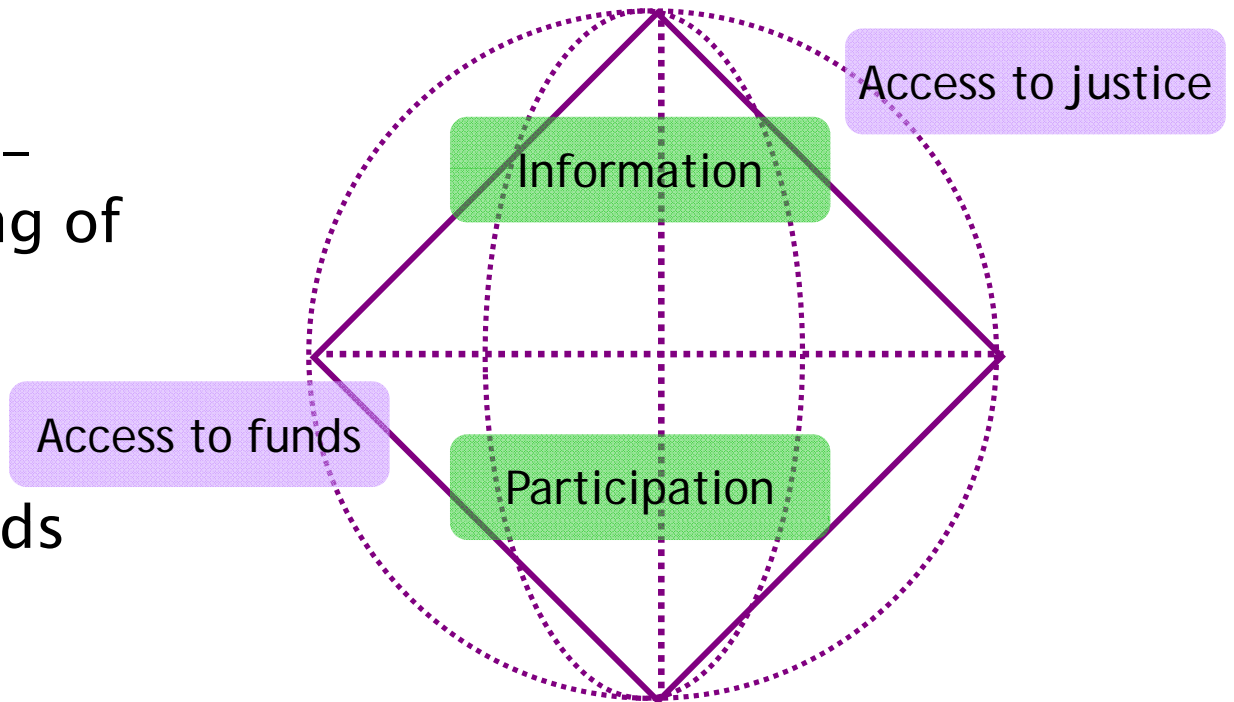


Key areas of NGO involvement



Pillars of participatory processes

- ▶ Access to information base of environmental and relevant developmental issues.
- ▶ Participation in consultation, decision-making and monitoring of implementation of agreements.
- ▶ Full access to justice.
- ▶ Access to support funds and credit.



Public participation: an evolving process

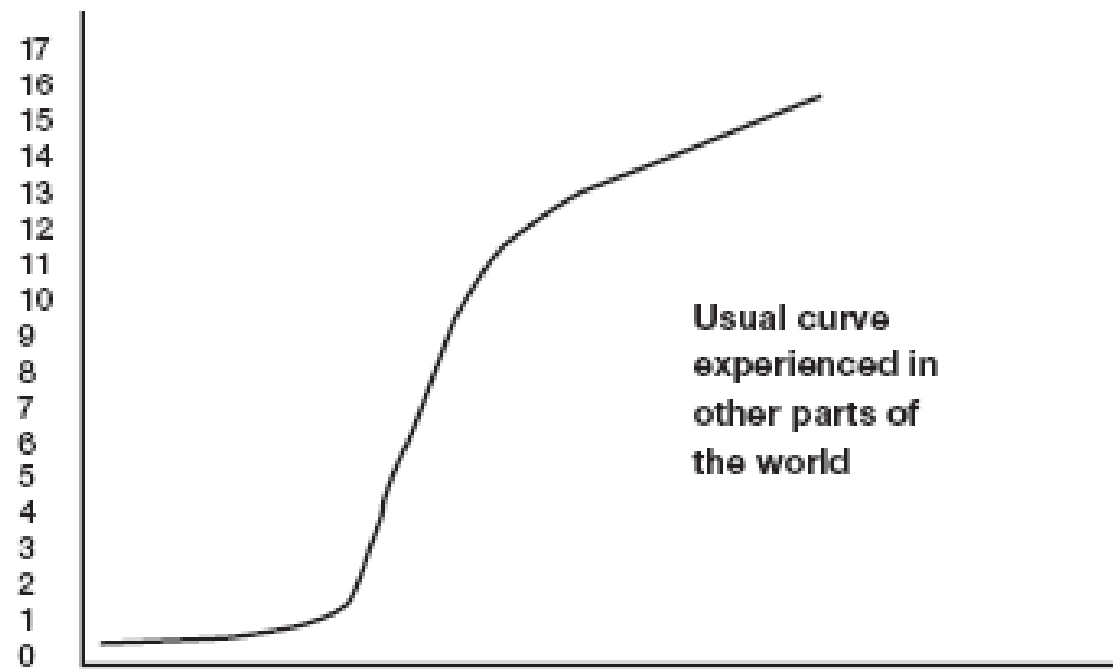


Fig. A.4

Schematic representation of the evolution of the participatory «process»

Public participation: an evolving process

0. No participatory practices at all.
1. Passive provision of unsystematic, arbitrarily selected information on environmental issues passed by the authorities to the public. Passive, uncoordinated environmental education projects developed *ad hoc*.
2. Acceptance of need for information flow on environmental issues by the authorities.
3. Participation of NGOs to information campaigns on conservation and restoration issues.
4. “Active” information: responding to requests by the public. Various means for access to selected information held by the authorities on environment and development issues.
5. Financial support to joint information campaigns and selected NGO projects. Introduction of environmental education projects in selected schools or groups. Systematic large scale awareness campaigns.
6. Consultations and *ad hoc* dialogue between citizens groups, NGOs, local authorities and the State without secured follow-up. Environmental education in curricula and/or coordinated networks and programmes.
7. Facilitation and advocacy by the authorities for access of independent civil groups and NGOs to international funds for projects or their operation, with no strings attached.

Public participation: an evolving process

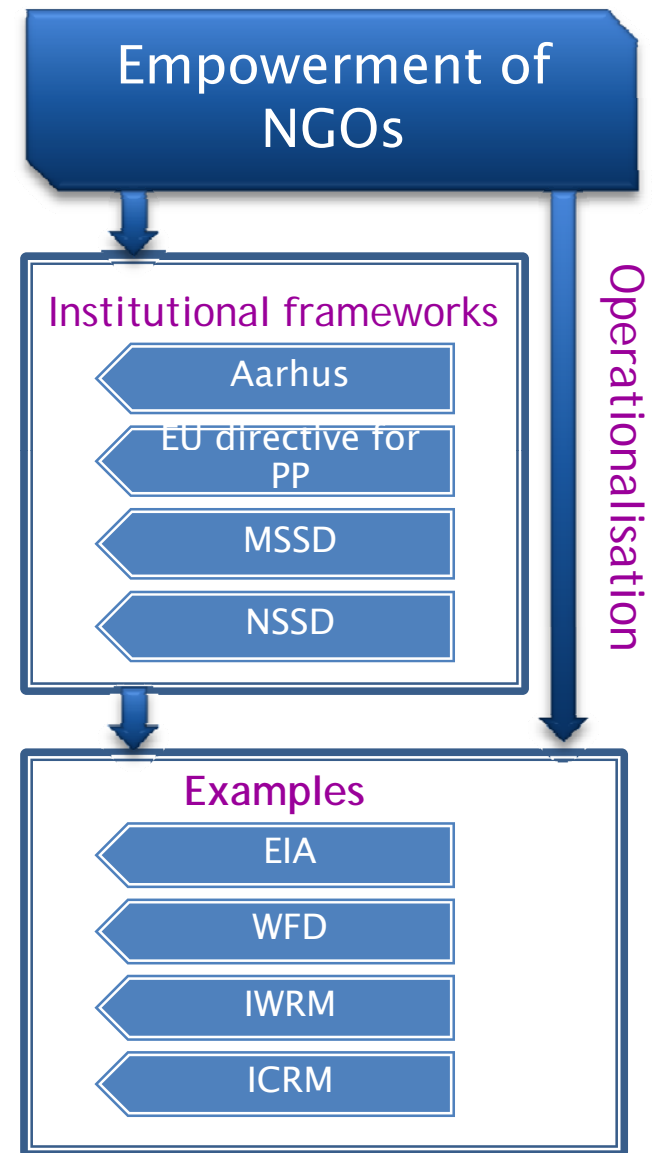
8. Facilitation mechanisms for participation of the public in the assessment of EIAs.
9. Active participation of the public through transparent mechanisms in drafting “sustainability charters”/Local Agenda 21, etc.
10. Full access of the public to the environmental and development information base of the State.
11. Participation of groups in the monitoring of implementation and management of sustainability plans.
12. Institutionalisation of 7.
13. Financing of projects and plans for “independent assessments” (counter-assessments) or counter-EIAs for controversial projects.
14. Institutionalisation of 10.
15. Access of public groups to justice including cases of liability and compensations for environmental damages.
16. Access of public groups to supporting funds and credit for operation and projects by national and international sources with no strings attached.
17. Full partnership in a balanced governance with full support to NGOs, local authorities and the public for a participation on equal footing.

Think local, act global
and/or
Think global, act local

How? Provisions for public participation (I)

Participatory legal frameworks

- ▶ Aarhus Convention,
- ▶ *acquis communautaire*,
- ▶ EU directive for Public Participation,
- ▶ Water Framework Directive (WFD),
- ▶ Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM),
- ▶ Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM),
- ▶ Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs),
- ▶ Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs), etc.

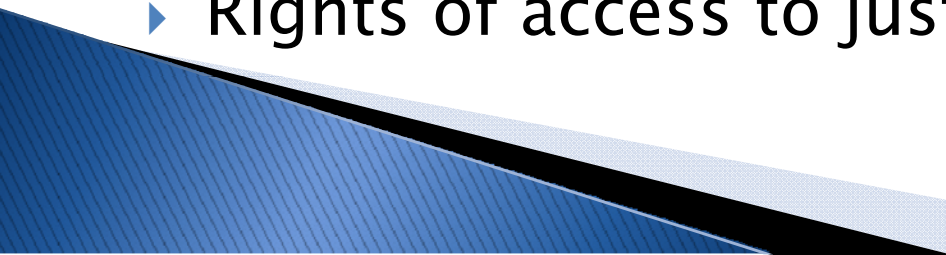


How? Provisions for public participation (II)

The Aarhus Convention

The Aarhus Convention incorporates human into environmental law and vice versa and grants the public a series of rights concerning access to information, public participation, participation in the decision-making process and access to justice in environmental matters while acting as a kind of "bridge" between environmental rights and human rights.

The three pillars of the Aarhus Convention are:

- ▶ Rights of access to environmental information
 - ▶ Rights to participate in environmental decision-making
 - ▶ Rights of access to justice in environmental matters
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How? Provisions for public participation (II)

The EU & the Aarhus Convention

The EC is a Party to the Convention since May 2005.

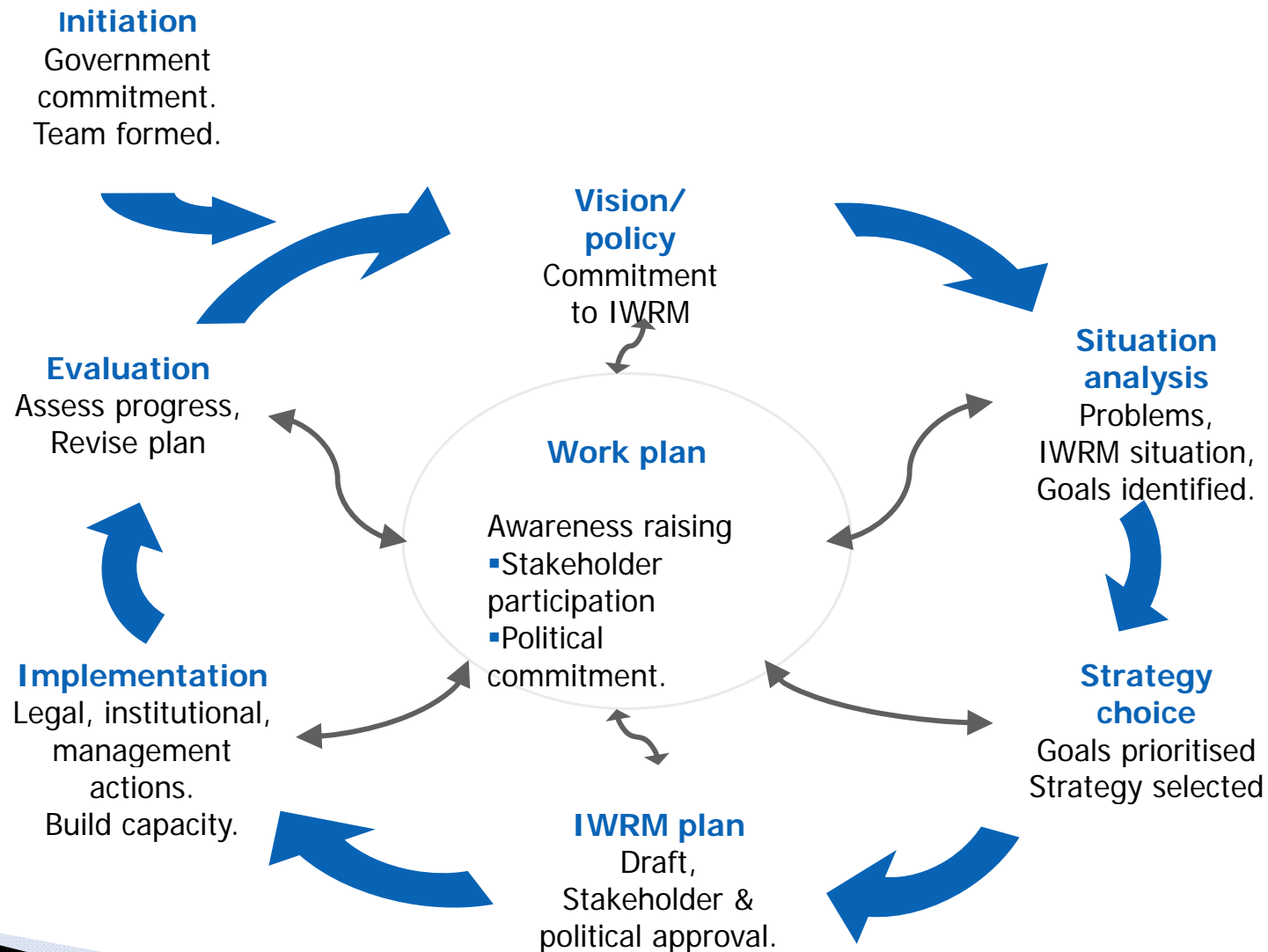
- ▶ Directive 2003/4/EC on public access to environmental information
- ▶ Directive 2003/35/EC providing for public participation in respect of the drawing up of certain plans and programmes relating to the environment and amending with regard to public participation and access to justice Council Directives 85/337/EEC and 96/61/EC
- ▶ EC Regulation 1367/2006 on the application of the provisions of the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters to Community institutions and bodies
- ▶ Provisions for public participation in environmental decision-making are furthermore to be found in a number of other environmental directives, e.g. the Water Framework Directive

How? Provisions for public participation (IV)

Public Participation under the EU Water Framework Directive

- ▶ The EU Water Framework Directive (WFD), which went into effect in 2000, places public participation (PP) at the center stage of water management as part of its integrated approach to water management.
- ▶ The WFD calls for PP in water management: “*the success of the Directive relies on close cooperation and coherent action at community, Member state and local level as well as on information, consultation and involvement of the public, including users*” (European Union, 2000/60/EC).

How? Provisions for public participation (V) Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and Public Participation



Provisions for public participation (V)

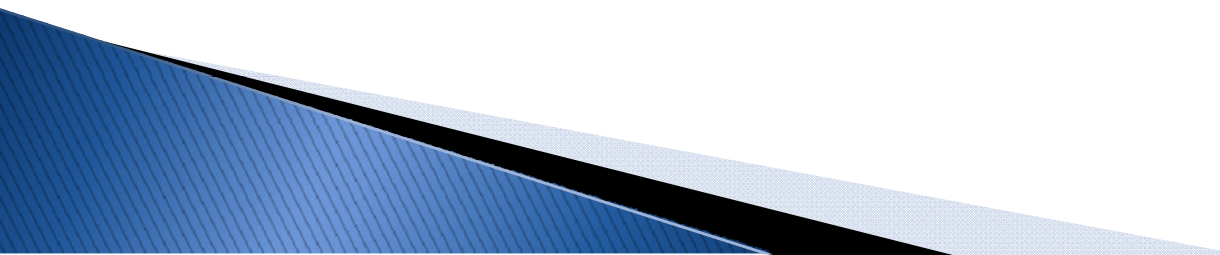
Environmental Impact Assessment

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) refers to both a decision making process and a document that provides a systematic, reproducible, and interdisciplinary evaluation of the potential physical, biological, cultural, and socioeconomic effects of a proposed action and its practical alternatives.

Proposed actions may include projects, programs, policies, or plans.

As a decision making process, EIA provides a means for decision makers to better integrate environmental, social, and economic concerns.

It provides the opportunity for all stakeholders in a proposed action, including the public, to participate in the identification of issues of concern, practical alternatives, and to identify opportunities to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts.



Provisions for public participation (VI)

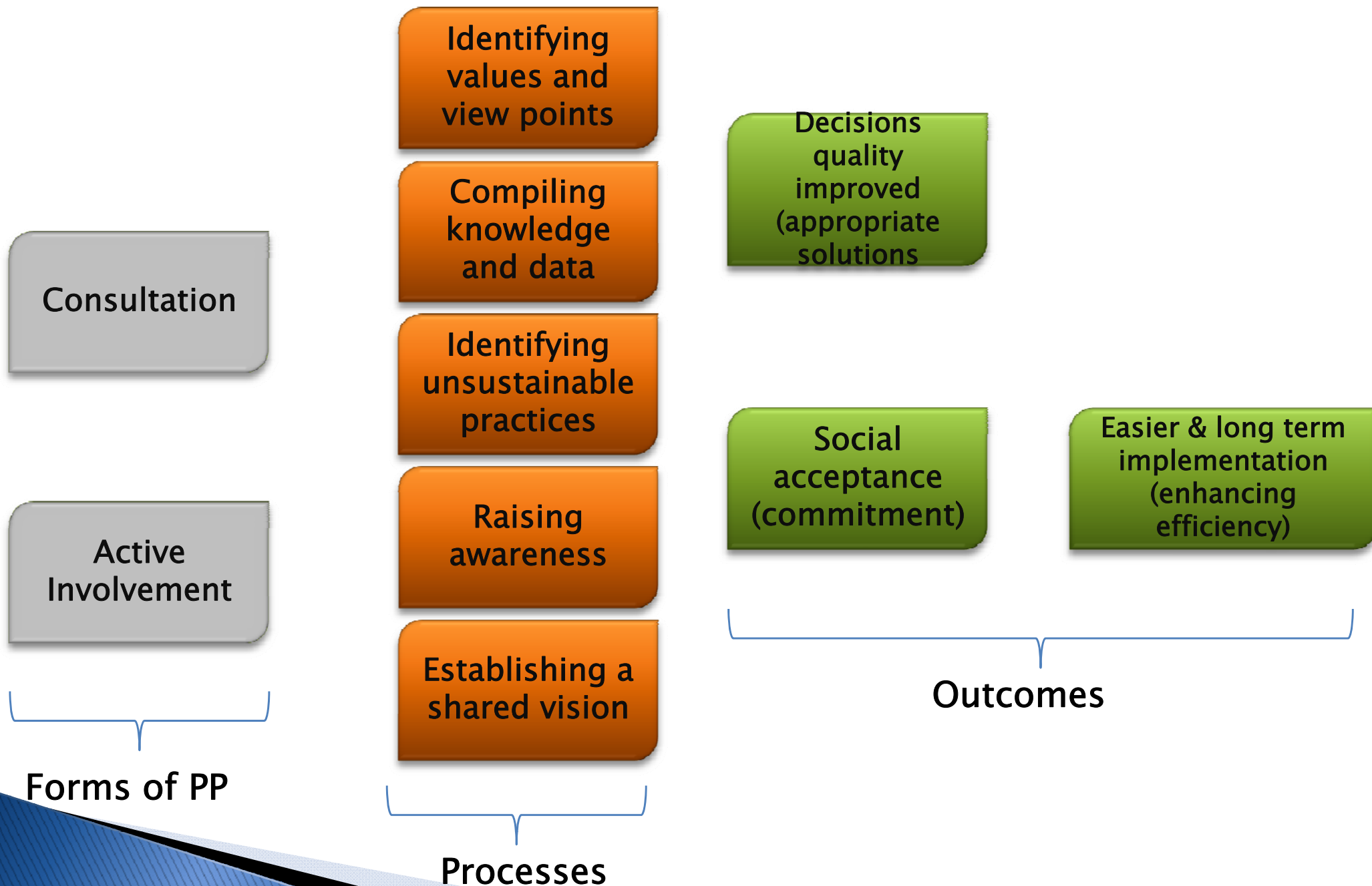
Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the formalised, systematic and comprehensive process of evaluating the environmental effects of a policy, plan or programme and its alternatives, including the preparation of a written report on the findings of that evaluation, and using the findings in publicly accountable decision-making.

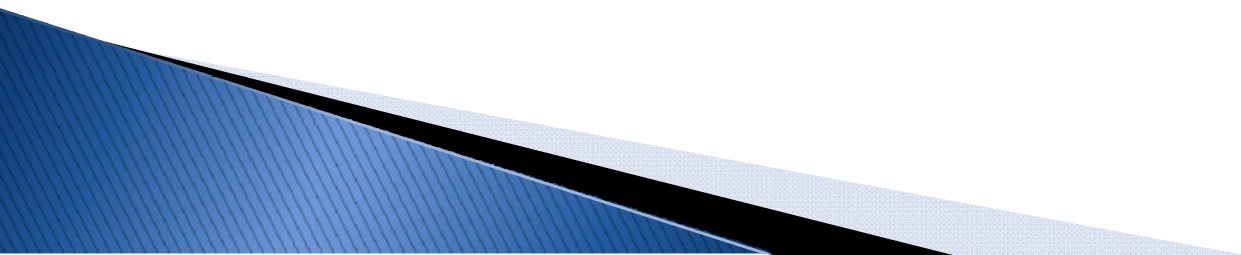
SEA aims to integrate environmental and sustainability considerations in strategic decision-making.



Public Participation: forms, processes and possible outcomes



Obstacles and challenges to NGO involvement

- ❑ legitimacy of NGOs
 - ❑ Representativity of NGOs
 - ❑ Relevance and in house knowledge of NGOs
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A coordinated Civil Society contribution for an effective Drin Dialogue

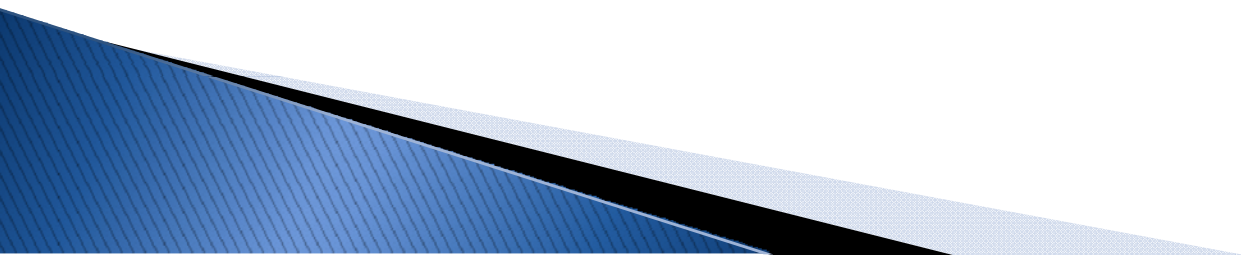
1st Drin Core meeting: MIO–ECSDE's commitment

To contribute to the aims and objectives of the Drin Dialogue process by:

- ▶ Supporting the dialogue at regional level (politically, technically, through communication/awareness raising actions...);
- ▶ Contributing in establishing a common understanding and shared vision via the coordinated involvement of civil society, and particularly NGOs, in the Drin Dialogue;
- ▶ Enhancing the ability and capacity of its member and collaborating NGOs in order to act in an effective and constructive way.

MIO–ECSDE's plan towards a coordinated and effective involvement of NGOs in the Drin Dialogue

MIO–ECSDE within its annual work programme of 2010 & 2011 will:

- ▶ Organize a regional workshop “Sustainable management of river and lake basins: Empowering NGOs for a coordinated effective involvement”, Ohrid, 4th November 2010.
 - ▶ Organize workshops in 2011 back-to-back with the national consultations and Core Group meetings.
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Regional workshop

“Sustainable management of river and lake basins: Empowering NGOs for a coordinated effective involvement”, Ohrid, 4th November 2010

The workshop is organized by MIO–ECSDE as the first of a series of events in cooperation with the UNECE and GWP–Med.

Aims and Objectives

- To provide the opportunity to NGOs to exchange experiences about their involvement in the development of river or lake basin management plans,
- To identify obstacles and challenges to successful participation of NGOs and strengthen the relations between the various organisations of the region.
- To give participants the opportunity to exchange experiences about the operationalization of different participatory frameworks e.g. the Aarhus Convention, the *acquis communautaire*, the EU directive for Public Participation, etc., the WFD, the IWRM, the ICZM, the EIAs, the SEAs, etc.
- To propose appropriate pilot actions to be considered in the framework of a GEF supported project under formulation.

Communications/Awareness raising actions

- ▶ Circulars on the developments regarding the Drin Dialogue via our extensive contact lists;
 - ▶ One issue of MIO-ECSDE's quarterly newsletter Sustainable Mediterranean dedicated to a feature on the Drin Dialogue;
 - ▶ Reference of the Drin Dialogue in various knowledge products such as 2011 publications/web applications on public participation in the Mediterranean;
 - ▶ Presentations at meetings.
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Enhancing synergies and impact

To enhance synergies and impact, MIO-ECSDE's actions in support of the Drin Dialogue are directly linked with two major Mediterranean initiatives, in which MIO-ECSDE is a key partner:

- ▶ **The UNEP/MAP – GEF Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem (the MedPartnership),** where MIO-ECSDE is responsible for the meaningful participation of civil society in the implementation of the project and the overall strengthening of civil society in the Mediterranean.
- ▶ **The ENPI Horizon 2020 Capacity Building/Mediterranean Environment Programme (CB/MEP)** which focuses on environmental integration and capacity building and aims through targeted activities within the partner countries to increase the capacities of all stakeholders (administrations – national, sub national, local authorities – NGOs, private sector, etc.) so as to effectively contribute to the de-pollution of the Mediterranean by 2020.

Thank you for your attention!

