

# Engaging Stakeholders in Research for Improved Decision Making

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# Using Research in Collaborative Decision-making Processes



Using Research  
to inform us in our Collaborative  
Decision-making Processes



Using Collaborative Decision-  
making Processes  
to help us focus on what to  
research and how



# HB1177 Roundtables Process

stakeholders deliberating about use  
of “1400 monies”

what research is needed to further  
assess needs of basins?



# HB1177 Roundtables Process

stakeholders deliberating about use  
of “1400 monies”

how use the research we already  
have?



# HB1177 Roundtables Process

stakeholders deliberating about use  
of “1400 monies”

do we need research on the “soft  
technologies” too?



# Danish Citizen Technology Panels



# Joint Fact Finding



# Joint Fact-Finding

“If the negotiations involve contentious technical and scientific issues, a joint fact-finding process should be established for investigating these issues.”



# Joint Fact-Finding

investigation of an issue performed by a neutral expert or panel of experts chosen by a group of shareholders



# EU Research on Water Resource Management

- Dipak Gyawali
- Engineer/political scientist
- 67 European projects
- 1994--2004



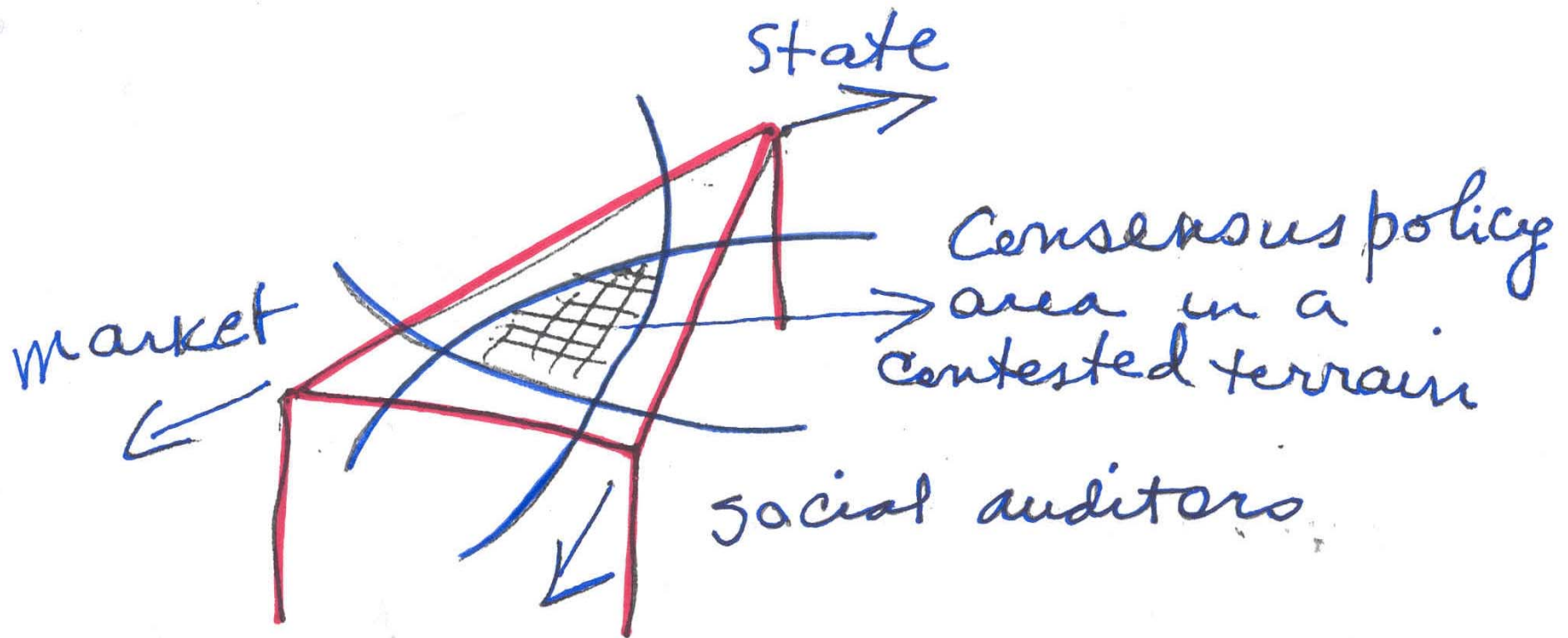
# EU Research of the Research: Three Major Findings

1. Research must constructively engage stakeholders in all phases—from design to interpretation



# Constructive Engagement of Stakeholders

constructive engagement



# What shall we research?

“Many debates over science are in fact debates over values. Pretending that uncertainty does not exist, or that there are scientific answers to questions that are in reality questions of values does nothing to further resolution of difficult issues.”



# But values are not objective!

Can a research project conducted with even perfectly pristine scientific design be considered objective given that values came into play in deciding what should be studied and how it should be studied?



Active Listening  
Seeking to Understand  
Not just tolerating other values  
Truly curious about how other  
values could be incorporated



More important?

Being open to bringing what we  
know and value deeply to the  
negotiating table



# EU Research of the Research: Three Major Findings

- 2 Researchers must find better ways to communicate the results of their research to policy makers



# EU Research of the Research: Three Major Findings

3. The most critical need for water research is not for more technical solutions but for socio-political solutions



# Example: Socio-Political Research

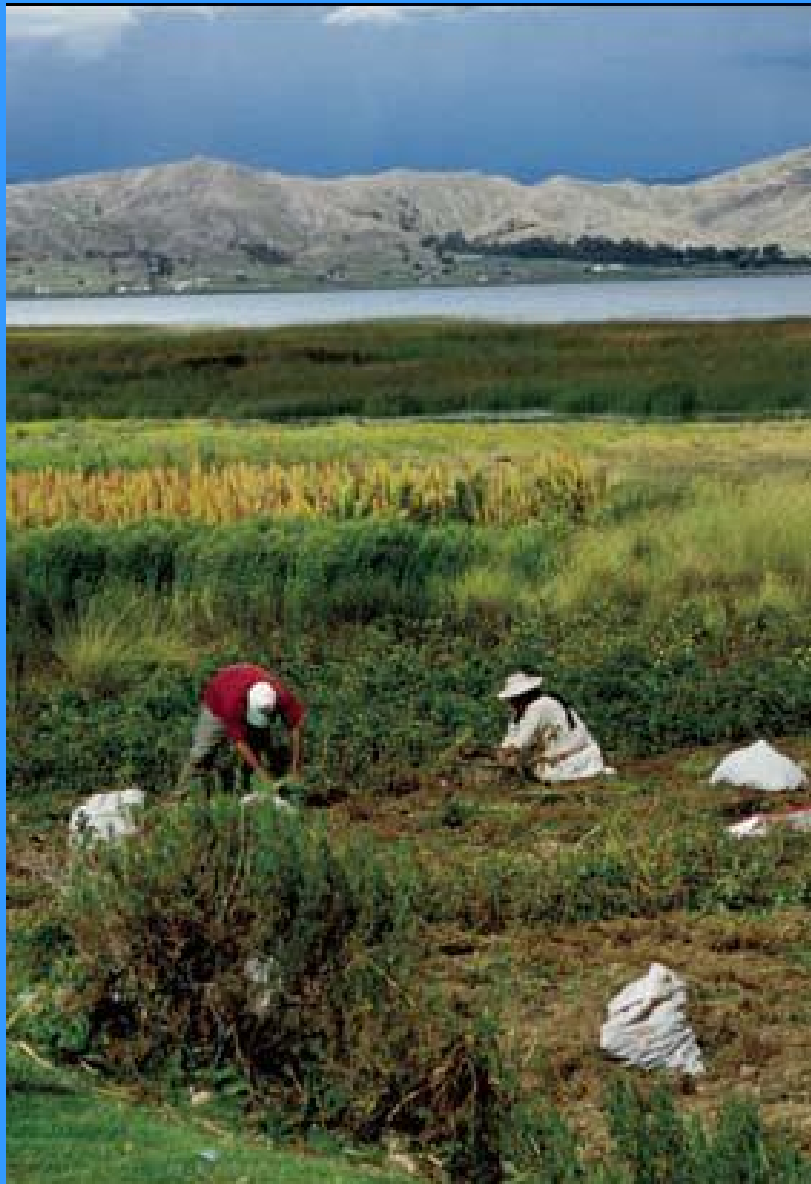
all costs being equal, what water use tradeoffs would the urban public be willing to make given the opportunity to preserve the open space of agriculture?





# Bolivia: Combining Grassroots Dialogue with High-Tech Science





*After 32 failed attempts to reach consensus on water legislation, and a deadly social conflict over water rights, Bolivian researchers helped their country develop a water law that everyone could agree on.*



# Common Vision



# Common Vision

Can we bring ourselves to the vision process as whole human beings, outside our designated roles? Perhaps we should all come to the table dressed in the role of wise great-grandmother.



# Peter Senge

“We are stuck in patterns where solutions are arrived at through the process of downloading, or taking an existing framework and applying it to the situation at hand.”



# Peter Senge

- Slow down to ponder the problem so that we can “illuminate the blind spot”
- Look at the problem as a whole, not just the sum of its parts
- Retreat and reflect, go to an inner place of stillness, then listen and make sense of it.



