Ingrid Belčaková, Paola Gazzola, Eva Pauditšová

4 Public Participation And Sustainable Landscape Management

4.1 Introduction

Landscape is perceived differently by various stakeholders, as their experiences and understandings of landscape differ. In the assessment process, an expert evaluation should not be the only one which counts, as how individual stakeholders or a community perceive the landscape is equally important. For a community, landscape can represent the character, faith, and a vision of the past, present or future. A community in turn can be passive or active and anticipative in the way in which it expresses its perceptions about a landscape.

According to Prieur (2006), landscape is a space of daily scenes of day-to-day life of people and it plays a role in the human sense of belonging to a specific place and to a specific community. Those who discover landscape as visitors or as part of their work or day-to-day living, experience and develop their own impressions of a local landscape's character, which will then determine whether their experience was positive or negative. Furthermore, whether it enhances their quality of life or not, whether there are any conflicts and issues, and whether what they are experiencing is the kind of landscape that they would like in the future.

Public participation in landscape management plays a fundamental role in providing a mechanism, by which the *public exercises its rights to live in an environment that is adequate in terms of health and well-being* and fulfils their duty to protect both the landscape and the wider environment. In addition, public participation can *improve the quality and implementation of decisions and contribute to raising public awareness on the issues of landscape quality*. It can *promote accountability and transparency* in environmental decision-making processes.

Public participation in EIA and SEA is an essential requirement for *effective landscape impact assessment practice, for spatially relevant planning processes and programmes of conservation, planning and management of landscape*.

This chapter considers public participation in relation to landscape impact assessment within environmental assessment procedures at both, the project and planning levels. First it provides a review of definitions of public participation and of different forms of public participation, and of formal international requirements. Methodological issues in landscape impact assessment are then explored. Finally, recommendations for good public participation practice in landscape impact assessment are presented.

4.2 Background

4.2.1 Definition And Typology Of Public Participation

The term “participation” refers to an organized process by which the public communicates its needs and values, and by which the public can influence institutionalized power (Laurian and Shaw, 2008). It involves members of the public working in partnership with public authorities (and/or other stakeholders) to reach an optimal result in decision making. As noted by Meyer (2011), when applied to landscape planning and design, public participation is the working application of the justice aspect of sustainability, as it seeks to recognize and communicate the perceptions, needs and interests of all members of society, including those that are marginalized.

The importance of public participation is widely acknowledged; it seeks to influence decision-making, ensure accountability from public officials (Arnstein, 1969; Juarez and Brown, 2008), solve conflicts, and adjust or engage in the development of alternatives to established institutional and social power relationships (Crewe, 1997; Aschemann, 2004). Within a landscape based EIA or SEA process, public participation aims to (Glasson et al., 1994; Westman, 1985; Wood, 1995; Heiland, 2005):

- provide accessible and valuable information about the intent of activities and strategic development proposals, by informing landscape impact assessment and helping to identify weaknesses in impact assessment documentation,
- give voice to directly concerned groups or organizations about the impacts of a proposed development,
- reduce the risk of later time losses due to litigations or protest activities, by identifying and addressing potential issues at an early stage of an impact assessment process,
- result in innovative and publicly acceptable proposals for mitigation measures or alternatives development,
- educate citizens by increasing their involvement and awareness of shared responsibilities for the environment,
- ensure a more democratic way of decision-making that can lead to greater acceptance of a proposed activity, policy, plan or programme,
- enhance confidence in the planning process, making the next stages simpler and faster.

White (1996) noted that participation does not have a single underlying philosophical tradition or consensus of meaning. Without an explicit and shared framework of definitions and standards, many people can speak of “participation” but mean different things. The variety of ways participation is conceptualized is presented by examples of public participation typologies or levels in the text below. In this context Jones (2007) argued that the effectiveness of public participation is dependent on the degree to which the authorities allow real involvement by the public and different

interest groups. A well known public participation typology is the one developed by Sherry Arnstein (1969) claiming that everyday citizens need more power. She has developed a typology of eight levels of participation (see Fig. 4.1). The eight types are arranged in a ladder pattern with each rung corresponding to the extent of citizens' power in determining the end product. Arnstein (1969) acknowledges that the model only recognises the differences between types of participation and does not analyze the reasons why these differences exist.

Similarly, Pretty (1995, p.1251) identified seven types of participation (Tab. 4.1), ranging "from manipulative and passive participation where people are told what is to happen and act out predetermined roles; to self-mobilization, where people take initiatives largely independent of external institutions". Pretty emphasizes that great care must be taken over using and interpreting the term participation (Jones, 2007).

Selecting and using only one type or approach to participation can be critical, because a single form may not be adequate to meet all of the requirements and demands of a differentiated public. The public in turn, should also take responsibility for its own positions and opinions, for the correctness and seriousness of their own attitudes to decision-making and for complying with the adopted decisions.

Figure 4.1: Ladder of participation. Source: Arnstein (1969).

Table 4.1: Typology of participation in development programs. According to Pretty (1995).

Type of participation	Description
Manipulative participation	Pretentious (make believe) participation with public representatives in official authorities, these representatives are not elected and have no decision-making power.
Passive participation	Public participates by being informed about what decision has been taken or what was already done. This includes the unilateral notification of the authority or the project manager without hearing the public's opinion. The information is shared only among external professionals.
Consultative participation	Public participates in a way that the issue is being consulted with it or it answers a questionnaire. The external agent defines the issue and the information-gathering process and thus reviews the analysis. Such a consultation process does not allow any sharing of decision-making and professionals are not expected to accept the public's opinion.
Participation for material benefits	Public participates by contributing to the resources, e.g. work for food, for financial rewards or for other material incentives (farmers can offer ground and/or work but they are not involved into experimentation or learning). This is very often called participation but there is no guarantee of continuing the activity when the material benefits are stopped.
Functional participation	Participation is organized externally as a means to achieve the project objective, especially at a lower price. Public can participate by creating groups in order to meet the predefined goals. Such involvement can be interactive and includes sharing decisions but tends to be applied only after the most crucial decisions have already been made externally. Or, at most, the public is invited to just identify external objectives.
Interactive participation	Public participates in joint analyzes, in development of action plans and in formation and/or strengthening of local institutions. Participation is perceived as a right, not as a means of achieving the project's intent. The process includes interdisciplinary methods that seek out multiple perspectives and use a systematic and structured learning process. Groups keep control of the local decisions and determine what resources are available for use, so the public has a share in maintaining the structure or activity.
Internal mobilization	Public participates by independently taking over the initiative to change the system from the external institution. Public develops contacts with external institutions in order to get advice on the resources and technical assistance it needs and it also maintains control over how these resources are used. Internal mobilization is widespread where the responsible authorities and non-governmental organizations provide framework support. The initiation of internal mobilization may or may not be a challenge to the existing distribution of prosperity and power.

4.2.2 International Context And Key Formal Requirements

Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, resolution 37/7 of 1982, the *World Charter for Nature* is a soft-law document encouraging the world community, *inter alia*, to involve the public in environmental decision making. It states that the public should have the opportunity to participate in the formulation of decisions that directly concern their environment. This document has served as a starting point for many multilateral environmental agreements and is referred to in their preambles.

Similarly, Principle 10 of the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* recognises the importance of public participation in environmental decision making: “environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level.”

The *Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context* (known as the “Espoo Convention”), shows the link between public participation and EIA. Article 2 states that members of the public potentially affected by proposed activities, irrespective of their state of residence, should have an equal opportunity to participate in environmental impact assessment procedures related to these activities. Furthermore, relevant EIA documentation should be distributed to the public within a reasonable time before the final decision is taken, and comments should be considered.

More specific obligations can be found in the *Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Espoo Convention* which stresses in Article 8 that parties shall endeavour to provide early, timely and effective opportunities for public participation in the strategic environmental assessment of plans and programmes, ensuring that the public can express its opinion on the draft plan or programme and on the environmental report within a reasonable time frame.

Significant international position in global trends in public participation is attributed to the *UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters* of 25 June 1998 (known as the “Aarhus Convention”), which entered into force on October 30, 2001. Many European countries ratified the Convention in 2005. The Aarhus Convention (UN ECE, 1998) grants rights to the public, and imposes on Parties and their public authorities, obligations concerning access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice regarding the environment. The Convention operates from the premise that sustainable development can be achieved only through the involvement of all stakeholders, and links environmental and human rights, and environmental protection and government accountability. It focuses on interactions between the public and public authorities in a democratic context and particularly on accountability, transparency and responsiveness, within and between governments. The *Almaty Guidelines on Promoting the Application of the Principles of the Aarhus Convention in International Forums* were adopted in June 2005 with the primary purpose of providing general guidance to parties in applying the principles

in the work of international organisations, which includes convention bodies (ECE/MP.PP/2005/2/Add.5).

The Aarhus Convention enhances the rights of the public in the creation and implementation of environmental policy and supports citizens and non-governmental organizations in pursuing their rights in environmental matters. Most of the countries of the UN Economic Commission for Europe worked on the preparation of this Convention and the preparatory process culminated in the signing of this Convention in Aarhus, Denmark. The adopted document sets the *minimum standard for the right to information, public participation in the decision-making process and justice in environmental matters*, which are based on the fact that everyone has the right to a healthy environment in accordance with sustainable development principles. This does not exclude, however, that the signatories move this standard further. This is what the national governments were invited to do by the representatives of non-governmental organizations during the Aarhus Conference.

According to the Aarhus Convention, the public concerned should be involved in decision making:

- relating to specific activities,
- concerning plans, programmes and policies,
- during the preparation of executive regulations and/or generally applicable legally binding normative instruments.

Within the context of environmental assessment, Articles 6, 7, 8 and 9 of this Convention are of particular importance with regard to public awareness, access to information, assessment of activities with trans-frontier effects and access to justice in environmental matters. Article 7 is particularly important in relation to public participation in processes concerning development plans, programmes and policies. The Article states that, “each Party to the Convention must take appropriate practical and/or other provisions ensuring public participation during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment, in a transparent and fair framework, having provided the necessary information to the public. The public, which may be involved, must be determined by the competent public authority, taking into account the objectives of the Convention. Each Party shall, within reasonable limits, provide opportunities for public participation in preparation of policy (concept) related to the environment”.

As stated by the Implementing Guidelines to the Aarhus Convention (Stec, Casey-Lefkowitz, Jendroska, 2000) Article 7 makes a clear distinction between plans and programmes on the one hand, and policies (concepts) on the other. Aarhus Convention does not define the terms “plans”, “programmes” and “concept” (policy) and these terms are used without definition also by the Espoo Convention. It draws on their general common meaning. Concept (policy) can be understood as a “principle, plan (programme), as directing the activities”. Concepts are less specific than plans and programmes (the concepts relating to the environment). Plans include land use plans

and regional development strategies, sectoral plans in transport, tourism, energy, industry, water management, health care, etc. But they may also include government initiatives to improve the environment, for example, aiming at the reduction of pollution, voluntary recycling programs, comprehensive strategies, such as national and local environmental action programs, health protection and others.

In the case of public participation in decision making on specific activities and when national laws related to the environment are infringed, access to justice rights should be exercised as foreseen in Article 9 of the Aarhus Convention.

The rules established by the Aarhus Convention and the SEA Protocol, and in the case of activities with potential transboundary effects, the Espoo Convention, should be followed. For instance, Articles 6 to 8 of the Aarhus Convention establish certain public participation requirements for decision making, including:

- timely and effective notification of the public concerned,
- reasonable timeframes for participation, including provision for participation at an early stage,
- a right for the public concerned to inspect information which is relevant to decision making free of charge,
- an obligation on the decision-making body to take due account of the outcome of public participation,
- prompt public notification of the decision, with the text of the decision and the reasons and considerations on which it is based, being made publicly accessible.

Another important policy to take into account, is the *European Parliament and Council Directive No. 2003/35/EC on public participation in the formation of certain plans and programmes relating to the environment*, which with regard to public participation and access to justice amends the Council Directives 85/337/EEC and 96/61/EC of 26 May 2003. This Directive implements the Aarhus Convention into EU law. In terms of public participation, the *Directive of the European Parliament and Council 2003/35/EC* is an essential legislation for all EU Member States. The Directive *provides for public participation in the drawing up of certain plans and programs relating to the environment*. It aims to promote accountability and transparency, and to strengthen public participation in decision-making. Both documents are based on three basic pillars (see Tab. 4.2). Overall, the Implementing Guideline (Stec, Casey-Lefkowitz, Jendroska, 2000) and Directive No. 2003/35/EC recommend that plans, programmes and concepts:

- provide tools to identify the public who should participate,
- establish clear procedures for submitting comments in writing or orally (e.g. during public hearings),
- establish clear rules for the public's involvement in the process,
- establish mechanisms for public announcements,
- establish guidelines and requirements (standards) on the quality of the information requested,
- monitor how public institutions respond (take into account) to comments received,

- provide some flexibility for public participation within the timeframe of the entire process.

Table 4.2: Basic pillars of the Aarhus Convention. According to UN ECE (1998).

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1. FIRST PILLAR – public access to environmental information – this pillar declares the right of the public to access environmental information. The purpose of this pillar is therefore to ensure that the public has enough information to comment on environmental matters associated with development proposals in order to:
 - a) understand what is happening,
 - b) participate actively and with knowledge in the decision-making process, and in other activities.
 2. SECOND PILLAR – public participation in the decision-making process – this is about enabling public participation prior to a decision being made, so that different possibilities can be scoped. The Aarhus Convention requires public input on:
 - a) decisions for particular significant activities,
 - b) decisions for plans, programmes and policies (substantial development concepts),
 - c) the development and approval of laws of general application that may have significant effects on the environment.
 3. THIRD PILLAR – public access to justice in environmental matters in the decision-making process. It creates guarantees for those whose environmental rights have been violated, by offering a fair assessment through independent authorities (for example, by courts). Access to justice is not only seen in relation to the first two pillars; it also lays down certain other rights for the public to influence the proceedings of public institutions, individuals and legal entities on matters of environmental protection, and public access to justice.
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The *European Landscape Convention* (Council of Europe, 2000) within the national general measures stipulates an obligation to “create conditions for the participation of the general public, of local and regional authorities and of other parties interested in defining and implementing landscape policies aimed at protecting, managing and planning the landscape”.

The Convention determines general obligations for public participation under Arts. 1, 5 and 6 (see Tab. 4.3). Prieur and Durousseau (2006) stated that “as perceived by people” implies that the views of all groups should be included, not just the views of academics or of the political elite. The author explained further that landscape protection, management and planning are hence to be concerned with the characteristics of the landscape that the involved population wish to give recognition to in their surroundings. Specific measures that the signatories are obliged to undertake include the identification of landscapes and analysis of “their characteristics and the forces and pressures transforming them”; and assessment of landscapes, “taking into account the particular values assigned to them by the interested parties and the population concerned”.

Table 4.3: Public participation according to the European Landscape Convention. Source: Council of Europe (2000).

Article 1—Definitions

Art. 1 a. “Landscape” means an area, *as perceived by people* . . .

Art. 1 c. “Landscape quality objective” means, for a specific landscape, the formulation by the competent public authorities of the *aspirations of the public* with regard to the landscape features of their surroundings.

Article 5—General measures

Art. 5 c. to establish procedures *for the participation of the general public*, local and regional authorities, and other parties with an interest in the definition and implementation of . . . landscape policies . . .

Article 6—Specific measures

C Identification and assessment

Art. 6 C 1. With *the active participation* of the interested parties, as stipulated in Article 5.c, and with a view to improving knowledge of its landscapes, each Party undertakes:

- i) to identify its own landscapes throughout its territory,
- ii) to analyse their characteristics and the forces and pressures transforming them,
- iii) to take note of changes,
- b) to assess the landscapes thus identified, taking into account *the particular values assigned to them by the interested parties and the population concerned*.

D Landscape quality objectives

Art. 6 D. Each party undertakes to define landscape quality objectives for the landscapes *identified and assessed, after public consultation in accordance with Article 5.c.*

Articles 5.c and 6.d of the European Landscape Convention highlight the need to put in place procedures for participation. The reason behind is to give legal recognition to the special features of landscape (landscape exists because it is visible). A landscape policy which involved only experts and administrators, would result in landscapes that are imposed on the public, similarly to when landscapes were produced by and for the elite.

Democratisation of the landscape is not just a question of the new scope introduced by the European Landscape Convention; it is also reflected in the collective and individual appropriation of landscapes, through the requirement that there be direct participation for all, in all phases of decision-making (Sarlow-Herlin, 2003; Prieur and Dourousseau, 2006) .

In relation to the European Landscape Convention, several proposed activities should be implemented by signatories, such as landscape awareness and education, training and research in landscape matters and in the procedures for participation and the integration of landscape protection in different sectoral policies.

4.3 Public Participation Methodology

Public participation in landscape impact assessment is undertaken within both, project related assessment and strategic environmental assessment following the regulation of the European EIA (EC, 2014) and SEA (EC, 2001) Directives.

Various forms of public participation do not take place separately from the procedural stages of an environmental assessment procedure; rather, they should go hand in hand as a way of ensuring quality control and public accountability (Jones et al., 2005; Fischer, 2007). When considering the methodological approach to adopt, questions about who should participate, when participation should occur, and how or with which methods are important (Aschemann, 2004).

4.3.1 Who Is The Public And Who Should Participate?

In deciding who has the authorization to enter participatory decision-making, Jones (2007) lists several groups: the officials, groups of entrepreneurs, the professionals and the general public; men, women children; the residents, the visitors; the inhabitants, the immigrants; the different ethnic groups. According to Prieur and Durousseau (2006), the term ‘public’ should be taken to mean “civil society in the broad sense”. Diamond (1994, p.62) defines civil society as “the citizens who collectively act in the public sphere, expressing their feelings, ideas, exchanging information, achieving common goals, making demands on the government, and calling public officials to behave responsibly. Civil society represents an intermediary sphere standing in between the private sphere and the state”. Putman (2007) sees the importance of a civil society as a help in building trust between citizens, and in strengthening beliefs in common values that form the basis for co-operation on common goals that could then feed into the political sphere.

The public cannot be regarded as a monolithic or unchanging entity. Rather we can say that it is a constantly changing set of people, who are grouped based on a common understanding of interest. It is therefore necessary to accept that there are different types of public and that these different types can have different numbers of members. The basic trend is that the number increases in parallel with a growth of interest and involvement on a specific issue. This is because citizens are involved and participate when they feel that an issue affects them (they do not participate if they believe that they are not affected or if they think that their participation is unlikely to influence matters or have an impact on the decision-making process).

When designing procedures for public participation it is very useful to consider two fundamentally different positions of the public. These are the public as a *vehicle for information* and the public as a *recipient of information* and commenting entity.

– Public as a vehicle for information

In this position, the public's role is that of an expert on local conditions who can precisely and with a great deal of responsibility assess the implementation of specific projects or plans (programmes). A public which has its own way of collecting information and is in contact with the local reality, can enrich the knowledge base of planning and the evidence basis of impact assessment. Citizens' opinions, beliefs, feelings and values ought to be recognized and respected to foster a state of cooperation, rather than a state of distrust and alienation. A state of distrust could be very dangerous and result in lengthy debates which could lead to the mobilization of activists and mass media, who can occasionally dominate the field. Experience and knowledge of the people, their memories and feelings are therefore invaluable information that can represent an essential guarantee for successful and good practice.

– Public as recipient of information and commenting entity

In this position, which we encounter more often, the public acts as one of the participants in the processes of planning, environmental assessment and decision-making. This position is contingent on the amount of data and availability and accessibility of information on all issues relating to a proposed development, and on their consequences. In this context, the public operates in an atmosphere of partnership, whereby public input is no longer restricted to the consideration of consequences or adverse effects, and expressed as a manifestation of "rebellion". Rather, as a recipient of information and commenting entity, the public will enter into manifestations of conscious involvement with positions worthwhile defending.

What follows on from the above is that when designing or planning public participation exercises, it is important to distinguish between the various subdivisions of the public. These may include:

- individuals who are directly affected by the potential resolution of identified issues,
- individuals who are potentially interested in the same issues,
- individuals or groups who may become concerned, if they are supplied with additional information,
- officials in management and self-governing bodies affected by the given issue,
- individuals who have been informed about the issue, but have decided that they will not be participating (as yet).

Although the public includes every citizen, all citizens are not participating citizens. As public participation processes never reach the entire public, it is more appropriate to talk about involving the public, rather than citizens. The process of actively engaging a citizen towards the consideration of public concerns may vary according to different countries' national specificities, resulting for example, from the level of maturity of a democracy or from the degree of respect that the principle of citizenship may have in different countries.

Who should be involved in landscape planning and assessment depends on the decision-making level as well as on the relevant topics and focal problems identified in each individual policy, plan, programme or project. As specified by Haaren et al. (2008), the regional or supra-regional level is mainly aimed at officials in the government administration. At the local level the members of public (or spokespersons of user groups) are involved to a greater extent. Involving the public in the decision-making processes of local authorities is a challenging and difficult task. At the same time, it can be a rewarding experience which enhances both the legitimacy of decision making and the value of the decision taken.

4.3.2 When And How To Involve?

Public participation exercises should take place in the early stages of an environmental assessment or planning process, or when a conclusive decision has not yet been made. The timescale for public participation should be long enough so that the public can become familiar with the development proposal, and give input at various stages of the environmental assessment or planning process (Heiland, 2005).

The scope of participation is extremely wide and takes in very different stages of decision making. The participation arrangements and stage may vary according to whether a question is national or local. *The identification and assessment processes* should be part of it, as is the *setting of landscape quality objectives* followed by *establishment of proposed criteria and actions* (see Fig. 4.2 and Tab. 4.4).

Within the EU context, the EIA and SEA Directives specify the steps and activities in which the public should be involved in:

- screening,
- scoping,
- during the preparation and consultation of the environmental report,
- providing information on the decision and about the approval of the proposed plan or programme or plan.

Figure 4.2: The example of public participation at each stage of developing the landscape character types (landscape character catalogue) in Catalonia. Adapted from Nogue et al., (2010).

Table.4.4: Description of stages of developing the landscape character types (landscape character catalogue) in Catalonia. Adapted from Nogue et al.,(2010).

Step 1 Characterisation of the landscape

Goal: Identification of territorial areas with similar characteristics as well as the more subtle and symbolic elements which define it (analysis of the distinctive features of the landscape).

Result: Division and classification of the land into areas with the same character, which are known as landscape units (or landscapes); they are areas characterised by a number of elements which make them different from the rest of the territory and contribute to making them unique in their own way.

Step 2 Landscape assessment

Goal: Studying the threats and opportunities for the landscape, taking into account its configuration, evaluating the dynamics and factors which have an influence, as well as looking into how it may change in the future.

Result: Participation in this stage played a role in improving the landscape assessment carried out by the team who developed the catalogue and in noticing distinctive features of the local environment that may get missed out in a more general study. Participation also helped to reflect on the importance of the threats and opportunities that were detected.

Step 3 Definition of landscape quality

Goal: Defining landscape quality objectives, which are the expression of the landscape preferences of a society, after understanding its state, values and risks.

Result: Quality objectives were determined based on the opinions gathered during the participatory processes, from citizens and from the main social and economic agents in each territory (what kind of landscape do we want).

Step 4 Establishment of proposed criteria

Goal: Proposals of criteria and actions for each landscape unit that will put into effect the landscape quality objectives defined in the previous stage.

Result: The proposed criteria and actions are prepared to be incorporated into spatial planning via landscape directives made by the Ministry of Town and Country Planning and Public Works. Participatory processes related to establishing criteria and actions were carried out, but it was necessary to help the participants that were not experts in this subject.

Both Directives require that the assessment is done early and in a transparent manner to ensure public accountability, but the level of participation is limited to the obligation to inform and involve the “public concerned”. It is the appropriate authority who determines the relevant procedural details, including the details about the methods for informing and consulting the public as well as the range of bodies and/or institutions that deal with the protection of the environment.

However, as stated by Wood (1995), often participation and disclosure occur before the end of the approval process and in some environmental assessment systems, public participation is part of screening and scoping procedures. For example, in the Netherlands public participation focuses on the scope of the evaluation and on the assessment of the Environmental Report. In Germany, public participation occurs mainly during the screening scoping stages. In Slovakia, public participation public participation is often reduced to commenting on the draft plan or project based on the

Environmental Report. More details about public participation in the Slovak Republic are provided in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Public participation in environmental assessment in the Slovak Republic. Source: Authors.

Communication on strategic document, or intent

During this stage, public participation occurs in the forms of information and consultation:

- The public is informed about the communication on a strategic document, respectively on the intent by the municipality concerned and may get acquainted with it within the specified period,
- Within the specified period from displaying the notice on a strategic document, respectively intent by the municipality the public can submit written comments.

Screening procedure

During this stage, the public's involvement is restricted to receiving information:

- The public is informed about the final decision without undue delay,
- By studying the document, the public can verify acceptance of their comments,
- In decision-making within the screening procedure, the opinions of the public are taken into account.

Scoping assessment and, where appropriate, also the timetable for the next stages

In this step public participation occurs through information and consultation exercises:

- The public is informed about the scope of the assessment without undue delay
- By studying the document, the public can verify acceptance of their comments
- The competent authority may consult the scoping document, and where appropriate, also the timetable for next stages
- In scoping, the opinions of the public are taken into account
- The public may submit comments on the scoping document.

Environmental Report

As required by law, the public is both informed and consulted on the Environmental Report:

- In the actual preparation of the Assessment Report there is much scope for consultation with the public and/or obtaining information from the local experts
- The public is informed about the Assessment Report by the responsible competent authority
- The Report is displayed within the given period of time at a specified place at the responsible competent authority
- The public may send comments on the Assessment Report
- By studying the document, the public can verify acceptance of its views

Public hearing on the Assessment Report

As the very name suggests, in this step the public is informed and consulted:

- The affected municipality in cooperation with the applicant must hold a public hearing (or the municipalities may agree on a joint public hearing)
- Oral or written comments from the public are included in the records of the public hearing

Expert opinion

During this stage, the public is neither fully informed nor consulted. A summary of the public's views must be taken into account and contribute to informing the experts' opinion:

- The expert opinion must take into account evaluated views, opinions and comments from the public
- If necessary, the author of the expert opinion may consult with the public

Final Opinion

In this step the public is only informed:

- The public is informed about the final opinion by the responsible competent authority concerned
 - The final opinion must be based also on the views of the public
 - The public may control the extent of acceptance of their comments and opinions by studying the document
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Publishing the results of an environmental assessment, is an organic component of a participatory process, as it is only making the results available for a sufficient length of that effective public participation can be expected. Choosing the correct approach to publishing the results, in terms of when, where and what should be published based on the established customs of a given environmental assessment system, is also important.

The practice of public participation whilst expected in project level EIA, can be more challenging in SEA, in terms of both, design and expected outcomes. This is because strategic intents, expressed in the forms of policies, plans or programmes, are more abstract and their consequences are more difficult for the public to grasp. Due to the more reactive and site-specific nature of projects, evidence from practice indicates that the public tends to be more active in EIA processes. Projects that fall within the remit of an EIA, such as the development of a power plant, landfill or highway, are more tangible, making the description of the potential impacts on the environment, on the economy and on the well-being of a specific community or locality easier to identify and describe. However, the site-specific nature of EIA and the more tangible effects of a proposed project development, can make public participation exercises in EIA vulnerable to the so-called NIMBY (Not In My BackYard) and LULU (Locally Unwanted Land Uses syndromes). Both LULU and NIMBY-isms can occur because of context-specific circumstances, which might reflect particular cultural, socioeconomic or political dynamics. In these cases, the dilemma for the responsible competent authorities is that whilst on the one hand they require the public's input; on the other hand, the public's input might be uncontrollable, costly and slow the planning process (Pretty, 1995).

The differences in the public's behaviour in participatory exercises in EIA and SEA have been described by Heiland (2005) as a "participatory paradox". Despite SEA providing the public with a greater opportunity to influence proposed plans and programmes and shape future development activities at the project level, the public's interest lessens. Thus, in SEA the public's interest in participating decreases as the strategic content of the proposed development increases. In these cases, seeking input from the "qualified public" could be of some assistance, with representatives of the public likely to include NGOs and experts (Lee, 2006).

Finding ways to ensure the effectiveness of public participation exercises, and overcome the participation paradox or NIMBY and LULU behaviours (Buchecker, Hunziker, Kienast, 2003), is important. On this basis, reflecting on what might be preventing the public from participating and on how to motivate the public to participate might be of assistance.

In many cases, however, despite the existence of information and efforts to engage the public, the public remains in the position of a "silent majority". In fact, the public can choose if they want to participate and when. They can choose whether they want to be part of a voicing minority or of a silent majority. It is worth noting that a silent majority can also act as a voicing minority, as whilst remaining

silent, the public can revise its position at any time and choose to become actively engaged and participate in the decision-making process.

4.3.3 Public Participation Tools And Techniques

Techniques of participatory planning, facilitation and mediation and more general procedures for activating individual responsibilities can stimulate one's interest to become actively engaged in an environmental assessment process. The choice of appropriate tool and/or technique for engaging the public is very important. It is necessary to carefully consider which one would be best suited to a particular situation, to the nature of the subject and object of the assessment. Further, it is helpful that the appropriate tool and/or technique is selected and applied by trained and unbiased experts. A list example of the most widely used techniques for engaging the public is provided in Table 4.6.

In relation to public information, many tools and techniques are available that are used as a *one way communication channel*. These include the use of media (e.g. newspapers, radio, TV, magazines, information boards), printed materials (e.g. brochures, press releases, promotional materials, leaflets) or electronic form (e.g. bulk E-mails, websites). Tools and techniques which generate a *two-way information channel* enable the public to act as "recipients" of information, and to fulfil a more active role as "carriers of information". The most widely used methods include meetings such as round tables or workshops with experts, press conferences or exhibitions, which are mainly used at the conceptual stages of an assessment process, for example, when formulating alternatives to the proposed development.

There is no exact formula for selecting a method or technique. Different methods and techniques require different time scale and resources (e.g. the establishment of an Internet line is relatively cheap, but TV advertising can be very expensive). Managing and updating a website requires a lot of time, but publicly accessible map documentation can be implemented fairly quickly. When selecting a method or technique, one has to keep in mind the environmental and demographic profile of the public to engage in the process, and the nature of the proposed development, and its potential impacts on the environment, economy, and community, as well as the technological, organisational and resource implications associated with different methods and techniques.

Table 4.6: Example of tools and techniques for public participation. According to UNEP (2002), Risse and Rauschmayer (2005), Heiland (2005) and Aschemann (2004).

Method	Description	Application
Deliberate voting	aimed at ascertaining as accurately as possible the views of the public on a particular issue. It takes place in the form of a questionnaire before and after the selected group has received relevant information related to the open issue. In the meantime, between the two questionnaires the group can discuss the newly acquired information.	support for significant decisions at national and international level.
Delphi	discussion of selected participants taking place without their personal meetings by filling out a questionnaire on the open issue. The questionnaire is distributed to all participants repeatedly. With each round there is a deeper discussion in order to seek and reach a consensus.	predicting trends, formulating the desirable state or looking for means for its achievement.
Open Doors	a public meeting that can be attended by citizens at any time within a predetermined period in a prearranged room; there is information available as well as people who are aware of the topic are ready to discuss it. Citizens can be informally informed and at the same time present their ideas to address the specific issue.	activities for general public with the opportunity to speak to each person separately; the public will get information rather than comment on the issue.
Focus Group	a planned structured discussion with a small number of participants; managed by an experienced facilitator in a safe environment; the objective is to get information about the preferences and values of people related to the given topic; the method can be understood as a combination of a targeted interview and a discussion group. It can also be an on-line meeting.	identifying people's views on issues, market research, identifying views on politics, etc.
Future search conference	the planning process during which different opinion groups meet to discuss the common past, present and, in particular, the future.	strategic participatory planning in municipalities, non-profit organizations and in companies; little time - big group - many trends.
Interactive exhibition	a combination of informative and consultative (or even decision-making) tools for working with public. The exhibition should, in particular, inform about the given topic. At the same time, it can be a forum for surveys and/or interviews for collecting views on a specific issue.	spatial planning, plan of an important project with a significant impact on inhabitants (bypasses, reconstruction, etc.)

Method	Description	Application
Consensual conference	public group discussion on a socially controversial topic; the selected group has an opportunity to consult with experts and then discuss so that it results in a consensual opinion as the basis for a political decision.	appropriate when addressing issues related to the use of new technologies.
Methods of mapping public areas	the territory is analyzed and/or mapped with the participation of citizens and incentives for its revitalization are collected; the effort is to describe the territory from different angles and then share the views. The group of methods include: city walk, mental mapping, perception mapping and sensual maps.	revitalization of square, city park, school garden and others, suitable for analyzing the perception of the place.
Panel of experts	a method for summarizing and synthesizing a wide range of data and information and creating a final report that is a set of recommendations for solving the issue being studied. Alternatively, a general overall vision related to the issue may be designed.	panels are used as consultative bodies of government, ministries, etc.
Planning cell	evaluation of public opinion by working with smaller, randomly selected groups that discuss the chosen topic over a longer period of time. Its result is a civic report that is submitted as a basis for decision-making in the issue.	used abroad for governmental decisions at national, regional and local levels.
Planning of creation and revitalization of public areas	one of the most common ways of involving the public in decision-making processes; its result is visible in relatively short time; there are several techniques that can be used for public engagement in planning public areas, these techniques can also be applied in other participative projects.	identifying the current use of the area under consideration, collection of public views on possible improvements.
Work group	the basic public engagement techniques; a group of 5 to 15 people repeatedly meet to resolve the given project, topic or intention; an important element for the functioning and outputs of the work group is its composition that should correspond to individual interest groups concerned by the issue being discussed.	problem solving, policy-making at all levels of public administration.
Citizen's jury	a smaller group of citizens / jury addressing a particular issue; presents to the authorities the basis for a decision; experts and representatives of different opinion streams can be asked to appear before the jury as "witnesses" at hearings; the jury discusses possible solutions and tries to achieve a consensual conclusion.	learn the public opinion on a specific controversial topic.

Method	Description	Application
Round table	one of the most traditional and most common methods of group discussion; the key principle is the equality of participants that is symbolically anchored by a circle; this can be achieved by arranging the debating participants as well as by a well-balanced discussion facilitated by an experienced moderator.	widespread form of group discussion.
Open Space Technology	a very informal and democratic method allowing the sharing of personal experiences and insights into the chosen topic; the detailed content of the meeting - a specific topic for discussion - is formed by the participants themselves and they themselves are the engine and facilitator of the whole process.	structuring of conferences, professional associations; it requires openness and individual approach, voluntary and active participation.
Scenarios for the future	based on the narrative, a description of possible future situations; it is not an estimate or a plan for the future but a description of a possible development that is determined by key trends and/or events; it is about creating alternatives that can inspire strategic decisions and planning.	analysis of complex events and events with a relatively long time horizon.
Creating a community vision	a method aimed at creating a long-term plan for development of a municipality or territory with the simultaneous selection and progressive implementation of the topics with short-term priority.	combining views of citizens in terms of the long-term development of the municipality, strengthening the responsibility for partial changes in the municipality.
Public hearing / discussion	it allows presentation and discussion of major projects and intentions; the presentation is provided by responsible persons - designer, official, etc.; a facilitated and documented discussion and a collection of oral and written comments on the project/intention could also be parts of these hearings.	major projects and intentions.
World Café	allows a medium to large groups of participants to share experiences, opinions and search for answers to predefined questions; the method can be used alone or as part of a larger action or process.	personal dialogue with people in a larger group, opening vague opinions, method applicable e.g. as part of a conference, a planning meeting.

4.4 Good Practice Principles In Public Participation With Regard To Landscape Issues

As noted in the previous sections, public participation plays an important role in the assessment of impacts on the landscape. It is essential for reaching a common understanding and agreement on key issues of landscape that are often subjective, or neglected, as participatory exercises can identify local interests and values that otherwise can be very easily overlooked.

The basic principles for public participation in both, landscape planning and assessment processes, clearly include the *aspect of democracy* which allows for the inclusion of the broad public and of other entities. The opinions and comments of the public should be respected at all stages of assessment, planning and decision-making processes, based on a working partnership inspired by fairness and by the mutual cooperation and compliance with the agreements adopted (Hanusch and Fischer, 2011; IEA and LI, 1995; Heiland, 2005).

Another significant principle is *making the public interested*. Public participation entails accepting the public as an immediate and equal entity to other planning and assessment stakeholders, with whom a relationship based on dialogue and communication is necessary. In this context Jones (2006) summarized the following basic principles:

- fairness for all participants,
- identification of needs of specific groups,
- protecting the interests of the local community,
- recognizing the complexity of property rights while maintaining landscape diversity,
- achieve *modus vivendi* among the interests of visitors,
- listening to immigrants in environmental matters.

Another principle to take into account, is maintaining the public engagement through time. Apathy on the part of the general public is a commonly experienced problem in planning and assessment processes. So once secured and engaged, it is essential to cultivate the public's interest, so that their enthusiasm can be used as a resource for voluntary work (Jones, 2007), or to feed into other decisions on projects, plans or landscape initiatives that might concern them.

The use of new technologies, such as information and communication media, can substantially support participatory processes. In particular, the use of geographic information systems (GIS) for both, presentation and analysis purposes, and the provision of data on the internet, open up diverse opportunities for communicating information and for participation. The take-up of digital technologies are further contributing to making public participation not only smarter, but also more wide-reaching and more cost- and time-efficient. However, it is worth acknowledging that going smart can also narrow the parameters defining who can participate, as it restricts participation to those who have access to the appropriate technology (whether a

computer, smart phone or handset) and to those who are IT-literate. Examples of good practices regarding promoting public participation can be very useful (see Tab. 4.7).

The landscape participation is not possible without the commitment and involvement of planners, politicians and members of the administrations. The provision and maintenance of information on the internet, the target group-specific and topic-specific presentation as well as the organisation, implementation and technical accompaniment of the participation process involves additional work and services which take up the time of the landscape management authorities or the planning consultants engaged to draw it up, especially at local level (Haaren et al., 2008). Local governments need to actively support the involvement of the public in planning, legislation, implementation and at the assessment stage to provide feedback to specialists in landscape planning and assessment, understand the positions and competences of involved individuals and groups as well as identify potential conflict situations as early as possible.

Table 4.7: Example of public participation process during Catalonia landscape catalogue development. Source: Nogue et al., (2010).

Tool	Stages of Catalonia landscape catalogue preparation	Main target	Advantages	Disadvantages
Telephone survey	Characterisation and assessment	<p>To get an initial sense of how citizens perceive the landscape and where they stand in relation to it.</p> <p>To find out about the values which people attribute to landscapes, both the tangible (historical, social) and the intangible ones (aesthetic, symbolic, identity-based).</p>	<p>Conclusions can be drawn about a larger percentage of the population given the representativity of the sample target of the study.</p> <p>Enables a high level of control over answers as it guarantees the usefulness and facilitates the analysis of the data obtained from the structured questionnaire.</p> <p>Generates a significant volume of information.</p>	<p>Does not create the space for debate or interaction between agents.</p> <p>Does not encourage reflections and in-depth analysis.</p> <p>Does not allow for any other facts beyond what is confined to the questions in the survey to be reflected on.</p> <p>Makes it difficult to understand the more experiential dimension of the landscape.</p>
Opinion poll	Characterisation and assessment	<p>To get an initial sense of how the population, experience and value the landscape, as well as their aspirations for it.</p>	<p>Reaches people who would not otherwise have participated using more voluntary methods.</p> <p>Generates a large amount of information</p> <p>Enables a high level of control over answers as it guarantees the usefulness and facilitates the analysis of the data obtained from the structured questionnaire.</p> <p>Takes into account the emotional dimension of the landscape.</p> <p>Makes it possible to link social and demographic aspects to the perception of landscape.</p> <p>The use of a semi-structured questionnaire includes a high percentage of open questions which allows for a richer analysis.</p>	<p>Does not create space for debate or exchange of ideas between interviewees.</p> <p>Does not encourage reflections or in-depth analysis.</p> <p>Does not encourage consensus in the perception of landscape.</p> <p>Does not allow for any facts beyond what is confined to the questions of the survey.</p>

Tool	Stages of Catalonia landscape catalogue preparation	Main target	Advantages	Disadvantages
Public consultation via the web	Characterisation, assessment and determination of landscape quality objectives	To get a sense of their perception of the landscape, to identify values and to contrast some of the results obtained by the team who developed the catalogues.	<p>It is possible to get a large number of contributions at a relatively low cost.</p> <p>Photographs and maps can be used, which help to illustrate the landscape catalogue or make answers to the consultation easier.</p> <p>Information about the consultation can spread by word of mouth, for example by forwarding the web link of the consultation by email</p> <p>Access is simple; it only requires a computer with internet connection.</p> <p>The landscape unit format brings the scale of study closer to citizens in general.</p> <p>The virtual platform that is created can be used for subsequent consultations, which means that the cost of each new consultation goes down.</p>	<p>Does not allow for dialogue and communication between participants.</p> <p>Does not give an overview of a representative sample of the population of the area.</p> <p>It is difficult to reach all age groups, given that the older sector of the population (over 65) cannot easily access the internet and are therefore almost completely excluded.</p> <p>Does not enable participants to give very in-depth answers.</p>
Interviews with agents	Characterisation and assessment	To find out their opinion on key issues, values, characteristics and challenges related to the landscape.	<p>Makes it possible to get in-depth information on the landscape.</p> <p>Makes it possible to get in-depth information on the landscape.</p> <p>The content of the interview can be modified as it goes along, according to what is of interest in the conversation.</p>	<p>Does not create space for debate</p> <p>Reaches a small number of people.</p>

Tool	Stages of Catalonia landscape catalogue preparation	Main target	Advantages	Disadvantages
Discussion groups	Assessment and determination of landscape quality objectives	To exchange and analyse ideas in order to create a group discourse, qualitatively different in content from the sum of individual discourses.	<p>Forges communication through dialogue and debate between agents</p> <p>If it is used in the middle stage of the participatory process, the discussion group helps with the work of subsequent procedures, given that it widens the range of recorded discourses and it engages people in debate so as to build consensus.</p> <p>Achieves a high degree of in-depth contributions by the groups and it enables people to get to know each other.</p>	<p>Makes it difficult to control certain types of personality (dominant or shy characters, favouritism).</p> <p>It is difficult to ensure that the conversation gets to a truly effective place, given that it takes a lot of skill to lead the group towards mutual empathy in the minimum time possible.</p> <p>Requires an extra effort in planning the sessions due to working with a group, given the difficulty of ensuring assistance for each invitation.</p>
Workshop with agents	Determination of landscape quality objectives and establishment of criteria and actions	To stimulate debate between various landscape agents with completely different visions on the same subject.	<p>Stimulates debate between agents.</p> <p>Makes it possible to identify areas of consensus and of disagreement.</p>	<p>Does not guarantee that those who are shy or are not used to speaking in public will contribute.</p> <p>Makes it difficult to reach people not very knowledgeable in the subject.</p>

Tool	Stages of Catalonia landscape catalogue preparation	Main target	Advantages	Disadvantages
Workshop with individuals	Assessment and determination of landscape quality objectives, establishment of criteria and actions	To debate on the values, key issues and challenges to the landscapes of the territorial areas.	<p>Points of view emerge that do not come out in individual interviews. It shows how attitudes and opinions arise and change.</p> <p>Opens up the range of approaches and values that emerge when dealing with landscapes. It blends technical and experiential knowledge in order to reach a richer collective analysis, while generating group- based knowledge.</p> <p>Encourages social learning about the landscape.</p>	<p>Only reaches a limited amount of people. It becomes an expensive method if the whole area of the landscape catalogue is to be covered.</p> <p>Restricting it to a limited territorial area has its risks.</p> <p>Requires an extra effort for planning group sessions, having to make sure every time that those invited will be able to assist.</p>
Open workshop	Characterisation and assessment	Open to all those interested in the landscape catalogue, introducing the catalogue, explaining at what stage it was at, and collecting the opinions of those attending.	<p>Makes it possible to reach a large number of people.</p> <p>Generates debate among those who participate in the workshops.</p> <p>Can be linked to the initial stage of giving out information about the participatory processes.</p>	<p>Doesn't make it possible to go into depth on certain subjects given that the workshops take place at the start of developing the landscape catalogues.</p>

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