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Research on Public Participation in Environmental Decision-Making:

Approaches, Contexts, Stakes and Perspectives Across Borders

International seminar - 12 and 13 April 2011

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Introduction

This report sums up the main findings of the international seminar held at Oxford, Great Britain, on 11 and 14 April 2011, in partnership with the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment at Oxford University, for the *Concertation, Décision et Environnement* (Participation, Decision and Environment) research programme, run by the French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing (*Ministère français de l'écologie, du développement durable, du transport et du logement* or MEDDTL) and the French Environment and Energy Management Agency (*Agence de l'Environnement et de la Maîtrise de l'Énergie* or ADEME).

The report is not an exhaustive account of the seminar, but an ordered presentation of the main outcomes. It focuses on the main issue dealt with: internationalising research on public participation in environmental decision-making.

This report is aimed at a wide audience, including researchers and research networks in the participation field and practitioners who are interested in the international dimension of participation in environmental decision-making.

This report is also available in French.

Context, stakes and objectives

An external evaluation of the CDE programme, launched after the first phase (1999-2005) was completed, was carried out in 2007.¹ As a result of this evaluation, organisers decided to focus on encouraging the internationalisation of French research on public participation in the environmental field when the second phase of the programme was launched in 2008. This objective is based on two observations on the practical and research levels.

Practically speaking, public participation is very dependent (in terms of objectives and methods, for instance) on the different forms of environmental decision-making in place in different countries. (What is the legal framework? What are the political issues and structures at stake? How is the public usually consulted during the decision-making process? Etc.) It is therefore logical that each country has developed different public participation practices.

However, at the same time, multi-scale situations (for example, climate policies from the global to local levels) and transnational legal frameworks (including European directives and the Aarhus Convention) are developing. They require participation practices that go beyond borders and connect different contexts. Participation is caught in a tension between national specificities on the one hand and the development of standardised discourses and practices on the international level on the other.

This tension is also at play in research on public participation. On the one hand, "territorialised" research provides an exhaustive and detailed view of participation taking into account national,

¹ This report (in French) can be downloaded from the CDE's website: http://www.concertation-environnement.fr/documents/CDE_Rapport_final_evaluation.pdf.

local and thematic specificities. On the other, “deterritorialised” research promotes standard tools and methods, more or less independent of their implementation contexts.

In addition, it is important to note that, while public participation develops in different ways depending on the country and the geographic or organisational scales in which it is used, it also evolves extremely rapidly within each context. Over the last ten years, for example, environmental participation in France has changed significantly. It has become more commonplace, more institutionalised and, increasingly, a field of research in its own right. This means that the stakes for research also evolve rapidly. One of the seminar’s objectives was to look into the international scope of research, while bearing in mind the changing and dynamic nature of participatory procedures.

With these observations in mind, the seminar’s main aim can be summed up as follows. On the one hand, it sought to encourage exchanges between French researchers (especially those involved in the CDE programme) and researchers carrying out territorialised studies in other countries. On the other, it aimed to increase their participation in and contribution to deterritorialised ideas developing as a result of public participation on the international level.

The seminar helped further the CDE programme’s research in several ways:

- By identifying new themes and potential partnerships allowing French teams to launch more international research initiatives on public participation in the environmental field.
- By establishing connections between the international dimension of research on environmental participation and the international issues affecting public policy when it comes to developing multi-scale mechanisms or implementing European or international agreements on public participation in environmental decision-making.
- By giving French teams working on participation in the environmental field new tools to develop international research initiatives, as well as ideas enabling them to further their work and build new partnerships.

Issues, themes and organisation

As past experience has shown, when participation researchers from different countries meet to discuss their work, they often risk taking part in trivial, stereotypical and unstructured debates comparing national contexts. To avoid this, organisers took several steps to focus discussions, including:

- Limiting the number of different nationalities present. Organisers chose to focus on comparing the situation in France and the United Kingdom. Only a small number of researchers from other countries were invited. This meant that participants at the seminar were able to better understand the two national contexts presented; describe the development of participation practices; understand how research on participation has been developed and organised in these two countries; and appreciate the many different approaches to and perspectives on participation amongst researchers from a single country.

- Identifying a limited number of clearly defined issues to be discussed during the seminar's debate sessions (see below).
- Focusing on public participation research in the environmental field.
- Giving pride of place to presentations on comparative studies where researchers have already carried out in-depth analyses of two different national contexts.

The seminar's preparation and organisation was based on these principles.

Encouraging discussion

The seminar took place over two days. Participants included around 20 French researchers, 12 British researchers and researchers from other countries (see the list of participants in the appendix). A steering committee, composed of members of the CDE scientific committee, chose participants (see list of members inside the front cover) and defined the program.

The seminar took place at Wadham College, Oxford University. Proceedings were in English. This was because encouraging French research teams to take part in discussions, studies and publications in English is an essential part of developing French research on public participation on an international level.

The programme included:

- Presentations summing up the development of public participation and research in this field in France and the United Kingdom.
- Presentations on the development of public participation on the supranational level, and difficulties for public policy in this field.
- Presentations on comparative research.
- A considerable amount of time was set aside for discussion and debate on these presentations.
- Workshops in sub-groups of researchers and practitioners – involved or not involved in the CDE programme – of at least two nationalities
- A summary of both days.

This report has four parts. The first, based primarily on the presentations and discussions that took place during the first half-day of the seminar, presents and compares environmental participation and research in this field in France and the United Kingdom. The second, based on presentations and discussions from the second half-day, examines issues affecting the internationalisation of environmental participation, in particular with respect to the Aarhus Convention and the participatory implementation of European environmental policies. The third focuses on some of the most interesting points of view exchanged during discussions on theoretical issues and current evolutions in research on public participation, especially on the second day of the seminar. The

fourth, relatively short, sums up some of the avenues to be explored by the CDE programme and French research on environmental participation.

Key questions

The seminar revolved around three key issues, each giving rise to a series of questions.

1 – The internationalisation of research: stakes and resources

What kinds of research will be required by international public policy mechanisms and commitments in the field of environmental participation?

What impact will the internationalisation of research on environmental participation have on public policy?

How can links be created between two complementary research fields focusing on (a) furthering territorialised research and exchanges between regions and (b) developing analytical frameworks, tools and studies on a transnational scale?

Which concepts and methods can be used to reinforce international research on public participation? How can they be further developed in future studies on the subject?

How can bilateral or multilateral research be encouraged?

2 - The stakes of public participation for public policy (and actions more generally) in the environmental field.

How has environmental participation developed nationally?

What role has it come to play in environmental actions?

How has research on national environmental participation developed over time, and what contributions has it made to participatory practices?

Do any current evolutions or perspectives allow us to better define the stakes for research and public actions?

How should the environment and factors unique to this field contribute to developing research practices in public participation?

3 – Theoretical resources for transnational comparisons and research

What theories and concepts from other disciplines can be used to make international comparisons or approach problems from a supranational point of view in the public participation field?

What conclusions and perspectives can be drawn from comparative research over the last decade?

What schools of thought are visible in each country? Can these schools of thought interact with each other? Are there links between national contexts and different schools of thought?

1. Perspectives on public participation in the environmental field

Participatory practices and research have developed simultaneously, as underlined in presentations by Jason Chilvers of the United Kingdom and Cécile Blatrix of France, as well as in the extensive discussions that followed.

There is no equivalent of the CDE programme in the United Kingdom. However, there is a field of research focusing on the environment (environmental studies), which benefits from more recognition than in France. There are also one or several epistemic communities involved in public participation in environmental decision-making. These communities are made up of researchers, practitioners, policy makers and various organisations.

One of the seminar's findings was that these communities operate relatively independently of each other and are "embedded" in their national contexts. One of the reasons for this could be the fact that the emergent participation market, as studied by Nonjon (2006) and Carson and Hendriks (2008), is national in both cases.

Discussion focused on the evolution of public participation practices and research in this field. The varying national contexts meant many similarities were identified, as well as significant differences.

A. Evolving research and practice in British environmental participation:

Jason Chilvers (University of East Anglia) began working on the subject of participation in 1999, as part of his research on decision-making processes and associated evaluation procedures. In particular, he focused on normative criteria for evaluating public participation. Recently, he has been working on a critical analysis of participation.

Chilvers' presentation at the seminar was based on two studies dealing with public participation in the environmental field in the United Kingdom. The first was carried out in 2003, and the second in 2009. They both analyse the emergence of new categories of experts and expertise in the public participation field.

Approaches to research on participation can be divided into three waves:

1. The rapid development of participatory methods and spreading of practices in the 1990s.
2. The evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of public participation, which became central to research and practice in the late 1990s.
3. The emergence of a more critical and reflective mode of public participation research from the mid 2000s. Participation became an object for study in itself, along with its political context, objectives, underlying assumptions, construction of power structures and other aspects.

² This section is based on the presentation given by Jason Chilvers, University of East Anglia.

These three phases do not follow each other in a linear manner, and often overlap.

The United Kingdom has had “a historical lack of experience in broad public engagement” and a political culture where “experts whose right to speak [was] virtually unquestioned” (Jasanoff, 2005: 286–289).

A major change has therefore taken place over the last fifteen years in terms of innovating in and institutionalising public participation, from the official point of view at least. The United Kingdom is beginning to develop these kinds of practices and is gaining recognition for its progress in some aspects of public participation.

However, the United Kingdom’s participatory history dates back further than the 1990s.

In the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, for example, local participation grew quickly, especially in the community planning field. This development stopped during the Thatcher years.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the predominant trend in research on environmental decision-making was to favour a technocratic approach, which focused on one-way communication with the public. Brian Wynne (1991) called this the “deficit model of public understanding of science.” In line with this model, resistance and inaction from the public when faced with environmental issues or technical and scientific questions were the result of public misunderstanding. Public support and acceptance therefore depended on better communications strategies. Consequently, the main recommendation made to the authorities was to improve the ways in which experts communicated with the public.

From the mid 1990s to 2005, a new wave of research on public participation began to emerge. It focused on two-way dialogue, and promoted decision-making practices by developing innovative methods. It was prompted by a crisis in expertise, which called into question technocratic approaches. This affected decisions in all fields, whether the issue was genetically modified organisms (GMOs) or managing hazardous waste. The domains open to public participation seemed to change: sustainable development and climate change became key issues given the underlying crisis of confidence in science. This led to attempts to rethink public participation, a theme adopted by New Labour as part of its development of a democratic renewal and social inclusion programme. These changes affected environmental sectors, including environmental risk management, waste management, etc. The focus was increasingly on theoretical debate on values, as two new forms of public participation emphasizing agreement or consensus developed. These approaches were:

- Stakeholder-based approaches, which targeted actors interested in or affected by the issues being debated. These methods included mediation, conflict resolution, etc.
- Public deliberation methods: citizens’ juries, consensus conferences, focus groups, etc.

This period was also characterised by a move towards participative and qualitative research.

As part of his doctoral thesis (Chilvers 2004-2008), Chilvers mapped out the epistemic community that began researching these two main approaches. This work was made possible thanks to the Research Council’s strong support for research in the 1990s.

Practitioners were generally independent mediators working for small companies or NGOs. They offered consulting services and decision-making advice to the government and industry – areas where decision-makers had not yet developed these skills. Chilvers carried out again a similar mapping work for the report *Sustainable Participation? Mapping out and reflecting on the field of public dialogue on science and technology* (Chilvers, 2010).

The Sciencewise Expert Resource Centre for Public Dialogue in Science and Innovation (Sciencewise-ERC)

The Centre, launched by Government in May 2008, aims to ‘develop the Government’s ability to carry out high quality dialogue and to ensure that the best ways of doing this are incorporated into the way Government makes policy in the future’. It follows on from the Sciencewise Programme initially set up in 2005, which has its roots in the commitment to public dialogue and ‘upstream’ engagement in the Treasury’s 10 year Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-2014 and was given extra impetus by The Council for Science and Technology’s ‘Policy Through Dialogue’ report in 2005, which recommended that Government should develop a ‘corporate memory’ about how to do dialogue well (Chilvers, 2010: 4).

Jason Chilvers was commissioned to carry out this study by Sciencewise-ERC. It was published in 2010 under the title “Sustainable participation? Mapping out and reflecting on the field of public dialogue on science and technology.” The report goes beyond case studies and good practices to provide a broader analysis of the public dialogue field by focusing on the structures and contexts affecting participative governance. The findings apply mainly to the domains of science, technology and the environment, but may also be of relevance to other sectors.³

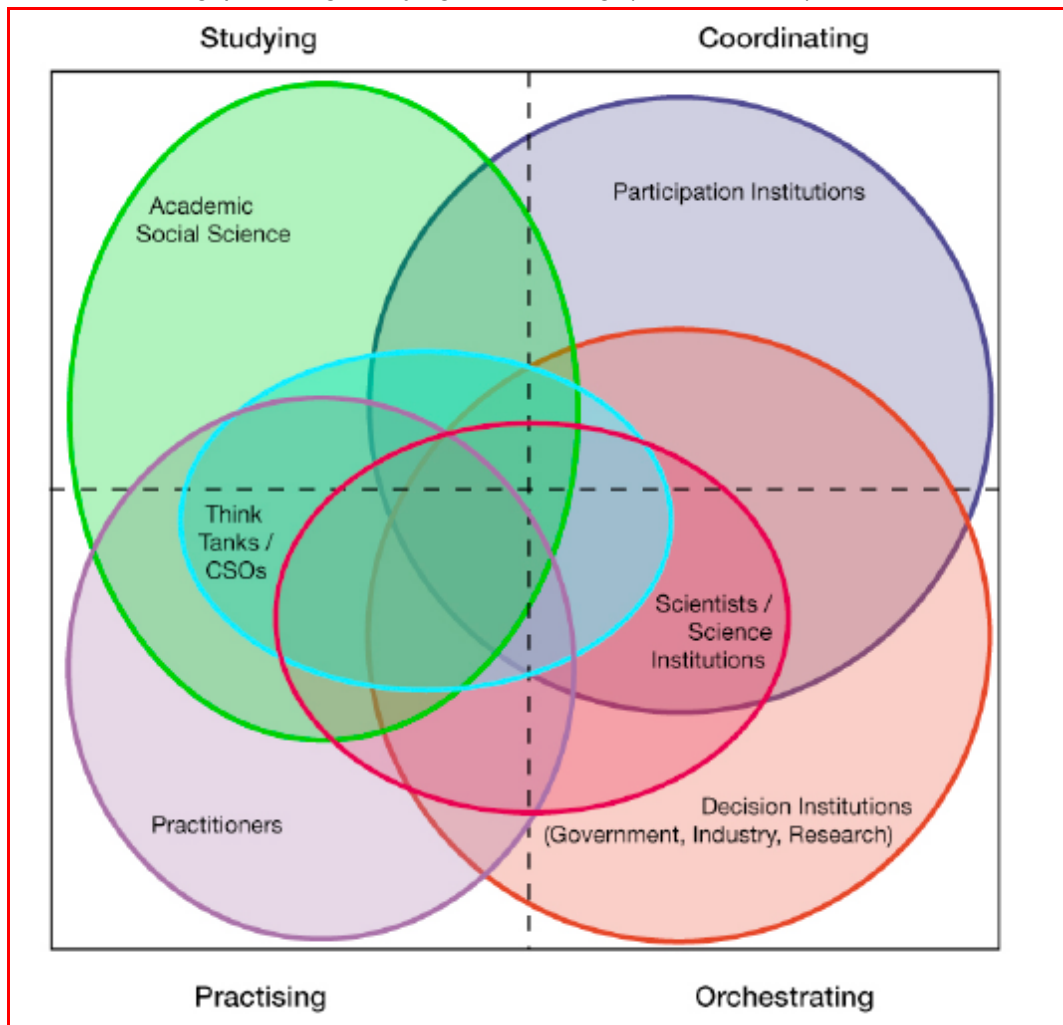
Between 2005 and the present, a new phase appears to have begun. It is characterised by a move to institutionalise and professionalise public participation (as seen in the rising public engagement industry, a second wave of practice-based research and the institutionalisation of participation itself), and public engagement in science and technology. While new practices have emerged, some patterns can be observed: there is a shift towards decision-making by small groups of “innocent citizens”, but also an opposing movement in favour of “scaling up”, which attempts to involve hundreds of people located in the same room at the same time. On-line participation is becoming increasingly common.

These practices seek to make science transparent upstream of decision-making and public actions. However, they have also been appropriated by different organisations, which often manage to use public participation to simply obtain approval for decisions on controversial issues or emerging technologies.

The following diagram shows the different kinds of actors involved in this area, and the relationships between them as they take part in four main activities:

³ This report is available from the Sciencewise-ERC website: <http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk/>

Illustration 1: *orchestrating, practising, studying, coordinating.* (Chilvers, 2010)



Since 2005, new actors have appeared in the participation field. This includes public participation institutions, which seek to professionalise participation.

Currently participation in the United Kingdom can be summed up as follows:

- In the orchestrating field, deciding institutions award contracts to design and implement public participation procedures to external third parties.
- In the studying field, researchers have moved from being involved in innovative experiments to adopting a more critical and independent stance with respect to public participation practices.
- Recently, attention has shifted to other kinds of processes that already exist but are gaining more recognition in practice: invited macro public dialogue (which takes place on a wider scale than normal project-based participation procedures), citizen-led processes and uninvited public engagement (which is not formally recognised by institutions).

Finally, given the changing political and economic context, three emerging trends must be mentioned. They all focus on the idea of efficiency (as public participation is no longer a priority in these circumstances):

1) There is a shift towards on-line procedures, which are presumed to be more efficient and effective.

2) The focus is increasingly on many spaces of engagement, by taking into account the different forms of participation that reinforce each other. This is a much wider view of public participation than obtained when focusing on one type of process or event. The objective is therefore to identify the most appropriate institutional design – to move from approaches centred on engagement as a goal in itself towards approaches where engagement is a means to an end. In this situation, it becomes part of a system of more general mechanisms implemented by policy makers. The aim is to coproduce and jointly test new relationships between science, society and politics.

3) As mentioned above, there is a shift towards more critical and reflective research. This last trend is a reaction to institutions appropriating public participation for their own purposes. It is as if scientific organisations and communities and public policy institutions had not taken public dialogue into account and instead, had shaped dialogues according to their own cultures and worldviews.

As a result of this reflective and critical approach, a series of seminars for practitioners and policy makers recently took place to discuss the state of affairs in the participation field⁴.

⁴ <http://www.uea.ac.uk/env/esrcsems>: this seminar provides the reader with an interesting overview of British debates on the subject.

B. France: the participative environment and the research market⁵

Before we discuss the participatory situation in France, we should provide some information on the French environmental context. French public policy on the environment only dates back to the 1960s and 1970s, when public demonstrations forced politicians to take action in this domain. Also, environmental studies are not as well recognised in France as they are in the English-speaking world. In addition, France is affected by a crisis in representational democracy, like most other Western democracies. The development of participative mechanisms is seen as a way of improving relationships between those governing and those governed. As a result, the “right to participate” has been developed and institutionalised in the environmental field.

In research, there is a close correlation between the way the participative environment has developed over time (especially with respect to environmental issues), and academic publications on the subject, which have inspired and contributed to testing new tools.

Three different periods can be identified:

- (1) The first period, which ended in the late 1960s, was characterised by a strict vision of representative democracy. In line with this view, the only necessary form of public participation was elections. The actors involved in decision-making were linked by negotiations both institutionalised and informal, but this depended on the area of action concerned. As underlined by Pierre Muller, an example of this is agricultural policy, which he called “neo-corporatism à la française” (Muller, 1984; for the water field, see Le Bourhis, 2003).
- (2) The second period, which lasted from the 1970s to the late 1980s, saw the gradual appearance of public decision-making spaces. This period was marked by the relative scarcity of participative tools on the one hand, and the lack of research on the other. Once again, the “strict” view of representative democracy prevailed. The only examples of compulsory public participation were public inquiries on projects affecting the environment or participation in the planning field, which took place at advanced stages of the decision-making process. Most research dealt with questions of law, in particular environmental law, by looking into public inquiries and participatory procedures.
- (3) The third period, which lasted from the 1990s to the early 2000s, saw the development (or even proliferation) of participatory tools and research. Most researchers focused on local experiences or specific tools. However, new tools also emerged: in addition to public inquiries and public participation in planning, there were now public debates organised by the *Commission Nationale du Débat Public* (National Commission for Public Debate), development councils, neighbourhood councils and municipal referendums. All these procedures were set down in law. At the same time, new techniques were tested outside the legal framework and often promoted in research work. Research thus took the form of guidelines or methodologies, and was carried out by researchers or associations supporting participative democracy or the procedures discussed⁶. Some recent examples of this trend

⁵ This section is based on the presentation given by Cécile Blatrix, AgroParisTech

include participatory budgeting and (an even more visible method), citizens' conferences inspired by the Danish Board of Technology's consensus conferences.

The table below is a simplified representation of these three periods. It highlights how each new period is affected by research on the ways in which participatory procedures work. During the second period, for example, researchers noted that public debates were insufficiently "public" and only attracted certain kinds of actors depending on the issue at hand. This failure to attract the "wider public" inspired reflection on and experimentation with participatory procedures involving the most disadvantaged populations (participatory budgeting) or ordinary citizens (citizens' conferences). The latter example is probably the most popular participatory procedure in France at the moment. Many experiments are taking place on the national level (for example a citizens' conference on the use of genetically-modified organisms in agriculture in 1998), but also on the local level at the initiative of private companies and regional authorities. A new market is developing for those with expertise in citizens' conferences.

The table focuses on the dominant participatory procedure characterising each period. However, these procedures do not disappear with the advent of the next period. Consequently, the best way of describing participation in France today would be as a patchwork (or even a jumble) of different methods.

⁶ ADELS, *Conseils de quartier, mode d'emploi* (Neighbourhood councils, a users' guide), 2003; Anacej, *Comment créer son conseil d'enfants et de jeunes* (How to set up councils for children and young people); Dominique Bourg, Daniel Boy, *Conférences de citoyens, mode d'emploi*, Paris, Charles Léopold Mayer, 2005.

	Emblematic forms of public participation	Main difficulties identified in research
Institutionalised spheres of negotiation	Basin committees Institutionalized, non-public places of bargaining between stakeholders	Lack of transparency, lack of control mechanisms
Public spheres of deliberation	Public debates (CNDP) Public events open to all (public meetings), no restrictions on participation	The public is principally made up of “de facto representatives”. Difficulty in involving some population groups (including young people and disadvantaged populations)
Small-group deliberation	Citizens conferences made up of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People representing the diversity of ordinary citizens - People representing future generations? 	Small number of participants Limited impacts, despite a growing interest in this procedure

Research plays an active and tangible role (which is often denied) in determining the contours and practices of the French participatory environment. Because they take the initiative and carry out research, researchers are involved in the processes contributing to an emerging “participative democracy”. Other determinants in these processes include international organisations, social movements and environmental issues, the transfer of ideas and knowledge about participation and institutional imitation (Blatrix, 2008).

The main characteristics of public participation in France can therefore be resumed as follows:

- Public participation in France generally takes place on the local level, and mainly concerns environmental or planning issues.
- Local authorities initiate public policies encouraging participation as a result of decentralisation.
- A range of different tools exists, and these tools have been institutionalised and developed to varying degrees.
- There is an underlying assumption that these methods are compatible with representative democracy. However, even though they are often used for consultative purposes, they sometimes produce effects calling representative democracy into question.

Several trends are also visible in the research field:

- There are few well-designed empirical studies on the sociology of participants. It is also difficult to get an overall vision of the participatory environment that is not limited to a single participatory tool.

- There are insufficient studies dealing with the actual impacts of participatory tools. Evaluation studies are often too focused on procedural questions, and overlook the impact of tools on decision-making and/or the policy at hand. The starting point for most research is tools, rather than procedures or underlying conflicts. All too often, analyses seem to concentrate on how tools work without taking into account underlying issues, local political contexts, and the longer time-span of decision-making processes.
- There is a tendency to overestimate “social demand” and related outcomes. Participatory tools are affected by the same social inequalities as elections, with the vast majority of people being “non participants”.

To echo Bernard Manin, it is possible to talk about the normalisation of a normative approach to research on participation. This can take the form of focusing on a particular procedure or tool, and underlining its unique qualities. A similar movement can be observed in research on the environmental participation field. While participatory tools were seen as experimental innovations and judged severely by social scientists who favoured criticism over collaboration in the 1980s, in the 1990s things changed radically. “Consultation tools became a reference model for public policy. Overall, the social sciences adopted an approach that promotes the quest for agreement” (Mermet, 2006: 81).

Several schools of thought influence research in this field. In particular, theorists inspired by Habermas and J. Elster have played an important role by developing approaches based on analysing discourse, arguments and the decision-making process. The idea of dialogism, advanced by Callon, Lascoumes and Barthe (2001), is also very present. Several recent works have suggested extending this perspective by giving it a global dimension – they talk about ecological democracy and global democracy. Sustainable development is currently pushing researchers to rethink these issues. For the first time, some studies have called into question the representative system itself, claiming it is ill-adapted to deal with some environmental issues (see for example Boutaud, 2007).

To conclude, the environmental field has been an extremely fertile ground for the development of public participation in France. However, it is unclear whether environmental issues have benefited from the development of public participation, which increasingly appears as a goal in and of itself.

C. Parallels between France and the United Kingdom

As these two presentations show, there are many similarities between the situations in France and the United Kingdom: (1) Public participation in environmental issues progressively became a specialised field of research over a similar period. (2) Research and discourses in both countries have focused on two main types of participatory methods (public debates and “mini-publics”). However, these methods are not representative of the wide range of tools available. (3) In both countries, participation has been professionalised, and is becoming an industry that a number of researchers participate in. (4) In both countries, many tend to consider that the development of public participation in environmental issues is moving in the right direction – in other words, environmental participation produces a better environment and a better democracy. However, they both have difficulties in integrating research on public participation into a wider view of the changes affecting the environment and politics. (5) France and the United Kingdom are both affected by the same European and international contexts. Finally, despite the differences we will deal with below, seminar participants from both these countries expressed similar concerns and had similar points of reference. This gave rise to extremely interesting debates over the two-day period.

The differences between the two countries were several. The most obvious difference was probably chronological. While evaluating participatory practices became a priority for British researchers in the late 1990s, their French counterparts are only now developing this theme.⁷ The development of critical studies on public participation several years ago in the United Kingdom contrasts with the apologetic approach adopted in French studies on the subject, despite the CDE programme’s longstanding support for more critical analyses (see session 12 “*Critiques de la concertation: amorcer le bilan à partir de 30 ans de recherches*” [A critical analysis of public participation: looking back on 30 years of research]⁸). Another major difference is the status of environmental research and studies on participation. In the United Kingdom, environmental research is more developed and benefits from more recognition than in France. British work on participation tends to be associated with research movements in the environmental, technological risk and scientific fields. However, research on participation in the United Kingdom today is not as strongly coordinated as it is in France. It resembles a multitude of different research groups, each with its own perspective and priorities.

It is also important to note that, in the United Kingdom, participation stakes and practices are different in England, Wales (one example discussed at the seminar), Scotland and Northern Ireland. Each region’s size and legal system can create significant differences.

After discussing similarities and differences in each country’s participative environment, participants at the seminar turned to the theoretical background of participatory evaluation in France and the United Kingdom.

⁷ Two CDE seminar sessions were organised to discuss this theme on 26 June 2002 and 10 June 2009. Accounts of seminar proceedings are available in French from the website <http://concertation-environnement.fr/> under the heading “*Les séminaires de CDE*” (CDE seminars). The theme of evaluation is also discussed in the ADEME’s publication, *La Concertation en environnement, éclairage des sciences humaines et repères pratiques* (Public Participation in the Environmental Field, Social Science Perspectives and Practical References), Paris 2011.

⁸ Seminar proceedings are available from the CDE’s website.

The first key observation was a tendency to more or less implicitly consider participation as having intrinsic value, independently of what was being participated in. But, in the general scheme of things, is participation always such a good thing? This is a very valid question given the issues raised by seminar participants.

One of the issues raised was the way in which participative decision-making could absolve policy makers of part of their responsibility for decisions. Such a diminution of responsibility could have negative effects on democracy and the environment. However, one of the most commonly raised issues, particularly mentioned by British participants, was the fact that participation was becoming an increasingly technical and formalised process. Scientific and planning institutions have successfully assimilated participatory jargon, without participation having a major impact on how programmes are ran or content decided on. As a result, the critical approaches to participation methods mentioned above are now choosing to focus more on the actions of citizens calling for change.

British participants suggested that there was a stronger link between institutionalised participation and social movements in France, while the United Kingdom was characterised by a bureaucratic, or even technocratic, view of participation. This observation was met with some scepticism on the part of French participants. However, to better understand the different routes towards and forms taken by participation in both countries, two issues deserve further analysis:

- First, the unique political context in which participation seems to have developed in recent years in the United Kingdom. Few studies have dealt with this context, which it seems necessary to take into account. Indeed, work by the Involve group suggests that participation can be used to accompany the public sector's withdrawal from a certain number of sectors (a possibility that should be added to the list of undesirable outcomes making the development of public participation a worrying rather than a positive development).
- Second, the relationships linking institutionalised participatory methods and (institutional) research. It is possible that, as far as France is concerned, the close proximity of researchers and the public sector makes it difficult for those involved to see participation as technocratic. Many French researchers have close ties to technostructures (such as the public sector, technical contracting authorities and participatory institutions). As such, they are not well placed to see this proximity.

By comparing the development of participatory tools and different research trends, it is possible to observe the ways in which academic studies help shape the evolution of participatory institutions.

Over the last few years, a real market for public participation has developed, accompanied by a growing group of professionals with skills in designing, implementing and evaluating participatory methods (Nonjon, 2006). This trend is important for the consolidation of public participation institutions. It also raises the question of the ambiguous role played by social sciences in this process.

Analyses of the relationships between science and governance have traditionally been limited to the hard science field. The social sciences have only recently begun to make an appearance in this field, in particular with research on decision-making consultants, the commercialisation of

deliberative democracy, and considerations on the role played by social sciences in public dialogue. Recent studies on these issues have appeared in both France and the United Kingdom.

2. International developments affecting public participation in environmental decision-making: new areas for research?

After comparing French and British perspectives, the seminar then moved onto developments in public participation that have taken place to different degrees on the supranational level. The discussion was preceded by three presentations dealing with three different aspects of the subject.

Étienne Ballan spoke about the Aarhus Convention and related issues; Pieter Leroy discussed his research on the participative dimension of the European Water Framework Directive; and Bernard Reber presented an overview of international research carried out on the effects of new digital information and communications technologies on participation.

A. Participation and the environment: the right to participate on the international level (Aarhus Convention)⁹

Firstly, it is important to remember that the Aarhus Convention is an international law. However its application, which can involve different perceptions of public participation, takes place on the national level.

Under this convention, public participation is based on three main “pillars”: access to information (articles 4 and 5), the right to participate in decision-making (articles 6 to 8) and access to justice (article 9). Parties to the convention must ensure these three concomitant rights are upheld in their national environmental decision-making procedures. As far as the right to participate is concerned, the aim is to avoid “fictive” participation (Lador, 2005). Consequently, participatory methods must be implemented early on in decision-making, when all options are still open. Sufficient time must be set aside for participation so that the public can obtain relevant information free of charge. The outcomes of participatory procedures must be taken into account in the final decision, however it is up to each Party to decide how.

The Convention was ratified in France by the *Loi n°2002-285 du 28 février 2002* (Law n° 2002-285 of 28 February 2002) and applied by the *Décret du 12 septembre 2002* (Decree of 12 September 2002). However, France’s main obligations in this area now stem from European regulations.

The European Community signed the convention in 1998, and the Council approved this decision on 17 February 2005. On 28 January 2003, a directive was adopted on public access to information on environmental decisions. This reinforced member states’ obligations in this field following an initial directive passed on 7 June 1990.

A second directive providing for public participation in some plans and programmes was adopted on 26 May 2003. It amended two existing directives: the “environmental impact assessment” directive (85/337/EEC) and the directive on different categories of industrial installations (96/61/EC). The approach favoured by the European Union was therefore to gradually modify

⁹ This section is based on the presentation given by Étienne Ballan and the discussions that followed.

existing directives, rather than adopting a general directive that dealt specifically with the issue at hand (Istasse, Colon, 2005).

One of the Aarhus Convention's most interesting provisions is article 15, which establishes a compliance review mechanism. Many researchers and analysts, especially in the legal field, have focused on this issue. This article is exceptional as far as NGOs are concerned (Keister, 2005), because under the Convention, these organisations can nominate candidates to the compliance committee (like parties), they can attend committee meetings as observers, and they can take part in committee discussions alongside individuals. More importantly, this compliance mechanism can be triggered by the public (as defined by article 2.4 of the Convention).¹⁰ In other words, any member of the public or NGO can request that a government decision not respecting the right to participate as set out under the Convention be reviewed by an independent committee of eight members.

The Aarhus Convention only contains one provision on public participation on an international scale. Under article 3.7, "Each Party shall promote the application of the principles of this Convention in international environmental decision-making processes and within the framework of international organizations in matters relating to the environment." To help parties apply this article, the Convention created a group of experts and a task force on the subject. These experts developed guidelines (called the "Almaty Guidelines on Promoting the Application of the Principles of the Aarhus Convention in International Forums"¹¹) that were adopted in May 2005 at the second Meeting of the Parties in Almaty.

In his presentation, Étienne Ballan, chair of the task force at the time of the seminar, said there was currently a relatively favourable environment for international participation. In addition to the 43 states in Europe and the United Nations that have already signed the Convention, other countries like India and Cameroon were also showing interest. However, he highlighted three key trends or issues affecting the implementation of the Convention, which should be taken into account in research on public participation.

- 1) Under the Convention, the public invited to participate includes members of the public as well as civil society organisations. However, in practice, public participation seems to be increasingly limited to the participation of NGOs active in the environmental field. It is as if these organisations represented the public. In this situation, a neo-corporatist model based on participation restricted to more or less institutionalised stakeholders dominates on all levels, whether local, national (the French *Grenelle* environmental forum being one

10 "The 'public' means one or more natural or legal persons, and, in accordance with national legislation or practice, their associations, organizations or groups."

11 An excellent study was carried out by on this subject by the Michel Prieur and Armelle Guignier for the *Centre International de Droit Comparé de l'Environnement* (International Centre of Comparative Environmental Law) in November 2006 at the request of the French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing (MEDDTL). This comprehensive study can be downloaded from the Aarhus Convention's website: <http://live.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/pp/ppif/Full%20Professor%20Prieur%20report.pdf>

The report concluded there were several weak points in research on the subject. In particular, it underlined a flagrant lack of research on the administrative science and administrative sociology of international organisations working in the environmental domain (p. 231).

The Prieur report also underlines the lack of studies on the influence of NGOs in training programmes on international environmental law identified by some researchers.

example) or international. This presents two major problems. On the one hand, it means NGOs risk moving away from their original roles as protesters, militants or experts, to no longer directly expressing public concerns. On the other hand, it hides the changes allowing the most important decisions to be made outside of the forums NGOs are invited to take part in as part of participatory methods. According to Ballan, disassociating institutionalised NGOs and the public leads to a deadlock. When the president of a large French NGO explains that there are two kinds of NGO – those that defend individual interests and those that defend the public interest – he is effectively dismissing both civil society and the public. Indeed, NGOs and public groups that defend the public interest have no particular legitimacy in this area (compared to government representatives, the public sector and public research organisations). But if these groups claim to defend individual interests, they are accused of NIMBY (not in my backyard) attitudes. They no longer fit in anywhere. The point of involving the public in decision-making is to question how individual and public interests are expressed and distinguished between in public decisions. It is therefore important that individual and public interests are not separated in implementing participatory procedures or identifying participants (which must include individuals).

- 2) The Aarhus Convention builds on Rio Principle 10, which states that environmental issues are best handled with public participation. The increasing importance of participatory methods in the 1980s and 1990s reflects a synergy or alliance between the environment and democracy, for example with the fall of the Iron Curtain, or the management of local issues in France. In Central Asia, the Aarhus Convention still gives rise to this kind of movement. Elsewhere, however, it is unclear whether the synergy between the environment, participation and democracy is still functional. There are reasonable grounds to suspect that it is not. In France, participation in planning decisions has been a frustrating exercise: it is still extremely difficult for the public to express its point of view in decision-making. The public must always fight to have its views heard. This continues to be difficult in a context of widespread environmental participation, which has alleviated or smothered conflicts. Many NGOs behave as if they denied environmental or planning conflicts, even though the environmental outcomes of participative movements are not always conclusive.
- 3) The Aarhus Convention is becoming increasingly bogged down in legal issues. Discussion is almost only limited to questions of regulations and law. While it is important to know whether the law has been upheld, it is also important to look into whether the right to participate has led to an increase in real participation and its impact on democracy and the environment. As a result, the expectations that fueled the development of participatory measures and the Aarhus Convention have not been attained. The Convention tends to lose momentum.

In the discussion that followed this presentation, the following conclusions were reached:

- a) There is insufficient research on participation's impacts (in environmental and political terms). This is a key issue for the future of environmental participation and environmental activities in general.
- b) If we want to avoid participation becoming a space for information and discussion disconnected from decision-making (including by limiting it to debate over the

Internet), we need to ensure it is used in a wider context. This context should include social environmental movements, but also public policy and private strategies in the environmental field. Today, the institutionalisation of participation tends to delegitimise social movements and hide how issues are really decided on in the public and private sectors. Consequently, if participation is limited to a space where it is cut off from the real issues, it could itself lose legitimacy and become marginalised.

- c) The links between law and other disciplines are extremely important in research on participation. As one participant put it, “it is difficult to pass laws ensuring the voice of the people is really heard”, especially when the people are fed up with overly formalised procedures. To understand laws in favour of public participation (like the Aarhus Convention) and their impacts, researchers must look to law, political sciences, sociology and public sector management, amongst other fields.

B. Making the right comparison: the WFD example¹²

Comparative research is one of the research strategies that has allowed studies on environmental participation to move beyond the local or national level. Research quality and improved methods are therefore essential issues for the internationalisation of studies on public participation. In his presentation on the subject, Pieter Leroy discussed research that dealt with the implementation of the water framework directive in five countries.¹³

The water framework directive (WFD, directive 2000/60/CE adopted by the European Parliament and Council on 23 October 2000) establishes a legal framework for a Community-wide policy on water.

Public participation in water management decisions plays an important role in the directive, especially in preambles 14 and 46, and article 14.

It mentions the “public”, “users”, the “general public”, and “interested parties” but does not limit participation to “stakeholders” only. The directive builds on the activities of international researchers and experts, as seen in the excellent guidance document n° 8, “Public Participation in Relation to the Water Framework Directive”, which contains an interesting summary of research on participation over the last 30 years.

Participation is ambiguous for many reasons, including its objectives, field of application and the actors involved.

However, to properly analyse this phenomenon, it needs to be examined in relation to its wider context – that which gives it meaning and influences design and implementation.

According to Pieter Leroy, an important aspect of this context is the directive’s aim to become a mechanism for institutional change by establishing or recognising new political territories (catchment, new publics (constituencies), new regulatory and management institutions (on the

¹² This section is based on the presentation given by Pieter Leroy.

¹³ Mark Wiering, Ykine Uitenboogaart et al., 2009, *Dealing with complexity and policy discretion*.

catchment scale), new rules and new actors (stakeholders). The implementation of the directive is clearly intended to be multi-scale, from both the institutional and participative points of view. Analysing the scope of a single participatory procedure linked to the directive is not possible without taking into account the directive's overall implementation and impacts. The challenges this presents is clear when we compare, for example, the considerable efforts by the *Agences françaises de l'Eau* (French Water Agencies) to involve the public, the programme's modest results, and the minor role played by this initiative (which requires considerable resources) in the much larger scope of implementing the directive. In this process, there are many different kinds of coexisting participatory methods. The most visible are probably local public participation initiatives. However, the most effective are undoubtedly those that take place on the European and national levels, those on the governance of catchment basins, and neo-corporatist negotiations with – or between – established actors (the “usual suspects”).

The second aspect of this context is the changing role of environmental participation in different sectors and politics. According to Van Tatenhove and Leroy (2003), transformations in the environmental participation field can be divided into three generations. During the first generation (1970s and 1980s), environmental organisations demanded public participation over discretionary or even authoritarian policies. Participation was part of a wider social and political movement. During the second generation (1980s and 1990s), participation was progressively institutionalised in decision-making and planning procedures. However, doubts remained as to the quality and scope of participatory methods. This included inputs (unequal access to participation) and outputs (real impacts on decision-making and action). Finally, during the third generation, the framework directive was implemented. This period was characterised by the outcomes of the environmental movement, the institutionalisation of participation, and a neo-liberal context that affected government action with the “new public management discourse”, the de-politicisation of environmental issues and the promotion of integrated, collaborative and negotiated approaches. On this last point, Leroy underlined that there have been insufficient studies on the ways in which participation is used to diminish state responsibility. The implications of this trend are serious and need further research.

Many studies have dealt with the framework directive. After going over the different approaches, Leroy suggested the classification presented in the following table:

Mode of analysis Level of analysis	Descriptive	Prescriptive (normative)
Empirical	Report on experiences with participatory practices and procedures in environmental governance, on local, national or supranational level	Formulate suggestions, recommendations for practices. Provide a toolbox with 'how to' techniques for participation
Conceptual	Characterise and explain trends in governance. Consider participatory governance within broader processes of socio-political change	Provide normative (meta) principles for participatory governance. Generally according to the Habermasian ideal of 'communicative rationality'

In this situation, it is not surprising that different research teams reach such different conclusions on the framework convention and its implementation.

To conclude, Leroy presented a table comparing the different judgments reached by different researchers on the implementation of participation in policies like the framework directive. Basically, these judgments depend on the perspective experts adopt on (a) the quality of the participatory methods implemented, and (b) the context in which the policy is implemented.

Quality of participatory design Conditions of implementation	+	-
Moderate barriers to the implementation of participatory designs	I - 'Right direction' Participation processes function relatively well. Societal and political hurdles may have to be overcome, but relatively optimistic about possibility of implementing them	IV - 'Procedures' More attention necessary to design of methodologies. Consequent 'right' application of discursive techniques. Assumes more or less favourable conditions for implementation
Substantial or structural (institutional, epistemological, power-related) barriers	III - 'Politics' Lack of political will to ratify deliberative approaches due to structural barriers. No clarity on status of deliberative processes in political decision-making.	IV - 'Power' Habermasian deliberative practices are naïve in a Foucauldian reality. Persistent power relations present structural barriers to a proper implementation and application of participatory designs.

According to Leroy, most studies in the field are based on the assumption that there are weak or moderate barriers to the implementation of environmental activities or changes in the participation process, even though there is a lack of research on the importance of participation in highly politicised contexts or where action and change are difficult.

Finally, despite ambiguities relating to participation within the framework directive and its limits, Leroy underlined the directive's importance in developing participation on the European level. This directive has contributed to the emergence of a new category of professionals who are able to share their experiences with their counterparts in other European Union member states.

C. Information and communication technologies: changing public participation and participation research

The third theme dealt with on the second half-day of the seminar was the role played by information and communication technologies (ICT) in research on public participation. In his presentation, Bernard Reber (from the *Centre de Recherche Sens, Ethique, Société* or the Research Centre on Meaning, Ethics and Society) spoke about three very different sides of this problem.

- 1) Empirical studies comparing on-line participatory forums, and participatory methods based on co-presence.
- 2) The different kinds of studies focusing on the relationship between public participation and ICTs.
- 3) ICTs' impacts on the nature and foundations of research on social sciences, and public participation in particular.

1) Many empirical studies have looked into how the Internet is used in public consultations. They examine the difference between “virtual forums” and “real forums”, or the effect of ICTs on participatory methods (examples include research carried out by the CDE programme's L. Monnoyer-Smith, who was unfortunately unable to present at the seminar as planned).

Reber gave examples of – relatively dated – studies comparing different participatory methods using ICTs in France and Switzerland. The French study compared an Internet forum and citizens' conference organised by France's *Office parlementaire des choix scientifiques et techniques* (Parliamentary Scientific and Technological Evaluation Office) in 1998 to discuss the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in agriculture. The Swiss study focused on a pluriforum targeting the widest possible audience organised by the Centre for Technology Assessment at the Swiss Science and Technology Council in 2001 to examine the question of medical transplants. This included an on-line forum.

In the French study in particular, researchers observed there were significant differences in style, moderation and timeframe between the real and virtual hybrid forums. Most importantly, online contributions tended to lack in civility – it is much easier to express things online that would be unacceptable in face-to-face discussions.

Researchers also noted there was a big difference between moderating a web forum on the one hand and a citizen panel on the other. In the first situation, moderators were more open, while in the second there was less room for individuals to express their opinions. The web moderator was also able to use his position to focus discussion on the issue at hand. Finally, the Internet allowed individuals to make contributions over a longer period of time, which (in theory) made it possible for participants to develop real, well reasoned, arguments (which is more difficult in oral forms of public participation) and build on previous discussions.

Internet also made it possible to use hyperlinks to other websites, in particular those written by participants. Therefore, the online forum had more added value in terms of information (for example, interesting websites on GMOs).

In addition, the Internet allowed some actors to successfully call for social mobilisation using embryonic forms of social networks (bearing in mind that this study took place over ten years ago).

This comparison between two kinds of forum underlines the need to deal with ethical issues.¹⁴ The fact that this subject was not dealt with in the real forum was not by chance, but because the steering committee chose to avoid the question.¹⁵

Over the last ten years, the Internet has come to play an increasingly important role in public participation, decision-making procedures and mobilisation. Consequently, there have been numerous studies on this issue. Unlike in other fields, research on this question generally takes place on the international scale. This is because the impacts of new ICTs are international in scope, but also because research communities dealing with the question are very open to international scientific dialogue.

2) Using work he did on the subject during the first phase of the CDE programme (Reber, 2002), Reber mapped out research communities working on ICT issues. He identified nine different perspectives. This included communities focusing on:

- Technical objects in “information and communication”.
- The history of these technical objects.
- The impacts of ICTs.
- Analyses focusing on use of ICTs.
- Analyses centred on interaction with technical objects.
- ICTs as means of cooperating in research in social sciences.
- Perception of innovations, and the necessity for research in the social and human science fields to make its own perspectives on such subjects more explicit.
- ICTs studied as evidence of the human and political condition.
- Evaluation of technical objects.

3) The third part of Reber’s presentation dealt with more reflective questions. As he observed, ICTs are not only an interesting aspect of public participation procedures. They have also invaded – and changed considerably – many ways in which research is carried out in this field. Reber introduced

14 For more information, see Reber Bernard, “Ethics in Participatory Technology Assessment”, *Technikfolgenabschätzung, Theorie und Praxis*, Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe in der Helmholtz-Gemeinschaft, (to be published), 2005.

15 Concerning the underdevelopment of moral philosophy and moral sociology in France, see Canto-Sperber M., *L'inquiétude morale*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2001 ; Pharo P., *Morale et sociologie*, Gallimard, Paris, 2004. This point is a good one to enter in a transnational comparison with the Swiss website. In another publiforum on GM Food (1998), ethics was treated as a specific topic. See Reber B., *La démocratie génétiquement modifiée*, *op. cit.*

the issue by discussing the book he wrote with the sociologist Claire Brossard: *Distributed Collective Practices and Corporative Technologies* (Brossard and Reber, 2010). For many reasons, care needs to be taken when analysing links between ICTs and society. Firstly, ICTs are complex objects. Secondly, human and social sciences must consider the ways in which these objects are dealt with from the methodological, theoretical and epistemological points of view. Social and technical determinism must be avoided.

We are currently witnessing the development of sophisticated physical and computing tools at the same time as (often competing) research objects emerge in human and social science disciplines.

The book seeks to move beyond studies on the uses and impacts of technology on society to examine how key concepts or notions in human and social sciences are formatted and processed by cognitive technologies from the theoretical and practical points of view.

To deal with these issues, a reflective approach combining social sciences and philosophy is needed. The development of new ICTs has led to new types of data and an avalanche of new documentary sources. These technologies also open up the way to new forms of collaboration between researchers and academic disciplines. However, in addition to providing new opportunities, ICTs can also affect the theoretical core, organisation and social and political implications of some disciplines.

Featuring authors from widely varying disciplines, the book discusses eight major conceptual themes in participative research: time, space, networks, text and hypertext, interpretation, cooperation, politics and socio-informatics.

Several themes emerged from the heated discussion that followed the presentations by Pieter Leroy and Bernard Reber. They included:

- a Comparisons between two countries are still relevant. However, they must be organised and focus on clearly defined questions to avoid becoming bogged down in other issues – including legal matters, political systems, administrative procedures and the place of science in public affairs. The question of scale is also important: for example, with its size and population, Wales is closer to Estonia than to England.
- b Comparisons dealing with specific questions such as nuclear waste or commercial planning are not the same as comparisons dealing with larger issues like the development of environmental participation.
- c When considering public participation studies, it is important to take into account the political context of public debate and policy, in terms of the evolution of political situations and transformations in environmental activities.
- d The scope of participatory research must be extended beyond Europe to Africa, South America and Asia. Otherwise, we risk reproducing in Europe the same lack of openness to other countries we are trying to avoid.
- e The development of public participation is very dependent on how discourses and methods spread from one country or one sector to another. The ways in which methods travel or are

transferred from one part of the world to another also deserve further study. So do the different power games at play in each context.

- f Comparison is only one way of internationalising research on public participation, and not necessarily the most important. Other possibilities include international exchanges within academic disciplines (often already highly internationalised), global research communities (for example, in environmental studies), transversal fields (such as science-technique-society), and communities working on and promoting specialised participatory techniques internationally. At the end of the day, the most important thing is to carry out rigorous research based on international collaborations. Working with researchers in other countries and sharing different points of view is a rewarding experience, whether the resulting studies are comparative or not.

3. Brainstorming new themes for research

In addition to providing a forum for sharing knowledge and practices, the seminar aimed to identify themes to be developed in research on the public participation field. Given the wide range of participants, many new themes were identified. This report will give an overview of proceedings in order to cover the main points raised during discussions and contributions made by participants. Sub-groups spent time dealing with four of these themes. Participants frequently mention mapping as a comprehensive analytical tool.

A. Sociological approaches to participation

Issue

Participation and non-participation: what are the long-term consequences for participants? Drawing up a genealogy of participation.

Participants

Rémi Barbier, Bernard Barraqué, Matthew Cotton, Albane Gaspard, Kathryn Monk, Sandrine Rui.

Summary

The group suggested studying the paths of individuals upstream and downstream of participatory procedures. Discussions focused on two key issues. Firstly, how should uninvited individuals or organisations and boycott movements be taken into account? Secondly, how should stakeholders in the process of becoming institutionalised (such as environmental NGOs) be dealt with? As far as uninvited participants and boycott movements were concerned, the group underlined that there were different possible levels of participation. For this reason, research should avoid the overly simplistic “present / not present” distinction. From a methodological point of view, the group identified the need to carry out longitudinal studies to measure behavioural changes in participants.

B. Institutionalising participation

Issue

Comparative approaches can be used to closely observe the institutionalisation processes at work in the public participation field, as well as their effects on participation, organisation and the results of participatory procedures.

Participants

Edward Andersson, Marie-Christine Bagnati, Jason Chilvers, Jean-Marc Dziedzicki, Judith Raoul-Duval, Tom Wakeford, Geoff Whitman.

Summary

The institutionalisation and professionalization of participatory procedures as a result of more

standardised methods can be observed both in France and the United Kingdom. An empirical study is needed to generate rigorous data on professionals, training programmes and forms of commercialisation. This information can then be used to map the actors involved in participatory activities and examine the changes affecting this field, as well as their causes and effects. In addition to producing data, the group suggested analysing the impacts of standardisation, professionalization and, in a more general sense, these new cartographies. This would allow researchers to identify the forces behind these movements, and examine their legitimacy. In addition, there is currently a shift towards more upstream participatory methods. Is this linked to the institutionalisation movement? How does institutionalisation influence the organisational strategies of participatory procedures?

C. Environmental action and social movements

Issue

The aim is to unite research on public participation in the environmental field with research on social movements, by using boycotts and other informal demonstrations as case studies.

Participants

Hélène Balazard, Cécile Blatrix, Pieter Leroy, Hellen Pallet, Christopher Rootes.

Summary

For some actors today, the choice whether or not to take part in the participatory procedure is a key issue. Is this stance a form of radicalism, or is it a way of expressing a point of view more efficiently than by taking part? To what extent does participation delegitimise contestation?

Research needs to focus on the dialectic separating the “organised” and “unorganised” worlds. This could be done through a multi-dimensional exercise mapping activist movements in the environmental field in France and Great Britain, where different activities (as part of, on the edge of, or outside organisations) on different scales (local, national and supranational) would be analysed. In this project, participation is not just taking part in participatory activities – it covers the whole participatory process.

D. Inter-level democracy to govern the environment

Issue

Does the environment boost democracy? The aim of this project is to carry out a multi-scale comparative study examining the determining aspects of environmental governance.

Participants

Etienne Ballan, John Forrester, Bernard Reber, Jaap Rozema, Oliver Soubeyran.

Summary

The project builds on a multi-dimensional observation: participative democracy on different

geographic scales (regional, national and supranational) is heterogeneous, and the principle of subsidiarity applies in different ways to many environmental issues. This is the case, for example, in fighting climate change or implementing the WFD. The Delta Alliance, linking the world's delta regions, is an example of this hybridity.

In some situations, these interregional collaborations short-circuit obstacles to democracy. It is therefore relevant to ask how inequalities – social, economical and in terms of access to information – are managed? Where does lobbying take place? Where is the epicentre of participation? How are ethnic identities dealt with in environmental issues and participation?

If participation is synergetic with the environment, is participation the same in post-materialist societies as in countries that are just moving from subsistence to materialistic ways of life?

4. Theoretical debates, the relationship between research and practice and the future of participatory research

Most of one morning was spent in extensive discussions on the importance (or lack of importance) of theory in participation research, and the relationships between research and practice. Once again, it is difficult to do justice to the wide range of ideas raised. This report will therefore focus on the main themes, questions and conclusions that could be useful in further debates on the future of research in the public participation and environmental fields.

The discussion will be organised around the three following issues: (a) the stakes and conditions required for more in-depth research in this field, (b) the relationship between research and practice and (c) the question of consistency in and the limits of research on public participation. It should be noted that seminar discussions showed how closely these three issues are linked. They have been separated here for presentation reasons only.

(a) The theoretical foundations of and debates in participation research. There was much discussion concerning the conditions required for meaningful theoretical debate in this field of research. Many participants seemed to agree that debates of this kind do not reach the level of visibility and clarity that would be expected. Divergent opinions amongst seminar participants on the reasons that explain this situation can be summed up by differing three different interpretation.

* For one group of participants, there are different theoretical perspectives and theoretical debate does exist. However, this debate is often invisible or inaccessible to those who do not have the background knowledge to decipher it. In addition, some researchers are purposely unclear on their theoretical positions for different reasons. As discussion progressed, this issue was dealt with by working on decrypting the explicit or implicit theories supported by different authors.

* A second group of participants considered that theoretical and reflective debates were less present in this field because of its essentially pragmatic nature. This led to two outcomes: either theoretical work was not considered a priority (it is either dealt with quickly as part of a pragmatic theoretical position, or studies use research practices and methods imported from abroad without the theoretical context they were developed in) or researchers overlooked their disciplinary and theoretical differences to work together effectively on objects or more pressing practical concerns.

* A third group of participants also considered there was a theoretical deficit. However, they considered this deficit was caused by the pre-eminence of a small group of theories. In this respect, many of those present were rather critical of the current state of research (and practice). They underlined the domination of stakeholder-based and mini-public based approaches, as well as theoretical positions that overestimate the efficiency and effectiveness of deliberation in participative decision-making and – therefore – participation tools. These positions effectively depoliticise participative tools and hide the ways in which they can be misused (through inaction, the diminution of political and administrative responsibility and cost reductions, for example).

Whatever importance we give each of these three positions, they all come to the following conclusion: research on participation is dominated by empirical and methodological studies, and theoretical discussions are often limited to summing up the different theoretical approaches possible, or outlining theories that are rarely fully developed.

(b) The fact that there are close ties between practice and research in the public participation field is not a new observation. Discussions at the seminar frequently returned to this point, and underlined a certain number of problems to do with research in the environmental participation field.

* Today, participation has become an institution. It has also become an “industry” – both a professional and an economic sector. Consequently, the relationship between research and practice has changed considerably with respect to other, not so distant, eras when participation was implemented because it was considered to be an innovation capable of calling into question economic institutions and actors. Critical analyses of the ties between research organisations and actors in the participation industry have therefore become necessary.

* There are many questions concerning researchers’ involvement in standardising participation, which is increasing as the field is institutionalised and professionalised. Plans for certification schemes for practitioners (establishing criteria for “good” or “bad” public participation) or generalised participation evaluations therefore raise issues for researchers. For example, evaluation criteria strongly reflect (even if this is often implied) theoretical positions on public participation. Should the standardisation of participatory tools and methods be opposed as a result? Or should researchers abandon the theoretical and normative pluralism that the participative movement can incorporate?

* If researchers adopt a critical approach to public participation, their relationships with participatory practice may change and become more complicated. Nevertheless, this relationship remains a key issue. These two points have become clear in the United Kingdom over the last few years.

* The outcomes of theoretical debates are not “academic” in the sense of being “cut off from practice.” Instead, they tie in with practical and political debates on different ways of designing and implementing participatory procedures. Promoting tools based on stakeholders (like France’s *Grenelle* environmental forum) or mini-publics is completely different from promoting participatory tools that aim at increasing minority groups’ ability to engage with politicians or economic actors, or tools that call for a less “top-down” approach to decision-making and activities. Similarly, public participation as a way of reaching consensus or encouraging dissensus, respectively, leads to different tools and different subjects for research.

* Nevertheless, theory and practice do not always follow the same agendas or issues. Consequently, some fields of research have been completely abandoned. An example is group dynamics, which still remains extremely relevant in training participation professionals. If research, training and practice build on each other, discussions should be made clearer. Each of these three activities should develop in line with their own stakes, skills and reasoning.

* Finally, participants at the seminar also agreed on the following point: it is no longer possible to think about public participation by considering specific kinds of tools (such as public debates, citizen juries, etc.) that could be considered as having by themselves an ability to bring about

change. The multiplication of participative processes – in terms of number, methods and contexts – makes a series of different approaches and perspectives necessary. It also suggests that we need to balance studies dealing with best practices (establishing general rules enabling participation to progress) and studies examining more ordinary participatory methods. It is likely that the latter methods predominate in the participation field, even if they are less visible.

(c) A third recurring issue at the seminar was the limits of environmental participation. In other words, up until what point should public participation be considered a more or less autonomous field of research? If it is autonomous, what are its limits? The following conclusions emerged from debate on this subject.

* More studies are needed to examine participation's ability to reinforce democracy, take into account the environment and, more generally, impact on public and political policy as it develops. According to some speakers, the fact that participation and the environment work so well together could be a question of time – two different projects being temporarily in sync. Several seminar participants suggested that this time was coming to an end. As public participation is institutionalised and professionalised, it becomes more routine. Meanwhile, new issues and movements are becoming increasingly crucial in the environmental and political fields.

* Social, protest and opposition movements remain or are once again key issues upstream and during public participation. Research should therefore take these movements and conflicts into account. The conditions governing decision-making (whether public or private) and the implementation of actions are also changing quickly and profoundly. This can be seen in Calliope Spanou's work (1991) on the stakes of environmental administration (but also private initiatives). These stakes have changed so much in recent years that more studies are needed to understand different actions, like public participation. Research on the changes affecting the environmental field is as important as research on participation. In sum, the meaning and limits of participation cannot be determined without an in-depth analysis of these underlying changes.

* Many disciplines are already present in participation research – and some are not yet present or not present enough (several participants underlined, for instance, the importance of law in the years to come). Given the many different situations making participation meaningful (or not), it is easier to understand how the field has become so fragmented, so that “no one really knows what is happening.”

* Public participation and participatory tools are “transitional objects,” which explains why they are able to act as points of reference or collaborative topics for research based on different theoretical backgrounds and centred on different issues. However, transitional objects are unstable by definition. They may occupy an extremely important position for a certain period of time (in the environmental or public policy fields, for example), but they are also capable of losing this position a few years later as the situation changes.

* Considering public participation as a “transitional object” also raises the question of the balance between two conflicting dynamics affecting participation research. The first dynamic is centripetal: it identifies, organises and gives independence to public participation as a field (of research and practice) in its own right. The second dynamic is centrifugal, and tends to make public participation an intersection of different movements – a place people pass through but do not stay in. Researchers and practitioners are pushed, individually and collectively, towards other issues and

other innovations after a temporary involvement with participation. Consequently, they sometimes have ambiguous, unstable or variable relationships with participation, a fact that was very clear when the seminar was being organised. Many of the researchers and practitioners contacted considered themselves both “inside” and “outside” this field. One participant, a key figure in participation studies in her country, summed up this feeling by quoting the chorus of a well-known song: “Should I stay or should I go?”

Perspectives

Most of the seminar was set aside for discussion between participants. This debate was extremely valuable. Participants reflected the wide range of views and practices seen in both France and Great Britain. They seemed to confirm the idea that this created the right conditions for meaningful discussion on participatory research stakes and practices.

Of the conclusions that have been presented in the rest of this report, the following are particularly relevant to the seminar's main objective: internationalising research on public participation in the environmental field.

* A global approach must be adopted to deal with the links between public participation activities on different geographic scales or levels (from the local to the international level).

* More research is needed on participation's place in the more general fields of environmental battles and public environmental policy (as well as private modes of action).

* The development of critical research on public participation has important implications for the field. Its relationship with research on participation's institutional and economic aspects should be the subject of joint reflection (the seminar showed that international discussion on this subject can be very rewarding for participants).

* The internationalisation of research depends not only on comparative studies – which must be rigorously planned and organised – but also on long-term dialogue and collaboration between researchers in different countries. It is about working internationally on transnational, national and local subjects. The issue is in determining what “working internationally” means. It may mean working with international teams, taking into account international theories and bibliographical references, or improving the international visibility of research produced by those involved in the programme (even if this initially only means publishing in English).

* The question of participation's real impact – how it affects decisions and to what extent – in the environmental domain (but also the social domain – for example, in terms of environmental inequality) is essential for research. Further studies are needed on this issue. The results will determine the future of participation in both academic and practical terms.

* Plurality – of tools, practices, theories, disciplines and normative perspectives – is an essential condition for the productivity of the public participation field. It should be a central aspect of all activities in this domain. To quote one British participant, “what we need isn't a summary, but a critical mass of [theoretical, methodological and practical] resources to discuss.” This critical mass is much more easily obtained if we start by planning international discussion networks and accepting the fluctuating nature – both centripetal and centrifugal – of the networks and communities taking part in – academic or practical – discussions on environmental participation.

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Appendices

List of participants

Edward Andersson Involve

Edward Andersson is Deputy Director of Involve, and an expert on methods of participatory decision making. He set up peopleandparticipation.net – one of the UKs leading public engagement sites. His research covers how to measure the business case for engagement, achieving efficiencies through engagement, and involving the public in the challenges of our ageing society. He is a Professional Facilitator (Certified by the International Association of Facilitators) and is a board member of the international not-for profit e-Democracy.org.

Marie-Christine Bagnati Ministère de l'Ecologie, du Développement durable, des Transports et du Logement (MEDDTL)

Hélène Balazard Ecole nationale des travaux publics de l'État (ENTPE)

Hélène Balazard is engineer in State Public Works (ENTPE) and a PhD student in political science in IEP, Université de Lyon - Laboratoire RIVES. She studies “ London Citizens”, a broad based organisation, in the wake of the approach initiated in the United States by Saul Alinsky. This organisation, where she was trained as a community organiser, aims at building power among ordinary citizens and making authorities and businesses accountable.

Étienne Ballan ARENES

Rémi Barbier Institut de recherche pour l'ingénierie de l'agriculture et de l'environnement (CEMAGREF)

Bernard Barraqué AgroParisTech

Cécile Blatrix AgroParisTech

Cécile Blatrix holds a PhD in political sciences from the Université Paris 1 Panthéon – Sorbonne. She taught for ten years at the Université Paris 13 - Paris Nord (Villetaneuse), where she created a Master's degree in Politics and Public Action focusing on managing and evaluating public policies.

She holds a *Habilitation à Diriger les Recherches*, which enables her to coordinate research. Since 2008, she has taught political science at AgroParisTech for the *UFR de Gestion du Vivant et Stratégies Patrimoniales* (Life Sciences and Heritage Strategies programme) in the *Département Sciences Economiques, Sociales et de Gestion* (Economic, Social and Management Sciences department).

She is a member of the Sorbonne's *Centre de Recherches Politiques* (Centre of Political Research) at the *Centre Européen de Sociologie et de Science Politique* (European Centre of Sociology and Political Sciences) (CRSP - CESSP - UMR CNRS - Université Paris 1).

Her work focuses on the transformations affecting contemporary democracies, the resulting transformations in political and joint forms of action (especially in the fields of sustainable development and the environment), the ways of building and disseminating participative democracy in France and abroad, and the ways in which public and political management models are transferred and spread internationally.

Jason Chilvers University of East Anglia

Jason Chilvers is an environmental social scientist and environmental geographer, specialising in interdisciplinary, theoretically informed, policy-relevant research at the interface between environmental science, geography, science and technology studies, and risk research. A key focus of his work centres on participatory research, assessment and decision-making in the context of sustainability, energy, waste and emerging technologies (including biotechnology and nanotechnology).

Matthew Cotton Exeter University

Laurence De Carlo École supérieure des sciences économiques et commerciales (ESSEC)

William Dutton Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford

Jean-Marc Dziedzicki Réseau Ferré de France

Jean-Marc Dziedzicki is the head of the Dialogue and public debate Department at Réseau ferré de France (RFF), the state public company responsible for operating, upgrading and developing the 30,000 km French rail network. This department aims to develop the stakeholder dialogue and public participation for several types of policies and projects : building new lines and especially high-speed lines, opening closed and old lines for a new service, creation of new stations, etc. Jean-Marc Dziedzicki, PhD in Urban Planning, is specialized in environmental conflicts, environmental mediation and public participation. He also gives courses in these fields in some universities.

John Forrester Stockholm Environment Institute

John's research focuses on how different stakeholders such as citizens, scientists, and policy actors can communicate better across their different sectoral (and epistemological) silos and, in particular, across levels of environmental governance and decision making. He mainly uses maps and models as heuristic devices.

Albane Gaspard Agence de l'Environnement et de la Maîtrise de l'Energie (ADEME)

Albane is in charge of questions related to public participation and stakeholder engagement in environmental policy making at the French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME). Her role entails following research in social sciences on these topics and communicating its findings to actors involved in local environmental policy making. She is also involved in research funding, for instance, she is in charge of following the Concertation, Décision, Environnement program for the ADEME. Her role also includes providing operational support in the design of the Agency's actions (for instance, the local Climate Change policies, the local air quality policies, and the social aspects of new technologies that receive financial support from the ADEME). Albane has a background in political sciences, and holds a Master in Geography from the London School of Economics.

Steven Griggs De Montfort University

Phil Kearney Aarhus Convention

David Laws University of Amsterdam

David Laws is a senior lecturer in the Department of Political Science at the University of Amsterdam. His research focuses on the relationship between negotiation and conflict resolution, public administration, and democratic governance. He has worked as a consultant for the New York Stock Exchange, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Air National Guard, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the Ministry of VROM.

Pieter Leroy Universit  de Nijmegen

Over the years Pieter Leroy carried out research and published on different societal and political aspects of environmental issues, such as the environmental movement, its strategies and effectiveness ; environmental conflicts and public participation ; and environmental politics and policies. His recent research focuses on the emergence and functioning of new policy arrangements in the environmental domain, in a context of more encompassing political changes. The former include either decision making or implementation practices, the latter refer to multi actor and multi level governance, new interrelations between state, market and civil society. Apart from certain policy domains such as waste management, water policies, nature conservation and others, his research focuses on topics such as public participation, the role of environmental knowledge in decision-making, and environmental policy evaluation.

Laurent Mermet AgroParisTech

Kathryn Monk Environment Agency, Wales

Helen Pallett University of East Anglia

Judith Raoul-Duval ZOGMA

An economist, Judith Raoul Duval graduated a MSc in Environmental Science in 1997, and since then became an expert of sustainable development (local policy frameworks) and of scientific

transfer and dissemination. She animates several research programs for the ministry of Ecology (LITEAU, CDE...). For CDE, she is in charge with Ghislaine Garin Ferraz of the communication and dissemination activities of the programme.

Bernard	Reber	Université Paris 4 – Sorbonne
Christopher	Rootes	School of Social Policy, Sociology & Social Research, University of Kent

Christopher Rootes studied Government at Queensland and Sociology at Yale and Oxford universities. Editor-in-Chief of the journal Environmental Politics, his recent research, mostly funded by the European Commission, has been on environmental protest, movements and NGOs, the global justice movement, and public contention over waste management. Among other publications, he has edited: The Green Challenge: the development of Green parties (with D. Richardson) (Routledge 1995); Environmental Movements (Cass 1999); Environmental Protest in Western Europe (Oxford University Press 2003, 2007); Acting Locally: Local environmental mobilizations and campaigns (Routledge 2008); Environmental Movements and Waste Infrastructure (with L. Leonard) (Routledge 2010). He is currently researching participation in street demonstrations, and writing a book on environmental movements.

Jaap	Rozema	University of East Anglia
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Jaap Rozema is a PhD candidate in the School of Environmental Sciences at the University of East Anglia (UEA). Originally titled “Examining Sustainability Appraisal discourse” (2010-2014). The research objective is to critically examine the normative considerations and their framings in the various stages of the assessment procedure. An intrinsic component of this endeavour is to investigate the role of environmental and sustainability discourses in relation to environmental assessment. It aims to provide insight in the formulation and articulation of these discourses, their prevalence over others, and how they impact the purpose and effectiveness evaluation of the assessment. It is proposed that public participation and social appraisal, as exponents of deliberative democracy and civic science, are important levers for the discursive orientation of environmental assessment.

Sandrine	Rui	Université Victor Segalen-Bordeaux 2
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Olivier	Soubeyran	Institut de Géographie Alpine
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Tom	Wakeford	Newcastle University
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Tina	Wegg	University of East Anglia
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Tina Wegg is a first year PhD research student based at the UEA in Norwich, England having completed my BSc (Hons) Environmental Sciences at the UEA in June 2010. I am funded by the UK Energy Research Centre (UKERC) and researching social acceptability of renewable energy technologies. I am interested in how participatory approaches can support transitions to sustainable energy systems and will be using a case-study on bio-fuels, particularly liquid

transport fuels, to investigate how people from different societies and sectors are accepting and shaping renewable energy technologies.

Geoff

Whitman

Durham University

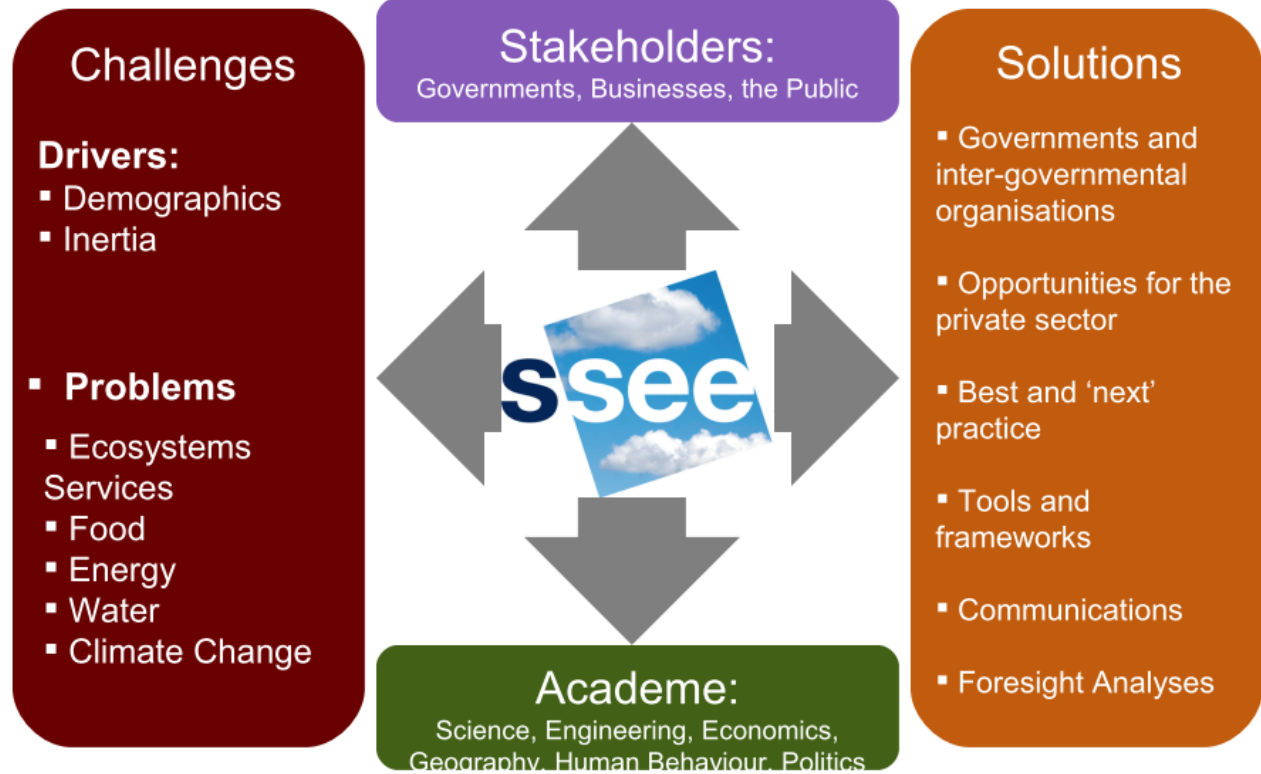
Programme for the seminar “Research on Public Participation in Environmental Making: Approaches, contexts, stakes and Perspectives across Borders Workshop”

Tuesday 12th April 2011	
Welcome and Workshop Introduction	SDK/SSEE, Laurent Mermet, CDE Program
Session One: Transnational and national stakes of environmental public participation – and of environmental participation research	
Part One: A brief overview of environmental participation in UK and of the associated research scene since the early 1980s.	Jason Chilvers
Part Two: A brief overview of environmental participation in France and of the associated research scene since the 1980s.	Cécile Blatrix
Discussion	
Session One (continued)	
Part Three: Participation in international environmental decision-making, and international commitments on participation in national decision-making: why the Aarhus convention needs more transnational research on public participation	Étienne Ballan
Session Two: Comparative research on environmental participation	
Part One: Public Participation in the Implementation of the EU Water Directive in five countries	Pieter Leroy (NI)
Discussion	
Part Two: What make ICTs to participation... and affect, not only the publics but the science	Bernard Reber
Discussion	
Round-table discussion on methodological issues in comparative studies on environmental participation	
End of session	

Wednesday 13th April 2011	
Sessions Three and Four will be devoted to joint mapping of issues in, structuration of and perspectives for the participation field. Participants may come prepared with their own mapping ideas, and ready to contribute to a partly self-organised, participatory work session.	
	Session Three: Disciplines, theoretical perspectives and schools of thought
	In this session, all participants will be invited to map the various positions and schools of thought in the UK and France. What disciplines are mobilised? What theories are used by whom? Are different positions defended by different groups? Is research on participation being institutionalised and how? What is at stake, academically and in terms of practice and politics?
	Session Four: The next decade of environmental participation: practical stakes, issues for research: breakout groups
	Over the last three decades, the environmental participation (and participation research) scenes (British and French each on its own rhythm and modalities) have gone through successive and dramatically different phases. There is a feeling that after generalisation, then institutionalisation of participation, a new turn is coming. What may be, and what should be, next? This session will start with breakout groups working in parallel on these questions. Outcomes will be reported to feed a general discussion.
	Session Four (continued): Reports of breakout groups and Plenary Discussion
	Final Discussion: Main Conclusions from Workshop A written report will draw on the main points and results from the workshop. In this concluding session, we will recapitulate and organise the workshop's findings, in preparation of the report.

The Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment at the University of Oxford

Making an impact on the environmental changes facing the planet



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Presentation of the Concertation Décision Environnement (Consultation, Decision, Environment or CDE) programme

The CDE programme

Citizens' participation has become a major feature today in addressing environmental issues. One of the goals of the Consultation, Decision, Environment (CDE) programme is to understand the stakes involved in the consultation processes, and how these processes work. It is also to analyse their evolution and to look at experience feedback in order to improve methods in the future. Like all the research programmes of the Ministry in charge of the Environment, CDE contributes to the progress of scientific work and to enhancing environmental and sustainable development policies.

During the first phase of the programme (1999-2005), more than 30 research projects were financed for more than €1.2 million. This first phase made it possible to encourage and structure the research by calling on a broad range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences (sociology, political science, geography, psychology, management, information and communication sciences, philosophy), as well as to encourage dialogue between researchers and practitioners, and to develop interdisciplinarity.

In 2008, the programme entered into a second phase with the launching of a new call for research proposals by the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing (MEDDTL). Twenty research projects are being funded during this second phase.

Programme leadership

As for most of the ministry's programmes, there are two bodies working on CDE planning and assessment: a scientific council and a steering committee.

Scientific board

It comprises 18 researchers, sets the scientific guidelines, prepares the calls for research proposals, evaluates the proposals, evaluates the project results and initiates animation and dissemination activities. Its composition is multidisciplinary (sociology, socio-economics, philosophy, social psychology, geography, urban and town planning, etc.). It meets about twice a year.

Chair: **Laurent Mermet**, AgroParisTech / École nationale du génie rural, des eaux et des forêts

Members:

Marc BARBIER, Institut national de la recherche agronomique • Bernard BARRAQUÉ, École nationale du génie rural, des eaux et des forêts • Cécile BLATRIX, AgroParisTech • Loïc BLONDIAUX, Université Paris 1 • Daniel FIXARI, École des mines de Paris • Jean-Michel FOURNIAU, Institut français des sciences et technologies des transports, de l'aménagement et des réseaux • Pieter LEROY, Nijmegen University, Pays-Bas • Paul MATHIAS, Collège international de philosophie • Laurence MONNOYER-SMITH, Université de technologie de Compiègne • Dominique PESTRE, École des hautes études en sciences sociales • Michel PRIEUR, Université de Limoges • Denis SALLES, Cemagref Bordeaux • Alain SOMAT, Université

Rennes-II Haute-Bretagne • Olivier SOUBEYRAN, Institut de géographie alpine de Grenoble • Marie-Gabrielle SURAUD, université Toulouse-III • Karine WEISS, Université de Nîmes.

Steering committee

It comprises representatives of not-for-profit organisations, of public agencies, of ministries and decentralized government services, and the chair of the programme's scientific board. The committee is in charge of defining the programme strategy lines, establishing priority research, making sure the selected projects are consistent, and setting up programme assessment, animation and dissemination activities. It meets twice a year. The director of economic studies and environmental evaluation at the MEDDTL chairs this committee.

Animation and dissemination activities

Special attention is given to the scientific facilitation of the programme and the optimisation of its research projects to make sure the knowledge produced is transferred to public-policy, not-for-profit and training-institution players. This is done through many events where researchers and practitioners can meet and share their thoughts: reporting symposia, thematic seminars, CDE days, etc. These events bank on the scientists involved and the knowledge produced by the programme, and also bring in other work and researchers, from France and abroad.

The website www.concertation-environnement.fr is updated on a regular basis and encourages interaction between research teams, the scientific board, the steering committee and interested individuals. Animation and dissemination activities are run by the Cité+ consultancy.

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CDE research projects

Management of protected natural areas and public participation: what effect on the decision? • Christophe BOUNI - Bureau d'études ASCA

Decision-making in crisis situations: waste-management, conflicts and concertation (France, Italy, Mexico) • Patrice MELE - Université de Tours UMR CITERES

The import of public engagement. Towards a sociological modelling of public participation impacts on decision-making processes • Jean-Michel FOURNIAU - Département économie et sociologie des transports de l'INRETS

Framing citizen's expression in participative procedures at the local level in environment: a European comparison • Laurence MONNOYER-SMITH - Université de Technologies de Compiègne

Ordinary actors in participatory dynamics linked to environmental questions • Roland RAYMOND - Université de Savoie

A national park in the Calanques of Marseille? Construction of territorial forms of consultation and principles of legitimacy • Valérie DELDREVE - CEMAGREF de Bordeaux- and Philippe DEBOUDT - Université des Sciences et Technologies de Lille 1

Outcomes and transferability of a participatory design: a comparison of Seveso sites • Odile PIRIOU - Laboratoire Interdisciplinaire pour la Sociologie Economique, CNRS-CNAM

Urban design projects integrating user expertise: Can a collaborative workspace improve public participation • Claudine GUIDAT - Ecole Nationale Supérieure en Génie des Systèmes Industriels

The "Grenelle de l'environnement": actors, speech, effects • Pierre LASCOUMES and Daniel BOY - Centre d'Etude de la vie politique française (CEVIPOF)

Public participation in developing national regulations on the environment in France and abroad. Democratic requirement, legal necessity • Gérard MONEDIAIRE - CRIDEAU Université de Limoges

SEMIPAR - Military secret and public participation: the case of basic nuclear installations and facilities classified for environmental protection • Philippe BILLET - Institut du droit à l'environnement - Université Jean Moulin - Lyon 3

Professional practices, markets & policies. Standardisation in viticulture and deliberative process • Didier BUSCA - CERTOP Université Toulouse-le-Mirail

The citizen consultation in eco-neighborhoods projects in France: assessment and European perspectives • Jodelle ZETLAOUI-LEGER - IUP Créteil

Participation of the public and co-production of street cleanliness. Compared field studies in Mulhouse and Besançon (France), Rufisque (Senegal) and Mohammedia (Morocco) •

Christian GUINCHARD - LASA Université de Franche-Comté

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Towards a "New Spirit of Democracy", established participation and citizen engagement around the planning for the intercommunal eco-neighbourhood Union-Roubaix, Tourcoing • Majdouline SBAI - Université Populaire & Citoyenne (UTC) Roubaix

