



## Cycloop Symposium

### Competing claims on space – Framing interests in multi-actor collaboration



#### Abstracts for STRAND 1 FRIDAY 19 June 2009

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<i>Discussants</i>	Tharsi Taillieu, René Bouwen

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## **From space for waste to wasted space**

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### **Abstract**

There is a widespread agreement that sustainability depends on the willingness to take into account different interests and perspectives (e.g. inter- and intra-generational solidarity in the classical Brundland definition; Elkington's "People – Profit – Planet"). As a consequence there are high expectations in multi-actor collaboration insights and work forms. However the contexts in which these insights and work forms have been mostly developed (local initiatives, with governmental funding), may not be representative for the new sustainability challenges ahead (connection local-global, long term perspective, political arenas, legal implications, strong business interests, technological innovation for more eco-efficiency). In this presentation we explore how these challenges influence the multi-actor collaborative process.

Our analysis is based on the functioning of a multi-actor group, called the Enhanced Landfill Mining Consortium (ELFM-Consortium). We took up the role of action-researchers and process facilitators for this group. For the analysis we rely on videotaped meetings of the consortium and individual interviews with the participants, during a period of six months.

The ELFM Consortium consists of approximately 15 persons, representing various research centers (technical, economics and human sciences), a business firm, a government agency and a local community committee. The Consortium wants to generate knowledge for integrating landfill mining in a sustainable material management cycle. "Enhanced" refers to the radically improved, sustainable way in which this activity should take place.

Historically, taking space for waste has been the non-sustainable end-of-pipe solution of linear production processes. For the Consortium these landfills are wasted spaces. Landfills should be considered as sources of energy and materials, with an enormous economic potential. However, landfill mining as a contribution to sustainability is all but an evident aim. There are high risks and uncertainties for the involved actors and different barriers have to be crossed. Some examples follow. Can technological innovations guarantee safe landfill mining activities? Will there be acceptance of local communities and broader society? Will it be possible to adapt the existing legal regulations that impede landfill mining and what about political lobbying on a regional and European level in this process? We focus our analysis on how the participants in the Consortium struggle with the tension between engaging in a collaborative process oriented to long term societal interests, while at the same safeguarding the short time interests of their own organizations.

**The importance of being earnest. The impact of intensive process design and management on the outcomes in 4 Flemish consultative/participative processes.**

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**Abstract**

There appears to be an increase in the number and diversity of public consultation and participation arrangements in policy making. These can be aggregation systems such as referenda and opinion polling, integrative systems such as open planning processes and consensus conferences, as well as complex arrangements combining aggregation and integration/deliberation (Van Damme & Brans, 2008). However, also more “traditional” systems such as public hearings and advisory councils are being maintained or even intensified. The result is an ever increasing competition between different mechanisms of consultation and participation, and an increasingly complex policy making process.

The general question that will be addressed in this paper is, how can we, in this increasingly complex policy environment with widely diverging perspectives, set up and manage processes of public consultation and participation that lead to the best possible outcomes? More specifically, we look at the impact of the intensity of the process design and management, on the outcomes (e.g. policy enrichment, policy support, social learning). To what extent does “process matter” in achieving good outcomes?

First of all, we will briefly look into insights of democratic theory and literature on network governance, we will discuss the diverging views on democracy and how these different perspectives shape the way in which arrangements of public consultation and participation are being approached. Then, we will define the notion of public consultation as being used here, and we will delve more deeply in the organization of public consultation processes, with a specific focus on process design and management. In our conceptual framework we will then bring together context, process and result variables. One of the result variables deals specifically with the level of social learning. To what extent have participants as well as initiators gained insight into the different perspectives and to what extent have they adjusted their own perspective? Have they been able to develop a new, possibly richer ‘frame’? Finally, we will present our empirical findings from a comparison of four Flemish cases of public consultation. Two cases deal with consultation processes in the broader realm of spatial planning (natuurrichtplan), two cases deal with the collaborative development of a local health plan in areas that have been historically heavily polluted. Whereas in two cases the future use of space and competing claims to spatial use are central topics, in the two other cases (polluted) space can be seen as the background against which local communities and administrators develop a partnership in dealing with environmental health risks. We will finally also raise some methodological issues related to the analysis and evaluation of such processes. The paper itself is also a collaborative effort between an academic researcher and a field worker/process manager.

## **Utilising a national protocol for collaboration on environmental problems in Ireland: the Silvermines case**

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### **Abstract**

The use of collaborative or consensus-based problem solving to address environmental problems (Environment Conflict Resolution or ECR) has been utilized in the U.S. for more than 20 years (Bingham, 1986; Gray, 1987; Talbot, 1983) with numerous demonstrations of its effectiveness, considerable case-based documentation of its utility (Susskind, MacKearnan & Thomas-Larmer, 1999), as well as proposals for evaluating such processes (O'Leary & Bingham, 2003). Adoption of ECR processes in other countries, however, has a much shorter history and one-to-one transfer of the lessons learned about US processes to these other contexts cannot be taken for granted.

We investigate a nascent effort in Ireland, the Silvermines Inter-Agency Investigation, to introduce such environmental conflict resolution practices. The case is the second to use the National Protocol for the Investigative Approach to Serious Animal/ Human Health Issues, invoked to address a serious environmental hazard involving lead (Pb) poisoning in the North Tipperary area. This National Protocol is a set of arrangements for collaboration between various agencies having responsibilities for human health, animal health and the environment in circumstances where such collaboration is necessary to adequately address a case which may be multidimensional in its cause or effects (EPA, 1997).

The Silvermines area in Ireland has a long and patchy Pb and zinc mining history which has left a permanent stamp on the locality. Dust blows from a large tailings management facility coupled with the deaths of cattle from Pb poisoning raised the concerns within the local community and among its public representatives as to whether these events had any wider significance for human or animal health in the area. Invocation of the 1997 National Investigative Protocol involved establishing An Inter-Agency Group (IAG) in 1999 with representation from 7 State or Government Agencies. The IAG's remit was to conduct an investigation into the presence and influence of Pb in the Silvermines area. After 12 months of detailed work, the IAG presented its report to the Irish Government. Increased community awareness of environmental health issues has led to a greater demand than in the past for research findings that are demonstrably valid to communities. Consequently, the community received detailed and regular feedback from the IAG through meetings, public announcements and press releases.

Subsequently, the EPA STRIVE Research Programme 2007-2013 funded a case study of the investigation to gain information which may assist individuals participating in a collaborative effort centred on human or animal health issues in the future. The case study was conducted in three phases; data were triangulated using both qualitative and quantitative designs.

Our analysis of the case will focus on four issues: 1) The need to integrate acquisition of technical data to assess actual contamination into the collaboration discussion; 2) the need for

interagency coordination; 3) the need to engage in regular dialogue with the community in order to assess the levels of hazard as well as to garner their participation in remediation efforts; and 4) the role of agency leadership in facilitating the collaborative effort.

Overall, the data from the collaboration's participants revealed that the process was a success, although challenging at times. The collaboration's most significant outcomes were identification of the problem (environmental Pb contamination), implementation of the IAG's 39 recommendations and finally remediation of the contaminated sites. Additionally, the Silvermines collaboration serves as a demonstration project in Ireland of the utility of environmental management through collaboration. It shows that collaborative partnerships paired with continuous environmental management can strengthen the capacity and confidence of a community to work with Government and Local Agencies to serve the public welfare while building bridges towards local environmental protection and re-development of contaminated areas.

**Keywords:** Environmental Conflict Resolution, Inter-Agency Collaboration.

A49

**Privatization of public space: the case of community-development in housing estates in late-modern society**

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**Abstract**

Since the early 1990s, the idea that social structures have become more flexible, loose and light has gained prominence. Consequently, social structures are increasingly understood in terms of networks and flexible communities. With this contribution we aim to add to the understanding of social structures and social cohesion in contemporary society. Two cases of contemporary community-development in apparently completely different housing estates are analyzed, starting from the questions: 1) what does people motivate to live in exclusive collective housing estates, and 2) how do they organize inclusion and exclusion of people? The ADM community lives on about 45 acres of land in the western harbour area of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The community consists of a 100 squatters who are mostly artists and artisans, for example dancers, photographers or mechanics. Most ADM dwellers are strongly critical of capitalist society. They view themselves as ‘freethinkers’ and ‘freebooters’.

The Golfresidence Dronten is a neighbourhood to the south of Dronten village in the centre of the Netherlands. It consists of 360 detached villas and 90 apartments. The total area of 86 acres includes a golf course. It is surrounded partly by a watercourse and partly by a fence. There is one road to enter and exit the residence. The Golfresidence is a residential area with restricted access and thus can be seen as a sort of gated community. Data have been collected by means of a combination of interviews, participatory observations and non-participatory observations in both communities. In addition, we analysed secondary material such as websites, documentaries and (scientific) documents. The case studies show a clear sense of social cohesion among the community members in both communities, providing them with a feeling of belonging and safety. While the ADM offers a home for people who want to express creativity in their daily non-conformist activities, offers the Golfresidence a home for educated upper-class people in a quiet and beautiful golfing-environment. In both cases particular forms of spatial and social closure are used by the inhabitants to exclude outsiders from the estates, resulting in privatization of what formally is public space.

When living in the comfortable realm of a more-less closed community with ‘same sort’ people becomes a trend - as it appears to be in the Netherlands - one could fear the consequences for different kinds of people living peacefully together at the scale of society. It is widely agreed upon that citizenship education asks for a nurturing of a sense of diversity and recognition of multiple reference points. Public spaces create room for different people to learn about each other and, to a certain extent, force people to be flexible in their interactions. Encounters in public spaces may lead to clashes, but also to more understanding, tolerance, and reframing of the situation. Current developments with regard to the social and political organization of society force us to revisit the way policy development for the design and use of space is organized. This study has provided several impetuses.

## **Innovative development of city spaces: a simulation for future engineers**

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### **Abstract**

The skills required for engineers are changing profoundly. Group T organizes its curriculum for industrial engineers around the model of the ‘integral engineer’, advocated by Ken Wilber. This refers to an engineer who is not only good at technology and science (Engineering), but who is also an entrepreneur (Enterprising), pays attention to the effects of technological inventions on nature and society (Environmenting), who is able to think in a holistic way (Ensembling) and an engineer who is capable to communicate, collaborate and develop himself and the people around him (Educating). This article focuses on the collaborative skills of engineers: in what way can they collaborate with other ‘stakeholders’ who have a different perspective on a ‘problem’ and who defend different interests.

In a rather simple simulation game of 2 hours we offered students in their first bachelor industrial engineering an opportunity to experience the challenges of multi-party collaboration. The simulation was based on a project of city innovation and development in Leuven (Belgium). The structure of the simulation was: preparation phase for the different interest parties (6 to 8), first round of talks, contact with constituency, second round of talks, contact with constituency and bilateral contacts, and final round of talks. The assignment of the project group, composed of a representative of each interest party, was to develop a proposal for the city council. The proposal had to consist of an innovative plan for a multi functional city area, respecting the vision of the city council. The simulation was organized for 15 groups with approximately 25 students. This seminar was part of a series of seminars on ‘group dynamics’. They were set up to support students in the two technological projects (‘Engineering Experience’) they had to do in their first year.

The debriefing of the simulation focused on several aspects. The task and outcome of the process, the way the process was organized and structured, the relationships that developed around the table and finally the role of the context (constituencies, the commissioners of the project, absent interest parties). We also focused on the assumptions (‘blind spot’) that influenced the behaviour of the representatives and their constituency (e.g. compromise vs consensus, power games, lack of an explicit common task). We explored the conditions, the required ‘new’ behaviour and skills for multi-actor collaboration and the shift from positional bargaining based on power, unilateral interests and win-lose dynamics, to interest based collaboration. In the paper we discuss the findings of these simulations in an educational setting based on extensive observation notes. The focus is on the required skills and attitudes for engaging in generative, innovative collaboration involving multiple actors. These may inspire future initiatives to prepare engineers for the work field.

A50

**Negotiating space for water: framing issues and interests**

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**Abstract**

This paper is based on an analysis of a participatory process to define a water area management plan in The Netherlands. As a local public authority, the water board initiated an interactive decision-making process, in order to analyze problems, devise solutions and develop the plan in a concerted way with key stakeholders. Competing claims on space for farming versus space for water turned out to be a crucial issue in the negotiation process. Divergent interests between fruit and dairy farmers threatened to divide the farmer community. Although most actors seemed to be aware of this from the beginning, the issue received little attention and only became a central part of how the issue was framed at the end of the process. We analyze how the common and divergent interests of the farmers get framed in the different interaction settings that occurred over the course of the process.

## **Sustainable water management in practice: coping with uncertainty**

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### **Abstract**

This paper introduces the problem statement of a recently started PhD research on sustainable water management. The problem statement reads as follows: how do project managers of water boards in The Netherlands deal with the uncertainties inherent of sustainable water management and what are the effects? The practical value of the research is that it stimulates practitioners in water management to reflect on their perception of the planning process and the effects of their behaviour. The scientific value of the research is an in-depth situational analysis of the practice of sustainable water management to develop and adjust methods to support interactive planning.

### **Keywords**

Sustainable water management, urban water management, uncertainty, coping strategies, interactive planning, framing