



Stakeholder Involvement

Preliminary comments based on draft documents and presentations

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WP5 objectives

- ✓ *To engage local public stakeholders in national and international repository monitoring R&D;*
- ✓ *To analyse the impact this has on both the participating stakeholders' and the project partners' understanding of and expectations regarding repository monitoring;*
- ✓ *To define more specific ways for integrating public stakeholder concerns and expectations into national repository monitoring programmes.*
- *Develop ideas on how to ensure accessibility and transparency of monitoring data to public stakeholders*

First thought: context matters

- Nothing new about the idea of technological lock-in or path dependence but the first WP report highlights, in an analytically structured way, the interlinked *contextual* factors that shape national approaches to monitoring. Specifically, a combination of:
 - National (political) cultures of public trust
 - History of RW policy and management
 - Institutional arrangements for RWM, GD and public stakeholder involvement (“governance matters”)
 - *Framing* of monitoring
- This reminds us of the complex and dynamic nature of what is sometimes treated simply as ‘context’ and sets the scene for citizen engagement with monitoring RD&D.

- ‘Responsible Research + Innovation’ (RRI) provides the rationale for involving public stakeholders in repository monitoring RD&D
 - “societal actors [...] work together during the whole research and innovation process in order to better align both the process and its outcomes with the values, needs and expectations of society.” (H2020 website)
- It also responds to interest from some citizen stakeholders and to concerns expressed by others
 - E.g. Modern2020 participation included WP2 consensus workshops on *Responding to Monitoring Results*
 - This was identified as a specific stakeholder concern during the first MoDeRn project.

- This is expressed in Deliverable D2.1, *Repository Monitoring Strategies and Screening Methodologies*, which declares that:
 - “Engagement with public stakeholders and regulators should take place *throughout* monitoring programme development and iteration” (p.51).
- WP5 sets out to test more explicitly the ways in which citizen stakeholders might engage with monitoring RD&D.

- What roles have I heard identified for an *engaged citizen* in Modern2020's RD&D?
 - A better informed citizen
 - A watchdog / agent of 'civic surveillance'
 - A 'modest witness' to the RD&D
 - A 'lab participant' / lab assistant
- These are not mutually exclusive and all have value
 - But *not* a 'co-producer' of monitoring R&D

- The response of citizen stakeholders indicates that it is not a role that most citizens expect or want:
 - “Citizens felt their role in the project was *not to influence* the course of the technical research, *but to understand* what it was for and how it could affect their national waste management programmes” (Anne Bergmans, Tuesday)
- This may be reassuring for those with concerns about the consequences of citizens influencing technical research
 - But it is worth noting that attitudes and expectations can evolve over time, not least if the context changes

- The draft version of the handbook (D5.2) that I have seen looks very promising and engaging
- I think it important that this *was* co-produced by citizen stakeholders, who are best placed to know what information and tools they need.
- The handbook seems to focus on engagement in international monitoring RD&D projects, but with parts that could clearly be used by national groups.
- My one suggestion to the team producing it is that when finalizing the draft they ensure the intended context(s) of use are clearly specified and, as appropriate, distinguished from one another.

Trust

- Trust varies across national contexts, so efforts at ‘trust building’ need to be contextually sensitive.
- There is a place for healthy skepticism (*‘active or critical trust’*) on the part of even the most trusting of citizens.
- Where public stakeholders have little or no trust in the institutions and organizations responsible for GD, an independent (monitoring) body can *institutionalize mistrust* in a constructive way (e.g. the proposal in WP2).
- I noted that advocates for variants of this suggestion were *German or Swiss* researchers, so perhaps we need to ask whether this too is a *context-specific* response?

Monitoring and memory

- One distinctive aspect of the institutional design paper by Thomas Flueler was the reminder that it gives of the importance of *knowledge management*. This was absent from other contributions that I heard and this now well-established idea could usefully be incorporated in thinking about the design of repository monitoring as a socio-technical system.

Continued innovative in approaches to engaging citizens with monitoring

- I was struck by two contributions that approached the challenge of increasing and sustaining citizen engagement with monitoring in very different ways:
 - This morning's paper on community modelling of river processes provided evidence of a novel method that has been successful in enhancing citizens' interest in monitoring data.
 - The second was a paper – and round table session – on using visual arts to stimulate citizens to engage with challenges such as different time scales, material culture and human memory.
- Both attest to the potential for continued innovation, across SSH disciplines, to develop new ways to support citizen engagement with repository monitoring.