



## Introduction

The aim of this poster is to describe stakeholder participation in the development of a list of measures to reduce phosphorus (P) loss from agriculture while being acceptable to farmers in the Lough Melvin catchment. Agri-environmental policy has often been characterized by difficulty in reaching consensus between the requirements of agricultural and environmental stakeholders. In order to reduce such difficulties stakeholder participation is increasingly accepted as necessary component of effective environmental policy.

## Theoretical Framework for Stakeholder Participation

### Arguments For/Against Stakeholder Participation

For	Against
Shared Knowledge	Difficult to Manage
Consensus Building	How to Integrate Subjective Opinions
Eases Implementation	Conflicting Perceptions of the Problem
Improves Technology Transfer	Biased Outputs
Increases Effectiveness	Decreases Effectiveness
Environmental Protection	Environmental Degradation

### Criteria for a Successful Stakeholder Participation Process

1. Clear aim for stakeholder participation
2. Representative of the target stakeholders
3. Overcome the barriers to stakeholder participation
4. Effective method for interacting with stakeholders
5. Outcomes reflect the inputs of stakeholders
6. Provide feedback to the stakeholders

## Implementation of Stakeholder Participation

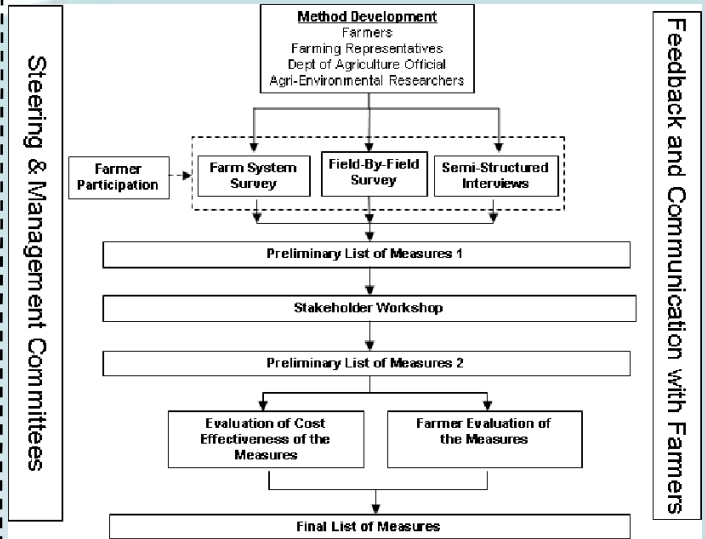


Figure 1: Stakeholder participation in the development of agri-environmental measures for farms in the Lough Melvin catchment

### Positive Outcomes from the Participation Process

- Agreement for continued partnership between researchers, policy makers and farmers in the Lough Melvin catchment.
- Knowledge transfer between researchers, farmers and policy makers
- Making use of farmers innate knowledge of farming in the catchment
- The measures that were most popular with farmers were also the most cost effective measures (€ per mg decrease in P ha<sup>-1</sup>)

### Challenges Faced During the Participation Process

- Achieving representative stakeholder participation
- Involving reluctant stakeholders in the process
- Integrating divergent opinions into the list of measures
- Integrating the outputs into formal policy making structures

## Conclusions

- Consensus on the list of measures has important implications for their effective implementation in the future.
- Stakeholder participation was the basis for a partnership agreement between researchers, policy makers and farmers in the catchment
- Need to move beyond stakeholder consultation, which is primarily used to gain feedback and to inform stakeholders of existing decisions
- The move from consultation to increased stakeholder participation requires structures and processes at local and national level