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RESOURCE

Stakeholder analysis: Mapping the river networks for integrated flood risk management

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Description / Abstract

In recent decades, a change of paradigm in flood risk management (FRM) has been taking place worldwide. The most current legislation and policies reflect this. This change of paradigm implies a gradual transition towards the adoption of more proactive, integrating strategies which require investment in nature-based solutions (NbS) to mitigate flood risk while ensuring the good status of water bodies and restoring river-floodplain systems. To be effective, this transition should be accompanied by an evolution in governance: from top-down approaches to bottom-up schemes in which empowered and well-endowed stakeholder engagement becomes essential. However, the still limited experiences in implementing this combination present numerous potential difficulties and barriers. We use empirical techniques of social network analysis in combination with latent class cluster analysis to diagnose ex-ante these potential challenges to guide policy makers in designing suitable strategies of communication and involvement of stakeholders in the decision-making process. The analysis is carried out in two stages: (i) identifying and examining the relationships of key stakeholders involved in the management, conservation and exploitation of fluvial systems; and (ii) categorising stakeholders according to their perception of the effectiveness of NbS. Only by creating a cohesive and power-balanced river network is it possible to implement just and legitimate FRM strategy.

Publication year
2021

Publisher
Environmental Science & Policy

Keywords
Bottom-up Nature-Based Solutions

Thematic Tagging
Gender Youth
Language English
View resource

Related IWRM Tools

Tool

Stakeholder Analysis

C1.03

Source URL: https://iwrmactionhub.org/resource/stakeholder-analysis-mapping-river-networks-integrated-flood-risk-management