

Decision Aiding in Social Decision Processes

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Outline

- 1 Social Decision Processes
- 2 Public Policies
- 3 Participation
- 4 Participation Structures
- 5 Conclusions

What is a social decision process?

- Distributed Decision Power (several stakeholders).
- Different Rationalities.
- Complexities and Uncertainties.
- Public Deliberation.
- Social Outcomes.

Specificities 1

What is specific in Public Policies?

- Unclear “Who”, “What”, “Why” ...
- Conflicting Actors and Social Groups.
- Participative (formally or not) decision processes.
- Heterogeneous Resources exchanged.
- Long time horizon (often).

Specificities 2

What is specific in Public Policies?

- Different types of Actors:
 - Political actors (short term political agendas).
 - Officials and Experts (medium term knowledge based agendas).
 - Social groups more or less fragmented.
- Different types of stakes.
 - From long term and/or affecting large parts of territory and population, to
 - short term individual “opportunistic” stakes.
- Heterogeneous resources such as: knowledge, trust, money, land, authority, power etc. are committed in the process.

Consequences

What are the consequences?

- Conflicting opinions, priorities, actions.
- Conflicting information and interpretations.
- Different languages and communication patterns.
- Mutually adaptive behaviour along time.

What does it mean?

*Evaluation = Aiding to Decide
Participative Decision Making*

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What is Participation?

Society

A way to conduct and to be as a Society (a system).

Individuals

A way to regulate the relationships between individuals (carrying their values and stakes).

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Why Participation?

- Science and Experts are not considered reliable.
 - Errors.
 - Controversial issues.
 - Principle of precaution.
- Information Society.
- Environmental issues and other such complex subjects.
- Social Fragmentation.

Lack of Legitimation

Why Participation?

What is Legitimation?

- Power to convince others to act:
 - Charismatic;
 - Traditional;
 - Rational.
- Argumentation and Consensus Building

How Participation?

Participation levels

- 0 Information
- 1 Feedback
- 2 Discussion
- 3 Involvement

Usual Structures

Information

Use of media, use of formal and informal information distribution channels. Communicate a Decision.

Feedback

Use of more or less large and/or specific target public enquiries. Use of Public Opinion Polls. Marketing a Decision.

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Discussion

- Focus Groups.
- Citizen Panels (Consensus Workshops of Citizens Juries).

Discuss a Decision.

Involvement

Collective Decision Making. Social Choice Procedures.
Consensus on $\langle PS, \Gamma, \mathcal{M}, \Phi \rangle$. Make a Decision.

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Participation Advantages

- Substantial Contribution.
- Procedural Contribution.
 - We know more
 - Conflict Prevention
 - Commitment
 - Legitimation
- Long term strategic cooperation

Participation Drawbacks

- Inefficiency of democracy.
- Cost.
- Uncertain outcomes.
- Heterogeneous Partners.
- Different Quality of Expertise and Knowledge.
- No interest to participate.
- Adversity to Participation.

What Decision Aiding?

- Help to establish a participative structure.
- Help to structure and formulate collectively a decision problem.
- Help a committee (a society) to make a decision.
- Assess (collectively) the consequences of a decision.

THUS ...

- We need to anticipate what the consequences are when we use and manipulate a certain information (what indicators mean?)
- We need to explain why and how certain outcomes can be reached and/or avoided.
- We need to create “socially intelligible” information.
- We need to construct “argumentative rationality”.

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