Results and Recommendations: Flood Risk Prevention

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European Union The European Regional Development Fund

Investing in the future by working together for a sustainable and competitive region

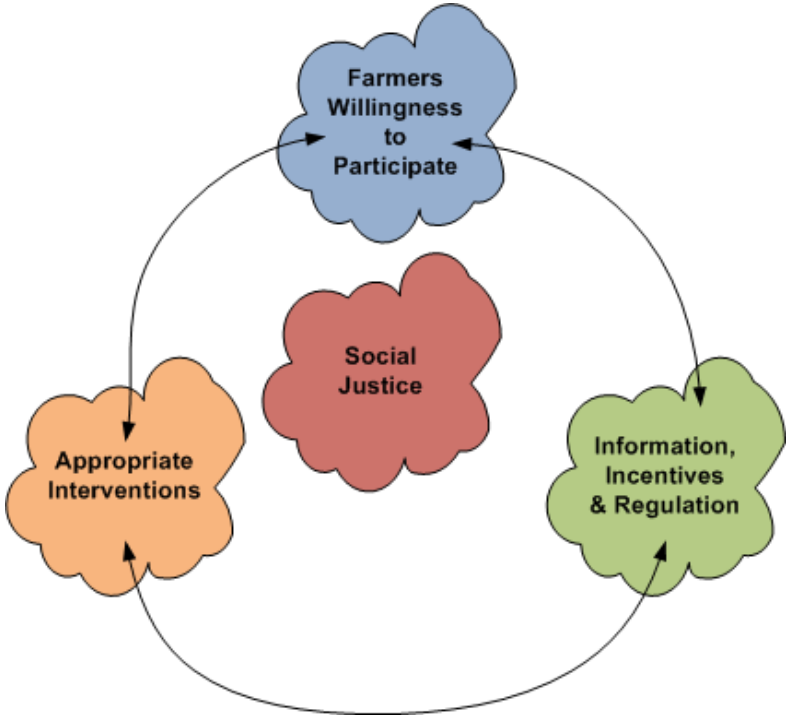
The Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme

The Issue

- Need to cope either with **more intense rainfall** in some seasons and having **less space and time** in which to do this.
  - **intensity can exceed capacity of infrastructure**
  - space issues - **urbanisation and glass houses** but in other areas there is development of **flood plains for housing and commerce**.
  - time issue - **water moves faster** through drainage systems as they have been "improved“ increasing peak flow.
  - moving water off land faster is **seen as better** in the farming community but the water has to go somewhere.
- Farmers have a **strong emotional connection** with their environment and care deeply about it but see their **primary business role as food producers**.
- The **cooperation of farmers** in water management is needed to deliver **cost-effective water management** responses to current and future climate.

The Objective

- To achieve the water management goals more sustainably through cooperation with stakeholders in the region - "Breaking into the Circle".



Interventions - I

Interventions - II

Results: Technical Findings

- **Strong Linkages** of technical-institutional/financial-participation (lock-in?)
- **Equity of Burden Sharing**
  - logic of cost effective engineering and control is one site
  - equity of burden sharing means catchment wide, smaller scale measures
  - who pays and why
- **Appropriate Scale of Interventions**
  - large interventions can work but on a more limited number of sites
  - smaller interventions can be part of learning process, less risky, more in control, act as demonstration, but take longer may be less cost effective (but better than nothing?)
  - how best to organize maintenance – small scale actors, coordinated by intermediaries
- **View Water Management as an Ongoing Process** not a one-off project
  - incremental, building over time (monitor, evaluate, adapt = learning)
  - can include some trade-offs e.g. wetlands vs. local dredging
- **Evidence Base for the Effectiveness** of catchment wide natural flow measures – still mainly within the academic domain
- **Need to Reduce the Net Costs** to tax payers – a key driver

Results: Institutional/Financial Findings

- Need for **clear roles and enforcement of responsibilities** (government, municipalities, agencies, farmers, developers)
- Need for **commitment to ongoing funding** (revenue) rather than just **capital** (capitalization can inflate costs)
- Need for **finances to match objectives and responsibilities**
- Need to **coordinate actions** – e.g. fluvial and pluvial flooding, infrastructures etc
- Green-blue **service catalogues** need to match better with **local characteristics and farmers' interest** as well as with water management interests
- Insufficient understanding of all the **relevant (EU) laws and regulations** can lead to costly and time consuming setbacks
- Make sure any **financial agreement** with farmers (and other stakeholders) are compliant.
- Opportunities to include more measures as part of **Pillar 2 CAP payments**

Results: Participatory Findings

- Participation varies **Responsible, Accountable , Consulted, Informed** (RACI model)
- Participation requires **trust, mutual understanding and willingness to learn** from each other
- **When to involve stakeholders** can be difficult to decide, **early as possible** (not just early) but a **clear proposal** with preliminary analysis can help by providing a **focus for discussion** (not too abstract)
- All appropriate stakeholders need to **agree the definition of the problem** and the **relevant parts of the system**, e.g. why allow houses to be built on flood plain and then use engineering to stop flooding
- Participants need to **feel they are being listened to** – not to dictate but not to be dismissed
- **Data and analyses** on which decisions will be based need to be **open to review** by local stakeholders and to incorporate knowledge from experience.
- Take time early to reach **clear agreements** about shared tasks and responsibilities
- **A solid business case** enhances the chance of turning initiatives into a practical success.
- **Definition of win-win** needs to incorporate all factors (including non-monetary).
- **Having an intermediary** can help to **recruit participants** and **coordinate work** more efficiently but they need sufficient knowledge about both project technicalities and general process requirements

Recommendations

- **Focus on process organization**: involving relevant stakeholders appropriately
- **Step into projects** – devise small scale ways to start to participate, harness peer-to-peer networks, use demonstration sites but only in realistic settings, progress towards catchment wide
- **Use a credible intermediary**: when you need to coordinate the action of many actors.
- **Focus on communication**: participation of stakeholders requires building trust; mutual understanding and willingness to learn from each other are key factors.
- **Identify win-win situations**: ensuring a solid business case, including all factors, greatly advances the chance of turning initiatives into a practical success.
- **Make sure you have comprehensive knowledge of (European) legislation**: to ensure any financial agreement with farmers and other stakeholders are in full legal compliance.
- **Think local and practical**: schemes need to match better with local characteristics and farmers' interest as well as with water management interests.