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*This paper explains some overall guiding principles of the IPPA Toolbox which should be kept in mind while exploring the toolbox.*

## 1 Toolbox Guiding Principles

1. The Toolbox offers support for organisations who
  - have the overall responsibility for the management (governance) of a decision-making process
  - are responsible for planning or implementing public participation
  - who are (or want to be) stakeholders in a decision-making process

You may wish to act either as an organiser of participatory measures or gather information to help you bring forward recommendations / requirements to the responsible organisations.

2. Independent of the tools that are used in a specific context, experience from research and practical implementation reveals a set of principles that should be considered as preconditions for successful participation processes. A summary of these principles, taken from “The IPPA Knowledge Base, Version 1” (2011) report, can be found as an attachment to this paper.
3. It is recommended that a participation process should be started as early as possible. If possible it should accompany the development of the decision-making framework before the plan or project itself is being discussed.
4. A participation process and the tools which are used in this context have to evolve alongside the progress of a plan or project. Regular evaluation can support the optimisation and adaption of the participation process.
5. The Toolbox offers information on tools that support different levels of public participation. An interactive exchange with stakeholders takes place at the “consult/exchange”, “collaborate” and “joint decision making” levels. The lower levels “listen” and “inform” are non-interactive and thus offer only a very small degree of public involvement, which does not equate to the preconditions for

successful participation processes (see no. 2). They are, however, a necessary complement to the interactive tools, and can be used to disseminate information or listen to the concerns of the broader public.

6. In complex process, such as site selection for a radioactive waste repository, the use of more than one tool is normally required. For example if you wish to create a Citizens Advisory Group, you will still need to use other tools such as Public Meetings, Websites, Printed Information, Newspaper Inserts, Media Releases, Press Conferences, Information Centres, Mobile Information Displays.

## 2 Before you start your search

Before searching for an appropriate tool or tools, please think about the likely conditions and framing of your proposed public participation process.

- In which phase of decision-making are you? Are you in the plans/programs phase, or are you already in the project phase?
- Which level of society (national, regional or local) is affected by the current stage of the plan or project? At which level(s) do you expect stakeholders interested in participating to emerge?
- What is the degree of stakeholder participation that you want to achieve with the participation process that you are planning? To what extent and in which way will the outcomes of the participation process influence decision-making?
- Who do you want to involve? Decision-makers? The public? Scientific experts?
- How much time do you have?
- Who will be responsible for implementing the tool(s)?

You do not need to answer all these questions, but use them to help develop an impression of the overall context of the intended public participation process before beginning your search.

## 3 Additional Explanation: The difference between Tools, Methods and Processes

The Toolbox contains information on a number of tools, methods and processes, but in order to increase the readability we have sometimes only used the term "tools". Our understanding of the differences between the terms is as follows:

- *“Processes” include the use of different tools. Examples include Regional Dialogue Forum, Mediation, RISCOM and Local Partnership.*

- *“Tools” include Expert Group, Citizens Panel, Roundtables and Discussion Meetings. In the socio-scientific context tools can be anything from a rather complex instrument for including stakeholders to moderation tools such as the use of simple cards for brainstorming.*
- *“Methods” are tools which are described in the literature and where the specific design and precise methodology are fixed. Examples include Foundation Discussion Workshops, Focus Group and Consensus Conference.*

## 4 Attachment

### Preconditions for successful public participation processes<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. Overarching principles for good public participation processes

*A successful public participation process should be guided by the following overarching principles, which can be understood as examples of democratic ideals, intended to ensure a fair, transparent and acceptable process, capable of the production of useable and tolerable outcomes:*

- a) Legitimacy of the process and of the decisions;
- b) Clarity of the level of influence the public have in the process
- c) Following the aim of fairness so that all parties and the public in a broader sense benefit from the cooperation;
- d) Ensuring transparency of the process;
- e) Enhancing quality of decision making;
- f) Supporting positive economical, ecological and societal development of the region affected by the planned measures/installations.
- g) Accompanying evaluation of the process

#### 2. Principles of the organisational framework

*A successful process requires an adequate organisational framework to set the rules for the cooperation and, when relevant, the interaction between participants at the national and regional level, so as to ensure that appropriate resources are available and to provide a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the different actors. Furthermore, it is very important to provide clarity on how the results of the public participation will feed into the formal decision making procedure. There needs therefore to be:*

- a) A supporting national policy and framework setting;
- b) Strong interaction between the national and the regional governance level;
- c) Institutionalised cooperation based on:
  - i. An agreed target and common understanding of perspectives and goals amongst all the actors;
  - ii. A regular working practice assuring the integration of all relevant stakeholders with clear accountabilities;
  - iii. Inclusive working methods assuring integration of all relevant issues;
  - iv. Professional coordination of the whole process (e.g. by an institution or an intermediary) ensuring focusing on the issue and transfer of results.

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<sup>1</sup> Phil Richardson and Emily Michie (Galson Sciences Ltd), Anne Minhans and Beate Kallenbach-Herbert (Öko-Institut e.V.), Kjell Andersson (Karita Research AB): The IPPA Knowledge Base, Version 1, 14 July 2011; Deliverable 1.1 of the IPPA European research project; [http://www.ippaproject.eu/sites/default/files/deliverables/IPPA-Deliverable-1\\_1.pdf](http://www.ippaproject.eu/sites/default/files/deliverables/IPPA-Deliverable-1_1.pdf)

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- d) Sufficient resources (finances, personnel, knowledge, time) for all necessary activities and all stakeholder groups
- e) Integration of the public participation process into the formal decision-making procedure;
- f) Transparent roles and responsibilities of all actors – in general – and a clear definition of the specific stakeholders' roles in the decision-making process.