Annex I

Public Participation Techniques

August 2002

1. Stakeholder analysis
2. Interaction and Communication tools
3. Interviews
4. Active listening
5. Problem and cause analysis
6. Communciation planning
7. Workshops
8. Creative sessions
9. Logical framework (forthcoming)

1. Stakeholder-analysis

When embarking on an interactive process it is of utmost importance to consider who will be participating in the process. To get an overview of all the relevant stakeholders (or actors) in the field of interest, a so called "stakeholder-analysis" can be performed. This analysis reduces the risk of forgetting an important actor and will give an idea about the different angles from which the subject can be viewed.

Stakeholder-analysis itself is a relatively simple and a methodological exercise. And a possible methodology is presented in this annex along with an illustration. However, it is left to the reader to assess how this can be adapted to her/his own situation and made relevant to the economic analysis process.

Background

A stakeholder can be any *relevant* person, group or organisation with an interest in the issue, either because he is going to be affected by the subject (victim, gainer) or because he has influence, knowledge or experience with the subject. The analysis will bring transparancy in what stakeholders already exist and which interests they represent. Types of stakeholders are: government, local authorities, non-governmental institutions, political organisations, research institutes, industries, agriculture, households or other businesses.

A stakeholder-analysis is usually performed starting from the contents of a project using the "who?" question (for example: we want to build a house, who knows how to build it?). Be aware that the problem definition must be clear from the beginning and that the problem shall be viewed from as many different angles as possible.

Besides analysing the stakeholders it can be uselful to map the environment of a project to identify external influences. The map could tell something about the interests, motives and relationships of the actors identified, the field of force they operate in and risks. For example: which stakeholders have a positive or negative influence on the project, who has power, who has the biggest monetary interest? Similar mapping can be done for factors influencing the process, often expressed as threats (e.g. weather, financial or human capacities).

Generally, a process consists of several stages (as illustrated in Figure 1). For every single stage, it should be reviewed which stakeholders are relevant to involve in the process and if the stakeholders have the same "rights". The role and involvement of the stakeholder can differ from stage to stage, and the stakeholder-analysis will make this more transparent.

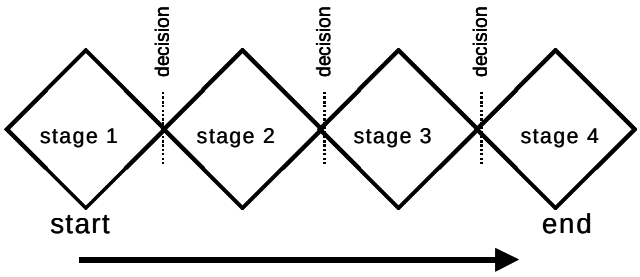


Figure 1: A process represented in diagram form

During the stakeholder-analysis the *degree of involvement* of every stakeholder (per stage) can be labelled as either (see Figure 2):

- *co-operating/co-working*: the stakeholder that will actually participate in and contribute actively to the process (i.e. active involvement);
- *co-thinking*: the stakeholder of which you want input with respect to content, it is a source of knowledge like experts (i.e. consultation);
- *co-knowing*: the stakeholder which does not play an active role in the process but should be informed of its progress (i.e. information supply).

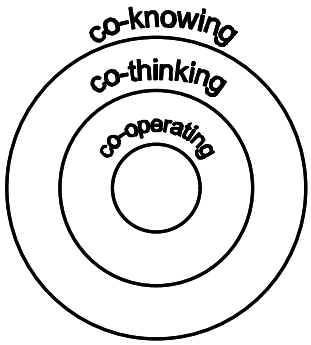


Figure 2: Target scheme to identify degree of involvement of stakeholder

If desired the identification approach can be refined by identifying the type of actor (see Figure 3):

- decision maker: stakeholders which decide about the project;
- user: stakeholders which use the result or are affected by it;
- implementer / executive: the stakeholders that have to implement the results or new policy;
- expert / supplier: stakeholders which put information, expertise or means at the disposal of the project.

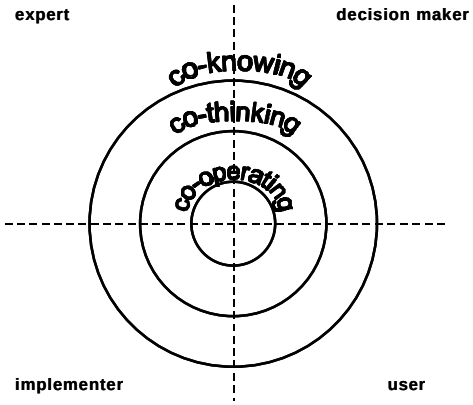


Figure 3: Refined target scheme to identify degree of involvement and type of stakeholder

Important! If the identified stakeholders are going to participate (actively or passively) in the project it is important to give feed-back to the stakeholder and specify clearly their role in order to avoid disappointments: management of expectations.

Stakeholder analysis: a simple methodology

Making the stakeholder analysis operational implies going through a series of steps of questioning and interaction. Although it needs to be adapted and refined to every situation, a simple methodology and series of steps is proposed below.

- Step 1 - Define the stage of the process that will be subject to a stakeholder analysis. Putting the subject in question-form makes it usually more accessible and facilitate the identification of key issues / stages. It appears rather wise to invite stakeholders (of which it is obvious that they are involved) to take part in a brainstorming session;
- Step 2 - A group of maximum 10 persons (the project team) including a chairman performs a brainstorming session in which as many stakeholders and perspectives or angles linked to the selected stages are mentioned.
    - Keep it rather general, name groups or organisations, not yet concrete names or people;
    - Every suggestion is written down without judgement.
- Step 3 - Check if the main perspectives / angles can be split up into sub-units / organised in types;
- Step 4 – Allocate to the stakeholders identified a concrete name (and address / contact information);
- Step 5 - Check the result:
    - Did we check all the stages of the process?
    - Do we have the ones that benefit and the victims?
    - Is the own project organisation included?
    - Did we identify the people behind umbrella organisations?

- Step 6 - Once the stakeholders are identified, the long list can be ordered by identifying the degree of involvement of each actor in each stage:
  - Write down every actor on a Post-it notepaper;
  - Draw up the "target"-scheme with circles on a flap over;
  - Be clear about the stage in the process that is effectively analysed.
- Step 7 - Put the notepapers in the right place in the "target"[2)] (Figure 2 and if refinement is desired this can be repeated for Figure 3);
- Step 8 - Check if there are no big gaps;
- Step 9 - Use the result! e.g. for a communication plan to notify concerned stakeholders. Be very clear with each stakeholder about his expected role and involvement in the process (management of expectations);
- Step 10 - The brainstorming session can be continued to identify relationships between stakeholders, their interests and motives and factors that influence the process.

Illustration of the stakeholder-analysis

A small case is presented for the illlustration of the methodology. Subject of the case is the pollution at the downstream part of the River Scheldt. The municipalities along the river recognise the problem and and want to improve the water quality, they are initiating this case. The process is described in Figure 4:

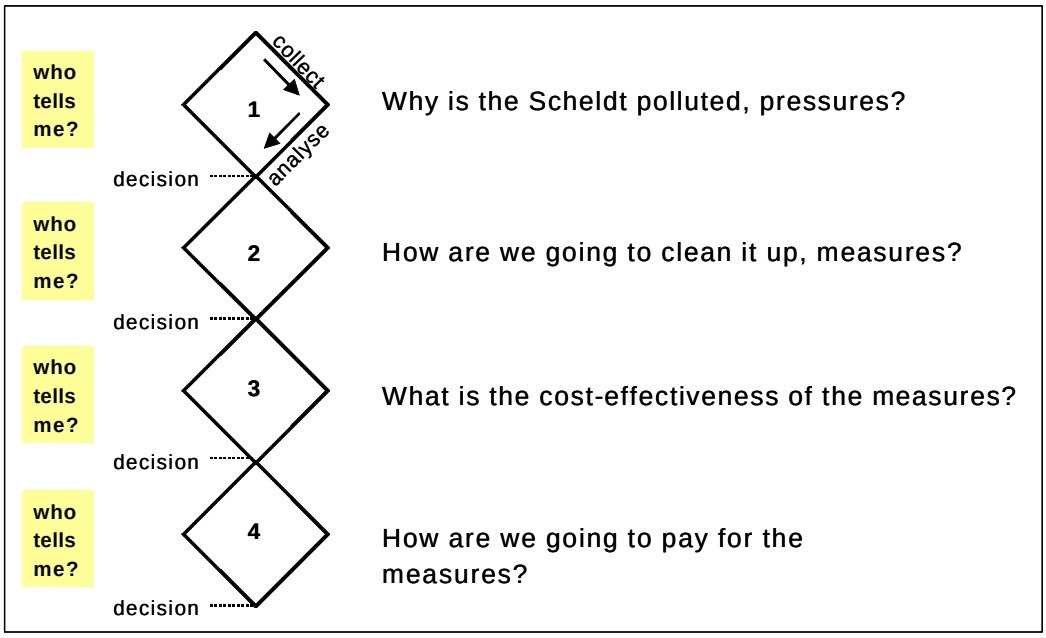


Figure 4: Different stages of a process concerning the pollution of the River Scheldt

[2)] Keep in mind that the degree of influence of the stakeholders is a factor to be considered. It might be useful more closely to involve "big" actors with much influence to ensure commitment and a supporting basis.

Analogous to the presented methodology in the former sub-section, the possible results are presented below for the different steps of the stakeholder analysis and for the stage 1 of the process (i.e. why is the Scheldt polluter, pressures?).

- Step 1 - Information is wanted about the pollution in the Scheldt, e.g. "Why is the Scheldt polluted?", who tells me that it is polluted?
- Step 2 - The proposed project team will include the municipalities and they have decided to invite also representatives of the harbour of Antwerp and Vlissingen. As many different angles as possible are viewed during a brainstorming session. The output of this session is a (finite) list of stakeholders involved:

ICPS (Scheldt commission)	people in the neighbourhood
agriculture	harbours
recreation	municipalities
dredging companies	shipping traffic
fisherman	industries
government	WWTP

- Step 3 – More detailed discussions show that the type "Industries" can be split up into:

  - Industries with emission to the air (deposit)

  - Industries with discharge to the water

- Step 4 - The list is defined more precisely:

ICPS (Scheldt Commission)	**people in the neighbourhood**
agriculture: - farmer A, B, C - poultry farm D - pig farm E, F	**harbours**: - Antwerp (B) - Ghent (B) - Terneuzen (NL) - Vlissingen (NL)
recreation: - anglers - canoeists - cyclists	**municipalities** Antwerp, Ghent, Terneuzen, Vlissingen
dredging companies: - company X - company Y	**shipping traffic:** - EU umbrella organisation for shipping traffic
Fisheries	**industries:** - emissions to air: industry G - discharge to water: industry H
Government Belgium (Flandres, Wallonia, Brussels) The Netherlands	**WWTP** Antwerp, Ghent, Vlissingen, Terneuzen

For all stakeholders the contact person / competent authority should be identified and the address / contact information identified.

- Step 5 - Checking the result shows that it is unclear which shipping companies are represented by the "European umbrella organisation for shipping traffic", as

only shipping companies operating in the Scheldt area are seen as relevant. This will need further checks by the project team. It is also noticed that environmental NGO's are missing from the list of stakeholders identified so far, and the union for the "Protection of the Scheldt landscape" is added to this list.

- Step 6 & 7 - The degree of involvement of the stakeholders is expressed by allocating stakeholders into the target scheme (Figure 5). For the first stage of the process (why is the Scheldt polluted, what are pressures?), much information needs to be collected. Thus many stakeholders end up in the second circle (co-thinking) of the target scheme. Some stakeholders are known to have a great socio-economic influence and are asked to co-operate together with the project team (inner circle). The outer border of the figure show the organisations that will be informed about the project.
- Step 8 - Check for gaps in Figure 5, refine it.

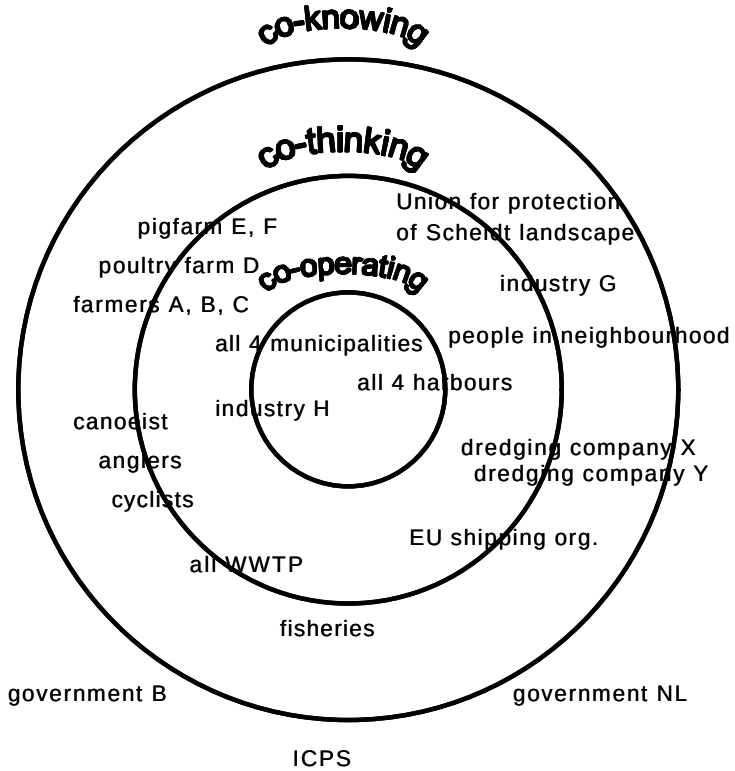


Figure 5: Target scheme with stakeholders who can tell about the pollution of the downstream part of the River Scheldt

- Step 9 - The results of the brainstorming session are included into the project plan. Decision is taken that the harbours of Gent and Terneuzen and Industry H that are not yet part of the project team will be approached for co-operation.
- Step 10 - The brainstorming session can be continued to refine the target scheme according to Figure 3 and/or to map the environment. Simple questions such as: What is the interest of Industry H?; What is the relationship between municipality

A or harbour W? will help increasing the project team understanding of the role and stakeholder relationships.

References

1. ARB toolkit, Gereedschap voor het managen van open beleidsprocessen (tools for the management of open policy processes); *Adviesunit Resultaatgericht Beleid, Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Water Management*, The Netherlands, 2000.

2. WWF's preliminary comments on Public Participation in the context of the Water Framework Directive and Integrated River Basin Management; *Adam Harrison, Guido Schmidt, Charlie Avis, Rayka Hauser*, WWF, june 2001.

2. Interaction and Communication tools

Workshop, sounding board or interview... The interaction and communication with the environment can be designed in several concrete forms. But which means fits the objective? When to choose what? What are the considerations? This inforsheet offers inspiration for a diversity of means. Also it gives some oversight in the multiformity of choices which you need to take while making a proces design or communication plan.

- The first two pages offer a number of criteria which can be of help by choosing certain means;
- Page three offers a “stain chart” with several means, classified after objective;
- Page four and further offer a short description of the different means in alphabetical order.

Criteria: when which means?

- What is the aim of the interaction, what do you expect of the parties?
    - ◊ Co-operating: asks for interactive media, such as working meetings, etc.
    - ◊ Co-thinking: asks for “tapping” means, like interviews, discussiongroups..
    - ◊ Co-knowing: asks for advising media, like presentations, articles, factsheets..
- using a stakeholder analysis (see first sheet) you can answer this question.
- Is it important to pay attention to relationships next to content? If so, choose as little as possible for written communication and as much as possible for personal contact. Do not leave this to third parties but do it yourself.
- Is it mainly about communication between project and target group, or also about communication between actors? In the last case, choose group meetings with plenty of time for networking and information exchange.
- How much money, time and capacity is available?
- Will you use a permanent committee or will you organize a temporary one?
- How large are the target groups? The bigger, the more difficult personal communication will be. In that case it is useful to look for liaisons.
- Will you ask a selected company, or do you invite everybody to contribute?
- Will the information get out of date soon? Do not choose for printed media, but for printing presentations and the internet.

Tips

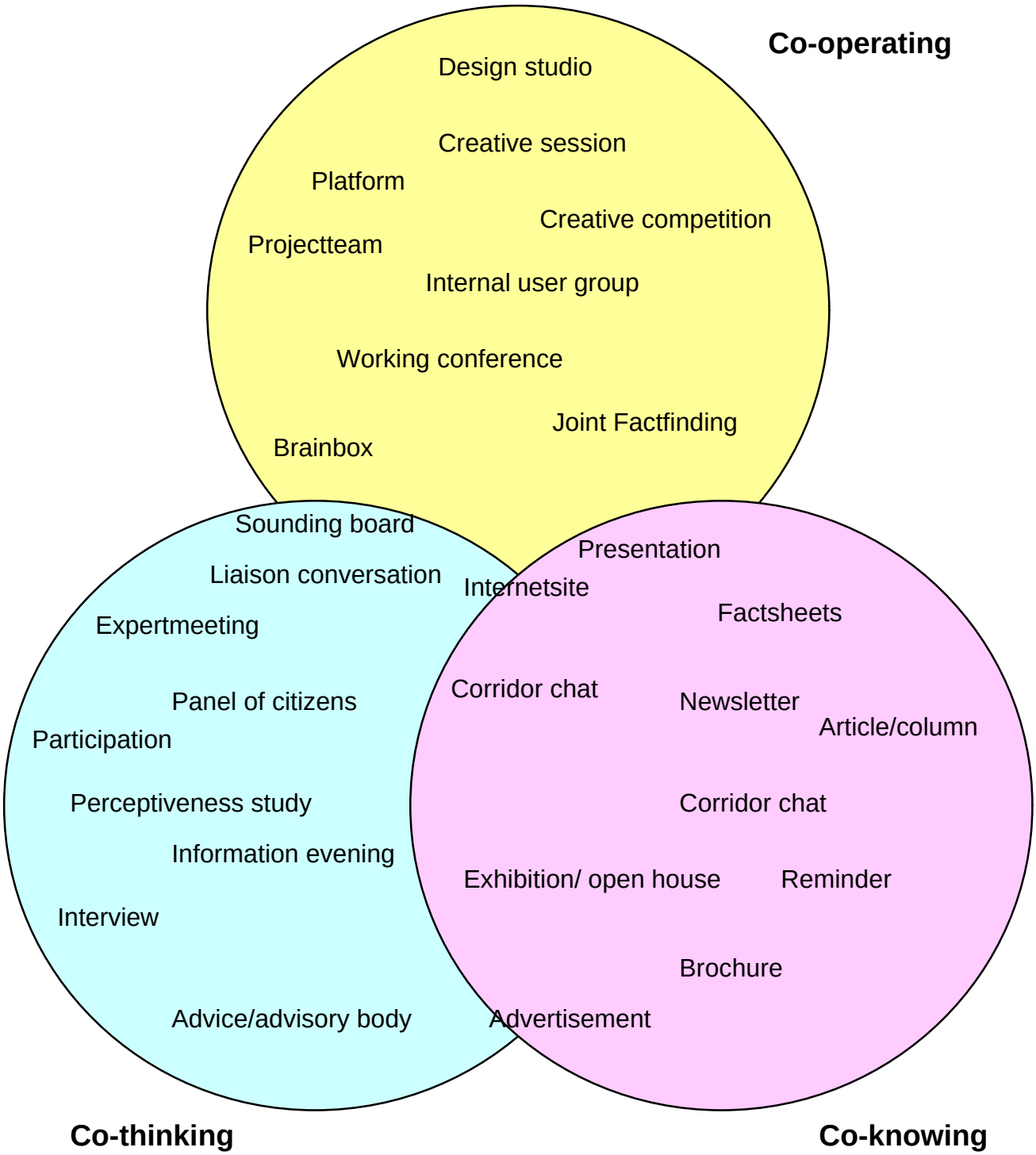
- Do not underestimate the value of showing your face: personal contact will be the best way to establish bonds and to inspire confidence. It also shows that you value the other party.
- In general people are bad readers and better listeners. Oral, personal communication is the most effective. Search for the combination: oral supported by written.

- Management of expectations: be alwas clear about the status of a certain contact. Tell at the introduction of the day what the objective is and what will happen with the results.
- Always state the name of a contact person, or point for reactions, on all communication means.
- Do not ‘forget’ people: once communicating means to continue communicating.
- Always provide minutes after a meeting, in which is stated what will happen with the results.
- Read also the infosheets in this Annex on Communication Planning and Preparation of Workshops.

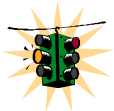
CONTINUE..

Stain chart for forms of interaction and communication

To put into action the different communication means is no hard core science. By presenting them slightly different a co-thinking day can transform into a co-operating day. Often these means are close to each other. The following arrangement gives broad outlines. All means can be found in alphabetical order and with an explanation in the tabel on the next pages.



Interaction and communication ABC

	Technique	Description	Look out ! 
	Advertisement	Certainty that information is presented unchanged at a certain time in a certain medium. Suitable for bringing projects to the attention of for example people living in the neighbourhood of a planned construction project. Can be obligatory in official participation procedures. Can reach a wider public.	Only space for limited information, this can sometimes be understood as “sales talk”. Expensive.
	Advice/advisory body	An advisory body advises on request of for example the minister or out of their own.	An advisory body cannot be used directly in the project, but can advise in all stages of the policy making process and signalize issues to be put on the agenda or fulfil a canalizing or sounding board function.
	Brainbox, electronic meeting, (ballot box)	IT supports participants of a brainstorm meeting, structures information and decision-making. Fast method to collect information with the possibility to give anonymous input.	Experienced facilitator is essential. Combine brainstorming in front of the computer with discussion around the table.
	Brochure	Can be used to present a short summary of the project, indicates the most important issues and how to participate. Can be limited to one edition, can be made cheap but also very expensive. Informs many people and restricts misleading information.	Can be interpreted wrongly, contains limited information, no direct feed-back, sometimes hard to disseminate. Quickly out-dated. Always state contact person, telephone number, e-mailaddress.
	Corridor chat	Individual (informal) approach of people. Good means to ask attention for project, process or aspects from it and in reverse to see if something goes down well. Get an idea what is at stake	Informal, person-dependent, sensitive to twaddle, does it fit your personal style? info could start to lead a life of its own. Do not forget to update your collegue next door or other departments.

	Technique	Description	Look out ! 
	Creative competition	Groups with high variety look for innovating solutions in the policy formulating stage while “competing with each other”. This method allows for retaining a wider creativity under a longer period, which prevents the drop-out of solutions in an early stage because of compromises.	
	Creative sessions	To find and selection of solutions in groups. See further on in Annex I “Creative sessions”	
	Design studio	To work in small groups (max 5 p.) to elaborate solutions. “Light” version of creative competition (see there)	
	Exhibition, Infocentre, Infopillar, Open house, Reading corner, Posterpresentation, Stand at a fair	To make accessible to interested parties the knowledge of participants. Gives general information at relatively limited costs, you might reach people who wouldn’t participate otherwise. The project is made ‘visible’.	One-way communication: gives info but does not receive. Use simple and accessible language, no jargon. Pay attention to anouncement. Give name of a contact person and telephonenumber.
	Expert meeting	Meeting for collection commentary / observations of experts on ideas or proposals, or to collect specific information. Make sure that the participants do not feel ‘drained’ on information only: give them something in return	Mobilizing of several experts and finding a date for the meeting can be difficult, invite far in advance. Participating experts can be (bussiness) competitors, they will not speak their minds. The panel chairman needs to know the subject well. Besides contents, think about inviting people with experience / empirical knowledge. If the aggregation of new ideas is the objective: do not limit to one and the same sector or discipline.

	Technique	Description	Look out ! 
	Factsheets	Give a summarized state of play on ±1 A4. Directed at people who are rather deeply involved in the subject or the proces of the project (co-operators / workers and co-thinkers, sometimes co-knowers). Quick and easy to make, also by having a format on A4 pre-printed which is filled in with up to date information. Relatively cheap.	Probably asks for a repeated publishing. Precisely from deeply involved people it is nice to receive feed-back, but this means does not provide for that. The message should contain tailor-made information, close to the needs of the recipient. Always indicate a contact person.
	Information evening	While providing for a meeting point for networking, a group of co-knowers / co-thinkers is informed.	Do not fill in the programme completely, leave some space. Plan long breaks to give opportunity for informal contacts.
	Internal user group	Broad composition of sounding board, specifically for internal projects (in organisation of competent authority)	
	Interview, personal or by telephone	A direct way to exchange information. Give people the feeling that someone is listening. Combine a in-depht conversation with a networking function. This can be a valuable investment.	Can be time consuming, reach is limited. Do not tender interviews: doing it yourself is likely to increase the involvement.
	Intranetsite, Internetsite, Discussion group on internet, Electronic participation and on-line planning	Gives the possibility to inform and interview people via a computernetwork or internet. Participation is made easier. The discussion can be protected against other internetusers.	Computer infrastructure is the limiting factor. Some experience with computers is required. Target group is unverifiable. Maintenance and updating is labour-intensive. Pay much attention to communication to anounce these actions. Discussion group can be a good preparation before a meeting.

	Technique	Description	Look out ! 
	Joint factfinding-guiding-group	Group of involved parties and interested parties which guides a process of joint factfinding. Group is involved in the formulation of research questions, selection of research bureau and assessment of interim results. Coordinated by initiator with scientific quality check.	
	Liaison conversation, conversation with possible mediators	Conversation in which you address someone about his / her membership of other networks / fora and in which you make agreements about the transfer of information (back and forth). Part of the dissemination of information is outsourced and it offers entrance to neighbouring networks, which can be too far from the subject to involve closely.	Most likely you have to approach these liaisons several times. Often you assume implicitely that people inform their own party. However this hardly ever happens automatically (unless the value of the news is high). Provide with supporting information.
	Panel of citizens /focus group	Qualitative research under citizents by means of group interviess, in which the projectteam / civil servants follow the interviews in a separate room via cameras. During the interview they can ask the interviewer to ask supplementary questions.	Interviews are done by professional agencies. To find out what citizens think is important with regard to issues such as “safety”.
	Participation	Can be a legal procedure to give citizens a chance to give their opinion about projects and decisions	
	Perceptiveness study	Survey which has the aim to identify value judgement of citizens and the estimation of effects of policies or plans from the perspective of the citizen.	
	Platform	More or less fixed committee of representatives of organisations, who meet regularly to exchange organised opinions about a certain theme. Can be used as societal thermometer, for competitive cooperation or for policy preparation.	

	Technique	Description	Look out ! 
	Presentation	Presentation for formal committees or for a working meeting, etc. You bring the subject to the people which increases the chance that they take note of it.	Timing is very important, even the projectplanning might be adapted to it. Tell clearly in advance why you come to tell something (informative, to probe opinions and what are you going to do with it? will it be used in decision-making?)
	Projectteam	Projectleader + team, often from the competent authority that take care of the organisation and steering of the project.	If possible involve people in the team that should play a role in the continuation of the project (next projectleader, more regional civil servants).
	Reminder	Small present as a thanks, it works as a reminder for the project. A present of daily use keeps people alert at work.	Keep it austere, it might be governmental money. Try to be original, a stale present works contrarily.
	Sounding board	Varied group of stakeholders which follows the policy process closely and which advices the decision-makers regularly about decisions to be taken or the progress.	Make good appointments about the status and the input of the sounding board. Take care of a good secretariat and timely information supply
	Working conference (with simulation, brainstorm, priority of alternatives, scenario discussion, etc.)	Meeting with a limited amount of participants to deepen the insight in a problem or to map possible solutions. A lot of information exchange, images, arguments. Solutions can be tried.	Good selection of participants, recruitment, preparation, participation and follow-up take a lot of time. Determine the objective well. I ist diverging or converging? Is the input/ contribution of the participants really useful? See to an adequate facilitator and good reporting.

Reference

ARB toolkit, Gereedschap voor het managen van open beleidsprocessen (tools for the management of open policy processes); *Adviesunit Resultaatgericht Beleid, Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Water Management*, The Netherlands, 2002.

3. Problem and cause analysis

Objective
Good policy starts with a good and divided analysis of the problems and underlying causes, for which the policy should be developed. For this purpose a problem and cause analysis can be applied. It is a schematic reproduction of a causal complex which is hidden under or behind a problem and it forms the conclusion of the exploration phase.
There will be no good basis to reflect upon the problem until there will be an explicit agreement on the issue as outlined in the analysis. In the first place, the analysis contributes as argumentation to the problem solving strategy. Next to this it will function as a ruling document for the competent authorities at their consideration to what causal level or in what area the most successful actions can be undertaken.

Amplification
In may cases the analysis will get the shape of a 'tree': the most penetrating causes are situated at the bottom, while the symptoms can be found at the top. For this reason the tree is to be read from below to above.

The circles are the recapitulations/summaries of groups of quotes from an anthology (possibly supported by small blocks of literal quotes) or literal quotes.
It is preferred to formulate these recaps as close as possible to the original statements; this will lead to more recognition rather than official formulations.

Procedure
The P&C analysis is to be set up by (a part of) the project team. The persons that have to deal with this should know the situation and context well and have some analytic abilities. It is advisable to call upon a person very well experienced in the making of this kind of analysis schedules.

- Make 'in relay' an anthology of the quotes

- In an anthology the quotes have usually already been classified. Sometimes one can get along quite far by indicating the relations between and within the subjects. The analysis phase will require more or less shoving of the quotes, depending on the number of preparations that have already been taken place.

- Separate the quotes or groups of quotes that belong together in the anthology. In doing this you should use your common sense. Dare to let loose the work of the anthology, but keep from doing unnecessary double work.

- Tape the flap-overs together and put them on the ground. Put the quotes down and start shoving them: put the most thorough, most fundamental causes at the bottom and put the symptoms at the top. By doing this slowly but surely a (number of) schedule(s) will arise. It is not necessary for the

whole group to join in this procedure A number of team members can do this by themselves and in a later stage the complete team can compare the 'cause/consequence-trees. Be aware not to divide the quotes in stacks in a too early stage, as it is important for all team members that they will be able to draw from all quotes available.

Use

- Agreement
  The P&C analysis will for the first time be submitted to the public for agreement: does everybody agree that this analysis presents a good diagnosis of the problems to which the conductors should take actions?

- What does and what does not?
  Furthermore a choice needs to be made on which items of the policy route the project team should concentrate. More often the analysis embraces a field to which the project has no influence. For that reason this part drops out, the policy cannot influence this part of the causes. It is important to communicate this conclusion to the public.

- Priorities
  Priorities can made for the remaining items, with or without the public, but need to be authorized at any case by the competent authority. At the conclusion of the exploring phase it needs to become clear on which causal level/in which field successful actions can take place. It should be the ambition to intervene as deep as possible into the causal complex, in order to prevent the symptom contest. However, the deeper and fundamental the causes, the more difficult it will appear to solve them.

- Policy formulation
  During the phase of policy formulation the information from the analysis phase can be used as a basis for the shaping of ideas.

Presentation

In a very abstract and analytical way the P&C analysis will give a view of the problems to which the policy should take hold of. It forms the legitimation of choices that are to be made in a later stage of the route. The way of this presentation however will not be appreciated by everybody. Therefore it is advised to use the schedules in a direct way. Or look for an alternative way. The schedules are adaptable for internal use, as 'evidence' or as input for conversations with some expert groups. For other objective groups images (cartoons, photos, …….), metaphors, a story or a written text can give better results. It is therefore advisable to write down the problem and cause analysis in an accompanying, summarizing text and eventually add the schedules in an enclosure, being a recap of the previous route and as a foundation of the conclusions.

Tips

- Pay attention to blind spots: There may lack an important point of view. A number of additional interviews can fill this gap.

- The stress for problems and causes may cause quite some resistance: 'how negative this is, while also positive things happen?!' In this case emphasize the objective of the analysis: the searching for the deeper causes of the bottlenecks, not yet for solutions. Essentially for this approach is not to be derived by a vision or being led into a problemsolving direction in an too early stage.

- A way to deepen the analysis is the organizing of expert meetings.

- Be aware of the question or assignment you give at the presentation of the schedules. The question is not: 'Do you agree?', but: 'Is the analysis right. Does it give a good diagnosis of the problems to which the policy shout take action?'

- It sometimes appears that the schedules are too rough or over-simplified to get good answers: a way to structure the discussions on the P&C analysis is to nominate tangible topics or conclusions, to which the project team should like to gather more information.

- A combination of searching for solutions or policy options are at hand here. Moreover while a natural reaction of people will be: "This all sound very good, but what is your aim to this? Where is the link to what you would like to achieve: the policy objectives?"

Reference

ARB toolkit, Gereedschap voor het managen van open beleidsprocessen (tools for the management of open policy processes); *Adviesunit Resultaatgericht Beleid, Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Water Management*, The Netherlands, 2002.

4. Communication planning

Objective
Communication is an important instrument in public participation, it is the lubricating oil of the
PP-process. The additional schedule can be a first step for the formulation of a communication plan.

Stake
The formulation of a rough communication strategy will take place in an early stage of the route, preferably during the starting phase. At the entering of every next phase the plan will be adjusted, since the role and the dedication of the actors (and therefore their need for information) can change. The added schedule can be used for this as a working schedule and can help in keeping an overview of all communication activities. Naturally a flexible process also demands a flexible communication: a continuous alertness for developments within the project which make communication possible or necessary.

Amplification
The basis of the planning schedule is being formed by the grouping of the actors after involvement (see Techniques # 3). At this inventory the actors are grouped into four main catagories, which all ask for another communicative approach:

- **Co-operators**: members of the project team and others who play an active role in the project (i.e. active involvement).
  Communication objective: exchange of information on behalf of the performance of the activities within the project.
  Means: project group meetings, lists of action points, working documents, etc.

- **Co-thinkers**: actors who can, at any moment in the process, be consulted or who contribute in an active way (i.e. consultation).
  Communication objective: to inform, interest and stimulate a positive, co-working attitude, and who give continuously back-up of the process steps.
  Means: interviews and workshops, newsletter, comment rounds, etc.

- **Co-knowers**: actors who need to be well-informed of the project (i.e. information supply)
  Communication objective: informing and the possibility to react
  Means: a general brochure, intranet site, information meeting, etc.

- **Deciders**: the competent authorization (and their advisors), that can take decisions at critical moments.
  Communication objective: to inform, and to stimulate, preferably, an active attitude.

Means: reports, presentations

Along the vertical axe the construction of the process is stated. Here the most important data are implemented. In this way a matrix is being created, in which at any time the the means for every objective group can be filled in.

Procedure

- Start making an inventory of the actors after dedication
- Fill in the process structure: which data are important?
- Pinpoint in every sector of the matrix what you would like to achieve at that particular moment at the various groups (co—workers, co-knowers, etc.). What will be the communication objective and what is the main message in that particular phase of the project?
- Now fill in the communication means at the proper point of time in the process structure
    - take the existing communication means and – channels as a start
    - search for combinations of written and oral communication
- Make a planning for each means of

Tips

- Appoint one member of the project team being explicitly responsible for the communication
- Adjust the grouping of the actors at the start of every new step in the process. It can namely be very well possible that a specific actor has been interviewed during the inventory phase, should only be kept informed at a later stage. On the other hand it is imaginable that a ‘co-knower’ will become a ‘co-thinker’ during the next phase of the project.
- Make sure that no actor ‘is being lost’: every person that has ever played a role in the project, stays at least a ‘co-knower’. Radio silence appears to be an awful let down for actors in interactive processes.
- Make use of as much as possible existing communication channels and –means, such as existing consulting organs, the internal newsletter or house-organs, intranet site, etc. Another so much more extra newsletter will lead to an overload, while an small article in existing and well-known newsletter is usually being read better.
- It will be possible to set in a number of communication means in a broad way, such as a general brochure, intranet site, a universal report cover, etc. Be on the other hand careful in spreading reports, anthologies, P&C analyses, etc. It is advisable not to send this kind of reports to all co-knowers, but see to a summary. An excess in information will bring the opposite result.
- Do always indicate that the project team must be reachable for questions and suggestions and in what way: also here the interactivity should be visible.
- It can be useful to give all means of communication within the project its own prospect: a kind of house style, slogan, colour combination or image will make

the project recognizable. However, always consider the (substantial) costs versus the benefits. And remember the house style of your own organisation!

Reference

ARB toolkit, Gereedschap voor het managen van open beleidsprocessen (tools for the management of open policy processes); *Adviesunit Resultaatgericht Beleid, Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Water Management*, The Netherlands, 2002.

5. Interviews

Objective
In public participation the opinion and / or knowledge of the parties concerned play an important part. The question however is how to trace these. A way of "tapping" the environment is to take 1-to-1 interviews with a number of the concerned parties. The target of the interviews seems to be easy: getting to know as much as possible on how the interviewed person thinks about the policy item. The right line of questioning can help to achieve this. Further some tips on how to work out the results.

Main Issue
During the exploring phase taking interviews can be one of the ways to make an inventory of the opinions of the parties concerned. Besides that it is a good way to make personal acquaintance with the concerned parties. The results are being gathered in an anthology, on the basis of which a problem- and cause analysis is being made.

Amplification
A number of very open key questions form the backbone of the conversation. The emphasis lies in the identification of problems and causes.

Key questions:
- What kind of developments do you see?
- What kind of problems / bottlenecks do you foresee?
- In your opinion, what are the causes of these problems?
- In your opinion, what is the desirable situation?
- Why this strives?
- What can you or what would you like to contribute in order to achieve the desired situation?

Help questions
The situation can arise that the questions are too open or that the lecturer has little to stimulate. In a situation like this it would be best to rephrase the question, by which however always the essence (developments, bottlenecks, causes) needs to be maintained.
For example:
- Think of developments, both on long as on short term
- How do you qualify the problems mentioned: as serious, superficial, etc.?)
- Suppose you would look upon your department / field / working area from another point of view / …….; what kind of problems would you see then?
- When would you feel the policy in this field is being adjusted well and why?
- What would need to be changed?

Procedure
The project team, eventually completed with a number of others, will take the interviews itself. The number of interviews depends of the outcome of the actor's analysis, but can vary from 15 to even 100 interviews.

The preparation

- Determine – by means of an actors inventory and analysis – which actors are the "co-thinkers";
- To summarize regularly will bring structure to the conversation and helps the listener to check;
- Send invitations in which the motive and the target of the conversation are being mentioned
  * inform about the tendency of the conversation, but do not about the literal questions
  * make sure the letter is being signed by a high-placed person (the principal)
  * make a telephone call after the letters have been sent in order to make a final appointment;
- See on beforehand to a clear briefing of all interviewers and eventually to a short training active listening.

The interview

- Before the interview: Assure yourself and once more restore in short in which context the conversation needs to take place
- During the conversation:
  * use the question list as a checklist and …….., not as a ……
  * keep track of the time (take one hour as a minimum)
  * do not use a tape recorder, but take notes in stitch words
  * do not act too formal; see it more as an informal conversation
- At the end of the conversation:
  * check if all questions are being asked
  * ask whether the interviewed person would have something to add
  * write down the person's address data
  * inform the person what will be done with the notes (are being treated confidentially and will be resumed into an anthology, which is to be ……)

The report

- Work out the notes quickly after the interview; at that time it is still fresh in your memory.
- The interview reports are only for own use: deal with it in a confidential way and make quotations in the anthology in an anonymous way.
- Stay as close as possible to the statements of the interviewed person.
- Rephrase in case the statements might be unclear for the team players

- Agree to a standard for the processing:
  * on the computer
  * reward the statements you found of interest for yourself with a *
  * classify the answers after sequence of the questions

Tips

- Do not contract the taking of the interviews out. The interviews give the possibility to get acquainted with important connections in your working field.
- With the dividing of the interviews it is better to prevent that interviewers will take interviews with their own connections. A too great acquaintance can easily result to the effect of "oh, you do understand what I mean by this". By acting like this there will be a great risk that the interview will give a poor result.

Reference

ARB toolkit, Gereedschap voor het managen van open beleidsprocessen (tools for the management of open policy processes); *Adviesunit Resultaatgericht Beleid, Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Water Management*, The Netherlands, 2002.

6. Active listening

Objective
The objective of the interviews in the exploring phase seems so easy: getting to know as much as possible on how the interviewed person thinks about the policy item. It however appears to be hard for the interviewers not to enter into the discussion themselves. This can be prevented when interviewers are aware of their own behaviour during these discussions. Some practical tips on listening skills, in order to get the best possible benefit from these interviews:

Main Issue
The below-mentioned guidelines can be used as a basis for a short training for the interviewers in how to listen actively, at the beginning of the exploring phase.

Tips

To do:

- Ask open questions:
  Ask questions to which the relater can give broad answers, for example questions that start with words like 'how', 'what', 'why', etc.

- Summarize:
  To summarize regularly will bring structure to the conversation and helps the listener to check whether or not he has understood the issue well: "When I get it well then ……'

- Ask through:
  Questions like 'Do you see any more aspects?' or 'Can you give an example' enter further into the matter.

- 'Humming'
  To 'hum' regularly or to confirm the lecturer ("yes", "indeed") stimulates the lecturer.

- Drop a silence
  People have a silence tolerance of only a few seconds. After four seconds already someone will continue speaking. It motivates the lecturer if there are moments of silence from time to time: the lecturer will be stimulated to inform his audience further on the matter in question.

- Non-verbal communication
  Regular eye contact, a slightly bend-forward position, approving nods from time to time, etc. demonstrate of attention for the lecturer.

Not to do:

- Do not ask closed questions
  Questions like: “Do you know the department?”, “Do you like apple pie?” can only be answered by the lecturer with yes or no, and therefore will not bring much new information.

- Do not ask multiple choice questions
  A variety on the closed questions: “Do you or don’t you like apple pie?” This kind of questions also brings little information.

- Do not ask suggestive questions
  Strictly taken, the answer is enclosed in this kind of questions: “I take it you do like apple pie? “. The lecturer is being steered in a certain direction when posing this kind of questions.

- Do not present your own opinion
  The lecturer will be inhibited in telling his story in case you will present your own opinion. It will also inhibit the interviewer to listen well.

- Do not enter into a discussion
  This is the biggest pitfall for listeners, especially when the lecturer mentions an item which is not agreeable to the interviewer’s opinion. However, “yes-no” conversations are conversations with another aim than to gain information.

- Do not interrupt
  Let the lecturer tell his story.

Reference

ARB toolkit, Gereedschap voor het managen van open beleidsprocessen (tools for the management of open policy processes); *Adviesunit Resultaatgericht Beleid, Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Water Management*, The Netherlands, 2002.

7. Preparation of workshops

Workshops – or whatever you call meetings – can be helpful in consulting stakeholders. But only if the contribution to and place in the process is well-considered.

Checklist preparation

1 - Consider the place in the overall process

- In which phase are we?
- Are we in a divergent or the convergent stadium?
- Is there a decision at hand?
- Do we want the people to react or to creatively invent?
- What is the position of the participants in the process?

2 - Determine the problem with regard to the contents

What is the objective of the meeting in terms of contents and relations?

Which questions have to be answered?

Is the group prepared to answer these questions?

Inquire after what is admitted to discuss and what not! Determine the boundary conditions of the conversation: which subjects are no longer under discussion?

Is the objective:

To develop a vision, to collect ideas, then:

pay attention to the human, postpone a judgement.

Decision making, then:

besides diverging also converging and formation of a judgement.

Transfer of knowledge, then:

emphasis on the contents, first establishing a good atmosphere (relations).

Co-operation, then:

build up relations from a common content (e.g. the working process).

Creating a common basis, support, then:

acknowledge and single out anger or resistance, make the boundary conditions for participation explicit.

3 - explore the situation

the group:

What are the features of the group?

How many people are we dealing with?

What type of people are they? Do they know eachother?

Do they have a aggravating previous history?

Are they participating out of free will or is it compulsory? Are they in a good mood (single out aversions or dislike)

Have the participants the same level of thinking?

the location:

Is everything present (whiteboard, pens, overhead projector, beamer, etc.)

Are there enough rooms in case of parallel workshops?
Can you move around the tables/chairs?
How is the atmosphere? It is better to keep the room as close as possible to the usual environment: no energy will be lost on that. A creative brainstorming session asks for a messy space.

available time and moment:
Consider to start the evening before: evenings allow for informal items in the programme, the ritual dancing. Next day you can start immediately with the contents.

what type of facilitator fits in?
Meetings with objectives in terms of relations ask for different capacities than meetings which mainly address contents. The one facilitator can't work with lawyers and rather works with farmers, the other one rather works with policy makers. The type of meeting decides the choice of facilitator.

Basis for the programme-structure

Whatever the objective of the meeting, as a basic rule:

- from abstract to concrete, and;
- from Conceptualization to Judgement to Decision making.

This brings the following possible basic structure for meetings:

1 preparation of the atmosphere
a cup of coffee, etc.

2 ritual dancing
introduction round, networking, opening speech of the project leader, etc.

3 laying eggs
possible frustrations, dissatisfaction, but people also have to get rid of over-enthusiasm and pride with regard to recently achieved results, before they can contribute to the meeting. For example by means of: sticking memo's with their comments to a flip-over and spout knowledge or ventilate criticism.

4 warming-up
a 'creative warming-up', e story teller, a catching presentation, cartoons, etc.

5 diverge
make an inventory of ideas, opinions, experiences, etc.
often in sub-groups

6 converge
combine and cluster of input, draw conclusions.
plenary feed-back of the subgroups

7 planning of actions
planning of actions with regard to the problems or the further process

8 planning of actions
to agree about actions for the processing of the results of this meeting.

Tips

- build in mobility in the programme (walking, to get up from the chair, etc.);
- take into account the famous 'dip' after lunch;

- see to variety; for example between talking and creativity, or by plenary parts and working in sub-groups;
- consider preparatory interviews with key-figures;
- make clear agreements about the role of the projectleader / client during the sessions;
- keep the projectteam free, so they can orientate on their role with regards to contents. Ask an external facilitator for the supervision of the process.

Reference

ARB toolkit, Gereedschap voor het managen van open beleidsprocessen (tools for the management of open policy processes); *Adviesunit Resultaatgericht Beleid, Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Water Management*, The Netherlands, 2002.

8. Creative sessions

The phase of the process in which future policy is formulated centralizes the search for solutions. Creative sessions with groups of co-thinkers is a good way to generate creative and innovative ideas. Some possibilities:

Programme structure
Generally a creative session consists of two stages:
diverging: to generate ideas, "fanning out"
converging: to combine input, search for the leitmotivs, concluding, "bringing together"
(See also infosheet on prepartions of workshops)

A programme for a creative session often contains the following steps:

- Context
  Clarity about the central question, to give the necessary background information
  Explanation of working process and time schedule
  Motivating kick-off
- Diverging
  Setting free of new ideas, individually or in a group
  Inventory of ideas (see below)
- Converging: structuring
  Look for connection / coherence between ideas, for example by means of clustering
- Converging: put a name to it
  Discussion and drawing conclusions, for example by naming or prioritizing of clusters
- Reflection
  Take decisions about the incorporation of solutions in the process.
  Make agreements about the processing and dissemination of the results.

(co-source: The Institute of Cultural Affairs)

Diverging and converging
All creative sessions have generally the same structure: after a diverging stage (the real brainstorming) follows the converging (analysing and concluding). Several methods can be used. Important is to adapt the method of diverging to the one of converging.

- ◊ Determine the desired result
- ◊ Estimate how widely you can diverge to later on converge to this desired result
- ◊ While diverging think about how you want to converge

Diverging: ways of brainstorming
Some rules of the game are always valid:

- ◊ Everything anyone says is OK

- ◊ Postpone judgements
- ◊ Everything will be written down or recorded in another way
- ◊ Everybody has to have his/her say

- Individual brainstorm
  Participants write down for themselves a couple of ideas. Then they select the 5-7 best/funniest ones and give it as input into the group. A safe way of brainstorming, appropriate for groups with a 'hindering' hierarchy (i.e. people do not feel free) or if the group contains some participants who start controlling the conversation.
- Brainstorming with a mindmap
  The simplest way of brainstorming is to have people 'shouting' ideas, experiences, etc. The facilitator writes down everything, for example in the form of a mindmap: the central question or subject in the centre and put around (like a spider) the ideas of the group. Ideas that have interlinkages can be put together at once, and clusters are formed. This method works well with groups that have plenty of ideas and with hardly any hierachic tresholds (people feel free to speak).
- 'Small' design studio
  Participants of the workshops are literally going to cut, paste, sing or dance what they actually mean. Size of (sub)group 5-7 people. Make sure you find a nice space with enough material to tinker (old magazines, felt-tips, paper, glue, etc.) in order to stimulate the creativity. Duration at least 2 hours. Appropriate for groups which need stimulation to become active, and you will strike new sources of creativity. Excellent for boring and sleepy times of the day like friday-afternoon.
- Associations
  Participants are asked to reason from completely different subjects or things towards the subject which is central for the workshop. This method is often applied in the world of Industrial design in order to find innovative solutions. For example: reason from a matchbox to a stadium. Result: an extending soccer field. But this can work also for questions about organisation or innovative policy solutions. For example by taking the animal world as an example or to benchmark with completely different business areas and to look for differences and similarities. These sessions ask for a relaxed atmosphere.
- Searching for images
  For sensitive issues (such as the functioning of people or parts of the organisation) it can be useful to ask people about an image or metaphor which they find representative/fitting for themselves or the organisation. Make an inventory of the images and ask what it says about themselves or the organisation; which features are important? Sometimes it can be useful to give a lead for the metaphor, for example an animal or a (type of) car.
- Brainbox
  A Group Decision Room or Brainbox is a room in which the participants have a computer and are connected with eachother by a network. Everybody can at the same time give input/opinions/ideas (anonymous) and react on eachothers remarks. In a short time a lot of information will be generated and it stimulates

creativity. The software should have the following possibilities: brainstorming, ranking / clustering of ideas, prioritizing or voting and discussion. Suitable for both diverging and converging, for large groups with varying backgrounds, complex matters and settled habits of communication. An oral plenary session is necessary to evaluate, make agreements on follow-up.

Converging: clustering and prioritizing

- Clustering
  By putting ideas on yellow Post-it memo's they are easy to move around on a board. Cluster from coarse to fine: firstly make general clusters under one expression (this is about...), later on look for refinements (positive-negative, short term-long term, etc.) and make sentences that summarize the cluster.
- Give points, score
  Everybody can give points or marks. For example 1x8, 2x4, 4x2 and 8x1 points to a list of items. The result is a kind of thermometer: the options with most points are accepted by definition, also drop-outs will be clear. Discussion can focus on the options with a mean score.
- Stickering
  Everybody can distribute 10 stickers to the options of his / her choice. The result will be more diffuse than giving points but also less confronting.
- Feed-back and discussion
  Methods of brainstorming like the design studio and associative exercises do not lead to lists of options which can be prioritized / ranked. In those cases plenary sessions are used for feedback of the results of (sub)groups and an evaluating discussion takes place under the supervision of a chairman.

Tips

- Try as much as possible to work in smaller groups; the bigger the chance that everybody joins in.
- Creative sessions take at least half a day.
- It could be useful to hire a facilitator / chairman, the projectteam can take part themselves.

Reference

ARB toolkit, Gereedschap voor het managen van open beleidsprocessen (tools for the management of open policy processes); *Adviesunit Resultaatgericht Beleid, Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Water Management*, The Netherlands, 2002.