



Public participation in forest planning: two case-studies in Italy

Subject

Nowadays, in Italy, forest planning plays a key role in sustainable forest management. That gives value to all different forest functions.

Public participation in the planning and management of natural resources helps to achieve the social sustainability of decisions and strategies of management.

Rationale

The territorial forest plan is the most suitable management tool when considering the sustainability of the man-forest relationship and to guarantee the safeguard of community interests towards forests.

Objectives

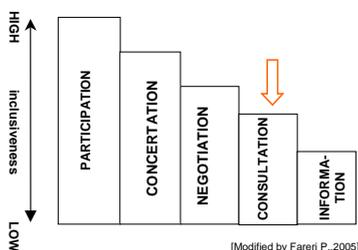
The participation of local communities in the planning process allows the achievement of the following goals:

- to provide a shared tool for the management of territory (bottom up approach)
- to take into account the needs of the population and to avoid conflicts within local communities
- to inform and get feedback from the population about the functions of the forests
- to bridge technical knowledge with local know-how
- to implement transparent and repeatable procedures

Main steps of the process in the case-studies

1. context analysis
2. stakeholders assessment
3. planning participation group definition
4. method definition (consultation)
5. tools selection (questionnaire, interview)
6. field survey and data collection
7. support systems for data analysis (SWOT analysis, statistical analysis)
8. evaluation of results
9. design of further development

The results of these two case-studies should help to produce a standardized method for public participation in forest planning, adaptable to other sites in Italy.



Case-studies overview

The case-study of Trento

The city of Trento, although being an urban area, to this day has still a strong relationship with the surrounding forest. Depending on the period, people give different importance to the various functions of forests: wood production, soil protection, recreative and touristic functions and so on.

The research aims at analysing opinions and expectations towards the forest among people living in the city of Trento. A survey is carried out by sending a questionnaire to a random sample of 1000 families.

The first results of such a survey give lots of information about relationship between citizens and forest, perception of forest management and landscape changes, interest in nature and its preservation, role of wood material in the society and the misunderstanding and possibility of generating conflicts. These information supports the local administration to adapt their forest policies.

The research is also intended to be used as a tool to reach out to lots of people and test the possibility for developing a forestry participatory plan.



Trento, the forest view from Piazza Dante



Collina Materana, various landscape

The case-study of Collina Materana

The Comunità Montana "Collina Materana" is located in the Basilicata district, (southern Italy), and covers an area of around 60,784 hectares. This area is deeply rural, far away from urban environment, characterised by poor socio-economic development, demographic decrease and lack of communication infrastructures

The economy is principally based on agriculture and zootechny.

The case-study illustrates an example of a territorial forest plan in which the local community is involved for the entire duration of the planning procedure: from preliminary assessments to the definition of the management guidelines within the 'orientation plan'.

Both institutional actors and other stakeholders (farmers, hunters, breeders, common people, etc.) actively take part in the stages of the process.

The main result is that needs and expectations of people who are usually unable to express their opinions are taken into consideration.

References

- Cantiani M.G., 2006 – L'approccio partecipativo nella pianificazione forestale. *Forest@*, 3 (2): 281-299. <http://www.sisef.it/>
- Fareri P., 2000- Rallentare. Note sulla partecipazione dal punto di vista dell'analisi delle politiche pubbliche. Non pubblicato
- Maino F., Endrizzi I., Martinelli A., Cantiani M.G., 2006 – La percezione del bosco da parte degli abitanti della città di Trento, *Dendronatura*, 27 (2): 8-23.
- Martinelli A., 2007 – Processi decisionali inclusivi. Caso di studio sulla Collina Materana. Tesi di dottorato, Università degli Studi della Tuscia di Viterbo, Viterbo.

M.G. Cantiani*, I. De Meo**, F. Ferretti***, F. Maino*

*Laboratorio di Ecologia del Dipartimento di Ingegneria Civile e Ambientale, Università degli Studi di Trento, Italy

**CRA - ISAF, Istituto sperimentale per l'Assessment forestale e l'Alpicoltura, Trento, Italy

***CRA-ISSEL, Istituto Sperimentale per la Selvicoltura, Sezione Operativa di Firenze, Firenze, Italy