Citizens in the Wasteland: The trouble with Radioactive Waste Management in Belgium

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I. Introduction, Research questions & Methodology

II. Citizens in the Wasteland in practice

III. ONDRAF Assessment of public participation

IV. Conclusion
I. Introduction

- HL & LL waste management in Belgium

  ➔ No institutional policy yet
  ➔ ONDRAF, the Federal Agency of NWM
  ➔ Waste Plan & Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as suggestive guidelines
  ➔ Public participation as legal obligation
I. Research questions

- How has the wider public opinion been integrated in the Waste Plan & SEA so far?
  - How ONDRAF actually assesses the quality of public/stakeholders participation?
  - How it makes use of it in its communication and management strategies?

- Second part of PhD reflexions
I. Methodology

- Participatory observation (2009-2010)
- ONDRAF official Declaration analysis (2011)
- Semi structured interviews of ONDRAF key actors (2010 & 2013)

  General Director of ONDRAF
  Director of Long term NW management
  Director of general services (in charge of communication skills)
  ONDRAF Engineer (safety task in LL NWM team)
II. Citizens in the Wasteland in practice

Legal framework for SEA & Waste Plan

- **How?** Classical Public Inquiry
- **When?** 7 June to 6 September 2010 (3 months)
- **$**

Public consultations initiatives as innovation.

- **How?** Citizens Focus group (1) & expert discussion group (2) Consensus Conference (3)
- **When?** April 2009 – January 2010
- **$$**
III. ONDRAF Assessment of public participation

Legal framework for Public Consultation

- **Which method?** Public opinion integrated to Waste Plan & SEA in a **systematic way**

Public consultations initiatives as innovation.

- **Which method?**

Phase 1. Description of the issue raised by the citizens
Phase 2. Reacting to it
Phase 3. Exposing official institutions considerations
Phase 4. Integration or not in the Waste Plan.
III. ONDRAF assessment of public participation

SEA document

- SEA document: no modification has been done.

Waste Plan

- Emphasizing the importance of some principles: RETRIEVABILITY, CONTROLABILITY, TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE, INDEPENDENT MONITORING.
III. Public participation: influence on the content?

SEA (technical document)

Geological disposal

No public integration

Alternative
Alternative
Alternative

OPEN

Waste Plan (technical & political document)

All options/Researches on geological disposal

Public/stakeholders integration
Technical consideration

GD

CLOSE
IV. Conclusions

- HL & LL decision making process and public participation design: “opening up, closing down” (Stirling, 2008)

- Consultation initiatives & integration of public opinions: a “creative destruction” or an “enduring change”? (Alter, 2000)
Thank you for your attention

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