Social Learning trough Participatory Integrated Resource Management

A Strategy to Cope with Climate Change Impacts in Alpine Regions

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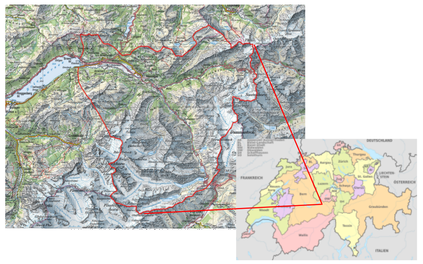
Project Area:
River catchment
"Hasli Aare"
(Switzerland)



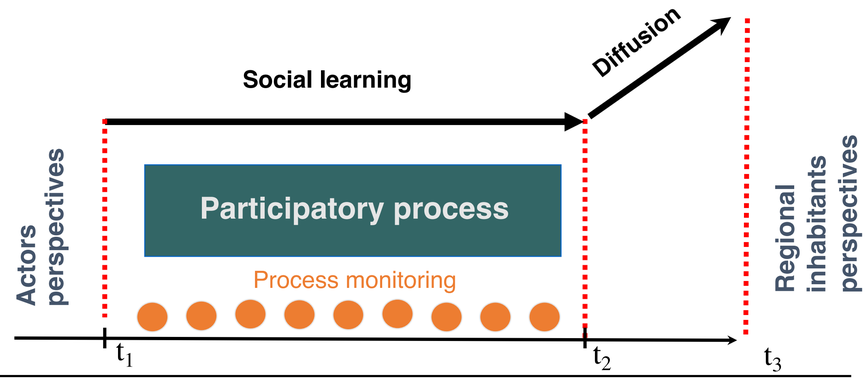
Preconditions:

- Integrated water management concept
- High exposure to climate change impacts
- High interdependence of actors' resource use and actor specific problem perspectives

Research Questions:

1. How much do the actor groups change **problem perspectives** during the participatory process?
2. How much does the learning process **diffuse to the wider public**?

Methods:



t1	t2	t3
Measuring the perspectives of directly and indirectly involved **actors** before and after the participatory deliberation through semi-structured interviews and standardized questionnaires.		Measuring the perspectives of a random sample of **regional inhabitants** through standardized questionnaires half a year after the participatory process.
Semi-structured interviews 22 participants	Semi-structured interviews 12 participants	Standardized questionnaires 342 participants
Standardized questionnaires 50 participants	Standardized questionnaires 46 participants after	

Findings:

- **Directly involved actors** changed their problem perspectives significantly **in various aspects** during the process
- **Indirectly involved actors** changed their problem perspectives significantly only **in a few aspects** during the process
- **Actors agreed**, **against** their original **scepticism**, on several integrated river projects
- Local river management **cooperatives agreed** to have **more profound cooperation** and to have **regular meetings**
- **Inhabitants' information-level** of the process had a significant **influence** on many aspects of their **problem perspectives** after the process
- **Combining different channels of communication** is important to enhance **diffusion** of consensus and community building processes
- **Interpersonal information** contributes to successful **diffusion** and the willingness for personal **involvement**

Conclusions:

Participatory, integrated resource management align the problem perspectives of the actors and increase collaboration. We recommend inclusive formats to foster an improved learning experience. Furthermore, interpersonal communication facilitates the diffusion of information and encourages consensus building into new levels of society.

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