

# Public and Stakeholder Participation for Managing and Reducing Risks

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California State Senate Subcommittee Hearing:

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[http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/BECS/DBASSE\\_083520](http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/BECS/DBASSE_083520)

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# History and Motivation

- How to involve the **public**, particularly those individuals and organizations that are strongly interested and affected – the “**stakeholders**” ?
- Subject of much discussion at the federal government level and previous National Academy of Sciences reports.

This 1996 report is available online at:  
[http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=5138](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=5138)

# *Understanding* **RISK**

*Informing  
Decisions  
in a  
Democratic  
Society*

How can we combine **good science** and a **good process** for participation by citizens and local communities ?

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# Stakeholder Involvement



- | Many people have interpreted recommendations for stakeholder involvement as letting stakeholders speak, letting them write comments, and (perhaps) letting them have seats at the negotiating table.
- | The main *Understanding Risk* recommendation is for involving stakeholders in an **analytic-deliberative process**. This means going beyond words and political negotiation. It means giving stakeholders opportunities to **observe, learn, and comment in an iterative process of analysis and deliberation on policy alternatives**.

# Process Diagram from *Understanding Risk*

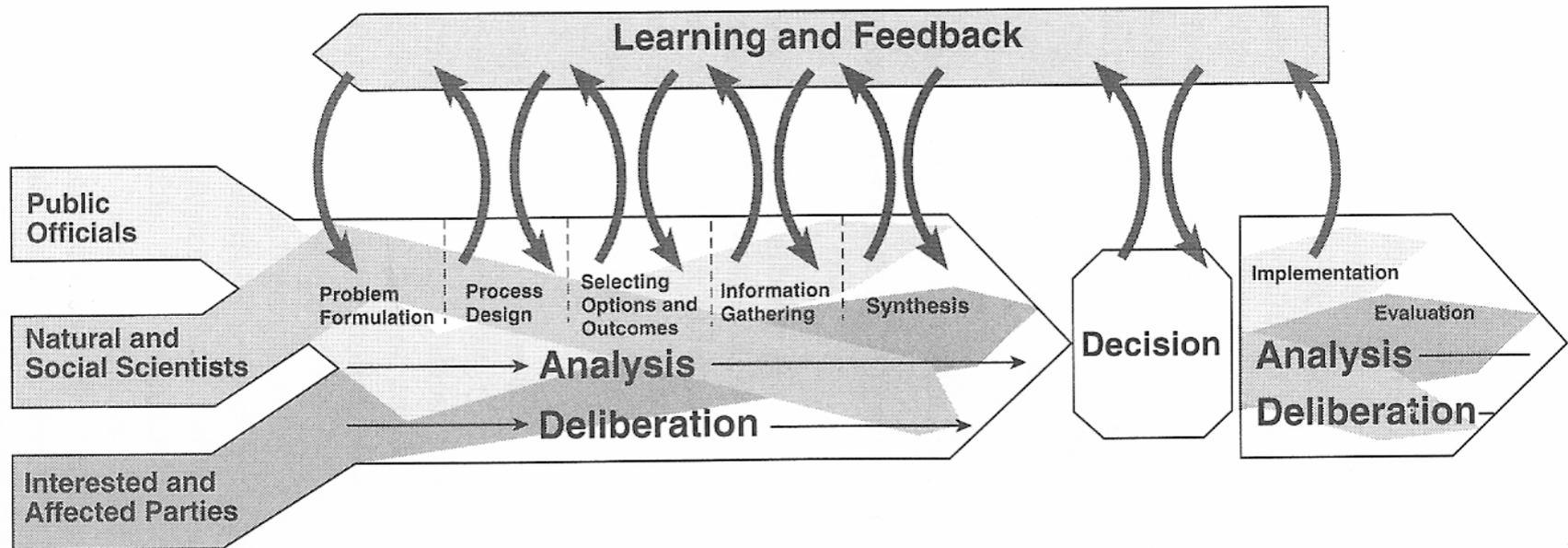


FIGURE 1-2. A schematic representation of the risk decision process.

# Five Key Bullet Points

- Getting the **science right**
- Getting the **right science**
- Getting the **right participation**
- Getting the **participation right**
- Developing an **accurate, balanced, and informative synthesis.**

Source: 1996 report, pages 6-7.

This 2008 report is available online at:  
[www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=12434](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12434)

How can we set up a  
**participation process** that can  
**build trust** and implement the  
ideas in the 1996 report?



**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION  
IN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
AND DECISION MAKING**

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# Goals of PP: Improve quality, legitimacy, capacity

- **Quality:** properly include (1) values, interests, concerns; (2) range of actions; (3) consequences of actions and their uncertainties (4) best available knowledge and methods (5) improved knowledge and methods as these emerge.
- **Legitimacy:** process perceived as fair and competent, consistent with laws and regulations.
- **Capacity:** for all participants, (1) become better informed and more skilled in participation; (2) become better able to engage scientific knowledge and values/concerns; (3) develop shared understanding, ability to communicate it, mutual trust.

condensed and paraphrased from 2008 report, pages 1-2

# Conclusion #1

When done well, **public participation improves the quality and legitimacy of a decision and builds the capacity of all involved to engage in the policy process.** It can lead to better results in terms of environmental quality and other social objectives. It can also **enhance trust and understanding** among parties. Achieving these results depends on using practices that address difficulties that specific aspects of the context can present.

2008 report, page 2

# California Example

- California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative

California Department of Fish and Game website:

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/>

This site has a video archive of all meetings:

Blue Ribbon Task Force, Stakeholder Group, and Science Advisory Team.

For more information, see :

Designing a network of Marine Protected Areas on the Central California Coast:

<http://bakerstreetpublishing.com/publications/designing-a-network-of-marine-protected-areas-for-california>

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# National Fisherman

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## 1 fish! I vote!

Commercial fishermen, anglers speak with one voice in D.C.



MARKET REPORT  
**Yankees stung by herring cut**

**Wash. builder beefs up new 48-footer**  
Safety improving, but more can be done



After gazillions of meetings, umpteen “decisions,” and lots of wasted time and money --- this is the norm.

Does it have to be this way?

**Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.”**  
Attributed to Albert Einstein.

(This slide and the previous one courtesy of Steve Barrager, Baker Street Publishing, San Francisco, CA)