Theory and practice in science-stakeholder dialogue
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The lesson had a presentation and a discussion part. In the introduction, we had a discussion about the definition of stakeholders and then we had established the stakeholder dialogue types: corporate, policy, multi-stakeholder platform and science-based stakeholders. We have also analysed the explicit objectives, the initiators and the stakeholders type.

The next issue was the difference between dialogue and discussion and also the features of the information flow between THE stakeholders and THE scientists.

An important question was "when is the stakeholder dialogue advisable?" We pointed out seven facts:
- to build / test hypotheses, assumptions, new integrated assessment methods, scenarios, results;
- to identify missing expertise and data;
- to explore values and perceptions;
- to create synergies and consensus between scientific and non-scientific communities;
- to better understand and model differences between key-actors;
- to explicitly incorporate normative and ethical issues;
- to influence policy and behaviour.

An example for a communication theory was the Habermas idea about the four levels of information: the level of understanding, the descriptive, the normative and the subjective level.

We also established when may the stakeholders dialogue not be advisable / profitable:
- in exploratory: fundamental research;
- in research on Earth system dynamics at large temporal scale;
- in detailed modelling development/ monitoring;
- and the list is to be continued.

There were emphasized the main gains of scientists and stakeholders in the dialogue process and it was defined what a science-stakeholder dialogue is:
"...a structured communicative process of linking scientists with actors that are relevant for the research problem at hand..." (Welp and de la Vega, in prep.)

Concerning the levels of stakeholders´ involvement, there were described four levels of participation from low to very high, conditioned by the stakeholders´ role, the exercise goals, the impact on research and by the degree of control.

The methods and tools used in scientists-stakeholders dialogue are: data analysis and data collection, with specific types of results: qualitative, semi-quantitative, quantitative.

There are many major issues to consider in dialogue, like: participants´ expectations, opinion and interests, how to sensitise stakeholders to the research and prejudices as well as cultural differences.

Finally, we pointed out the key elements to a successful dialogue:
- open minds, desire to learn and collaborate;
- clear objectives, rules of dialogue and role of participants;
- build a common language;
- building trust;
- understanding of group dynamics;
- flexibility to change research course if necessary;

- relevant, exciting, scientifically challenging and credible research(ers).

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