

Stakeholder engagement in water-related nature-based solutions (NBS)

NBS should be highly inclusive and consider who will gain and are benefits distributed equally. Planning together is key target in socially inclusive Stakeholders can be defined as individuals or institutional, professional, economic or other actors that have an interest towards the case or project, may be (in)directly affected by the project or can have an effect on the project (Cascetta et al. 2015). The potential stakeholders can be identified by asking:

- Who is most likely interested in the planned NBS?
- Who are the potential beneficiaries?
- Who is or might be affected by the NBS?
- Who are the supporters, sponsors or funding agencies
- Who are against the NBS?
- Who might have effect on the NBS?



Photo: Kati Vierikko

Key steps towards effective stakeholder engagement

Step 1: List potential stakeholders. Be rational when selecting those who are invited to become participants and those who are left out. Be aware of vulnerable and minority groups.

Step 2: Classify stakeholders. Identify their potential influence and how relevant the project is for them.

Step 3: Define participation level and choose feasible methods. Do you want inform, involve, collaborate or empower them?



Photo: Mia Jaatsi

Why engagement is needed?

- Increase awareness and knowledge exchange
- Reveal perceived obstacles and barriers
- Increase acceptance, lower resistance and fear
- Identify conflicting attitudes, needs and values
- Overcome path dependencies and silo thinking
- Produce socially fair and inclusive NBS