Due account of comments and outcomes of public participation – challenges and good practices

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Challenges with taking into account of comments usually are dealing either with the weak experience in such actions or the intention to avoid of taking them into account. The usual situations could be dealt with:

- **Weak initial preparation of comments collection and analysis – organizers do not have the intention to collect comments but to demonstrate that procedures of PP have been realized. Comments are not fixed or fixed incorrectly, not reflecting their content**
- **The organizers say that they took comments in consideration, when in reality it is not happen and final formulations do not reflect the public proposals or only partly reflect the existing comments**
- **Late information of public on existing option of PP**
- **Organization of imitation of public hearings (staff as a public, no information and ignorance of interesting public, etc.)**
- **The public could not get the feedback of PP due to organizers do not have such task**

Public participation is not organized in the most productive forms, i.e. its effect could not be efficient:

- the full draft is not presented for PP in time, or only summary is presented
- the draft presented for PP is not the last version of document
- there are presented different drafts without noting of what one is officially discussing
- the language of document does not correspond the auditorium
- etc.

Good practices:

- creation of the e-register of interesting public and web-list to share information and draft documents in advance
- creation in time of web-list of interesting public and its use for comments and discussion
- initiation of joint working group with public to elaborate decision on the stage, when draft yet not exists
- later – when such WG was not created – informal consultations within the public
- creation of the database of proposals and delivered comments
- when public hearings are organized – balance of invitees by groups and avoiding of different intentions to misuse of real public participation
- involvement of mass-media in analysis of draft decision reflection, of alternatives, pluses and minuses, to widen the interesting public – it will help to put initiators of public participation into conditions to work in a fair way.

Finally, the cultural traditions are important:

- in countries in transition the issue of taking public comments into account depend from human factor, but it is important to leave less freedom in PP organization by more regulation and planning, which also could be a subject of public discussion. In some countries the issue is formally regulated.
- In developed countries the traditional respect of non-written rules could be enough to reach the taking into account of comments and outcomes of public participation, but it is also case to case.

Thank you for attention, ilyatrom@mail.ru