WORKSHOP REPORT ON THE STAKEHOLDER MEETING

Leuven (Belgium)

10th to 11th of March 2003

2nd Report of the HarmoniCOP project – Harmonising COllaborative Planning

Preamble

Public and stakeholder participation is a central theme in many conferences on water. Governance is often perceived to be more important than technical solutions to deal with water resource problems. The issue receives a unique importance with the introduction of the European Water Framework Directive. Nevertheless, the theme has received comparatively little attention in the research community.

The HarmoniCOP project has assembled a group of enthusiastic people with different scientific and practical background. In and of itself, the project presents a major challenge and a practical lesson in social learning in order to promote and guide the research process to profit from the diversity of knowledge and experiences.

But the success of HarmoniCOP will not only be determined by the direct project participants. The establishment of a "stakeholder group" for the purpose of accompanying HarmoniCOP is equally important. The stakeholder group functions as an external advisory board to the project. Certainly, being potential beneficiaries and users of HarmoniCOP outcome, the stakeholder group will also validate the project but their main contribution is their advice to HarmoniCOP from a practical viewpoint. The integration of this knowledge and the maintenance of the applicability of the scientific project results represent one of the major challenges of the project.

The present workshop report contains the report of the first stakeholder meeting. This meeting was the first occasion to get feedback on HarmoniCOP from practitioners. The interesting discussions and excellent atmosphere during the meeting showed that it was right to integrate stakeholders directly from the beginning of the project.

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Coordinator HarmoniCOP project
May 2003

Content

1. Introduction

HarmoniCOP

The HarmoniCOP project is a three-year research project on public participation and social learning in river basin management against the background of the European Water Framework Directive. It has been set up in the framework of the 5th European Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development and started in November 2003. HarmoniCOP involves 17 research teams from nine European countries. Its specific objectives are as follows:

* To provide insight into social learning in a multi-phase multi-level context
* To increase the understanding of the role of information and information tools
* To compare and assess national PP experiences and their background
* To prepare a "Handbook on PP methodologies"

Following the terminology for European projects, the research is organised in "work packages" (WPs). Figure 1 gives an overview of the different WPs. More background information on HarmoniCOP can be found in the inception report and on the project website. (www.harmonicop.info)
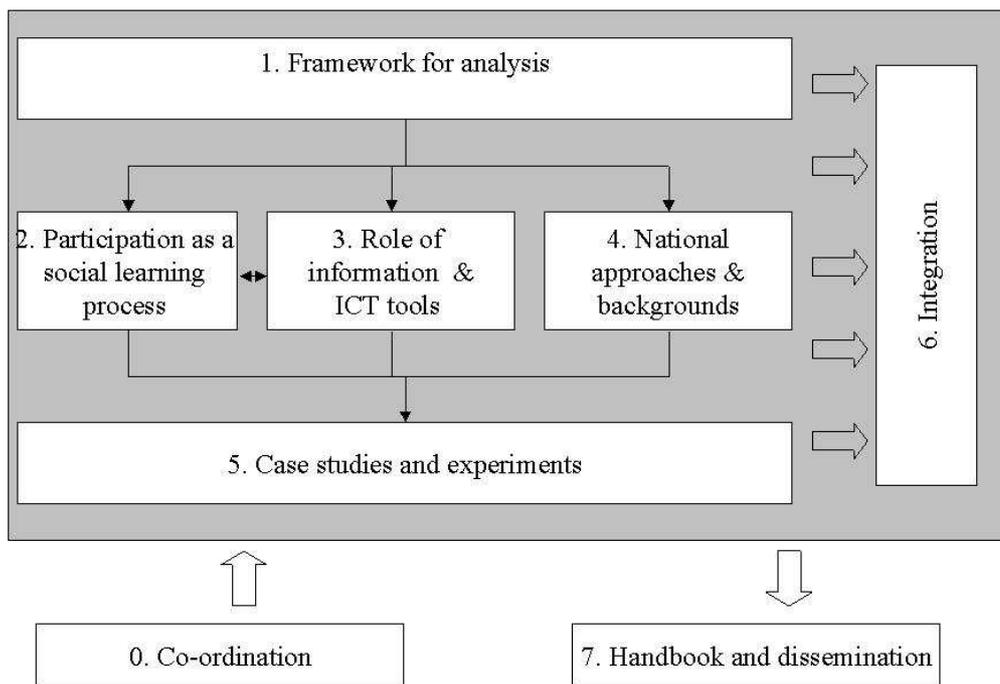

Figure 1: Work packages (WPs) of the HarmoniCOP project

The stakeholder meeting

On 10 and 11 March 2003, a stakeholder meeting was organised in Leuven to involve stakeholders. It combined a general project meeting with Work Package team meetings for WP 2, 3, 4 and 5. The purpose of the general project meetings was as follows:

- To give the stakeholders the opportunity to get in-depth insight in the HarmoniCOP project: origins, objectives and internal logic, collaborating institutes and experts, main questions and expected deliverables
- To "tune" and clarify expectations between the project team and the stakeholders group
- To get feedback on and contributions to the actual project functioning and the inception report
- To apply social learning mechanisms and practise social learning between project experts and stakeholders

The purpose of the WP team meetings was twofold:
- To appropriate the proposed conceptual framework and analyse its implications for the WP work.
- To get early feedback on the operational planning for the WPs.

The first day of the meeting introduced the stakeholders (and newcomers) to the project and to work packages 2, 3, 4 and 5. The second day started with an excursion to the Dijle catchment, which provided all participants with a common experience of what social learning can mean practically for river basin management. In the afternoon, the stakeholder meeting was evaluated. After 4 pm and the next day the HarmoniCOP consortium discussed the operational planning of the research. For this part of the meeting the stakeholders could stay, but they were not requested to do so.

It is one of the objectives of HarmoniCOP to get a feedback of practitioners right from the beginning of the project. For that purpose the stakeholder group was established. A continuous exchange that includes their participation during the major project meetings helps to produce more valuable practise-oriented project outputs. Additionally, it is a means of dissemination of the project idea and project outputs.

The role of the stakeholders during the coming meetings will be comparable to the meeting in Leuven. HarmoniCOP approaches, concepts and intermediary outputs will be presented or tested and stakeholders help to shape the final product. The coming meetings will only differ slightly to Leuven because they will be more content-oriented and less emphasis will be put on group building dynamics.

Workshop report

The present workshop report summarises the discussions during the stakeholder meetings. It also includes information from the meeting on Wednesday. Attention is paid to the tuning of expectations (2), the discussion on the different WPs (3-6), the evaluation of the first day (7), the fieldtrip to the Dijle catchment (8), the appreciative inquiry exercise (9), and the general evaluation and suggestions of the project participants (10).

2. Expectations and issues

Expectations

The stakeholder meeting started with a short introduction of the HarmoniCOP project and the programme and a short introduction round. Following, the project participants split up in four WP groups (WP 2, 3, 4 and 5) and the stakeholders split up visited in four groups all four WP groups. At first, two questions were asked to the stakeholders:

1. What do you and the group or institution that you represent, expect of HarmoniCOP?
2. What do you think that you and your organisation can contribute to HarmoniCOP?

Next, the WP teams gave their reaction. The answers to the two questions can be found below. The reaction by the WP groups is incorporated in the next chapters.

Answers to question1:
- Collaboration from A to Z, e.g. through regular notices (email, collaboration platform of www.harmonicop.info, etc)
- Exchange and share experiences
- Results and/or recommendations that are practical
- A practical social learning process
- Have the courage to do new work and accept the challenge
- Provide us (the stakeholders) with ammunition how to convince our "home"
- More stakeholders and a wider variety of backgrounds
- A clear stakeholder strategy

Answers to question 2:
- Our experiences, problems, lessons learnt etc.
- Our network? – potential existing relationships...
- Provide papers, plans, TORs, etc.
- Influence the outcome; helps to maximise the practical value
- Safeguard legal boundaries of the WFD and make boundaries clearer
- Proportionality must be considered: what is realistic for stakeholders to provide as input in practise?
- Legitimise the process/project of HarmoniCOP

"Hot issues"

In the plenary session at the end of Monday morning a number of "hot issues" requiring further attention were raised. A lot of emphasis was put on making HarmoniCOP relevant for practice. The cases selected in HarmoniCOP and the forms of PP should be clearly related to river basin management and to the WFD.

Secondly, it will take a lot of convincing for people in hierarchical institutions to adopt the idea of PP and social learning.

Thirdly, a broader range of stakeholders needs to be involved. Because of other obligations, two invited stakeholders had not been able to make it to the first meeting: Coralie Noel (French Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development) and Julio Berbel (technical advisor to the federation of Spanish irrigation associations). On Wednesday it was concluded to invite for future meetings four more stakeholders: from the Rhine Commission (Upper Rhine), the Lake Peipsi Centre for Transboundary Cooperation

(Estonia-Russia), the water industry (Thames Water) and the WWF Danube Carpathian programme. (See annex 2)

Finally, it was not clear to everybody what exactly is expected from the stakeholders. According to the invitation letter that the stakeholders received they are expected to:

- Give stakeholders the opportunity to get an insight into the HarmoniCOP project: its origins, objectives and internal logic, collaborating institutes and experts, main questions and expected deliverables, etc.;
- clarify expectations among the project team and the stakeholders group;
- get feedback from the stakeholders on the project set up and
- finally to find a consensus about the framework of analysis and the details for the next project steps.

More intensive involvement is possible, but this is up to the stakeholder her or himself to decide.

Issues from the inception report

The afternoon programme started with a short presentation of the Inception report, focusing on the issues to be addressed. A basic issue is the general aim of HarmoniCOP: to support the implementation of the PP provisions of the WFD, to support meaningful implementation, or to promote social learning? The conclusion of the stakeholder meetings seems to be: to support meaningful implementation *and* to promote social learning.

The next issue concerned the concept of social learning. On the one hand, social learning is a fashionable term without too much meaning. On the other hand there are a number of very relevant but also complex theories on social learning. The challenge is to turn the concept into a meaningful concept for practice - both the river basin management practice and our practice within HarmoniCOP.

Concerning WP3 the fundamental challenge is how ICT tools be used to facilitate social learning.

A key issue concerning WP5 - case studies and experiments - is which case to choose. Would it be possible to link with ongoing initiatives: WFD basins, Elbe? How to do this?

3. Work package 2: Social Learning

The sections on the different work packages contain information from the Monday morning session (tuning of expectations), the Monday afternoon session (conceptual framework) and the Wednesday morning sessions without the stakeholders (operational planning).

The discussions on WP2 concerned primarily the concept of social learning. Expectations of the WP2 team concerning the stakeholders included willingness to communicate, providing a check on the practical relevance of WP2, and perhaps contacts to other stakeholders. What WP2 is aiming to provide is support for the daily work of stakeholders, help for transferring the experiences within HarmoniCOP to the cases they are dealing with, and to "show stakeholders what they do not know". An important issue will be the communication between the stakeholders involved in HarmoniCOP and the stakeholders "back home". Specifically, the possibility of co-operation with the Public Participation Strategy project for the Danube basin was mentioned.

On Monday afternoon, after some search for an appropriate working method, a brainstorming session was organised in order to identify the different components and dimensions of "social learning", using the meta-plan technique. This resulted in a large number of concepts. Next, these concepts were analysed. The first step was the identification by the WP-members of a number of key questions:

- What is social learning?
- What conditions are necessary?
- What are the dynamics?
- What is social learning for?

Following, two schemes were proposed to organise and cluster the different concepts. The first proposal was to cluster the different concepts under three headings: cognitive aspects of social learning, relational aspects of social learning, and - in between - "facilitation." This proposal was not implemented during the session. The second proposal was to see what clusters "emerge" from the different concepts. This resulted in seven clusters (see photographs of blackboards/flipcharts on www.harmonicop.info):

CONTEXT OF GOVERNANCE
- social learning in policy processes
- transition from traditional governmental style
- link social learning - polycentric government
- institutional change
- learning as reconstruction

PROBLEM SOLVING / DECISION MAKING (PS/DM) CYCLE
- phases of decision making
- problem awareness
- problem analysis/ definition
- information analysis
- choices/ priorities/ alternatives
- vision/ future

(SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL) PROCESSES
- task ambiguity
- interests/ conflicts

- willingness to cooperate
- different expectations of actors
- representation
- transparency
- responsibility
- community building

MULTIPARTY LEARNING
- single/ double loop learning
- perceiving, understanding and appreciating multiple perspectives
- framing
- cultural diversity
- role of norms and values
- un-learning events
- cognitive/ relational learning

PARTICIPATION
- forms of participation
- degree
- levels
- scale of participation
- who participates/ stakeholders

FACILITATING MECHANISMS
- tools, instruments, methods
- facilitators
- trust

CRITERIA
- quality
- competence
- legitimacy
- benefits for stakeholders
- acceptability
- fairness
- validity
- enhanced active citizenship
- sustainability

This scheme gave rise to a number of fundamental questions. Below you will find the different points that were raised, in unedited form:

- Is social learning by individuals possible?
- Does the process of social learning have to be initiated in groups?
- We need to look at different levels of social learning, intermediate forms of social learning.
- Participative processes have a particular quality that we can call social learning: respecting uniqueness, dealing with diversity, etc. Different degrees and scalings are relevant.
- What is the special thing about learning in groups?
  o *The process aspect*
  o *We always assumed a group process, the learning happens in groups of up to about 10 or 12 people.*
  o *Different kinds of groups can be relevant*

> o *Feeling included and a sense of identity can substitute for face-to-face contact. The group basically consists by virtue of the perception of belonging to a group.*

- single / double loop learning
- perceiving, understanding and appreciating multiple perspectives
- framing
- cultural diversity
- role of norms and values
- un-learning events
- cognitive/ relational learning

Presently (April 2003) these ideas are being developed into a consistent framework, version 1, to be used in WP 3, 4 and 5. Moreover, a version 2 will be developed as the final product of WP2. This can be used in WP5 - case studies and experiments.

4. Work package 3: ICT Tools

The involvement of the stakeholders in the work of WP3 could differ according to the time they can dedicate. They will be informed about the progress of WP 3, they can provide feedback and become more actively involved. Based on their practical experiences, they could provide information on:

- Their requirements in term of ICT tools, for which purpose?
- Their good and bad experiences with ICT
- Ideas about ICT tools or experiences that could be analysed
- Criteria to be taken into account to analyse the role of ICT tools
- What should be in the handbook concerning ICT?
- Specific issues concerning the tools and their use

The main result of WP3 will be a guidance for a more efficient and effective use of ICT tools in participatory river basin management planning. Stakeholders usually want clear recommendations and no recipes. An im-portant question is whether HarmoniCOP can provide a culturally sensitive book of cooking techniques.

Before giving a definition of ICT tool, their main properties can be described. An ICT tool:

- is a material object that can be seen or touched. It does not include for example group animation techniques (e.g. citizen jury, focus group, ...) or field trips.
- allows two-way communication between stakeholders
- allows/supports interaction between stakeholders
- allows to collect, provide and share information
- allows interactive control of use directly by the stakeholders or through a facilitator

It was suggested to take into account the role of ICT tools in the communication process between stakeholders and scientists. ICT tools should also allow exploration of issues if scientists and various stakeholder groups frame the issue quite differently.

A number of issues were identified in addition to those mentioned in the inception report:

Long term issues
- How will the ICT tool be maintained in the long term?
- How can we get feedback from the end-users?

Implicit biases in the inception report
- Who are the end-users? Interesting to see if people are working with ICT Tools in different national backgrounds.
- Do we consider the national and cultural feasibility of different tools? Cultures of participation differ: role playing games are very difficult to employ in Vietnam for example. Trust in models is different in Belgium compared to the Netherlands. Moreover, European countries differ in the availability of certain type of data.

Work package
- Do we consider only the use or also the development of tools?
- How do we incorporate scale issues?
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During the meeting a provisional list of ICT tools was developed. Examples are questionnaire, flyer, poster (only if they are elaborated in a participative way), 3D

landscape scale model, maps, movie, paper model, Internet (if used for 2 way communication, e.g. electronic poll, electronic forum), information system (tool to organize the information), geographic information system, visualisation tool, scenario tools, multicriteria analysis tool, simulation tool, Decision Support System. This list will have to be updated according to the literature review and the type of tools that have been identified in the WP4 national studies and the preliminary contacts to choose case studies

It was agreed to make a long-list of possible tools and then decide which tools to include in the HarmoniCOP-project and which not. Moreover, a glossary defining and explaining ICT tools will be developed. The definitions have to be adapted to the WFD context.

5. Work package 4: National approaches and experiences

The aim of the Monday morning meetings on WP4 was to exchange views with the stakeholders and fine tune the ideas about the objectives of WP4, the role of the stakeholders in executing WP4 tasks and the expectations of and from the stakeholders with respect to the results WP4. The exchange took place in a series of three open discussions of some twenty minutes. Each discussion in principle started with an introduction by Mita Patel, based on a summary of WP4 and a distributed list of issues.

In one meeting the discussions were intense and mainly focused on the question what social learning is and how it could be applied from the beginning in the work of WP4. There was an interesting difference in views between one stakeholder and the group with respect to the objectives of WP4. It is clear from the discussion that there is quite a range of perceptions, from little experience with PP and social learning to more or less a strong focus on the social learning process (as an innovative element?) only.

In another meetings part of the discussion was addressing the change in the accession countries in the post Soviet era. Interesting examples were given about the need to learn how to express public interest within a democratic setting. The main conclusions from the Monday morning meetings are:

- The best form of communication with stakeholders would be via e-mail and a web page (Password for collaboration platform is needed?).
- The use of English was considered to be a problem in contacting some of the stakeholders.
- The involvement of other stakeholders could in the situation of Germany be organized through Heide Jekel who to a certain extent is willing to act as a kind of focal point.
- One should not "flood" stakeholders with (English) reports.
- The present number of stakeholders at the meeting is too small and they are perhaps not representative enough.
- Where possible and where needed stakeholders should also be consulted between national studies.
- There is a need for an agreed upon and clear definition of social learning.
- There is also a need for a better definition of PP, and the objectives of the WP should be explained better.
- The national reports should give a general overview of the experience with PP and will then zoom in on the RBM issue; experiments can take place in WP5.
- The national reports should pay attention to the process aspects.
- There should also be attention for grassroots initiated PP.
- The ToR provides guidelines, not strict rules to which one should adhere.
- *Where possible* social learning and PP should also take place within the work of WP4.
- There is a need to define indicators (including cultural ones) in order to help facilitate comparability between studies; however there is also a need to remain culturally sensitive in the context of the ToR.
- The costs related to PP and social learning is a sensitive issue for policy makers.
- How to involve people who are not yet in the PP system? (Organization of workshops with people who so far were not yet involved in PP?); improving contact and communication with potential participants

In the plenary presentation the main objectives of WP4 were discussed:

- To influence water managers and policy makers in different countries
- To identify and review participatory processes in river basin management in different countries

There was some discussion whether the first objective is not the goals of the whole project.

The objectives will be reached in three ways:
- By locating experiences where e.g. ICT tools have been used
- Through the study of literature and reports
- Input from national stakeholders/ practitioners

Important issues in this respect are who are we going to speak to, how do we find them, how will we motivate them, how will we speak to them, and what will we talk about? Does it have to be a group process or can it be on a one-to-one basis (questionnaires/ interviews)? Would it be an idea to start more individually and move to group level?

Another important issue was to initiate or not, in WP4, national dialogues on participatory processes? One of the stakeholders invited the HarmoniCOP team to identify opportunities not just to extract knowledge from practitioners, but also to start to create knowledge with them on cultural differences. The conclusion of the discussion seemed to be that WP4 can and probably will induce processes of dialogue, but that is not the main idea. This might be more something for the case studies. In the case studies attention could also be paid to lower scales. For instance, the Flemish team will try to focus on linking different levels through a reflection process with government on what can be learned from the pilot catchments. They see this as a part of the case study work package. The SLIM project will organize a national level event on social learning.

6. Work Package 5: Case Studies

Introducing WP5 to the stakeholders:

After a short introduction by Jodie Thorn on the tasks of WP5 (to gain first hand "real insight" experience, on which we will test out findings of WP2-4), she asked the stakeholders what their interests in WP5 and HarmoniCOP are and what experiences they have in the practical application of PP.

In the following, mainly their demands towards HarmoniCOP are documented.

There was a request to define clearly what each term PUBLIC and PARTICIPATION means. How can you introduce the Case Studies & Experiments to the main text within the handbook? In the CIS-Guidance document they integrated some 30 case studies through small boxes on "lessons learnt". Longer descriptions were included in the annex. It was also considered valuable to cross-reference between the different case studies and link them in order to enable all participations to gain from the different cases.

Another point to address is PP in international river basins. Who is paying for it? Collaboration within international basins is closely linked to the amount of power the different partners have (even more than between international collaboration?). Especially the international level will be a challenge for PP.

Moreover, the Global Water Partnership Toolbox was referred to (www.gwpforum.org - Toolbox). There are different case studies from different basins located in the accession countries presented (Kammiska, Biskica, Peipsi). There are also some valuable documents on www.gwpcee.org - Prague. An important advice was first to build trust to avoid conflict due to NIMBY[1]-positions. The questions discussed also touch upon the scale and the kind of stakeholders (governmental?) that HarmoniCOP would like to involve.

Another issue was how the Pilot Basins could be linked to the case studies. Moreover, how to link the case studies and the handbook? How can you motivate stakeholders to participate? How to consider different approaches within one nation. For example, in Germany, Northrhine-Westfalia and Schleswig-Holstein are the leading federal states in PP, whereas others basically have not done anything so far, and some just have started PP.

Another experience was that, at least in Niedersachsen (Germany), it is difficult to involve farmers if they do not see a direct benefit. The farmers are by now not really informed about WFD issues. It is difficult to convince them that the WFD might be a chance for them, especially because they had some bad experience with the FFH-Guideline. PP is better within local planning.

The comparison between the 9 case studies was seen as a big challenge. How we look at PP in the national case studies (process orientated or focus on social learning?).

One stakeholder wanted to know what HarmoniCOP has to offer to the partners in potential case studies. Working on the national policy level and doing a pilot study, he also has to advise the policy level. He was not sure if he needs our advice and support. He pointed out that the implementation authorities do not need us to do their PP process, but that we need them to be able to do our case study. He seemed to be concerned that our approach was not respecting the implementation authorities to be the experts of the basins.

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[1] Not In My Backyard

Discussion:

The most crucial question for this WP concerns the integration of different scale levels and at the same time the involvement of the people coming from the different levels.

For HarmoniCOP, it is important to touch base, to make the results relevant for the practical life of water management. Exchanging ideas with other cases and with other projects was discussed as valuable source of inspiration for our own cases.

How can a European-wide learning process facilitate processes within one culture? People are generally slow at learning. Can this problem be overcome in networks?

As presented in plenary, the contribution of WP5 to the interests of stakeholders would be the following:

- Handbook and reports
- Contact with other European groups and other contexts for PP
- Forum to discuss PP in a positive environment
- Personal capacity building for PP and social learning (and a more general understanding of what PP is)
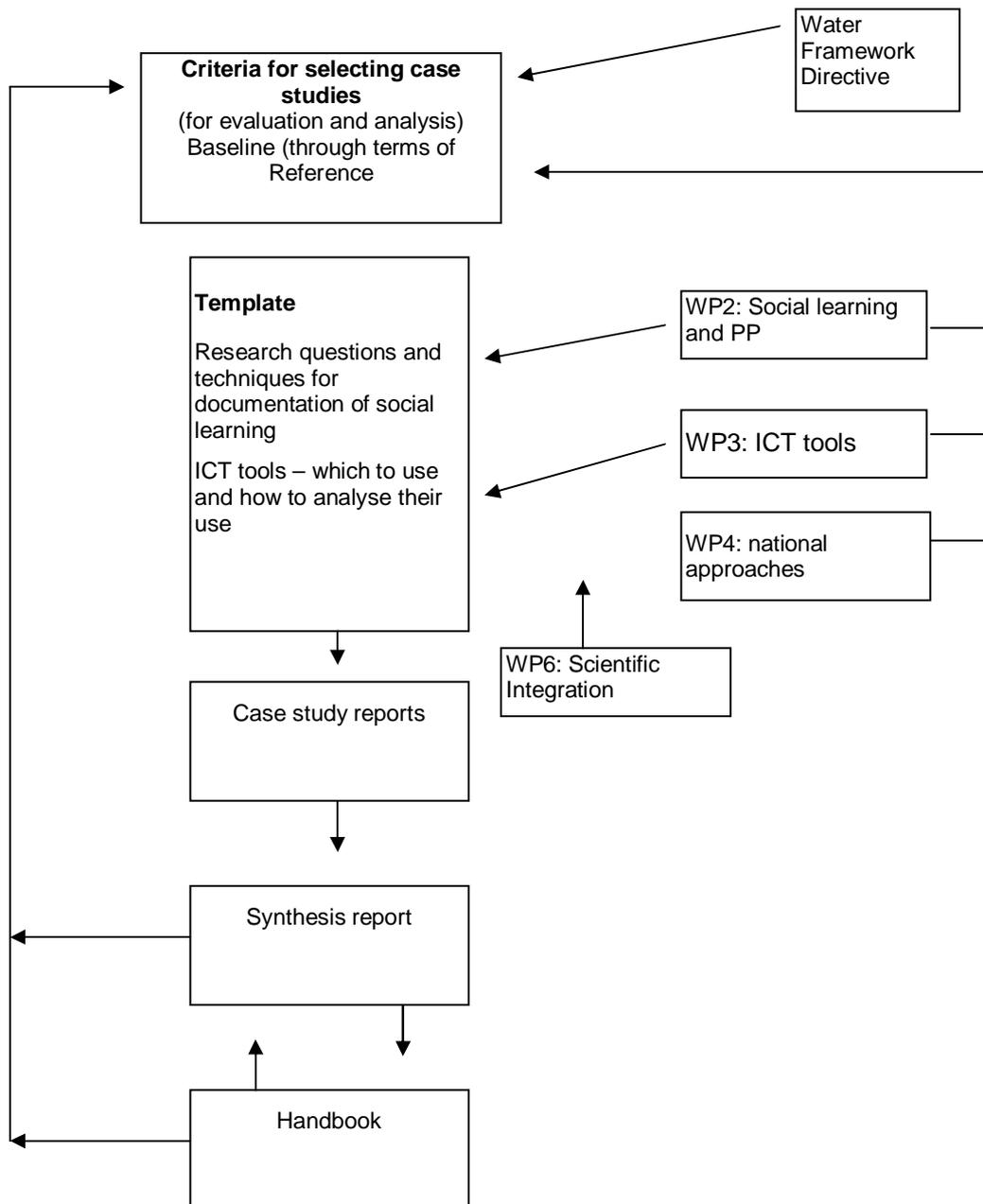- Opportunity to share experiences of past cases studies (positive and negative points)

The expectations from the stakeholders are be the following:

- Focus – their involvement allows HarmoniCOP to be clearer in their setting of priorities
- Practical – their involvement provides a more practical outlook on the research objectives
- Insight – into institutions and groups, including their own expectations and experiences
- Linkages –links to/ or means of contacting other stakeholders (especially relevant for WP5)
- End users – the stakeholders are potentially end-users of the handbook
- Potential input – the stakeholders could potentially provide input in the draft reports

The WP5 team claimed that they ended up with 37 problems and no solutions, partly because they rely very much on input from other work packages. The following major questions were raised:

- What is innovative about WP5, what is it about? Is it to reflect on the results of the other packages or is it the development of something innovative? WP5 could in practice promote social learning.
- Are our case studies based on the WFD? Do we include only WFD pilot river basins or also other water management contexts?
- Are we going to do "historical studies" or "real time studies"? At the moment we are negotiating our case studies.
- Boundaries. Rather than having input from different case studies, we want a two-way process.
- How to ensure representativeness, given the fact that there will be only nine case studies? How do we compare them?
- Level of social learning. Who is learning from whom? Who joins? What level of social learning are we looking for: revolution or adaptation?

The picture below shows the relation between the case studies (WP5) and the other project WPs and outputs

Criteria for selecting case studies
(for evaluation and analysis)
Baseline (through terms of Reference

Water Framework Directive

Template

Research questions and techniques for documentation of social learning

ICT tools – which to use and how to analyse their use

WP2: Social learning and PP

WP3: ICT tools

WP4: national approaches

Case study reports

WP6: Scientific Integration

Synthesis report

Handbook

7. Evaluation and feedback on the first day of the meeting

The first day was concluded with an evaluation. First the stakeholders got the opportunity to give their opinion. The main comments are listed below:

- It is necessary to develop a glossary and reach consensus on what is meant by different concepts. It is quite difficult to give input when everybody is meaning different things.

- Different people have different knowledge on the project, and that causes waste of time.

- It is really an exciting project, social learning is a useful basket term which allows a lot of different ways of thinking to work together. Very mixed experiences are present, there is a lot of diversity, but if we cannot work with that what can we work with?

- There is a little bit more information and preparation needed beforehand.

- In the social learning group the results must be concretised and put into practice.

- The experiences of the German farmers with social learning in planning, could serve as an example for the rural areas and future implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

- Awareness raising trough national dialogue is useful for us, but this is a very slow process.

- Accession countries are involved but not everyone is represented.

- The different working groups were helpful, now it is much clearer where you want to go.

- Social learning is still a bit cloudy. It seems very complex, but I got interested in it. Perhaps we should make progress in our own administration with respect to social learning.

- Social learning must be a two-way process, demand driven bottom up approach of stakeholders to learn more about WFD, and on the other hand the enabling environment has to be guaranteed by the government as more top-down contribution.

- We should always keep in mind the final goal of the WFD: a good water status in 15 to 20 years time.

Following, critics, suggestions and compliments from all participants were collected, using the "evaluation egg" (next page). The idea to group the brainstorming of critics and compliments around the "evaluation egg" was very much appreciated. In the following some of the critics, suggestions and compliments are presented:

Contents
+: ....
 -: ....

Procedures
+: ....
 -: ....

Relations
+: ....
 -: ....

Infrastructure
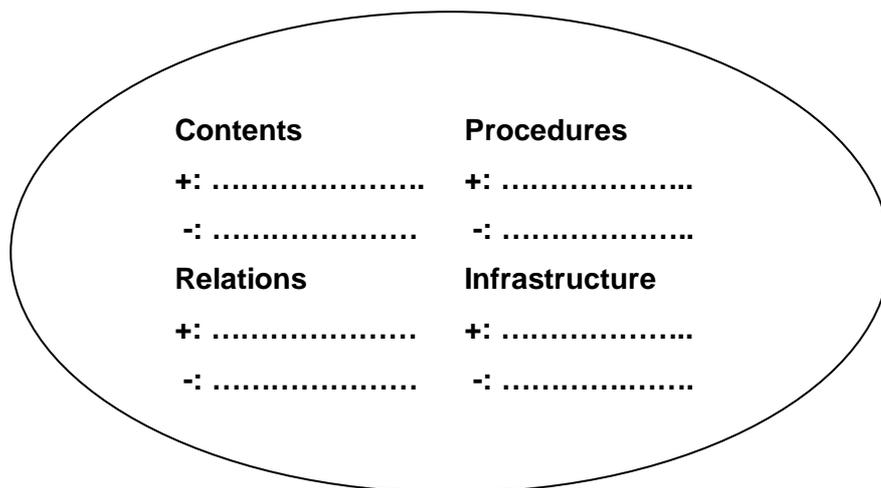+: ....
 -: ....

Fig: The "evaluation egg"

Contents:

Positive
- Focus on the inception report

- The structure of the workshop was explained
- The discussion on social learning got started
- Focus on the different WPs and how they interact
- A lot of up-dating of issues
- The total overload in information reflects the complexity of the project; this meeting is a good opportunity to get familiar with it
- The morning agenda was good to share with stakeholders
- The possibility for ambiguities

Negative
- Sometimes focus was missing, scope not yet clear, scope too wide. It would be easier to get results when you work more within a given framework. More boundary setting
- So much up-dating and new issues that time was too short to discuss it all: a lot of content for too limited time
- Social learning (some aspects) is still too vague, lack of concept explanation (social learning), the social learning concept too theoretical and too psychological for engineers
- Some decisions were not made
- Maybe too theoretical for some stakeholders (? Needs being grounded)

Procedures:

Positive
- Interactive, creative (repeated)
- Small group work (adequate size), making it easier for WP members and stakeholders (repeatedly mentioned), much better than the usual long plenary sessions
- Stakeholder involvement
- Break-outs
- Respect of established time, time management
- Short presentations
- Open ears during group sessions, two-way communication

Negative
- Very dense and busy, too much for one day, many changes
- Before breaks, next term might already be introduced
- Clearer explanation of the meta-plan technique
- Not enough time to discuss within WP-groups
- Afternoon session with stakeholders too short
- Presentation of inception report should have been first
- Difficult to discuss "fundamental" questions in the plenary

Relations:

Positive
- Relaxed, easy going atmosphere
- Conflicts dealt with
- A lot of mixing opportunities for contact (repeated)
- (Supportive, open) stakeholder involvement

Negative
- More breaks for socialising needed
- Some participants have "insight" views which they do not seem to like to explain
- This group is too different from the kick-off meeting
- Is the language excluding some of the stakeholders?

- Not enough stakeholders

<u>Infrastructure:</u>

Positive
- Delightful building
- Nice service, well-organized
- Nice to have water and sweets all the time
- Leuven is small, good accessible and well organized

Negative
- More signs needed to find places and rooms
- Lunch without seats
- Plenary room (a bit) small (repeated)

8. Field trip to the Dijle catchment and "Doode Beemde" nature reserve

The purpose of the field trip on Tuesday morning was to obtain a joint experience around the topic water management and participation and see what social learning can mean in practice. Participants were encouraged to exchange their ideas. The presenting person, Mr. Piet Debecker, coming from a local NGO, allowed an intensive debate around the topic. See the pictures at www.harmonicop.info/pictures_csImpressions.html

The river Dijle shows how flood management (safety standard 1/ 50 years), nature protection and agriculture can be combined. The starting situation was quite advantageous to implement decentralised flood management measures and allow the river to meander because the necessary room was available and it was possible to compensate farmers for their land use restrictions and loss of space.

Despite the rainy weather intensive discussions started about engineering aspects, resource management aspects and of course the issue of participation during the process of realisation of the project. In this case the initiative came from a local NGO. They opposed rigid technical measures of flood protection and favoured decentralised measures that have a smaller impact on nature and landscape. There was no planned participatory process but rather a series of "Trial and Error" leading to an integrative approach because it was just noticed that this was the most promising way leading to successful implementation of something.

9. "Social Learning in Practice"

On Tuesday afternoon an "Appreciative Inquiry" exercise was given to help the group to practise "social learning" and understand what is meant by this term. The exercise was introduced and facilitated by Rene Bouwen (COPP) and involved the following:

- Making explicit what is experienced implicitly
- Discovering and describing our "theories-in-practice"
- Building together a "generative theory": a theory that generates actions and opportunities beyond merely explaining and predicting
- CO-CREATION of guiding principles

The exercise was based on principles of social constructionism, simultaneity and appreciation. The basis for problem solving is a "felt need". It involves an identification of the problem, an analysis of its causes, an analysis of possible solutions, and action Planning and treatment. The basic assumption is that organising is a problem that can be solved.

"Appreciation" involves:

- Valuing the best of "what is"
- Envisioning "what might be"
- Dialoguing "what should be"
- Innovating "what will be"

A basic assumption is that organizing is an act of social creativity.

An Appreciative Inquiry has five phases:

1. Affirmative topic choice   (in this case social learning)
2. Inquiry into "life giving" properties   (data collection)
3. Articulation of possibilities   (envisioning)
4. Consensual validation   (agreeing)
5. Integrating ideal and actual   (organizational integration)

See Dave Cooperrider & Jane Dutton (1999), *Organizational Dimensions of Global Change. No Limits to cooperation.* Sage.)

Reflection on experiential social learning

Two questions were addressed during the exercise:

Looking at your entire experience as a member of the HarmoniCOP learning community, when did you feel most connected, when did you feel most involved and member of something important?
- *What made it feel a peak experience?*
- *What did I do, what did others do?*
- *What did I appreciate particularly?*
- *What was the precise context, task, assignment?*

What are the most important life-giving forces/ sources of energy that were supporting this experience?
- *Make a list of sources, factors, elements*
- *How can these resourceful situations be multiplied to energize HarmoniCOP?*

Two persons interviewed each other for 7 minutes and tried to answer the given questions.

Both tasks were very much appreciated. One outcome of the second task was pointing out that informal settings allow better to communicate in an equal and honest manner. Having the same level of information, e.g. once people share a common experience, is also very much appreciated. Changing the environment or location helps in generating more creative ideas. Aspects such as building trust and confidence among participants can be achieved more easily in small groups.

Below the answers to the second question are presented:

<u>A: LIFE GIVING FORCES</u>

1.
- For the stakeholders: to feel wanted/ helpful
- Rooms like Van Hamaele (on Monday) that were just big enough: i.e. intimate, close
- Informal settings and activities/ moments per se: i.e. an opportunity to communicate intensively but relaxed and in a small group, without a felt need to count your words or to evaluate every word
- Contact with the people from the SLIM project: especially because they have more or less the same objectives and because there is a continuity in those contacts
- The fieldtrip and especially the discussion afterwards. It not only stimulated us to think long-term (historical, process) by someone from a different background who has a message (passion), but also provided us with a common experience for us all and an opportunity to recharge our mental batteries.
- The diversity of people/ participants

2.
- Thoughtful design of the meeting
- Input by all
- Concrete action, together with other people
- Being part of a larger movement
- Open, direct, simple communication
- New methods (e.g., Appreciative Inquiry) and points of view (e.g., social sciences)
- Working in small groups with 1 goal

3.
- Achieving "tangible" results makes people feel connected
- Give constructive feedback
- Changing rhythms of ways to work
- Everybody is equally heard
- Surprises
- Realizing that something is usable for future work
- Feeling of real commitment of everybody
- Clear explicit processes

4.
- To be active
- Feel your opinion is heard
- Relaxed atmosphere
- Assumptions being challenged
- Cross-thinkers
- Small groups
- To have a clear task and method accepted by all
- Openness
- Being flexible, equal, and complementary
- Feel part of a group/ community
- Giving feedback

<u>HOW TO MULTIPLY THEM?</u>

1.
- Foresee informal/ bounding activities, recharging opportunities, and breathing space
- Change the meeting environment once in a while: going outside or to a different room
- Select a common case study (on paper?) for discussion among all (at the next meeting?)

2.
- Take insights from this design and develop interdisciplinary seminar in own organisation
- More meetings in small groups
- Higher frequency of WP meetings
- Think of use of case studies for inspiration
- Continue openness for diversity
- Meet the right persons
- Input of stakeholders to challenge us

3.
- Transmit to plenary session lessons from small groups
- Provide means to ensure that comments are explicitly taken into account and lead to answers
- Combine simple and complex tasks
- Keep commitment you need to keep networks alive
- Promote responsibility in WPs
- Bring different and unexpected people – activities together

4.
- Face-to-face contacts
- Small, informal meetings
- Share tasks/ responsibilities
- Longer meetings
- Informal contacts
- Visual mapping

10. General Evaluation & Suggestions of project participants

The final part of the meeting took place on Wednesday, after the stakeholders had already left. The topic was operational planning of the work in HarmoniCOP. Some of the conclusions have been incorporated in the chapters 2 to 6, e.g. on involving more stakeholders. Below the other conclusions and points of general interest are presented.

The problem of language was mentioned. First, native English speakers do not only speak but also understand faster and can easily dominate a group by their quick reactions. It is always necessary to be sensitive to different language skills in one group. Secondly, there is the issue of technical language and different scientific terminologies. Sometimes the terminology used was not clear to everybody. As HarmoniCOP is composed of sociologists, engineers, economists etc, everybody is encouraged to use simple language that is commonly understood.

For the next HarmoniCOP meeting end of September the following issues were raised:

- Clarifying the "training" aspect of the next meeting
- Clarifying the objectives of WP meetings: WP leaders should clearly define what they want to achieve during the meeting. They communicate it early enough (at least 1 month) to Dagmar and this will be stated already in the programme. (It also clarifies expectations of HarmoniCOP towards stakeholders.)
- Working definitions of terminology should be discussed before the meeting. Examples: social learning and ICT tools. Can we agree on one term and one common definition? Once the term is defined we can include it into our glossary.
- Enhance a common understanding of the WFD
- Facilities (e.g. computers) to feedback results more quickly
- Clearer "products" of plenary sessions
- More time to work at WP-level
- Putting theory directly in contact with practise, to overcome problem of different "languages" used by participants
- Coordination through WP-leaders, instead of in plenary form
- Less introduction at the start of the meeting

In the final reckoning the meeting was considered successful, but room for improvements remains. It provided the HarmoniCOP team with a lot of information and ideas to work with and improve the quality and practical relevance of the project.

Annex 1: List of Participants

Organization	First name	Last name	Email address
Project Partners			
BUTE - Budapest	Istvan	Ijjas	istvan.ijjas@axelero.hu
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RIZA - Lelystad	Henk	Wolters	h.a.wolters@riza.rws.minvenw.nl
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WRc - Swindon	Jodie	Thorne	thorne_j@wrcplc.co.uk

SLIM - Project			
UK - Open University	Kevin	Collins	k.b.collins@open.ac.uk
UK - Open University	Ray	Ison	r.l.ison@open.ac.uk

Stakeholders			
British Env. Agency	John	Colvin	john.colvin@environment-agency.gov.uk
Global Water Partnership	Jozsef	Gayer	gayer@vituki.hu
German Min. for Env.	Heide	Jekel	heide.jekel@bmu.bund.de
ICLEI	Katiuscia	Fara	katiuscia.fara@iclei-europe.org
Dutch Min. for Water Man.	Jetske	Verkerk	j.verkerk@riza.rws.minvenw.nl
German Chamber of Agric.	Ulrich	Wördemann	u.woerdemann@lwk-we.de

Annex 2: List of stakeholders

Stakeholder Type	Institution	Representative	Nationality
Ministry/ **drafting group for implement-tation**	German Ministry for Environment	Heide Jekel, Phone +49 1888 305 2521 heide.jekel@bmu.bund.de	German
Ministry/ **Drafting group**	Dutch Ministry for Water Management,	Jetske Verkerk Tel: +31 320 298 882 j.verkerk@riza.rws.minvenw.nl	Dutch
Environmental Agency	Social Policy Officer, EA Head Office UK	John Colvin john.colvin@environment-agency.gov.uk	British
Farmers/ water users	technical advisor of the association FENACORE (federation of Spanish irrigation associations)	Julio Berbel University of Cordoba email: berbel@uco.es	Spanish (Could not attend during first meeting)
GWP	Chairman of the Central and Eastern European Global Water Partnership	Jozsef Gayer gayer@vituki.hu	Hungarian
Ministry	Ingénieur chargée de mission "planification et directive-cadre" Bureau de la programmation et de l'économie de l'eau Direction de l'eau	Coralie Noel Ministère de l'écologie et du développement durable: tél : 01 42 19 13 76 / fax : 01 42 19 12 94 e.mail: Coralie.NOEL@environnement.gouv.fr	French (Could not attend during first meeting)
NGO	ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives)	Katiuscia Fara and Naomi Luhde Thompson (will rotate) katiuscia.fara@iclei-europe.org Naomi.luhde.thompson@iclei-europe.org	Italian and British
Farmers	Chamber of Agriculture Region Weser-Ems (Germany): "agricultural quango"*	Ulrich Wördemann u.woerdemann@lwk-we.de	German
Transboundary Water Issues	Peipsi Centre for Transboundary Cooperation	Margit Säre msare@yahoo.com	Estonian
Rhine Commission	Bundesamt für Wasser und Geologie	Bruno Schädler (or collegue)	Swiss

(Upper Rhine)	(Switzerland)	Bruno.Schaedler@bwg.admin.ch	
Water Industry	Thames Water	?	British
NGO	WWF Danube Carpathian programme	Rayka Hauser rayka.hauser@vip.hr	Hungarian

Annex 3: Programme

Monday 10.03.03

When	Where	What	Who	How
8.30 – 8.45	Begijnhof – Chievre Convent, Hamaele	Arrival	Project members, stakeholders	- distribute materials, name tags - coffee
8.45 – 9.30	Hamaele	Welcome, General introd. Project, PP and Social Learning, meeting program	C. Pahl-Wostl, T. Thaillieu, M. Craps	- Plenary exposé
9.30 – 10.00	Hamaele	Short presentation	All	Project members by institution, stakeholders' indiv.
10.00 – 11.00	- Hamaele, - St Ana - St Barbara - Depaepe	Contacting between stakeholders and project	4 WP teams meet with stakeholders	4 X 15 min. conversations
11.00 – 11.15	Hamaele	Coffee break		
11.15 – 11.45	- Hamaele, - St Ana - St Barbara - Depaepe	Generate proposal on stakeholder functions	5 work groups (4 WP teams and stakeholder group)	List of questions to be resolved:
11.45 – 12.30	Hamaele	Debate and conclusions on stakeholders in HarmoniCOP	Plenary (Moderator: MC)	Panel: represent. Of stakeholders en WP-teams, discussion and conclusions
12.30 – 14.00	Faculty Club	Lunch		
14.00 – 14.30	Hamaele	Presentation Inception rep.	E. Mostert	Slide show Clarifying debateable issues
14.30 – 16.00	- Hamaele, - St Ana - St Barbara - Depaepe	Joint analysis of WP 2, 3, 4, 5 inception result	4 parallel WP workgroups, stakeholders distributed over groups	Visial mapping of internal logic, (wallpaper and cards)
16.00 – 16.15	Hamaele	Coffee break		
16.15 – 17.30	Hamaele	Plenary session	Presentations by WP-leaders,	WP team-presentation (4 X 10 min.)

		Stakeholder-panel		Clarifications, Reflections by stakeholders
				Discussion and conclusions
17.30 – 18.00		Evaluation	All, individual and plenary	Written: indiv. Questions sheets
				Oral: plenary group
19.00 – 20.00	Faculty Club - Infirmerie	Act "More Balls than most"	All	First observing, than taking part
20.00	Faculty Club - Infirmerie	Dinner	All	

Tuesday 11.03.03

When	Where	What	Who	How
8.45	Parking Faculty Club	Departure to "Doode Beemde"	Project members and stakeholders	by bus
9.15 – 11.00	"Doode Beemde" (part of Dijle catchment)	Field trip		Guided walking (with stakeholder)
11.00 – 11.15	Rest. St Jean	Coffee break		
11.15 – 12.00	Rest. St Jean	Discussion	Plenary with local stakeholder-guide, Moderator: WP5	Analysis taking Doode Beemde as case study example
12.00 – 13.00	Rest. St Jean	Lunch		
13.00 – 13.30	Back to Leuven			By bus
13.30 – 14.00	Faculty Club – Lemaire Room	HarmoniCOP Website	D. Ridder presents, plenary feedback	First presentation, then questions and comments
14.00 – 16.00	Faculty Club -Lemaire Room, - Roelants, - Begga - Van Ophem	Social learning reflection analysis and evaluation on HarmoniCOP experiences	Introduction and facilitation: R. Bouwen	- short introduction on "appreciative inquiry" and social learning (15 min.)
				- telling and analyzing concrete experiences (groups of 3 pers., 20 min.)
				- Identifying social learning facilitating and complicating factors (mixed groups (30 min.)

When	Where	What	Who	How
				- Plenary report
				- Feedback of stakeholders
				- Adjusting stakeholder roles and functions
16.00 – 16.30	Lemaire room	Coffee Goodbye to stakeholders	C. Pahl-Wostl	
16.30 – 18.00	- Lemaire - Roelants - Begga - Van Ophem	WP 6 and 7 meeting		First 2 groups (WP 6, 7): implications of stakeholder meeting Plenary presentation and discussion
19.30	Restaurant "La cantina", Parijsstr. 40	Dinner	Those who would like…	

Wednesday 12.03.03

When	Where	What	Who	How
9.00 – 10.30	Begijnhof - Chievres Convent: - H. Geest room,	WP operationali-sation	WP 2, 3, 4 and 5, WP team leaders coordinate	WP workgroups, answering operational questions: who, when, how, deadlines, coordinate and integrate, etc.
10.30 – 10.45	H. Geest room,	Coffee Break		
10.45 – 12.00	H. Geest room	Plenary session		Plenary presentation, observations, questions of integration
12.00 – 12.30	H. Geest room	"Hot issues" resolving		Plenary session
12.30 – 13.00	H. Geest room	Final meeting evaluation and conclusions for next meeting		Orally: first by institution, than plenary
13.00 – 14.00	Faculty Club	Lunch	All project	
14.00 – 16.00	H. Geest	Coordination meeting	Coordination group (WP leaders) C. Pahl-Wostl leads	Agenda prepared by Osnabrueck
16.00 – 16.30	H. Geest	Coffee and goodbye		