

## Supplementary materials

### Information sheet

**Research project title:** Water Co-Governance for Sustainable Ecosystems (WaterCoG)

**Researchers:** Ilke Borowski-Maaser  
Morten Graversgaard  
Madeleine Prutzer  
Natalie Foster

**Please read this information carefully before deciding whether to participate in this research project. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign a consent form.**

#### 1. What is the research about?

Working with a range of partners and stakeholders from Sweden, Germany, Denmark, Netherlands and the UK, WaterCoG aims to understand the extent to which effective stakeholder and community participation in water management (co-governance) can deliver more sustainable and long-term approaches to managing North Sea Region (NSR) ecosystems by improving the implementation of key environmental objectives such as the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

This research forms a part of the evaluation phase of the WaterCoG project. It is being conducted by local researchers on behalf of the WaterCoG project (<https://northsearegion.eu/watercog>).

WaterCoG is co-funded by the INTERREG North Sea Region Programme 2014 - 2020.

#### 2. Why have I been asked to participate?

Research participants will be stakeholders in water governance, e.g. Government bodies, advisors, consultants, NGOs, general public. Participants have been asked to take part because they have been identified as a stakeholder, that is, they have a stake or interest in water governance.

#### 3. What will happen if I participate?

Via interviews, participants will be asked about activities/projects that they are involved in. We are interested in finding out about what assumptions, perspectives and values are informing water governance, why and how people do or don't make decisions and take actions, either individually or with others, and how people develop knowledge and best practice related to water governance. Participation is voluntary and consent to participate is an agreement to participate in the research project, and for the data obtained as a result of participation to be used for the purpose of the research project.

#### 4. Are there any benefits in taking part?

Participation in the research project presents an opportunity to disseminate your own knowledge and experiences of water governance. It is hoped that the research will also lead to concerted actions to improve future water governance in the UK and elsewhere.

#### 5. Are there any risks involved?

There is minimal risk involved in taking part in the research. The research complies with the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act.

#### 6. Will participation be confidential?

Some interviews may involve more than one participant, and therefore, participant anonymity and confidentiality cannot be maintained in these circumstances. However, we will anonymize all contributions in project reports and publications.

#### 7. What happens if I change my mind?

Participants may withdraw consent at any time without their legal rights being affected. If participants decide to withdraw, they may also request that their data is withdrawn from the project at any time until 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

#### 8. What happens if something goes wrong?

In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, please contact Barry Bendall, WaterCoG Project Lead ( [email] or [telephone] ).

### 9. Where can I get more information about this research project?

For further information, please contact Dr. Natalie Foster ( [email] or [telephone] ).

#### Consent form

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Please initial the box if you agree with the statement:

☐

I have read and understood the Information Sheet and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the research project.

☐

I consent to participate in the research project and for the data obtained as a result of my participation to be used for research purposes, including publication, in an anonymised format.

☐

I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw consent at any time without my legal rights being affected. I understand that if I decide to withdraw, I can request that my data is withdrawn from the project at any time until 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

Participant name (print name):

Participant signature:

Researcher name (print name):

Researcher signature:

Date:

#### Interview questions

Short overview of WaterCog

Explain reason(s) for the interview

Explain interview format and confidentiality agreement (sign the consent form)

Opportunity for questions on any of the above, then:

#### Background and context

1. What area(s) of the Wharfe/Cameo catchment do you live and/or work in?  
Easy icebreaker, and gives us a better understanding about what they do and why
2. How would you define the term 'water co-governance'?  
Important because it puts all the other answers into context!
3. In this context, what are the main activities or projects that you are involved in?  
It would help us if you could provide a short overview of each activity or project, including your role

#### Sources of motivation

4. **Purpose:** What do you hope to achieve by undertaking these activities or projects, i.e. what is the immediate objective?
5. **Beneficiary or client:** Who or what are the beneficiaries of the activities or projects that you are involved in?
6. **Measure of success:** What are the measure of success (or improvement) for the activities and projects?

#### Sources of control

7. **Decision-maker:** In relation to your activities or projects, who makes the key decisions about what needs to be done?
8. **Resources:** What components of these activities or projects are controlled by the key decision-maker(s)?
9. **Environment:** What conditions have enabled or constrained the activities or projects; and how have these conditions (challenges) affected your choice of who you work with or how you go about your activities or projects?

#### Sources of expertise

10. **Expertise:** How have you developed the knowledge and skills needed to undertake these activities or projects?
11. **Expert (or designer):** Whose knowledge, ideas and perspectives have been taken into account when designing 'improvements' to be implemented through these activities or projects?
12. **Guarantor:** What is/ought to be providing guarantor attributes of success for the activities or projects (e.g. technical support, consensus amongst professional experts, stakeholder involvement etc.) and hence what is/might be false guarantor attributes of success (e.g. technical fixes, managerialism, tokenism, etc.)?

#### Source of legitimacy

13. **Witnesses:** Who is/ought to be representing the interest of those affected by but not involved with the activities or projects, including those stakeholders who cannot speak for themselves (e.g. future generations and non-human entities)?
14. **Emancipation:** To what degree—and in what way—are the interests of the affected free from the effects of the activities or projects?
15. **Worldview:** What is the worldview underlying the creation or maintenance of the activities or projects, i.e. what visions (long-term aims) or underlying meanings of 'improvement' are considered, and how are they reconciled?

#### Closing remarks

16. Is there anything else that you would like to add that is not covered already?

Thank interviewee

Reiterate confidentiality agreement

Interview questions based on a technique developed by Ulrich [1]

1. Ulrich, W. Reflective practice in the civil society: The contribution of critical systems thinking. *Reflective Pract.* **2000**, *1*, 247–268.