Effective participation by all stakeholders in natural resource management is being promoted as a means to attain both improved livelihoods and sustainable resource management. In support of this the Community Forestry Unit of the Food and Agriculture Organization is working on a new set of materials on the topic of **participation in forestry and natural resource management**. These materials, tentatively called The Participatory Process Package are now in the development phase. It will take approximately two years to complete this multi-module set. We expect that approximately seven modules will be developed on topics such as tools and approaches for participatory natural resource management. A sourcebook is also expected to be part of the set.

Our **purpose** for developing The Participatory Process Package is to enable forestry and natural resource management projects to have more effective participation by all stakeholders throughout the project cycle, from problem and situation analysis, to final evaluation.

It is increasingly recognised that participation often does not move beyond rural community analysis and assessment, using approaches such as Participatory Rural Appraisal. Excellent PRAs have stayed on the shelves, ignored in the rest of the project cycle. The challenge is how to build upon that analysis and to fold what is learned from it into project planning and implementation.

Our goal is that *The Participatory Process Package* will provide practical information primarily to **mid-level managers of forestry or natural resource projects** about how to include effective participation throughout the entire project cycle from assessment to phase-out.

As a first step a paper has been developed giving an overview of the participatory process. This paper, which is tentatively called *The Overview* is included for your review and comments. After the revision, based upon your comments, *The Overview* is intended to be the first module in *The Participatory Process Package*.

Before we go any further in developing *The Participatory Process Package* it is critically important that we hear from you, the managers and practitioners in the field so that we can build upon your experiences and respond to your needs. We would Re your suggestions as to how to include participation in the project cycle, obstacles you are facing, what kinds of materials would help you, the formats you like best, and how we should go forward from here.

In order to structure your input and to help us compare different perspectives, we have enclosed a questionnaire. We hope that you will take the time to respond to the questionnaire and return it along with your comments on *The Overview* at your earliest convenience and -if at all possible- before April 30, 1998 to:

**Helle Qwist-Hoffmann**

Community Forestry Unit, FAO  
Viale delle Terme di Caracalle  
I - 00100 Rome, Italy  
E-mail: Helle.QwistHoffmann@fao.org  
Tel: + 39-6-570 55191  
Fax: + 39-6-570 55514

We took forward to hearing from you. Please contact Helle if you have any questions about this request or any of the activities of the Community Forestry Unit of FAO.
Your suggestions for The Participatory Process Package

1. First some information about you:

Your Name:
Organization:
Project Name:
Your occupation/duties:
Mailing Address:
Telephone and fax numbers:
(H)
(O)
E-mail address:

2. If you are involved in a project, what are the project's goals as they relate to participation? If you are not in a project, what kind of work do you/your institution do to promote participation in forestry or natural resource management?

3. What has been successful in the project/institution in terms of participatory activities and strategies?

4. What are the biggest obstacles you face in designing and implementing participatory forestry or natural resource management? (Please circle and add)

In terms of human resources (staffing):

- staff not trained to implement participatory projects
- training resources and materials for training in participatory approaches
- (lack of) true commitment to participation within your institution/project/counterpart agency
- understanding the contribution of participation to sustainable natural resource management
- team building (setting and reaching goals, time management, etc)

In terms of project design:

- Folding community needs into the project objectives and activities
- Rigid project documents that are not flexible enough to take into account the local communities (changing) demands, and that lack the space to allow for adjustments of project outputs and activities accordingly

In terms of working with communities:

- identifying and working with stakeholders (understanding the roles of all stakeholders)
- addressing gender, ethnicity, equity, and other social factors
- negotiation and conflict management
• building capacity among communities to better enable them to participate in management and decision-making

• monitoring and evaluating (including selection of criteria and indicators)

• use of incentives

• adapting communication and extension methods to the local situation

• working in an environment where previous projects/agencies have paid or provided incentives for participation and by that have created that your project will do the same.

• In terms of external factors:

• policy and legislation not responding to local needs and priorities

• co-ordination with other agencies/projects/institutions working in the same area

• networking - finding ways how networking can be enhanced at all levels

• changing priorities from donors and other partner agencies (working in a changing environment)

• institutional constraints for open-agenda planning and action (e.g. inflexibility and accountability issues)
  - creating space in existing institutions for the use of participatory approaches

• Others?

5. In terms of participatory tools, which tools has your project/institution found useful?

Which tools have not worked well?

Have the project/institution developed tools that you think should be included in this set of materials on the participatory process?

6. We are considering that The Participatory Process Package will include the following types of modules. We would really value your comments on this proposal:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Module</th>
<th>Objective of Module</th>
<th>Chapters or Submodules (tentatively identified, please add)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The Overview             | To provide a pragmatic overview of participation in NRM and development, with a focus on integrating participation into the entire process | • Introduction  
• Overview of the Participatory Process  
• The Actors and Environment for Collaborative Management  
• Practical Aspects of Managing a Support Programme |
| The Manager's Briefcase  | To help build project management skills                                              | • The role of the manager in participatory projects  
• Team building  
• Staff development and training |
| Participatory Natural Resource Management Projects - From Start to Phase out | To provide information and guidelines for use in participatory natural resource management projects from needs assessment to the phase out. This module will use a self-study workbook format. It is meant to be used in conjunction with the companion manual Tools for Participatory Natural Resource Management Projects. | Needs and Resource Assessments  
Conducting a Stakeholder Analysis and Developing a Participation Strategy  
Designing the Project & Making Decisions  
Action Planning  
Project Implementation  
Monitoring and Evaluation  
Phasing out  
Tying it all together |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tools for Participatory Natural Resource Management Projects | To provide tools about how to design and implement participatory NRM projects. These tools will relate directly to the process presented in the module Participatory Natural Resource Management Projects - From Start to Phase out | Introduction and overview  
Tools which can be used in participatory NRM projects and activities  
Include participatory communication tools such as video and radio |
| Case Studies Of Participation in Action | To provide detailed information by way of examples of problems, solutions and lessons learned in participatory natural resource management. The focus of the case studies will be on problem-solving and analysis. This module will include a section on the application of case studies to training and evaluation. | Case study from the "Inter-regional Project for Participatory Upland Conservation and Development"  
Other case studies (covering different Geographic regions)  
Developing your own case studies for use in training or evaluation |
| Designing and Conducting Effective Training | To provide information for non-professional trainers on how to design and conduct  
Adult Education & Learning Theory  
Needs assessment  
Design Training |
### Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training activities for staff, community members and others.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Evaluation and Follow-up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Participation Sourcebook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To provide sources and contact information about the many resources and organisations available which support participatory management ... the catch-all of management and participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Include information on publications, multimedia materials, web sites, organisations, on a broad range of topics including:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• team building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• project management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• staff development and training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PRA, RRA and other participatory analysis techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• stakeholder analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• planning for participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• negotiation skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• conflict management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• gender analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• building local support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• tenure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how to order books from overseas (catalogues, web sites, mailing etc)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your suggestions:

Generally, do the modules presented above seem to address your needs?

Are some of the individual modules redundant?

Is something missing that should be added?

Other comments?

7. We anticipate that The Participatory Process Package will initially be available as a set of modules. Which formats of printed materials do you find to be most useful? (Please circle)

- pocket-sized field handbooks
- a boxed set of individual modules
- a set of modules held in a binder
- one large book with various chapters
- other (please explain)

8. What other types of materials do you find to be useful? (Please circle)

- text available electronically (computer disk, pdf files on internet)
- videos
- slide or filmstrip presentations
- inter-active computerised learning materials (computer disks or CD ROM)
- other (please explain)

9. We anticipate holding a workshop of practitioners who would define the individual modules and identify authors. What do you think of this idea? Would you be interested in participating in such a workshop?

10. Once the modules are drafted, they will be field tested. Would your project/institution be interested in helping with the field testing?

11. Do you have suggestions about other people to contact (name and address, phone and e-mail) and existing materials (name of publication and publisher) that would be helpful to the development of this set of materials? Please include possible authors for the modules, or partner institutions to help in the development or testing of modules.

12. What other suggestions do you have about the development of this set of materials on the participation process? Anything we have forgotten?

Thank you for your time!