



# **Public participation in the context of nuclear energy**

## *Setting the landscape for future research*

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# *Nuclear safety, A top priority for the civil society*

- The Fukushima accident has increased, all over the world, the societal awareness of the risks and catastrophic potential entailed by nuclear energy
- Nuclear safety involves very demanding conditions (financial, technical, social, political and legal)
- Can be challenged at any time and do not authorise a relaxation of vigilance.

# Nuclear safety vigilance transcends European Borders

- A wide range of government attitudes towards nuclear power in the EU
- All European concerned by nuclear safety, whatever is their position (phasing out nuclear, Maintaining or developing nuclear, having no nuclear)
- The hypothesis of a nuclear accident cannot be excluded in the EU or at its borders
- Consequences will not be limited to the State in which the accident will take place.

# Societal Vigilance to reinforce Nuclear Safety

- Disasters often result from situations of non-transparency ("A manmade disaster" Report - Japanese Parliament - 2012)
- Nuclear safety does not just involve a high commitment of the operators and regulators,
- The existence of an institutional and regulatory framework is necessary but insufficient
- Societal vigilance on the monitoring of the safety of nuclear activities is required

# “DE FACTO” Public Participation in the context of Nuclear activities

- Historically, the need for civil society engagement has been acknowledged as a result of “**de facto**” public engagement
- When nuclear issues moved out of laboratories and NPPs and irrupted into territories & societal activities.
  - In the context of nuclear emergencies and post-emergencies
  - when decision-making processes have reached the level of siting
- Narrow windows of opportunity have been created for public engagement

# “Nuclear Transparency” : different expectations vis-à-vis the public

What is the **expected role** of civil society?

- Several models with considerable differences regarding the role of the public
- **Ambiguities** on the implicit goals :
  - *Develop nuclear acceptance?*
  - *Increase public trust?*
  - *Improve decisions regarding environment?*
- Creating an “**Unsafe**” situation for Civil Society

# The contribution of the public according to the Aarhus Convention

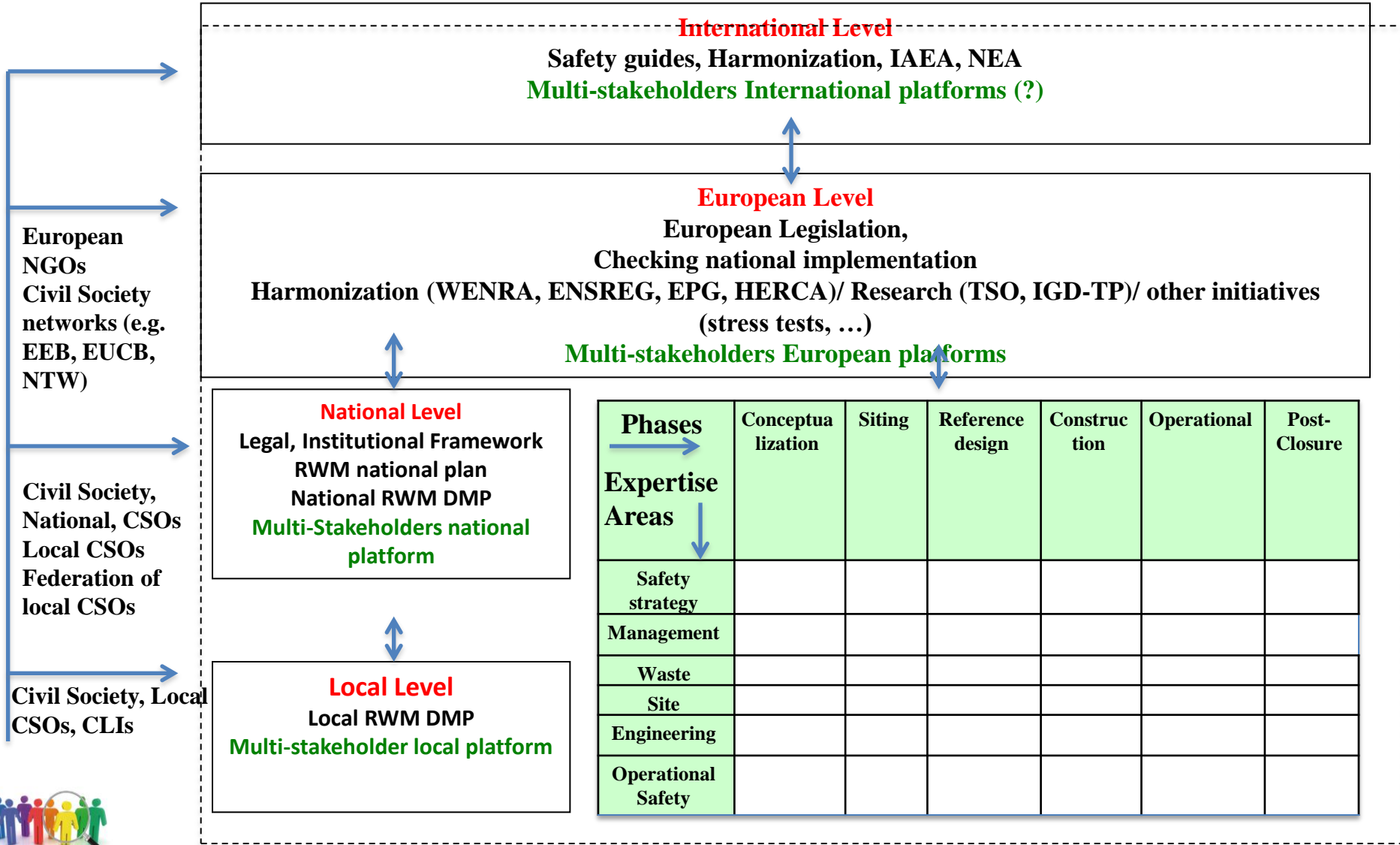
- A specific and unique expectation regarding the contribution of the public to the quality of decision-making regarding environment & health :  
***Public access to information and participation in decision-making is to enhance the quality of decisions and their implementation***
- The Aarhus Convention offers a **Safe Road Map** for implementing public participation in the nuclear context (Aarhus Convention & Nuclear - March 2013)

# Deploying a systematic contribution of the public to nuclear safety

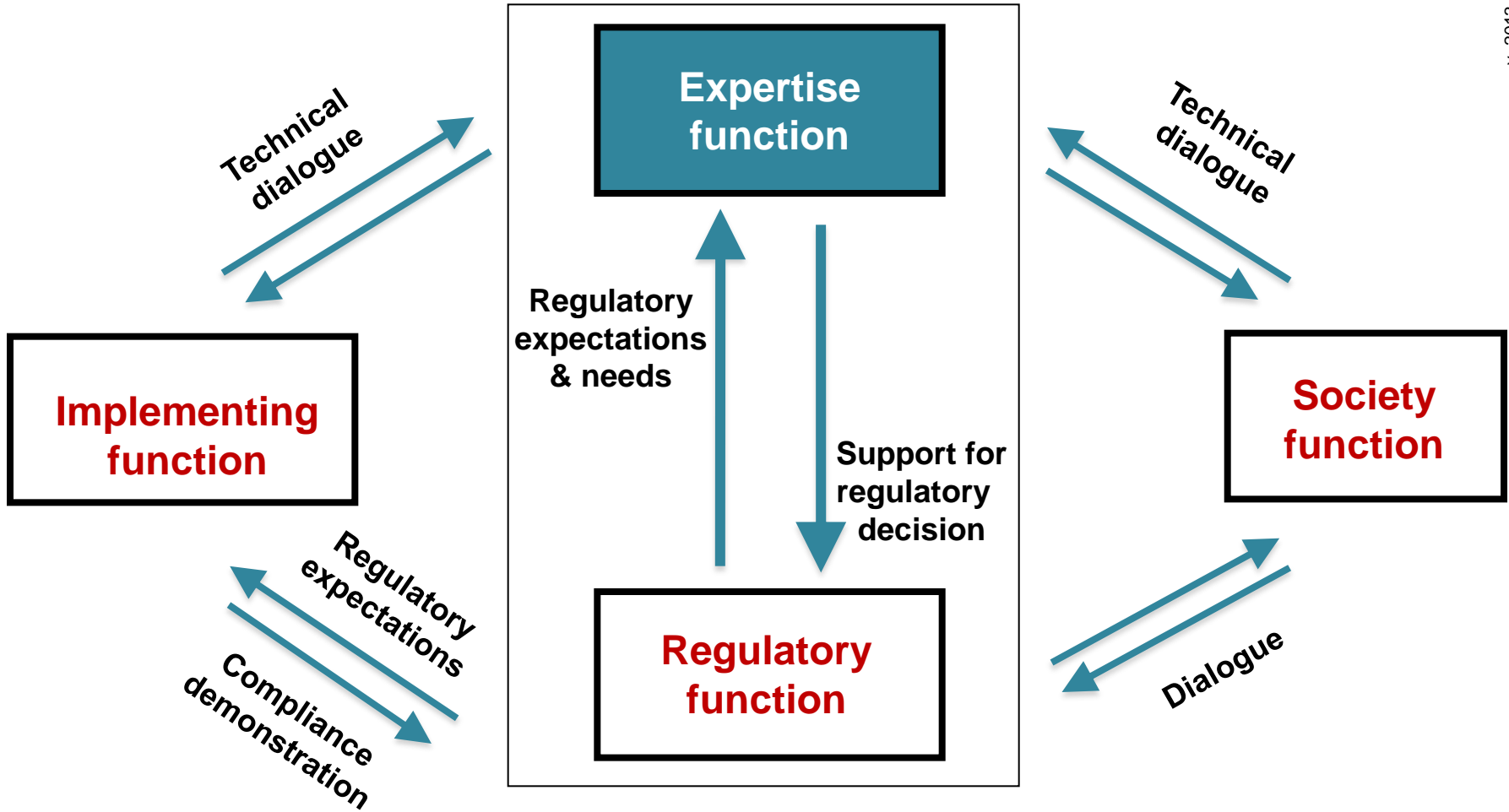
- Taking into account the specificity of each nuclear activity : safety, environmental monitoring, emergency, post-accident management, siting, decommissioning, RWM
- Public engagement all along the decision making process, at local, national or international levels
- Public access to public and independent expertise
- Moving out of traditional nuclear polarization : reinforcing nuclear safety vigilance as a common goal for nuclear stakeholders and the civil society



# Civil society multi level contribution along the RWM Decision-Making



### Regulatory body and its supporting organizations



**SITEX: the expertise function and its interactions**

## *Major challenges for the future*

- To stimulate experimental interactions between experts & society on topical nuclear issues involving high stakes for civil society
- To create conditions for a dynamic co-evolution of the relations between nuclear stakeholders and civil society
- To develop appropriate inclusive governance frameworks at local, national and European levels
- A challenge for future Interdisciplinary and Participatory research involving civil society

# Nuclear Transparency Watch (NTW)

- MEPs call for Nuclear Transparency (4/12/13)
- A network of Civil Society Organisations in Europe (EU and neighbours)
- To reinforce the public contribution to nuclear safety at national and European levels
- 1st General Assembly on 7th November 2013, European Parliament
- NTW will develop societal investigations and interactions with nuclear stakeholders and research in order to deploy public participation