

Structuring the criteria for the revitalization of the Cantareira region to assess the impact of policy instruments: an application of MACBETH process.

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Abstract

The Cantareira region located on Southern Brazil holds the most important water provision region for São Paulo Metropolitan Region and its main ecosystem service threatened are water related services. Consequently, is necessary to promote actions to diminish the environmental negative impacts mainly in the area where are located the main headwater of rivers that compose the region. A group of stakeholders that have been developing actions in the area met together in the beginning of 2012 to discuss which are the objectives to be achieved aiming to solve the several problems in the region and formed the working group (WG) for the Revitalization of the Cantareira Region, which is composed of NGOs, universities and research government institutes, municipalities, state agencies, PCJ watershed technical committee representatives, among others. The WG agreed that they had not a shared understanding about the meaning of the revitalization of Cantareira region and consequently could not identify which should be the objectives to achieve to revitalize the region. Consequently, it would be difficult to assess which could be the policy instruments most useful to help them solving their socio environmental problems. It was suggested to the WG that they could build a shared understanding about the meaning of the revitalization of the Cantareira region applying the social component of the MACBETH process, which is composed the following phases: (a) analysis of the decision context and design of the intervention process; (b) structuring the problem; (c) building the evaluation model; and (d) sensitivity and robustness analyses and elaboration of recommendations. In this study case only the phases (a), (b) and partially phase (c) were applied since the objective of the intervention was to help the WG to build a shared understanding regarding the revitalization of Cantareira region. The following activities were done during the process of structuring: the WG worked together with the help of a facilitator during two decision conferencing (DC). During the DC the WG participants expressed their main concerns regarding the problems in the Cantareira region and identified a set of objectives to solve the problems following the value-thinking approach, i.e., the criteria were structured to distinguish between means and ends objectives. The WG identified seven criteria which are: present to society the importance of the contribution areas for water production; increasing environmental mobilization in the region; development and implementation of management plans of protected areas; encouraging environmental-friendly agricultural practices; increase rural extension as a way to spread environmental-friendly agricultural practices; conserve forest remnants and biodiversity; reforest areas around the reservoirs between quota filling and SABESP property boundary. To each criteria the WG established two reference levels of impacts in order to increase their understanding and establish intrinsic levels to assess policy instruments, when necessary. The WG analyzed the results and agreed that the identified criteria could represent their understanding regarding the revitalization of Cantareira region.