

Following and trying to rectify the action is the aim of landscape processes that are devised as continuous transformations, in which the action attempts to steer current changes in the direction which may emerge from debate. But do all citizens want debate? While governments need alternative forms of exercising democracy in order to address controversial situations, it is not certain that everyone subscribes to the solution of interactive democracy. Participatory democracy is sometimes criticised by elected representatives themselves, who regard it as a deviant form of representative democracy or a muddled path liable to disrupt the political process and the place of the elected representatives of the people in political decision making.

Clearly, in the debates which accompany these experiences, having a say depends on voluntary affiliation and this raises the question of the participants' representativeness and of the pressure that category-based organisations can exert on collective debate. The question is what an activity really means when its participants are not selected in a manner that is representative of the local community concerned. This question poses many problems regarding the organisation of such activities and their social and political relevance. Like many other environmental law specialists, Massimo Morisi addresses these questions by making a distinction between various categories of policies including landscape projects, which may constitute public policies arising from deliberative or argumentative democracy, alongside public policies originating from the political world, those deriving from technocracy and those resulting from a referendum. He also introduces other questions relating to the organisation of this form of participation.¹¹⁸

Initiative is the first issue raised: the difference between a local democracy activity undertaken by a political institution and one undertaken by a residents' association is not insignificant. It casts doubt on the social validity of participation. Not all residents of a place where a conflict situation has emerged participate, but the fact that the participants are not representative can be presumed not to constitute an obstacle in itself to the circulation of information. The main aim is simply for the participation procedure to begin, provided, that is, that it is open enough. In any given locality, information circulates by word of mouth and the whole population is soon informed to a greater or lesser extent of the debates which have taken place and shown that there is

118. Massimo Morisi, *Partecipazione e governo del territorio*, Biennale Toscana del Paesaggio, 13-15 November 2008. The terms denoting non-representative democracy vary; interactive democracy is closer to the concept put forward here than deliberative, argumentative or participatory democracy.