



## Developing a diagnostic, strategic, evaluation tool to assess when participation is necessary

Public Engagement

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The mainstream literature sees participation as critical to deepening democracy and solving complex environmental issues. An explosion of literature on public participation has occurred since Arnstein's ladder of participation in (1969). However, the literature does not address the conditions under which participation is likely to work and what it can achieve in different circumstances. In order to address these questions, this paper reviews the literature on participation, learning, trust, governance and management and conceptualizes the analysis through developing the split ladder of participation. It creates four ideal typical circumstances and explains what the nature and goal of stakeholder participation is for each circumstance. This model is then tested in four case studies in Mendoza, Argentina, Coquimbo, Chile, and Alberta and Saskatchewan, Canada. This split ladder is presented as both a diagnostic and evaluation tool and is supported through the use of examples.