Companion modelling and participatory simulation: A glimpse

Simulation/games are ‘usually’ used to communicate science, such as in educational, environment or government organizations. Another developing use is to help organizations to solve problems or make decisions. Two successful and related simulation/gaming approaches, called companion modelling (ComMod) and participatory simulation (PS), have been developed over the last two decades, and constitute fairly elaborate decision-making aids and problem-solving tools. Debriefing is always an essential component.

Psychological and social aspects of simulation/games are: experience, learning, and communication. Simulation/games are essentially participatory. Stakeholders provide input, challenge the modeler’s assumptions, and become involved in the decision-making process. This can occur in the form of role-playing, which is a key component of PS. Debriefing is always an essential component.

Stakeholder-participants share collective control over the decisions that affect them. PS provides a framework allowing the participants to collectively explore and develop ideas, concepts, strategies and plans that are beneficial to them and their communities. PS tends to capture emerging phenomena and trace developing relations in regard to social, industrial and territorial demands on those resources; it can manifest powerful foresight or future projection properties.

PS overlaps to a large degree with ComMod. One main difference is that it does not necessarily involve the long process of building a complex ABM with stakeholders. PS tends to be easier to develop and implement because its design does not require as much toing and frothing.

In LittoSIM, local authorities and managers interact with a spatially explicit, coastal flooding model to discuss together about possible alternative measures and territorial adaptation pathways.

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The Mediterranean and Climate Change: Impacts, people, action
to include a 1.5-day participatory simulation with debriefing.

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Also 52nd conference of ISAGA (International Simulation And Gaming Association), La Rochelle, 2021 — dates to be announced