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Considering Vulnerability and Perspectives of Stakeholders in Energy Expansion

Negative effects of energy infrastructures on local population must be considered for sure, but they are not enough anymore. In the context of Energy Transition, considering medium and long-term scenarios of evolution of energy systems must include other relevant issues, as local impacts of climate change, that may increase local vulnerability and demand different of adaptation measures (physical, social, institutional).

Also, consider local perception, suggestions and experience in the expansion planning is critical for the analysis of alternatives of the project, for the definition of social projects, and for the definition of local adaptation strategies. This is a part of the stakeholder engagement.

Stakeholder engagement is crucially different to stakeholder management: stakeholder engagement implies a willingness to listen, to discuss issues of interest to stakeholders and, eventually, to change what it aims to achieve and how it operates. It must be considered since the beginning of the development planning until the operation phase, in a structured framework.

Brazil has been developing a framework for planning sustainable hydropower development and operation. The entire planning process to implement a HPP include some kind of social participation, either through technical meetings with the presentation of the studies (that are mandatory), or through specific social communication programs. It is important to maintain them throughout all stages of the HPP implementation (from planning to operation), especially in basins where more vulnerable people, as indigenous people are present, for example.

But issues related to climate change are not yet formally considered in the Brazilian Expansion Planning and Hydropower Planning. The methodology presented in the Paper 10163 aims to identify the vulnerable areas to climate change in order to guide local adaptation strategies. The methodology was developed to be included as a part of the Hydropower Inventory Studies of River Basins.

Although the methodology presented is already defined in terms of criteria and information to be considered, the stakeholder engagement is essential to include specific information about local population, indigenous people, basin committees, etc, that can enrich the assessment of local vulnerability and the definition of adaptation measures.

