WHY DO ONLY SOME OPPOSE?

UNRAVELING THE NETWORK OF ACTORS IN CITIZENS’ SENSEMAKING OF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

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What’s the problem

Before

After - visualization
What’s the problem

Before

After - visualization
What’s the problem

Usual responses:
- Time to think and formulate questions
- One-on-one conversations more satisfying and safe

In gas storage case:
- A way to prevent opposition from influencing others
- Robbed of their deliberative space
What’s the problem

1. Why do we see opposition in projects with ”good” participatory processes and low impacts?

2. Why do only some oppose?

3. What’s the role of the planning and participation process?
Yes, we are all individuals!

I’m not

Shhh
Theoretical positioning

• **Sensemaking**
  – Process of making sense of the world by enacting cues
  – Focus on construction and action

• **Actor-network theory**
  – Views actors as a connected network
  – Focus on dynamic constructive associations
Case

Cable project – a low impact case
Results

Compensation

Unfair preceding process

Restrictions imposed by project

Changed everyday practice

Negotiator’s actions

Current project

Restrictions on forest and land sale

Effects on neighbour

Citizen’s sense and action

Effects on neighbour

Restrictions on forest and land sale

Current project

5/27/2015
Conclusions

• Many different actors influence sensemaking and actions
  - Past experience, identity (mental models)
  - Materiality and practices
  - The negotiator
  - The current project and participation process

• Difference between citizens is due to composition and dynamic in actor-network

• The planning and participation process most often activate other actors
Implications

• Good participatory processes still important

• **But** no one-size fits all

• A need for at more holistic approach to citizens sensemaking in order to understand conflict

• The project as a part of the citizens life not the other way around.