



# River co-learning arena (RCA) methods

Country: Depending on student interests

Host institute: tbd

Online possible ? : Yes



## Project description

Participatory action research methods are becoming increasingly popular. They take different forms and shapes depending on the organisations and people involved and the context: as living labs, citizen science, environmental clinics, among others. They are seen as a way to promote co-creation and to engage a wide range of stakeholders, worldviews and knowledges in water and environmental governance. Such methodologies are also central to the Riverhood and River Commons projects. Both projects are developing River Co-learning Areas (RCA) as a novel approach to understanding pluriversal water worlds and promoting knowledge co-creation and democratisation in a bottom-up, dialogical and transdisciplinary ways. RCAs bring together academia, local communities, public and private sectors, government agencies and others to promote decolonising and disruptive methodologies and learning practices, and to support action towards ecologically sustainable and socially just socio-ecological river systems. After two years of running the projects, we aim to collect and systematise social learning experiences and innovative action research methods that have emerged from the RCA conducted by each PhD (approximately 14 research projects). A thesis on this topic could either be a desk study or involve field research (cases located in Africa, Latin America and Asia) to study specific inspiring examples. Possible research questions could include:

- How are RCA being implemented on the ground, and what is the impact?
- What can be learned from RCA, e.g. in terms of methods, challenges and opportunities?
- In what situations do participatory action research methods empower or disempower local people?
- What strategies can be used to build international bridges between different RCAs?

The overall research approach should be embedded in political ecology. Cases and countries can be discussed and explored together.

## Project details

Group: Water Resources Management (WRM)

Project type: Master Thesis

Begin date: April 2024 (preparatory phase) September 2024  
(Fieldwork – if applicable)

End date: March, 2025

Used skills: language skills of the respective country

Requirements: Political Ecology of Water (WRM31306) (preferably)

## Contact

Supervisor(s): Daniele Tubino, Jeroen Vos, Rutgerd Boelens, Bibiana Duarte Abadia.

Examiner:

Contact details: contact potential supervisors (see above)  
[bibiana.duarteabadia@wur.nl](mailto:bibiana.duarteabadia@wur.nl)