STAKEHOLDER
engagement

Participatory Approaches for the Planning and Development of Marine Protected Areas

| Understanding and Engaging Stakeholders | Getting Started with Stakeholders | Participatory Problem Solving | Stakeholders as Advisors | Co-Management Approaches |

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The role of NOAA's International MPA Capacity Building Program (IMPACBP) is to facilitate the bringing together of different MPA management models from around the world so that the experiences and lessons learned can be shared between and among regional MPA networks. Once a region is selected, a commitment is made by the IMPACBP to design and implement a 3-5 year program to build MPA management capacity through: interactive and participatory training programs around topical areas; workshops focused on program and management development; skill development; training of trainers programs; and sharing of expertise through site exchanges. Since 2009, the IMPACBP has been partnering with WWF Mediterranean on delivering capacity building programs such as the training on *Stakeholder Engagement* to the MedPAN South countries.

International MPA Capacity Building Program
NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
Silver Spring, MD USA

http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/management/international/mpa.html

Cover photo: MPA practitioners and stakeholders visiting Port-Cros National Park in France to discuss tourism management.

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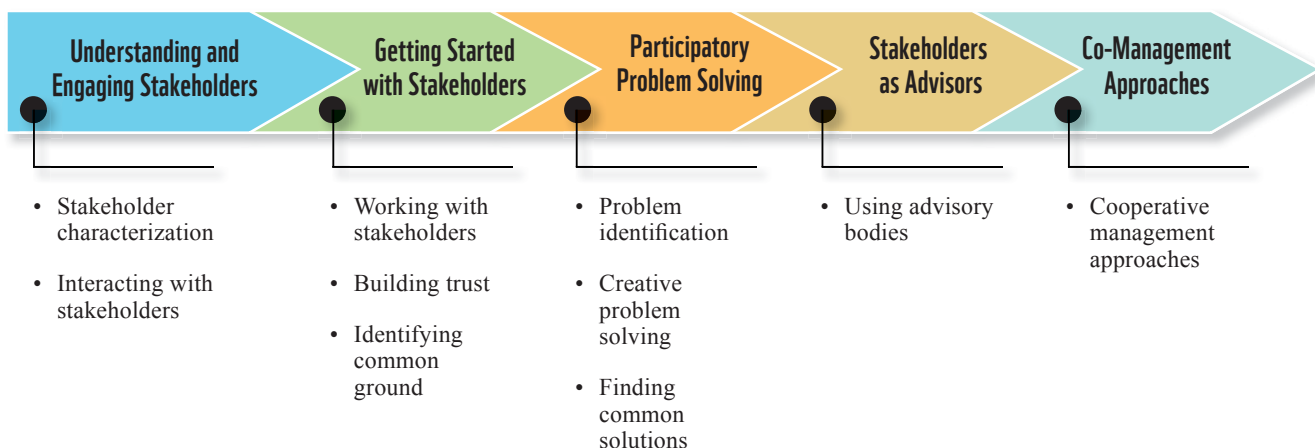© Copyright

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

Stakeholder engagement in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) can be described as a process of maturity from initial stages to more developed and self-sustaining stages. At early stages, practitioners may consult stakeholder communities as they plan, designate and implement an MPA. As the MPA development process evolves, stakeholders take a more active role, reaching consensus on MPA structure and management, and then perhaps negotiating with MPA managers to ensure their specific goals and values are represented. At full maturity, MPAs may share authority between their management body and stakeholders, or even transfer authority completely to local communities, with the MPA management authority only providing advice and consultation.

It is critical to note that the participatory engagement of stakeholders is perhaps the most important component of the planning and development of an MPA. Meaningful engagement depends on the ability of practitioners to build a healthy, lasting, and trustful relationship with stakeholders, including local communities. The approaches described in this guidebook are intended to help practitioners navigate this process of stakeholder engagement.

A series of five steps as shown in the figure below have been developed in workshops and training sessions over several years: *Understanding and engaging stakeholders; Getting started with stakeholders; Participatory problem solving; Stakeholders as advisors;* and *Co-management approaches.* Each step includes progressively greater participation from stakeholders and increasingly more shared responsibility with the MPA management authority.

Understanding and Engaging Stakeholders	Getting Started with Stakeholders	Participatory Problem Solving	Stakeholders as Advisors	Co-Management Approaches
• Stakeholder characterization • Interacting with stakeholders	• Working with stakeholders • Building trust • Identifying common ground	• Problem identification • Creative problem solving • Finding common solutions	• Using advisory bodies	• Cooperative management approaches

At each step toward increased stakeholder engagement maturity, different techniques will be required. Some techniques and/or tools may be more useful at some stages of the MPA process than others. For example, creating an *advisory body* or engaging in a *cooperative management* approach will probably not be important to focus on in the beginning stages, when a MPA manager is just beginning to work with stakeholders. At these early stages, it is more important to focus on *building trust* and *engaging stakeholders*. However, it is good to keep in mind that *advisory bodies* and *cooperative management* will become useful in the later steps of MPA development. MPA practitioners should be able to quickly reference those tools that are most useful at each step of the MPA process.

This guidebook does not provide complete details about the steps and techniques listed; those are provided in many other documents. Instead, this serves as a helpful guide for practitioners who need guidance on the steps and techniques for engaging stakeholders in MPA management.

Assumptions

Although we assume that most of the MPA practitioners using this guide will have already participated in some level of stakeholder engagement and/or participated in the *Stakeholder Engagement* Training course that should accompany this guide, we hope the organization of steps and techniques will continue to be useful.

It is also assumed that engagement between stakeholders and MPAs is a progressive process that aspires to move stakeholders and communities that are initially less engaged, to those that are highly engaged, and will ultimately take some level of responsibility for managing the MPA.

The organization of this guide assumes that MPA practitioners working with mature MPAs will already have applied many of the techniques and approaches shown at the left side of the figure above, and they provide a solid foundation from which to build a more mature MPA in terms of stakeholder engagement. As the types and levels of stakeholder engagement become more complex and responsive to management needs, so do the decision making tools and frameworks required for making multi-stakeholder participatory decisions, as exemplified on the right side of the figure. In fact, some MPAs may pick and choose the type of engagement they want with different stakeholders at different times, so the model is not always a progression, but rather provides a range of possibilities for engagement.

As stated previously, this guide is not intended to provide exhaustive detail about the steps and techniques included in engaging stakeholders in management of an MPA. Instead, it is meant to be a companion to other materials, including educational modules that provide in-depth training on how to apply each of the process steps and skills.

How to use this guide

Users should first determine the types and level of engagement, including what they want to ultimately achieve by engaging stakeholders. Techniques that are identified with earlier steps of stakeholder engagement should provide a solid foundation for moving towards more sophisticated or mature levels of engagement. When progress has been satisfactorily achieved within one phase, if there is an interest in moving forward, then review the techniques associated within the next phase and begin to apply them. You may want to develop a checklist to determine which of these need further exploration and application before moving to the next step.

Local fishermen working outside the border of Brijuni National Park, Croatia.

1. Understanding and Engaging Stakeholders

- Stakeholder characterization
- Interacting with stakeholders

So what do we mean by stakeholders? A stakeholder is basically any group or individual with a direct or indirect interest, or stake, in the resources your MPA has authority to manage. Stakeholders may include government agencies, non-governmental agencies (NGOs), local community groups, local communities and other resource management agencies.

Extensive stakeholder engagement is key for securing success in both the designation, implementation and management of a MPA. Stakeholder engagement is an ongoing process of involving interested parties in assessing, planning, and implementing your MPA. Involving stakeholders at every stage of the planning process for your MPA ensures that their perspectives, knowledge, and support are included. If they are not involved at every stage of the every planning process, at the very least they should be informed of the process and brought in at key decision-making points that may have a direct or indirect impact on them. The more buy-in from stakeholders, the greater sense of "ownership", which leads to more successful management implementation of your MPA in the long run. It is important to understand not only who the stakeholders of your management area are, but also what their relationship is to your MPA. For example, many stakeholders may live and work within close proximity to the MPA, but some will live and work far away. Regardless of their physical location, stakeholders have varying degrees of power and influence with regard to MPA decision-making. A marine-based industry with a powerful lobbying arm or a government ministry may be geographically removed from an MPA, yet may have enormous influence; while a local small business or community may have very little influence—or it may be the other way around. This information is important when identifying and characterizing stakeholders.

Identifying and characterizing stakeholders early on will help to inform your MPA management team when making decisions about which stakeholders to involve and how to involve them in the management of your MPA. Ultimately, many of the decisions about involving stakeholders are political—based on identifying both champions of your process and adversaries; and in most cases, both sides need to be at the table.

Step 1

Stakeholder characterization

GOAL: To understand who your stakeholders are as people, what their interests and affiliations are, and the best approaches for communicating with and engaging them over the long term.
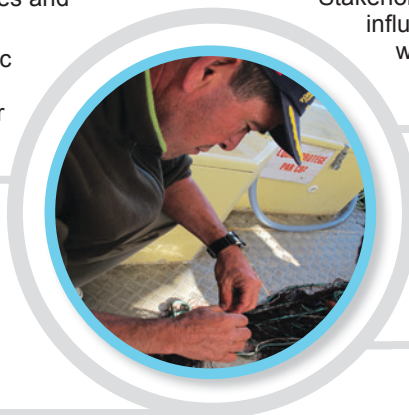
Principles for stakeholder characterization

Differences between communities and stakeholders

- The biggest distinction between communities and stakeholders is geography.
- Communities tend to have close geographic proximity to MPAs, while the term stakeholders implies a broader cast of user or interest groups.

Distinction among stakeholders

- Stakeholders (and communities) as a whole are not a homogeneous group, but rather include different interest groups, economic classes, family grouping, religious, ethnic, or other affiliations.

Degrees of power and influence

- Stakeholders have varying degrees of power and influence with regard to MPA decision-making, which is an important consideration when identifying and characterizing stakeholders.

Working with other agencies

- Building relationships with people in other agencies, and with political leaders, can strengthen projects and increase their likelihood of success.

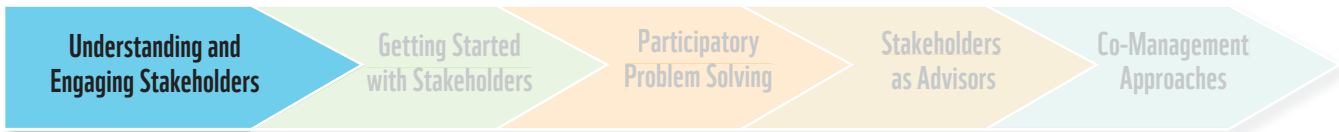## CASE STUDY: STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION IN LIBYAN MPAS

In 2011, the first two MPAs were established in Libya: Farwa Lagoon and Ain El Gazhela. However, Libya's institutional changes in recent years created delays in advancing these MPAs to an operational state. In this context, a set of basic trainings were conducted to build the capacity of Libyan practitioners responsible that in the future will manage these MPAs.

Fifteen Libyan representatives from the Marine Biological Research Centre, the Environmental General Authority, and Coast Guard participated in a training workshop on Stakeholders Engagement in MPAs. Through presentations and practical exercises, participants learned the principles of participatory planning and communication, and drafted a road map to engage stakeholders that are key for the future implementation of the MPAs. Through a facilitated discussion with the other participants, they assembled a stakeholder list, including small-scale fishermen, hunters, commercial fishermen, sand extractors, aquaculture owners, village heads, local and national administrations and authorities, environmental NGOs, international conservation groups, and universities.

The analysis of the specific interests and needs of each stakeholder group allowed managers to plan strategies that can be adopted to work with stakeholders in the future development of the MPAs.

Libyan participants to the capacity building training on stakeholder engagement.

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Step 1

Tips for stakeholder characterization

| **Identify stakeholders early on** | Identifying and characterizing stakeholders early on will help to inform your MPA management team when making decisions about which stakeholders to involve and how to involve them in the management of your MPA. |

| **Include broad interests** | Remember, not all stakeholders or community members will have the same interests. For example, what is good for the owner of a tourism business might not be good for local fishermen. A strong management partnership will find ways to accommodate this plurality. |

| **Acknowledge diverse backgrounds** | Individuals' affiliations such as clubs, organizations, churches, or cooperatives (as well as their specific sources of information such as television, radio, newspapers, or social media) help shape their perceptions, actions, and behavior; influence what people pay attention to in complicated situations, and define how people approach and solve problems. |

| **Balance participants** | Ultimately, many of the decisions involving stakeholders are political-based on identifying both champions of your process and adversaries, and in most cases, both sides need to be at the table. |

| **Encourage equal participation** | In many developing countries in particular, the role of women in coastal and marine management tends to be overlooked, although women may play key roles as stakeholders, resource users and managers. Women and men can play different but equally important roles, and there are ways to provide guidance to stimulate participation from both. |

Challenges to characterizing stakeholders

- Stakeholders, like all human beings, have different agendas and reasons for engaging in multi-stakeholder processes. Before these positions can be well understood, there is often a lot of posturing which masks the real interests and concerns of a stakeholder group.

- Many participants engaged in multi-stakeholder processes come into the process with a wide range of education backgrounds, understanding and experience in regards to engaging in natural resource management processes, which can create an uneven playing field.

Step 1

Interacting with stakeholders

GOAL: To build a foundation of mutual trust, create opportunities for sharing information, and identify areas of common interest.

Principles for interacting with stakeholders

Be inclusive

- Have systems in place to encourage equitable treatment of all stakeholders regardless of their level of engagement and irrespective of gender, beliefs, socio-economics, or other differences.

Responsiveness

- Respond to and address concerns of stakeholders in a timely manner.

Accountability

- Fulfill all commitments and promises to stakeholders in a consistent and timely manner. When not able to do so, immediately communicate back and keep appropriate stakeholder groups appraised of the situation.
- Cultivate an environment of mutual accountability between MPA managers and stakeholders.

Participation

- Ensure that the MPA's level of expectation for stakeholder engagement is consistent with the ability of those stakeholders to commit their time, their availability (which will vary among stakeholders), and their level of interest.

Effectiveness

- Use the input and knowledge of stakeholders to inform management processes.
- Create a legitimate and supportable management structure by engaging stakeholders in decision-making.

Legitimacy

- Ensure legitimacy of the MPA's authority through building awareness of stakeholders and obtaining their buy-in on the purpose and need for your MPA and the added value it contributes to marine resource management.

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Step 1
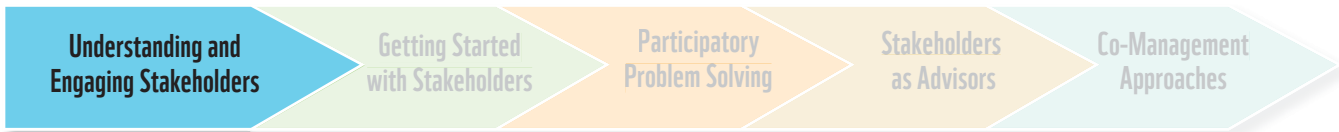
Tips for interacting with stakeholders

| **Invest time** | Building relationships with stakeholders will be time consuming, particularly during the initial stages of engagement, however well worth the investment over the long run. |

| **Build a foundation** | A foundation based on trust, transparency, and early identification of mutual interests and concerns creates an excellent starting point for a long term working relationship between MPA managers and stakeholders. |

| **Verify perceptions** | When working with stakeholders and communities, verify their perceptions of the status of the resources with independent observations to ensure accuracy of information, and vice versa. |

| **Stakeholders as MPA representatives** | Stakeholders can make excellent spokespeople for the MPA as they can serve as vital links between the broader community and MPA management. |

| **Ensure continuous engagement** | Stakeholder engagement is an on-going process and stakeholders should be encouraged to continue their engagement in the MPA through participation in management activities such as enforcement, monitoring, and outreach programs. |

Challenges to interacting with stakeholders

- When there is a history of distrust and/or conflict between a stakeholder group and MPA representatives, this will have to be addressed early on.

- Key stakeholders may be unintentionally overlooked during the initial stages of engagement in any process and may have to be brought into a process that is already underway.

- Some seemingly important stakeholders may not want to have active engagement with the MPA, yet the MPA management should make an effort to ensure they are continually informed of what is going on in the MPA.

- Some stakeholders may be more assertive in pushing forward a particular agenda than others, overshadowing important issues and the voices of other stakeholders. It is important to ensure an equitable engagement by and with all stakeholders.

Stakeholders of Algerian, Moroccan, and Tunisian MPAs visiting the Port-Cros National Park, France.

2. Getting Started with Stakeholders

- Working with stakeholders
- Building trust
- Identifying common ground

Multi-stakeholder processes, more often than not, involve divergent points of view and conflict. On the other hand, it provides an enormous opportunity for bringing together a range of vantage points, skills and knowledge for both aligning interests and innovative problem solving. Calling on the varied experience of different stakeholders, taking the time to work through an issue and consider all options and input, and inviting, rather than fearing differences, all make for richer and well supported solutions.

Multi-stakeholder process are not only about making decisions, which is usually the end point, but rather about the process to get there and the value that brings to building knowledge about an MPA and the issues it faces. It is also about building relationships among stakeholders and between stakeholders and the MPA. This establishes the foundation for building trust, and a long term, working relationship.

Participation is a learned skill on the part of individual stakeholders and depends on their ability to confidently articulate their concerns and visions and take an active role in management efforts. The stakeholders themselves may also show a range of responses in terms of their desired level of engagement. At one end of the spectrum, stakeholders may be completely unaware of what is happening within the MPA and not want to be involved in any decision-making. At the other end, stakeholders might keep fully engaged, aware of all available information, and become active decision-makers who take proactive steps in pushing for various management changes.

Working with stakeholders

GOAL: To engage a range of stakeholder interests and expertise in order to foster creative solutions to complex natural resource management issues.

Principles of working with stakeholders

Step 2

Group composition

- Ensure there is a balance of power among stakeholder groups, and they are each represented by an equal voice at the table.
- Encourage minority participation in any MPA management process, and ensure broad representation in terms of gender, religion, economic status, or ethnicity.

Appropriate representation

- Provide ample time for identified stakeholder groups to consult with their constituencies in order to determine who would best represent them in any MPA management process.
- Ensure transparency about stakeholder group selection criteria, and the criteria being used to identify any individuals you may want to include for their technical expertise.

Facilitators for the MPA planning process

- Choose facilitators who understand the issues, but do not have a stake in the outcome of any planning process.
- Make use of your facilitator to address and mediate any concerns or conflicts that arise among stakeholder groups engaged in a multi-stakeholder process.
- Encourage your stakeholder team to commit to addressing resource management issues with the intent of identifying well-supported solutions by applying agreed upon rules of engagement and protocols for decision-making.
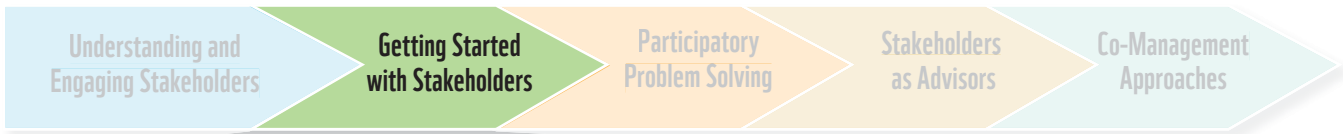
Preparing stakeholders

- All participating stakeholder groups should prepare intial position papers to ensure full disclosure about any agenda with which they are coming into the planning process.
- Ensure all stakeholder groups have equitable access to all relevant information provided throughout an entire decision-making process.
- Early in the process, clearly define the overall objective learly define the overall objective and/or outcome for any planning process in which you are engaging stakeholders, and ensure they agree to work toward achieving that objective.
- Set and communicate what the agenda, timetable, and process will be before engaging stakeholders in any planning for the MPA.

Building capacity

- If participants lack knowledge on particular issues relevant to the planning process, or necessary skills to engage in the process, provide them with appropriate capacity-building opportunities prior to engaging them in the process.
- Provide information in an appropriate format, such as in local languages and non-expert vocabulary.

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Tips for working with stakeholders

Shared ownership	Stress that the management direction of the MPA is inclusive, and considers a wide range of interests.
Quality	The process of engaging stakeholders will be enhanced if it provides an opportunity for learning, building capacity, and well-supported outcomes.
Consider timing	Be realistic about the additional time it takes to engage stakeholders in any decision-making process, and know that this engagement will become easier over time.

Step 2

Challenges to working with stakeholders

- Not all participants will be part of a unanimous decision, so it is incumbent on the stakeholder team to decide whether unanimity is a realistic target for each decision to be made.

- The level of commitment to a unanimous decision may vary among stakeholders, despite agreement. Some participants will agree with the decision because it seems the best possible, even if they don't approve. Others may agree because they do not want to be responsible for prolonging the decision-making process.

- Solutions given by a facilitator during the consensus building process can be improperly evaluated, and more appropriate solutions may be overlooked.

Building trust

GOAL: To build a foundation for taking the next step of working with stakeholders by creating an environment of mutual respect, open and clear communication, and productive partnerships.

Principles to build trust with stakeholders

Step 2

Listen
• Pay attention to what others say.
• Respect the views of others on issues and considerations.

Be fair, open, and honest
• Manage projects fairly and openly.
• Don't avoid tough issues or reduce their importance.
• Encourage discussion about issues and be honest about your views and opinions.

Empathize
• Be understanding of the circumstances of others.
• Try to understand their needs.

Share and encourage feedback
• Keep everyone as informed as possible about the project and encourage others to do the same.
• Encourage everyone to share their thoughts, ideas, and concerns.

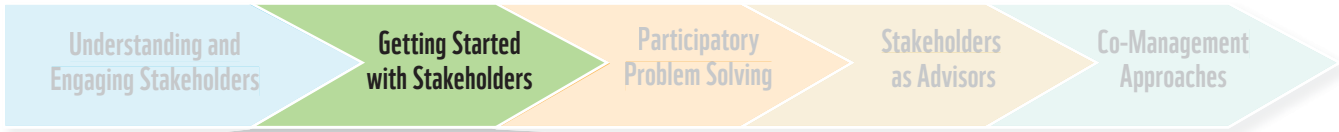## CASE STUDY: ENGAGING THE WOMEN COMMUNITY OF CAP NÉGRO-CAP SERRAT MARINE PROTECTED AREA, TUNISIA

Cap Négro-Cap Serrat is one of the priority areas for conservation identified under the Tunisian National Strategy for Marine Protected Areas. In addition, the Northern Tunisian coast is one of the most rural regions of the country. WWF teamed up with ATDEPA, the Association of Artisanal Fishermen, and ALDID, a local NGO, on a one-year project to assess the needs and concerns of local population, build their trust, and raise awareness on the sustainable use of natural resources. Community consultations and informational meetings were held involving the fishermen of the different villages. The depletion of fish resources and income helped bring out the potential benefits of MPA in supporting local small-scale fishery. Even so, concerns were voiced about future fishery restrictions and opposition against the MPA persisted.

To resolve these issues, women from the local community of Cap Négro-Cap Serrat, who traditionally play an important role in rural natural resource management, were engaged as spokespersons. Those that owned traditional fishing nets and sustainable gear were identified and a series of training workshops were organized for the other women of the area. A day-trip in Cap Négro-Cap Serrat MPA was organized for a Tunis hiking club, and a traditional breakfast prepared by local women (traditional Tabouna bread, olive oil, and fish) was offered to visitors. This visit was important to show the benefits and opportunities to the local economy through the promotion of sustainable tourism activities in the MPA.

The trust and awareness raised during these initiatives, together with the time dedicated to listen to their needs and encourage discussion about their concerns for the future, successfully disseminated ideas among the members of the fishing community and helped gain their confidence about the creation of the MPA.

Women teaching traditional methods to repair fishing nets in Cap Négro-Cap Serrat MPA, Tunisia.

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Tips for building stakeholder trust

Believe in your mission	Stakeholders trust MPA managers who are committed to what they do.
Value your stakeholders	Honor the experiences, talents, knowledge and contributions of all stakeholders.
Be reliable and consistent	Do what you say, stick to your plan and schedule, and if you have to make changes communicate early on and keep your stakeholders updated.
Be a proactive planner	Plan ahead, anticipate problems or challenges and lay out your options for addressing these early on.
Socialize	Get to know your stakeholders on their own turf. Share meals, family stories, and build an open sense of community.
Document everything	Memories are not perfect, infallible or subject to change. As such, document all decisions made with stakeholders to ensure a record and reference point that is agreed upon by all and serves as a checkpoint when looking back on decisions made in the past.

Step 2

Challenges to building stakeholder trust

- There is a history of conflict between stakeholders.

- Participants have hidden agendas that they don't disclose when coming into a stakeholder process.

- Some stakeholders dominate others.

- Important issues are not discussed.

- Participants have hidden agendas for their involvement.

- The project process is unclear.

- Participants are unwilling to compromise.

- Stakeholders do not understand the benefit of being engaged in the MPA management process.

Identifying common ground

GOAL: To find common interests and concerns among stakeholder groups and with the MPA, and based on this, define a vision for the future which serves as an early agreement milestone and brings a sense of accomplishment in working together.

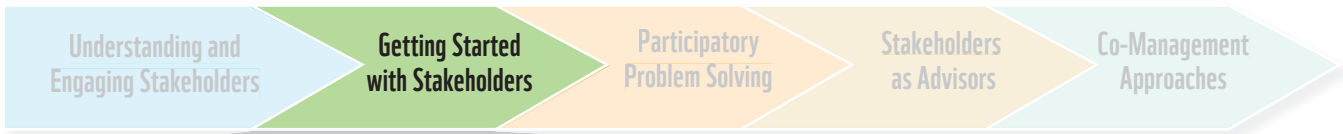## Principles for identifying common ground

Step 2

Vision statement

- Work with stakeholders to develop an "idealized" future state of the MPA (5 to 10 years ahead).
- Set a target for what could be achieved as a result of your planning process and the successful implementation of any outcomes from that process.
- Develop the vision statement using the present tense, as if you are living the future today.

Goals and objectives

- Set realistic and measureable anticipated outcomes for the future to gauge success for the actions that come out of any multi-stakeholder planning process.

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Tips for identifying common ground

Agree on desired outcomes	Evaluate the current condition of the MPA, and then define and develop a pathway to achieving the ideal state of the MPA.
Develop a clear description	When describing the future vision for the MPA, clearly describe the place, the people, the community, the condition of the natural resources and the benefits realized by both the environment and the stakeholders.
Align with values and culture	Ensure the vision of the MPA aligns with the local values and cultures of the region, and includes a wide spectrum of stakeholder interests; not only those that are politically or culturally advantaged.
Revisit the MPA vision	A vision for the MPA should be valid through the life of the proscribed management plan, usually up to five years. When the management plan is reviewed, the vision of the MPA should also be reviewed and revised.

Step 2

Challenges to identifying common ground

• When planning for the future, stakeholders may have unrealistic expectations for what the MPA can actually achieve over a given time period.

• Unrealistic and not clearly articulated goals and objectives can set you up for failure and loss of interest by stakeholders in the MPA.

Stakeholders of Tunisia and Algeria during a capacity building training workshop on Planning for Sustainable Fishing in MPAs.

3. Participatory Problem Solving

- Problem identification
- Creative problem solving
- Finding common solutions

MPAs are controversial in nature, especially those that are designed as multiple use sites, and whose stakeholders represent many divergent interests. If not adequately addressed, conflict will undermine the management of the MPA. Managers are generally wise to face the conflict by engaging stakeholders and working collaboratively towards common solutions.

The participatory approach, commonly used by MPAs, is based on the idea that with adequate investment in a facilitated process, and the willingness to take the time needed to work through the conflicts, an agreement on challenging resource management issues can be achieved between and among stakeholder groups with different interests. Conflict can be destructive however, if it is addressed and well managed, it can actually produce positive and long lasting results. Conflict can be used to uncover important differences and guide the way to positive change.

Participatory problem solving involves relationship building and may include the need for outside assistance to facilitate the process. One of the best ways to start to address a problem is to focus on the interests or principles, rather than on individual stakeholder agendas or positions. All parties must acknowledge that as many of their interests as possible must be met if the agreement is going to be sustainable. This will require innovative solutions, yet all stakeholder needs may not be fully met, so a willingness to compromise is essential. In addition to having interests met, it is very important that all relevant stakeholders are included, and that they feel like they have been heard and understood.

Problem identification

GOAL: To use a collaborative learning process that recognizes the different interests of stakeholder groups, yet focuses on identifying common and agreed upon problems that then become the focus of this creative solution-finding process.

Principles for problem identification

Step 3

Survey the territory

- Encourage participants to become familar with each other's needs, interests, and perspectives.
- Outline the background context in which a collaborative effort takes place (political, legal, social, economic).

Define the problem

- Gather and present information about the issues.
- Build a common understanding of the problem.

Build trust

- Problem solving requires a level of trust between stakeholders.
- Encourage all participants to have a say.
- The process of reaching tangible solutions should be transparent and fair.

Seek agreement

- Refine and strengthen alternatives that seem most promising.
- Look for inclusive solutions that accomodate the needs and interests of all participants.

Evaluate alternatives

- Establish a range of possible solutions.
- Evaluate alternative solutions, understanding and acknowledging how alternative solutions might affect the interests and needs of other participants.
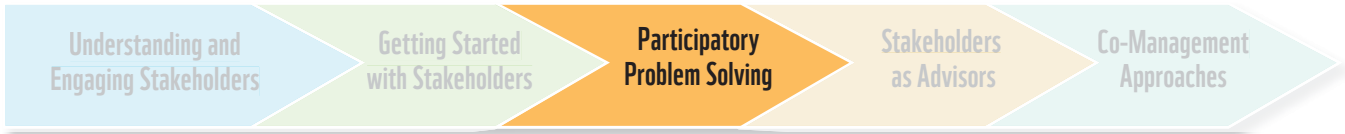
Share and encourage feedback

- Keep everyone as informed as possible about the project and encourage others to do the same.
- Encourage everyone to share their thoughts, ideas, and concerns.

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Tips for promoting problem identification

| **Be inclusive** | Include a wide range of relevant stakeholders, from community members to government officials, while keeping the team size manageable in order to reach the best possible solution. |

| **Promote fairness and transparency** | The problem solving process should be fair and transparent, allowing for all stakeholders' voices to be equally heard, all positions expressed and all issues aired, in the spirit of moving the process forward towards some resolution. |

Challenges to problem identification

• Stakeholders and decision-makers may expect a "quick fix" solution to a problem and not allow the time to consider a range of options.

Step 3

Creative problem solving

GOAL: To draw on a range of tools, techniques, ideas, and approaches provided by a wide range of participating stakeholder groups, in order to continually work towards finding creative solutions that all participating stakeholders find acceptable and supportable.

Principles for creative problem solving

Step 3

Multi-stakeholder analysis

- Examine complex relationships between stakeholders and natural resources to better understand conflict and develop solutions.
- Use multi-stakeholder analysis to examine all the interests and power differentials between stakeholders.

Interactive conflict resolution

- Avoid arguing for favorite proposals, using "against them" statements, and surrendering just to avoid conflict.
- View early solutions as opportunities for deeper exploration of differences, and what may be necessary in terms of achieving buy-in.

Conciliation

- Enlist a neutral person as a facilitator to meet privately wth each disputant and gather information to find new conflict resolutions.
- Provide the facilitator with authority to enforce process ground rules and the final decision.

Mediation

- Enlist a neutral person to facilitate a voluntary agreement between disputants.

Negotiation

- Have the conflicting parties meet face to face, with or without a facilitator, to reach a voluntary compromise.
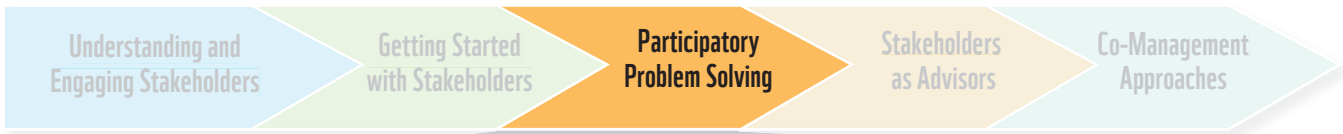
CASE STUDY: DEVELOPING A ZONING PLAN FOR LASTOVO ISLANDS AND TELAŠĆICA NATURE PARKS, CROATIA

In 2012, the Nature Parks of Lastovo Islands and Telašćica completed their management plan. During the development of these plans and specifically the designation of user zones, conflicts emerged particularly for the regulation of fisheries and tourism activities. To facilitate the dialogue and reciprocal understanding among stakeholders and to show how effective solutions were found at other MPAs, a delegation of management authorities, fishermen, and diving operators from these two MPAs visited Cabrera National Park in Spain. The MPA in Cabrera is a good example of how a multiple-use zoning plan can be developed and can provide economic benefits to local stakeholders. "Interaction with local fishermen, diving operators, and park authorities gave us new insight into what we can do in Croatia" stated Marko Frlan, diving center owner from Lastovo. Ivica Lešić, professional fisherman, changed his opinion on the effectiveness of no-take zones: "I was a strong opponent of new fishing regulations, but after talking with Cabrera fishermen I believe no-take zones might work in Croatian MPAs."

Upon returning to Croatia, participants shared their experience with colleagues and local stakeholders who were more supportive to the development of the zoning plan and regulations.

Artisanal fishermen of Cabrera National Park explaining the zoning plan to a delegation of fishermen and diving operators from Croatian MPAs.

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Tips for creative problem solving

| **Neutralize power and influence** | The process facilitator should strive to neutralize any inequitable sense of individual power and influence at the beginning stages of any process, or it will prove to be a continual challenge throughout the process. |

| **Use a facilitator** | Use a neutral party familiar with the issues to move the process forward and manage any potential conflict among stakeholders that could inhibit, invalidate or stall the process. |

| **Develop an implementation plan** | At the completion of a multi-stakeholder process, and upon coming to an agreement on a solution, immediately move towards working with the team on developing an implementation plan so that momentum is not lost or the agreement ends up shelved. |

Challenges to creative problem solving

- Conflict is inevitable, particularly when dealing with natural resource use in marine protected areas.

- Conflict can be destructive to the MPA management process if not properly handled and resolved.

- Not all stakeholders have the same goals and may not be willing to compromise.

- Attitudes towards conflict resolution can vary between cultures, and Western approaches to dealing with conflict may not be accepted locally.

- In many places, an emphasis on 'saving face' precludes even acknowledging that a conflict exists.

Step 3

Finding common solutions

GOAL: To move each stakeholder group to a common point of agreement where they all support a specific management approach that best addresses the resource management issue being considered, while meeting the management objectives of the MPA.

Principles for finding common solutions

Encourage participation

- Encourage everyone to share their thoughts and speak their minds.
- Facilitate, but do not control the conversation.
- Formulate consensus, but do not press for agreement.
- Disagreement should be encouraged so that it leads to innovative solutions, not hard feelings.
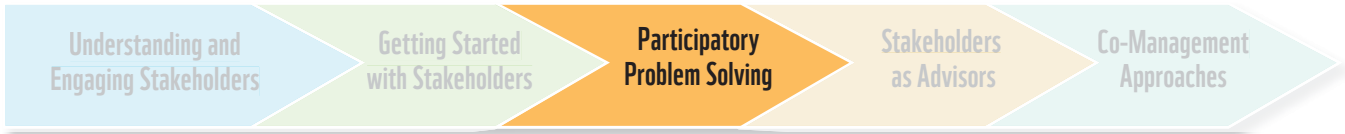- Hold additional meetings if necessary.
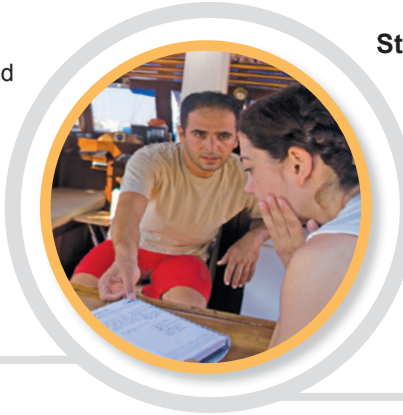
Strive for unanimity

- Urge participants to seek a solution that incorporates all viewpoints.

Avoid confrontation and criticism

- Participants should argue on a logical basis when presenting their own opinions, and address the group as a whole, while showing concern for each view point.

Step 3

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Tips for finding common solutions

Appropriate use of consensus

Consensus-based processes are most effective when the issues are of high priority, decisions are required, no single entity has complete control over the solution, the issues and interests are identifiable and negotiable, and there is enough time and resources to support the process.

Everyone participates

Every individual in the group participates, not just a vocal few.

Allow opposing viewpoints

Opposing viewpoints among participants can be allowed to exist, and each person is encouraged to speak about controversial issues.

Challenges to finding common solutions

• Not all participants will reach a unanimous decision, and people have to debate whether unanimity is a realistic goal for every decision.

• The level of commitment to a unanimous decision may vary among stakeholders, despite agreement. Some participants will agree with the decision because it seems the best possible, even if they don't approve. Others may agree because they do not want to be responsible for prolonging the decision-making process.

• Solutions given by a facilitator during the consensus building process can be improperly evaluated, and more appropriate solutions may be overlooked.

Step 3

Stakeholders from France, Libya, Syria, and Morocco during a field visit to the fish market of Kaş-Kekova SPA, Turkey.

4. Stakeholders as Advisors

• Advisory Councils

An MPA advisory body is a formal stakeholder-based advisory group consisting of representatives from various user groups, government agencies, interest groups and local communities. The role of a formal advisory body or council is to provide advice to the MPA manager and/or management authority on the operation of the MPA and/or on addressing complex resource management issues.

MPA advisory bodies are increasingly used as a way to engage multiple constituencies, with each constituency having an individual representative at the table. Advisory body members offer MPA managers a wide range of view points about resource management issues, with structured engagement offering a forum for working out the different positions on the issues in order to come to a single recommendation.

MPA managers are seeking this type of input as stakeholder views are important in terms of long term support for management of the MPA, it keeps stakeholders continually involved in the management process, and many stakeholders have a wealth of knowledge to contribute to the decision making process.

MPA advisory body or council members represent a cross-section of the communities/stakeholders that are found within and/or adjacent to the MPA. Council members might include fishers, divers, boaters, business people, NGOs, scientists and other agency representatives. Many MPA managers regard the involvement of communities in an advisory capacity, and the development of a stewardship ethic as vitally important to successfully protecting coastal and marine resources. MPA advisory council members provide expertise on the local community and natural resources, strengthen connections with the community, and help build increased stewardship for the MPA.

Advisory councils

GOAL: To develop a formal multi-stakeholder advisory body that collaboratively and collectively finds innovative and well supported approaches to complex resource management issues, and uses this as a basis for making recommendations on management solutions to the MPA manager.

Principles for forming advisory councils

Advisory council structure

• The MPA manager should keep the management objectives in mind when determining the composition of the advisory council.

Troubleshooting advisory councils

• Anticipate the potential for occasional conflict between the advisory council and/or specific members and the MPA manager.

• Communicate with other MPAs that have councils to identify and anticipate any potential challenges.

• Review relationships with specific stakeholders to better understand potential areas of conflict.

• Schedule a regular review and evaluation of the charter, and amend as needed to better suit the needs of the council.

• Engage experts in providing technical support as needed for decision-making by the council.

• If a specific council member is consistently disruptive to the council function, consider removal of that person.
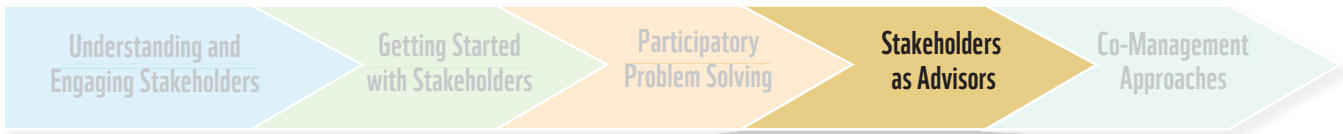
CASE STUDY: THE ADVISORY BOARD OF TAZA NATIONAL PARK, ALGERIA

Taza National Park covers 3807ha of pristine coastal mountains in NE Algeria. In 2009, the Park authority applied for the extension of its borders to the adjacent marine area (about 9603ha) and the creation of a new MPA. To ensure that the local stakeholders endorsed the creation of the MPA and could benefit from an effective management, the Park Authority was interested to adopt a participatory approach to the development of the management plan and the identification of user zones. To this end a Steering Committee was established to engage and secure the commitment of local administrations to support the establishment of the new MPA. In parallel, and for the first time in Algeria, an Advisory and Consultation Commission was established to bring Park staff and community members together in the planning process. To invite people to take part in the Commission, several official meetings were hosted within the three municipalities present within the Park boarders. The Park staff invested a lot of time in discussing with fishermen and fishing associations to identify group leaders, to be inclusive of the different groups, and to balance among potential allies and opponents.

The consultation and planning process lasted three years. Participatory planning was a new concept for all and Park staff had to facilitate long negotiations and manage many conflicts. Nevertheless, the community actively participated and contributed their ideas throughout the development process. Finally, the agreed zoning plan met both conservation and socioeconomic objectives, and the community developed a sense of ownership that will ensure higher compliance to and the implementation of MPA regulations.

Members of the Advisory and Consultation Commission discuss the zoning plan of Taza National Park.

Step 4

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Tips for advisory councils

Connect stakeholders

Use the council as an opportunity to bring diverse stakeholder groups together to work on an on-going basis as an advisor to the MPA manager on complex resource management issues.

Select effective council members

Each stakeholder group should support their council representative as the voice of that constituency, and at the same time identify a representative that works well with the MPA manager and other stakeholder representatives.

Challenges facing advisory councils

• Over time, council members may lose interest in council meetings and activities.

• Often, national laws do not allow for formally established advisory boards, which can reduce stakeholder interest and engagement.

Step 4

A staff member from Taza National Park meets with a local fisherman.

5. Co-Management Arrangements

• Co-Management Partnerships

The term "collaborative management" or "co-management" describes a partnership in which some or all of the relevant stakeholders engage with the MPA management authority in managing, in different capacities, the natural resources of the MPA. Co-management includes a range of levels of participation from stakeholders in the management of the MPA. It is a flexible concept, as many different levels of participation are possible, and the partnership usually changes over time.

Increasingly, MPAs are moving towards co-management arrangements. Co-management generally refers to a legally recognized partnership between a local community or stakeholder group (such as fishers or tourism operators) and the designated MPA authority.

Co-management is a diverse and fluid process. The arrangements and degree of participation varies, depending on the place and context. Over time, it evolves to reflect the changing needs and relationships of the partners. It is a process which values trust, democratization, and respect for the needs and concerns of all involved.

Agreements between partners may be formal or informal. They may recognize a management system which already exists, or agreements may spring from new ideas which require patience. Research shows that it can take three to five years to organize and implement new programs at the community level.

The context within which a co-management partnership develops is the policies and laws, the socio-economic environment, the history and culture, the institutions and the rules that make up the relevant social context. Obviously, some MPA settings are better suited to engender and support management partnerships than others. It will naturally depend on many issues. Each situation is unique and the feasibility of a management partnership can be examined only on a case-by-case basis.

Co-management partnerships

GOAL: To develop a formally recognized cooperative management relationship between the MPA authority and a targeted stakeholder group or community in order to make day-to-day and long-term decisions about MPA management of the natural and other significant resources.

Principles for co-management partnerships

Assess feasibility

- Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of the existing management system.
- Understand existing management authority and formal or legal capacity for engaging in co-management.
- Examine political issues, institutional context, and economic opportunities and advantages of engaging in co-management.
- Compare conservation and socioeconomic needs and expectations of potential co-management partners.

Plan co-management partnerships

- Assemble a start-up team to advance the process of developing an MPA co-management framework.
- Identify appropriate partners, and evaluate their capacity and authority for a co-management arrangement.

Process and protocols for decision-making

- Identify rules of engagement, process, and protocols for decision-making.
  - Determine administrative structure and support systems for implementing a co-management partnership.
  - Determine areas of responsibilitiy for implementation of co-management agreements and actions.

Monitor co-management progress

- Design monitoring and evaluation programs to determine if co-management agreements and actions are achieving management objectives.
- Evaluate results and document lessons learned, and communicate to partners and stakeholders.
- Remain transparent and open about successes and failures, and adapt management approaches and actions in response to monitoring results.

CASE STUDY: FIRST STEP TOWARDS A SHARED MANAGEMENT OF KAŞ-KEKOVA SPA, TURKEY
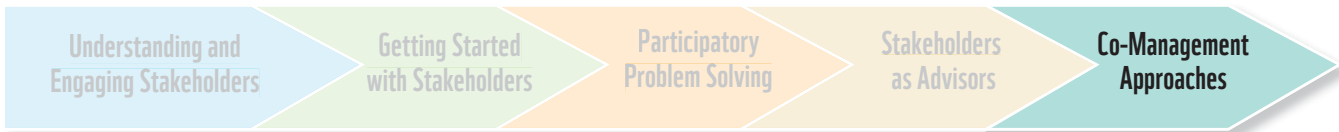
In 2009, WWF assisted the MPA authorities in developing the management plan for Kaş-Kekova Specially Protected Area (SPA), with special attention to the management of recreational activities. However, Turkish MPA legislation is still under revision and does not allow for a single management plan under which all activities are managed. As a result, the management strategies had to take into consideration several laws and regulations.

In particular, to regulate scuba diving, snorkeling activities, and anchoring, WWF and the Kaş Underwater Diving Association (KASAD), a group that includes all local operators, prepared a voluntary agreement with the local Governor. Diving operators committed to anchor in designated areas, use only those diving zones agreed with fishermen and designed according to divers' experience, and apply correct procedures to minimize divers' impact on the environment. Dive-instructors will also run a brief marine conservation course to educate divers on the MPA value and the importance of sustainable recreational activities.

The stakeholders of Kaş-Kekova SPA have taken a first step in response to existing problems and are working towards co-management of their natural resources.

KASAD members who collaborated with the management team of Kaş-Kekova SPA.

Step 5

| Understanding and Engaging Stakeholders | Getting Started with Stakeholders | Participatory Problem Solving | Stakeholders as Advisors | Co-Management Approaches |

Tips for co-management partnerships

Acknowledge cultural context	Take time to understand the cultural roots of management activities currently or formally taking place in the MPA, and move towards a management approach that identifies and merges complementary traditional and modern management approaches.
Identify benefits	Identify and emphasize benefits derived from MPA management that may not be sufficiently appreciated but could become incentives to encourage positive outcomes from a co-management partnership.
Recognize non-economic benefits	Recognize and emphasize non-economic benefits to those participating in the co-management partnership including the value of economic services, heritage value of maintaining the sense of place, and intrinsic value of a place that has maintained its natural and traditional state.
Stress positive outcomes	Profile and highlight the success stories of co-management partnerships both within your MPA and from other MPAs and areas who are also realizing these benefits.
Ensure transparency	Ensure the entire process, from initial planning phase to the implementation phase, including day-to-day engagement among the co-management partnership, remains transparent to all partners and stakeholders.
Learn from mistakes	Learn from mistakes by transforming them into knowledge through stories about lessons learned along the way. Build a learning network with other MPAs engaged in co-management partnerships, and build your own capacity through the lessons learned by others.

Challenges with co-management partnerships

- Each of the co-management partners may be moving forward with different agendas and anticipated outcomes, which will undermine the partnership.

- Some stakeholder groups may be entering the partnership without the required trust to move forward with a successful partnership.

- Stakeholders entering the partnership with more political or social power can dominate the co-partnership process, creating an inequitable outcome from the partnership.

- There may be false expectations of the mechanism(s), processes and protocols for decision making, leading to disagreements about how the co-management partnership works.

Step 5

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