Steps to success-

Working with residents and neighbours to develop and implement plans for protected areas

David Elcome and John Baines
European Committee for Environmental Education
Commission on Education and Communication

IUCN
The World Conservation Union

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The material in his publication reflects the views of the authors and does not necessarily reflect those of IUCN or the Commission on Education and Communication.

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Contents

Glossary

This glossary contains some words that are not used in this document because in reading material connected with Conservation and Consensus Building, Stakeholder Dialogue or whatever you have decided to call this solutions based approach, you are likely to come across other words that are unfamiliar.

Arbitrator
An independent third party who listens to conflicting arguments put forward by interested parties and states, which one will win.

Biodiversity
Means 'biological diversity in nature'. - the concept embraces genetic variety within a species, the variety of species and the variety of ecosystems.

Community
The individuals and interest groups that live in a locality.

Conflict Resolution
A process where people in conflict are brought together to find a mutually acceptable solution.

Consensus
An agreement that is reached by identifying the interests of all concerned parties and then building an integrative solution that maximises satisfaction of as many of the interests as possible. It does not mean unanimity, as it does not satisfy all participants' interests equally.

Consensus building
A process in which people work together on the problems to create mutually beneficial solutions. It is often referred to as the 'Roundtable Process'.

Critical success factors
Those things that must be undertaken to increase the likelihood of achieving your goals. They include getting stakeholders to agree on courses of action through encouraging active partnership and participation.

Facilitator
An independent third party who guides the way a group identifies and solves problems and makes decisions to increase the group's effectiveness. The facilitator should be acceptable to all members of the group. A facilitator has no decision making authority

Information
Data, facts, ideas, skills and opinions to be communicated between people. It must be accepted as relevant, accurate and authoritative if the target group is to consider it seriously.

Key stakeholder

The most relevant groups and individuals and likely to be the potential partners in developing partnerships for an area's conservation. Their attitudes, policy decisions and courses of action they take will be critical factors in the success of the area in achieving its biodiversity conservation objectives. They are likely to be 'highest priority' target group for education and communication.

Local Agenda 21
The actions that are planned to be taken at a local level through the offices of the local authority to help achieve sustainable development.

Mediator
A mediator is an impartial neutral third party who facilitates negotiations between the parties in an informal setting. The mediator helps the Parties to develop and reach a settlement in a voluntary process.

Negotiation
Negotiation is a problem solving process in which two or more people voluntarily discuss their differences and attempt to reach a joint decision on their common concerns. There is usually no third party involved.

Distributive negotiation is where the parties have decided in advance how much of the cake they want. It is characterised by starting from fixed positions, being closed about the underlying motives, no concern for the other party, no relationship building and no joint fact finding.

Integrative negotiation has the idea that the parties together create the cake they would like together. The starting point is from an interest in a desired future, openess, sharing motives and feelings, joint fact finding, concern for the consequences on the other and relationship building.

Participation
Participation is when individual and group stakeholders actively take part in identifying the issues, policies and solutions and in the implementation of these policies and actions by contributing their ideas, labour or other resources.

Partnerships
These are formal alliances of individuals and groups in which they agree to pool some resources and work together to achieve a shared goal. Partners are genuinely a part of the decision-making process for conservation and in programme implementation.

Round table
See Consensus building

Stakeholder
Someone who is directly affected by the issues being discussed.

Stakeholder analysis

A detailed analysis undertaken to identify the key stakeholders in an area to be targeted by education/communication programmes.

Stakeholder dialogue
The process of bringing stakeholders together to state their opinions about an issue, and work together to find a solution acceptable to all. Also called 'consensus building'.

Target group
The individuals or groups selected as the priorities for involvement in education and communication programmes, and whose participation and agreement is essential for achieving success in an area's conservation.

Training
Training, also termed *instruction*, is concerned with the development of the skills needed for active participation in planning and conservation management through programmes of instruction and practice.

About *Steps to Success*

"The most perfect solution in the world is useless unless those responsible for its implementation are committed to it." Allen Hickling

Steps to Success suggests practical ways of developing participation and partnerships. **It is aimed at protected area managers, rangers, volunteers and others who want to achieve their professional objectives with the active support of residents and neighbours**.

The publication has been prepared by the European Committee for Environmental Education (ECEE), a regional committee of the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication. It draws mainly on the experience and ideas of participants at the ECEE conference held at Mikolajki, Poland in 1997.

It describes the stages of a process which involves residents and neighbours in the development and implementation of a protected area plan. The process is known by a number of names such as *Stakeholder Dialogue*, *Round Table Discussion*, *Consensus Building* and *Conflict Resolution*. The booklet is intended to be light on background theory - it focuses on the process.

The value of participation and partnerships

People working to conserve the natural heritage have ideal images of what they would like the world to be like. While conservationists do not all share the same detailed images, they usually have a lot in common - a world in which human development and the natural environment both prosper. They share a strong desire to achieve this goal and to this end co-operate in developing strategies and work programmes at global, regional and local levels.

Conservationists often find it easier to talk to each other than to those outside their circle. Their language and ideas emphasise scientific knowledge about the ecosystem and species. They may speak of the ethics of conserving species and ecosystems. However to most outside this small circle these ideas are unknown, or not even important. Scientists, and protected area managers, believing in the power of their knowledge to convince and persuade people are often frustrated when after sharing the scientific facts people do not change opinions or practices.

The fact that there is conflict over natural resource conservation shows that not everyone shares the same image of how the world should be. Within communities, both large and small, there are competing values and interests. The result is that groups try to promote and achieve their own particular goals. At a local level, those trying to safeguard protected areas are one of those groups. If their goals are to be achieved, they are likely to need the support and consent of other interest groups.

This publication suggests some of the ways in which consensus can be earned, *because earned it must be*. In these days of Local Agenda 21, more and more people are demanding to be involved in decisions that affect them. However good a conservation plan might be, it is not likely to be accepted without this involvement. Those with responsibilities for developing and implementing protected area plans need to be skilled communicators and mediators. This short publication starts to show you how.

What is participation?

Participation is a general term that is used to describe involvement of groups and individuals in the decision-making process. The term is capable of wide interpretation and levels of participation similarly vary. This is represented on the diagram below.
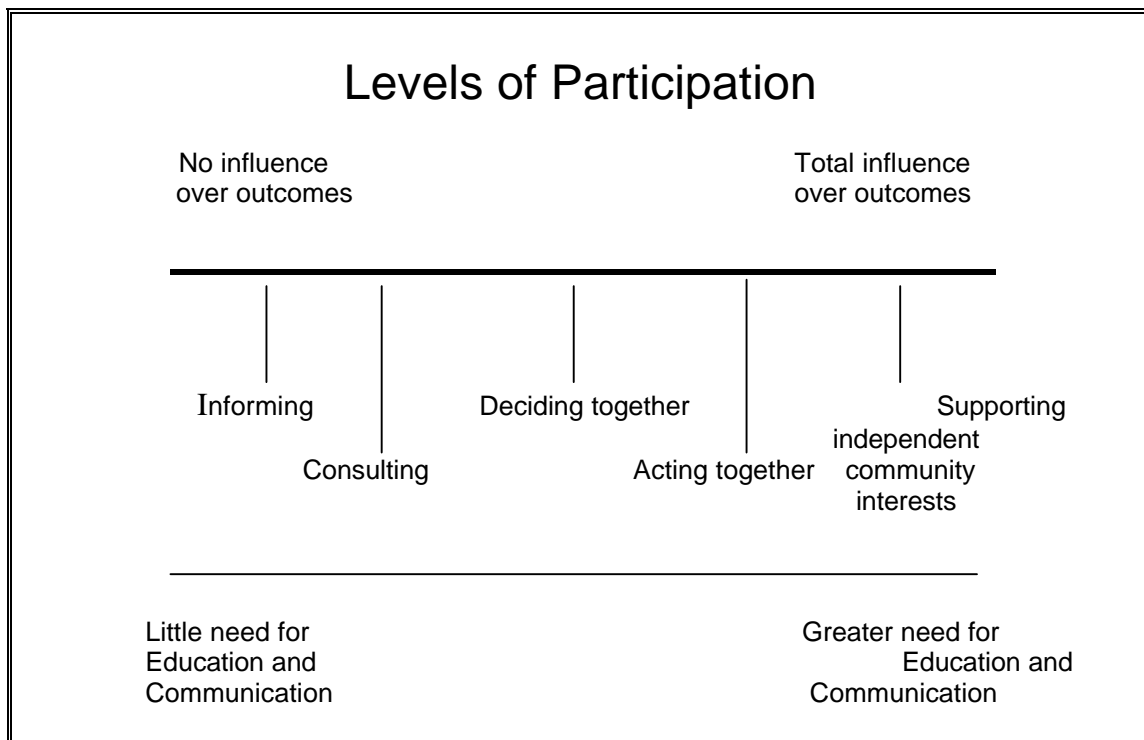
Figure 4 - Levels of participation

- *Informing* is the lowest level of participation. Groups and individuals receive information about proposed actions but have no opportunities to change them. The purpose of the information is usually to persuade others to the project leader's point of view. This is more akin to manipulation or propaganda and represents a 'top-down' approach to decision making in conservation.

- *Consulting* is one step up from informing. Local communities, other key stakeholders and organisations receive information about a project or plan and their views on it are sought. The views of those consulted are usually taken account of when the final plan is drawn up.

- *Deciding together* is when those affected by an issue are invited to learn about it, discuss it and become part of the final decision making process. Although they

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share in the decision making process, those initiating the discussion usually set boundaries on how much influence the other stakeholders have in the final decision.

- *Acting together* is when as well as sharing in the decision making process, the responsibility for implementing the decisions becomes a shared responsibility.

- *Supporting independent community interests* is the highest level of participation, communities become responsible for setting their own agendas and implementing the decisions they take. The role of experts is to support the community with information and expertise so that they can take informed decisions. This represents a 'bottom-up' approach to conservation.

Disagreement by design

Environmental problems are notoriously complicated, with people holding many different points of view and believing in them very strongly. Conventional decision-making mechanisms tend to exclude rather than include diverse interests and do not cope well with complex issues. This is characterised by a government or park management authority consulting a limited group of people before deciding on the policy, or management plan. They reduce the chance of finding solutions because they encourage conflict by:

- Forcing people into entrenched positions.
- Making one group suspicious of the motives of another.
- Creating winners, losers and divisions within communities.

This approach has often been summarised as **Decide, Announce, Defend**.

Agreement by design

Consensus-building, or whatever you wish to call it, encourages interested parties to bring together their diverse knowledge, expertise and wisdom, to resolve existing problems and prevent new ones. People become partners in the solution.

The process is designed to confront the issues you need to resolve rather than the people with opposing views. It allows time for trust to build up between the participants so that they all feel part of a team seeking solutions together. Reaching agreement becomes the responsibility of the participants. This may not always be possible, but this is not a good reason for failing to try.

This approach is often summarised as **Discuss, Agree, Implement**.

A scenario

You are helping to manage a protected or similar area. The local residents and neighbours are not quite sure how they are going to be affected, but are rather suspicious. Many rumours are going around. There is an underlying feeling of hostility among many. There are divisions in the community about the designation. Some will

not believe anything you say because you are part of the system bringing changes. However, you need the support of local people if conservation goals are to be achieved. How can this be don? This booklet should help.

Part Two - Participation and Partnerships

Guiding principles

➢ *Involve people early*

People are more likely to participate if they feel they have some influence over what will eventually happen. Involving people at the outset of a project provides them with a greater opportunity to influence the outcomes. That does not necessarily mean they set the agenda; they help shape it with you.

Ability to influence outcomes

100%

The earlier people are involved, the more opportunity they have to influence the outcomes

Time
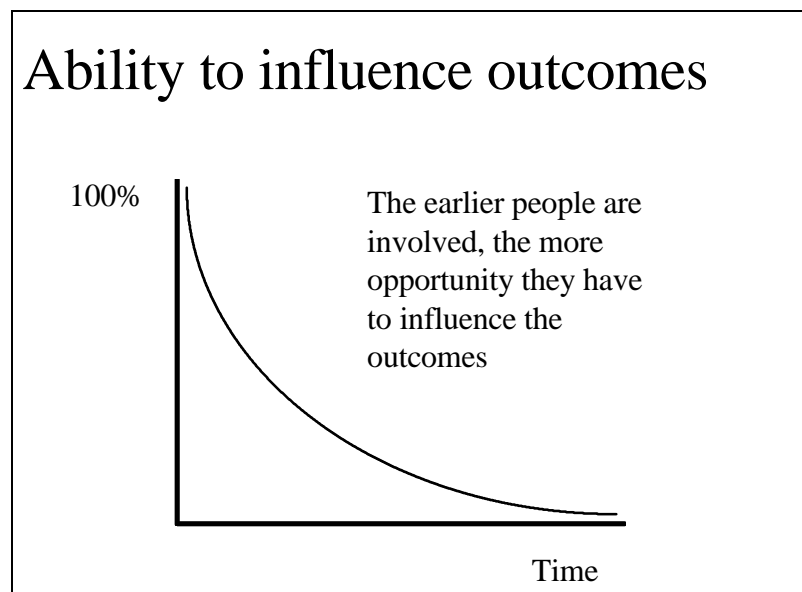
Figure 1 - Designing for agreement

➢ *Communicate*

Communication should be a two-way process rather than a top-down, one-way communication. The opinions of others are listened to, valued and a shared meaning is sought. As a result of communication, knowledge of an issue is improved and there can be a convergence of opinion on an issue.

Expert opinion is available to participants, but it is there to inform not to control the outcomes. One way of putting it is *Experts on tap, not on top*. Experts will have to learn new roles as communicators, teachers and advisers and will need training to carry out the role effectively.

Why communicate?
- reduce risks of failure
- clarify the problem
- identify interests & benefits
- develop a shared meaning
- prevent rumours
- allay unnecessary fears
- reduce hostility to a scheme
- build on local knowledge and experience
- build support for a project
- encourage participation
- clarify who does what when

> ### *Provide information and education*

The more influence people have over the decisions that affect their use of the environment, the more important it is for them to be aware of the implications of their decisions - both for themselves and the environment. Providing information and education in appropriate forms helps people make decisions based on a sound understanding of the issues involved.

> ### *Allow lots of time*

Good participation takes time, especially in the early stages of a project. It is important to give a lot of time at the start to build up relationships, explore the issues, collect the data that people need, communicate information and ideas and consider possible solutions. You may think it is taking a long time to get going, but it does mean that once decisions are taken, everyone consents to the project going ahead and it proceeds quickly. The project itself is much more likely to succeed in the long term because it has taken account of local feelings and local conditions and enjoys the support of local people.

> ### *Build in flexibility*

Most projects need to evolve as people's understanding of a situation evolves, as more information becomes available and various solutions are explored. While plans are essential, they should not be so rigid that they cannot change. Build in periodic reviews which recognise that change will be necessary. However, any changes will need to get the consent of all those who consented to the plan in the first place.

Methods that help achieve participation and partnerships

This section describes how to go about interesting residents and neighbours in conservation and shows how to encourage partnerships between the various interested parties or stakeholders. It is divided into the following phases:

1. Preparation
2. Discussion
3. Agreement
4. Implementation
5. Maintaining the momentum.

Within each phase a sequence of actions is described. These are presented in a.logical order, but you might like to use a different sequence or so some things concurrently. Do what you find works for you.

Phase 1 - Preparation

During the first phase of the process you get yourself ready. You learn about the process and its implications for your style of working. You will be asking others to make changes in how they behave and how they work, so it is only right that you should be aware that you might need to change as well.

➢ Is there a problem?

It is common for proposals for conservation of nature and natural resources to be resisted. They are often perceived as unwelcome restrictions on the freedom of people and companies to develop the environment, create wealth and improve standards of living. An organisation or individual that wants conservation to succeed will need to be prepared to handle the likely opposition and conflict that will arise and work with it to find solutions that all can accept. Recognising there is a problem is the first step towards a solution. Recognising you do not have a monopoly on knowing how to solve the problem is the second.

➢ Know yourself

We all try to find ways of working that we are comfortable with. However, the approach advocated by this booklet may be unfamiliar and it can be threatening to be exposed to unfamiliar situations. Being forewarned can help reduce the stress of the situation. Try answering these questions truthfully, and consider if you might need to make some changes too.

Question	Yes/No
1. I like listening to alternative ways of doing things.	
2. I expect other people to accept my opinion when I know more than they do about a subject.	
3. I enjoy arguing my point.	
4. I celebrate diversity of opinion as much as diversity in the environment.	
5. I accept change as part of life.	
6. I like situations where I can be flexible.	
7. I respect other people's opinions, even if I disagree with them strongly.	
8. I can accept that I am sometimes wrong.	
9. I do not believe you can compromise on environmental issues.	
10. I do not like uncertainty.	
11. I lack confidence in unknown situations.	
12. I accept that people need to use nature's resources.	
13. I can accept decisions which I do not necessarily agree with.	

Figure 2 - Self questionnaire

If you replied *Yes* to questions 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13 and *No* to the others then you should be able to work well with this approach.

➢ Know what you want to do

Clarify your aims and objectives. Know precisely what you want or are required to achieve and when you want to achieve it by. This represents your bottom line. You can then make it clear what you are and are not able to negotiate. For example, while the maintenance of biodiversity may be your non-negotiable goal because the law requires it, how that goal is achieved could well be negotiable.

➢ Know what you can do

You will need to know how much authority you have to negotiate and agree alternative ways to achieve your objectives. Check with your supervisor, steering committee or other supervisory body.

Aim/Objective A/O	Negotiable Y/N	My "bottom line"	Authority to negotiate change, Y/N
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

Figure 3 My position

➢ Learn to see things from other points of view

Conservationists want to change situations so that conservation of the environment is safeguarded. As an expert there is a tendency to feel that you know best and as a result may not understand other people's points of view. It is helpful to write down your own experiences of being on the receiving end of someone else's changes, when they felt they were the experts. What were the factors that persuaded you to accept some changes sometimes but not others? Armed with this knowledge, you can adopt the successful approach.

Why I accepted change	Why I resisted change
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.

Figure 4 - My response to change

Phase 2 - Discussion

➢ Inform yourself

It helps to know the area, the people and their hopes and concerns before developing long term strategies for a protected area. What you learn can give an indication of what problems and potential conflicts are in store and will probably modify ideas for your plans for the area. Local people also have a wealth of information on the area and its resources. Below are some methods to 'listen' to community and other stakeholder opinion.

1. *Standardised questionnaires* are useful for obtaining general community opinion. People are asked to answer a set of questions. It is not economic to ask everyone, so a sample has to be selected. Questionnaires can be sent in the post, used at visitor centres, shopping centres, etc.

2. *Casual group interviews* are casual conversations with groups of stakeholders in their normal surroundings. The interviewer needs to have a good idea of the information they wish to gather, but there is no formal set of questions as such. Open-ended points are raised in conversation on topics relevant to achieving the conservation objective. The technique carries the risk that the people engaged in conversation may be suspicious of newcomers or outsiders and, therefore, they may not give frank opinions.

3. *Focus Groups* have a dozen or so people to discuss a specific issue. Stakeholders are selected on the basis of their having a common background - e.g. local farmers, members of a hunters' association, etc. The purpose of the exercise is made clear at the outset. Several pre-set questions provide the focus for the discussion. The person carrying out the interview needs to be experienced, well informed and

possess an excellent ability to digest and make use of the information provided. The conversations can be recorded and transcribed.

Stakeholders

When there is a proposal to designate a protected area there are many groups who have an interest in the decision. These groups are usually referred to as stakeholders. The following questions may be asked to help identify the key stakeholders:
1. What are people's relationships with the area - how do they use it?
2. What are their various roles and responsibilities?
3. In what ways are they likely to be affected by any conservation initiative?
4. What is the current impact of their activities on the quality of the area's environment?
5. How are their current activities likely to be curtailed, modified or supported if the features of the protected area are to be effectively maintained?

Key individuals with influence on the protected area might include**:**
- minister & director of other land and resource management authorities
- the leaders of the local community
- landowners and home owners
- occupiers, including practising farmers and those renting property
- business managers and the work force involved in particular economic activities such as water supply, forestry and mineral extraction
- protected area planners, managers and their work force
- representatives of those who organise or influence visitors (e.g. NGOs) to the area for leisure and recreational pursuits such as anglers; hunters, walkers, campers, canoeists etc. Their 'behaviour' has a major potential to damage biodiversity through facility development, disturbance, trampling, etc.

Are you sure you have identified and contacted all the interest groups?

These are not only those who are well organised, vociferous and seek you out. Some people may not have the financial or organisational resources to form an effective interest group and you might need to offer some help to enable them to participate.

➢ Communicate and educate

The communication should not all be one way. Find out what the other groups want to know and be as open as you can with the information you have - it helps build up trust between you. For example, people might like to know:

- Will they be evicted from their homes?
- Will they be prevented from using farm chemicals?
- Will they be able to build a new farmhouse?
- Will they be able to fell trees for fuel and building work?
- Will they receive grants for planting trees?

Many of the questions you may not be able to answer - you may want the local groups to help you make those decisions, but answer as truthfully as you can and ask questions as well. This two-way communication can help clear the air of misinformation and help identify the hopes and fears of both the community and the project leaders.

➢ Find areas of agreement

You will probably find that there are areas of agreement between many of the interest groups and between yourself and the interest groups. These may be very general such as everyone wanting a pleasant place to live, or all wanting to find employment in the area. These are positive things that can be built on. Being aware of areas of agreement and disagreement is part of the preparation for finding solutions. Use a table like that below to analyse the situation.

How do I communicate?

As project leader you will need to identify the most appropriate forms of communication and prepare a communication plan. This will help you to avoid making mistakes in timing and in choosing the appropriate means and to whom the communication should reach. You will also determine appropriate means of communication according to whether you are making people aware of the issue, developing plans, or supporting implementation.

Think through what you are trying to communicate and why before deciding on what means you will choose.

Internal communication within the team is also very important so that everyone knows what to do, is clear about the situation, what to say and tasks to be done.

Points of agreement between aims and objectives of local people and the project	Points of disagreement between aims and objectives of local people and the project
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Figure 5 - Finding areas of agreement

One way to find areas of agreement is to encourage people to think about the future. What sort of future do they want in five or ten years time. Compare this with what

kind of future they expect to have and the causes of any differences. By looking at the long term, people are taken away from the immediate problems that separate them and often find common goals.

Use all this information to carry out a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats analysis on the aims and objectives of the project.

- *Strengths* - those items that are within your direct control that can help you achieve your aims and objectives.

- *Weaknesses* - also in your control, but hinder achieving your aims and objectives.

- *Opportunities* - those things outside your direct control but which are supporting your aims and objectives.

- *Threats* - outside your direct control and hinder your ability to achieve your aims and objectives.

Strengths	Opportunities
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
Weaknesses	Threats
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Figure 6 - SWOT analysis

Phase 3 - Agreement

The third phase of the process of encouraging participation and partnerships is to bring people together to exchange points of view and plan the future together. The first meeting will be a formal occasion, but should not be so formal that participants feel uncomfortable or threatened by it. Being conscious of building relationships between people start the process with an informal event, drinks, or a meal together so that they can meet each other informally before the meeting. How many people is it appropriate to have at the meeting? How many meetings, how often they take place and other

detail will be decided in the meeting itself. It is most unlikely that one meeting will be sufficient.

➢ Negotiation styles

Negotiation is the means to the result. How the process is managed can determine the success of the outcome. Negotiation may be distributive in nature, where each aims to have as much of the cake as possible, or integrative negotiation, where each party seeks to create a cake together.

Distributive negotiations start from fixed positions to which each group wants to hold as tightly as possible. People ask for too much knowing that they have to give something up.The negotiators are closed about their underlying motives and personal feelings. Threats are common, the constituency is kept alert with actively distributed images of the bad enemy.

Integrative negotiations start from an interest or an idea about the desired future. Understanding of the issues best comes from involvement in critical reflection. People are more open and try to share their feelings, beliefs and motives. Threats are minimised, keeping relationships as good as possible. Joint fact finding is common. There is concern about the consequences of a discussion on the other. Most important people are learning; learning to see themselves from the position of the other and over time relationships are built up. Such learning processes are absent in distributive negotiations. However the process is difficult and fragile as attitudes belonging to old situations are strongly embedded in social interactions.

Distributive negotiation	Integrative negotiation
Focuses on getting a share of the cake	Focuses on designing the cake
Starts from fixed positions	Starts from an interest in a desired future
Becomes very charged	Remains calmer
Underlying motives and feelings are hidden	Motives, feelings, beliefs are shared
Threats are commonly used	Threats are minimised
There is no joint fact finding	There is joint fact finding
There is no concern for consequences on others	There is concern for consequences on others
There is no focus on building positive relationships	There is a focus on building positive relationshops
Stereotypes are maintained	Stereotypes are broken as people learn to see themselves from the position of the others

Figure 7 - Comparison of distributive and integrative negotiation styles[1]

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[1] Based on table in Cees van Woerkum and Noelle Arts: Communication between farmers and government about nature: a new approach to policy development. Facilitating Sustainable Agriculture Cambridge University Press.

➢ Choose a venue and plan the layout

If you are having public meetings or group meetings choose a venue that is able to accommodate comfortably the number of people you expect to attend. You may wish to avoid using premises that belong to one of the groups, as it might be seen as favouring their particular point of view. Public meeting rooms are preferable.

If you are not sure how many will attend, put out a limited number of chairs but have others stacked around the room for use if necessary. The arrangement of the room is also very important. Avoid seating plans that are confrontational or imply an 'us-and-them' situation. Choose ones that suggest equality such as three-quarters of a circle. This still enables people to see the writing on flip charts, slides, etc that may be used. If tables are needed, then keep them separate rather than having them arranged as one big table. The round table may be an exception.

Should I appoint an independent facilitator?

As the project leader you are one of the stakeholders and therefore not impartial. It may be best to have an independent facilitator who is acceptable to all parties helping to plan and manage the process. Their impartiality and professional skills increase the chances of a successful outcome to the process. They will be involved in planning the process, choosing the venue, agreeing the ground rules and the agenda. Once the main discussions start they will make sure the ground rules are kept, the agenda is kept to, the momentum is maintained and schedules kept. They will handle those difficult moments that will arise leaving time for the project leaders to listen, learn, contribute, reflect and respond. This is a skilled job, so use people who have received special training and have a good reputation.

➢ Design ways of working together

If people are involved in designing the process by which decisions about the project are made, they are more likely to be committed to it. Be as flexible as you can so that people feel able to make their contribution. For example, you may need to hold several introductory meetings throughout the region because people are not able to travel easily to a central location. You may need to hold a series of meetings so that progress can be made a step at a time. If possible, do not rush. Given time, trust and agreement can develop.

Can I set any conditions?

As a stakeholder, you have your aims and objectives and have the same rights to make conditions as all the other participants. Also, if you are the convenor (and therefore usually paying for the process) you are able to set certain boundaries for the decisions that are made. For example, you may not be able to change the objectives you have to achieve, but you may be able to change how you achieve them.

➤ Design the decision making process

Within the overall process how decisions are made has to be addressed. As project leader what you need is consent to a plan and a programme that enables you to achieve your objectives, in other words while not everyone might agree with the plans, they are willing to allow them to proceed. Other groups also want to achieve their objectives. Ideally you want to devise a process which encourages solutions in which everyone wins.

➤ Agree the Ground Rules

Getting everyone to agree a set of ground rules for the discussions shows that agreement can be reached and sets an example for the more difficult areas of discussion later. Everyone should be able to contribute to them. It is probably best to start with relatively minor points such as:

- smoking in the room
- breaks for refreshment
- names by which people wish to be called.

Then tackle more difficult ones such as:

- how long people can talk
- how to show respect for other people's opinions
- how confidential the discussions should be

and so on.

➤ Agree the agenda

How do I handle the press?

The press is a stakeholder and is likely to be interested in what is happening, especially if there is a lot of controversy to make a good story.

Relations with the media should be considered as part of the process. A decision often made in these cases is that the press are not allowed into meetings but that a press release agreed by everyone present is given them after the meeting. Individuals agree not to give interviews or release their own press release.

It is important not to antagonise the media because later you will want them to publicise your successes! Involve them in the process.

Everyone also needs to contribute to the formation of the agenda so they can be certain there will be time for them to make their point. Time limits should be set on the agenda items. They should only be exceeded with everyone's consent.

➤ Describe the issues, air opinions and listen

Groups are allowed to make opening statements. In this they normally state:
- what they want to achieve, and
- their bottom line.

A maximum time for each contribution should be agreed beforehand. This will help each group plan its contribution. The project leaders will probably start the process. Be open about the aims for the short term and the long term and what is negotiable and what is non-negotiable - keep the latter to a minimum.

The facilitator or facilitators will manage the process and the participants. He or she will be making sure the participants confront the issues rather than each other! During this time listen and learn: be open to new solutions, ideas and suggestions. Show you value what you hear by responding positively. That does not mean you agree but that you recognise the validity of what is being said. Note and recognise the areas of agreement and think how you can build on them. The facilitator will be trying to create a positive atmosphere and you should assist this. This will help in the search for solutions.

➢ Brainstorm solutions

Once the issues have been explored fully and the actual and potential problems identified, the process moves on to finding solutions. Brainstorming is often used within a group situation to draw out thoughts and ideas about particular issues. All members of the group are encouraged to contribute. It can generate fresh thinking; point-up conflicts and stimulate discussion whereby a consensus can be reached. It can be particularly useful as a technique to encourage partnerships with key stakeholders.

Collect ideas from people without any discussion or critical comment of them. Make the process rapid within 5-10 minutes. Record all ideas on a flip chart or cards and only allow questions of clarification at the end.

How do we record the proceedings?

This can be decided by the group. A popular way is to have a rapporteur who records things on a flip chart. What is written can be challenged by the group and amended until it is agreed. When one chart is finished it is stuck up on the wall. At the end photos of all the sheets can be photographed and made into a photo report.

Another way is to record key ideas on cards and pin them to boards. This allows all members of the group to put in their ideas. The ideas can be clustered according to similarity of ideas in a process discussed with the group. Clusters are given a heading. The more visual the process the easier it is to keep a track of proceedings. The more all are encouraged to put in their ideas the easier it is for the group to feel a part of the process.

If any need further clarification do so before they are discussed in more detail. Cluster or prioritise the ideas for the solutions in terms of feasibility. Get people's consent to the solutions. Not everyone may agree, but they may allow the proposals to go forward without objection. Once a number of possible solutions or ways forward have been identified, it is possible to think about which is the best solution.

➢ Agree the solution or way forward

The possible solutions can be explained and discussed in more detail. It may be possible to withdraw some at this point. However, you are likely to be left with several and a method of deciding which is the best solution needs to be made. The facilitator will have thought about this and will have suggestions for participants to consider. It may not be possible to agree the best solution because more research may be needed. Representatives of groups may also need to return to their constituencies to test the possible solutions with them.

How do we agree which solution is the best?

Avoid people having to raise their hands, or make any other public display of which solutions they favour. All the possible solutions or ways forward should be recorded on one or more flip chart sheets. People can then be given 3 sticky dots to place against the three solutions they think are the best. They can of course choose their own solution. To avoid someone placing all their dots against one solution, you can put numbers on the dots - each person has three dots with the same number on them.
This gives people time to think about their choices and gets people moving around.

Once the best solution has been identified, it is time to work out how to implement it by making a plan.

➢ Prepare a plan and build partnerships

The purpose of inviting everyone to participate in learning about the issues and looking for mutually acceptable solutions is that they will want to share in developing the plan and implementing it. In other words becoming partners in the solution. Nothing will happen unless the commitment is turned into a practical plan of action. The facilitator will probably be needed to help with the development of the plan and getting the necessary commitment from the stakeholders for implementing it. Action plans will need to

The behaviour of representatives?

Representatives have two possible roles.
1. To promote the interests of their group. In this role they tend to keep quiet until decisions are being made and then make a fuss.
2. To act as agents of change, bringing change to their own group and other groups. In this role they are much more engaged in the discussions that lead to the decisions. This is a much more positive role and should be encouraged.

cover objectives, targets, responsibilities, resources and evaluation. Objectives should be measurable so that you can see how well the plan is working.

Phase 4 – Implementation

The time has come to implement the plans. Not all the groups may be involved at this stage, but you might wish to arrange to keep them informed with regular progress reports.

> ➢ Monitor, report and modify

Communication of progress is essential so that those who participated can see that their involvement was worthwhile. It should also help maintain their support, especially when there are difficulties. Procedures should be agreed for:
- monitoring performance
- reporting it
- responding to the results.

Some reports might be for limited circulation amongst the participants and partners; others might be available publicly. It is important to agree with all the stakeholders what information can be made public (*see* How do I handle the media?).

> ➢ Communicate & celebrate

The people you are working with are representatives of larger interest groups and they too need to be kept informed of progress and what is eventually decided. The group needs to agree a communication plan and let their constituencies know what it is - when can they expect reports, what kind of reports, who will have agreed them, etc. Finally, if you have achieved success, celebrate: everyone deserves it. However, again be careful that the celebrations are agreed to. You do not want to upset those groups who may have less to celebrate than others.

Phase 5 - Maintaining the momentum

Sow a thought and reap an action
Sow an action and reap a habit
Sow a habit and reap a destiny

Many projects work well initially when enthusiasm is high. It's in the news. Grants are helping to pay for staff, equipment and programmes. Progress is rapid. Maintaining the momentum long enough for the actions to become habits and the programme to become an established part of everyday life is more of a problem. If momentum is not maintained, there is a danger that old habits become re-established and there is no long-term benefit for the environment and possibly the local people as well. The following checklist might help a programme leader know when a project is likely to survive on its own.

Question	Yes/No
Is the programme successful?	
Are there other clear benefits to the community to keep the programme going?	
Is there still enthusiasm and commitment for the programme amongst the community?	
Will financial and other resources be adequate?	
Are there paid staff to keep the programme running?	
Are further grants linked to performance?	
Are the management systems understood?	
Are the management systems working well?	
Are there clear objectives and targets for the participants to continue working towards?	
Do the participants have the skills necessary to maintain the programme?	
Are there procedures for monitoring, recording and evaluating progress against objectives and targets?	
Are effective communications established between the stakeholders?	
Are responsibilities assigned and accepted by those they are assigned to?	
Is there an effective steering group for the programme?	

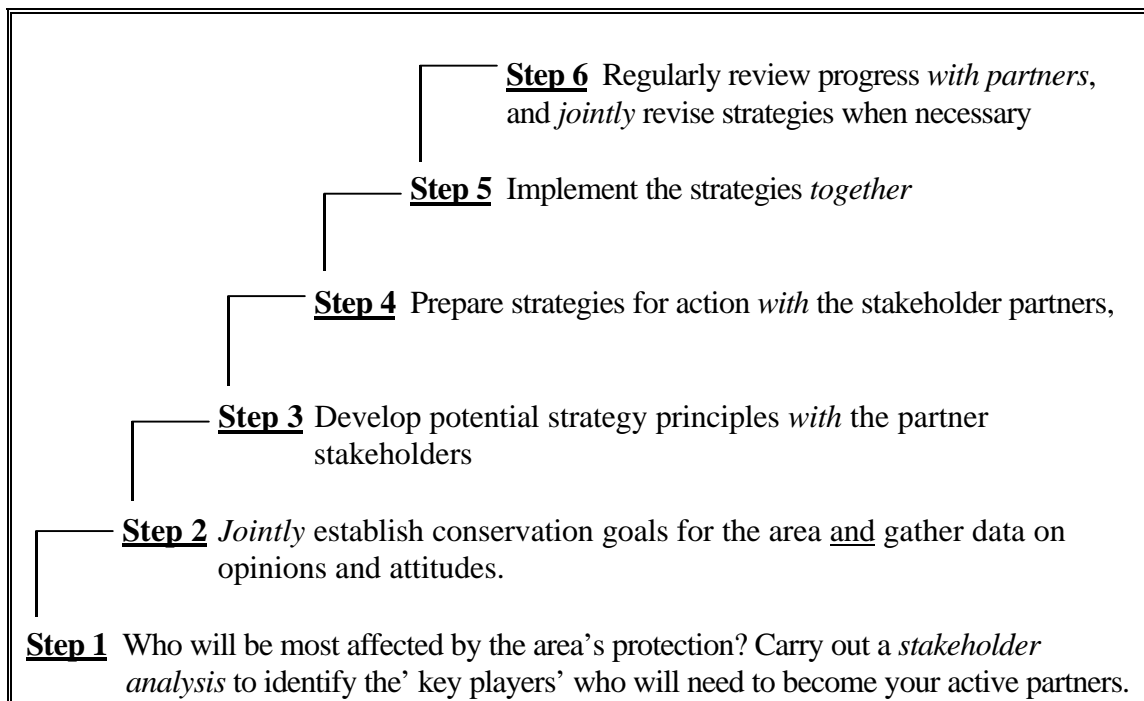**Figure 8 - Is the programme established?**

➤ Publicity

Success breeds success, but only if people know about it. Maintaining a public profile for a programme is an important way of ensuring its continued success. Commercial and public companies advertise and sponsor things to keep their products and services in the public eye. Conservation programmes rarely have sufficient money to advertise, but there are a number of ways of keeping attention on a programme including:
- sending regular press releases to the written and broadcast media
- preparing and distributing regular progress reports
- putting on special events such as open days, training days, a fund raising carnival
- preparing and distributing regular newsletters to the public
- starting up a membership scheme
- setting up demonstration projects
- getting high profile people to attend special events or promote the programme
- getting sponsorship - the company wants people to know it is sponsoring the programme and will probably do the publicity for you.

➢ Evaluation

Those working together will need to see that what they set out to do is actually happening. All programmes should have an evaluation plan. Evaluation is dependent upon measurable objectives having been set in the first place. This is not always easy. Some of the things the plan aims to change could be behaviour or attitudes and these are very difficult to measure. You may need to use indirect indicators, such as a reduction in poaching or illegal timber cutting.

Summary of the Approach

Step 6 Regularly review progress *with partners*, and *jointly* revise strategies when necessary

Step 5 Implement the strategies *together*

Step 4 Prepare strategies for action *with* the stakeholder partners,

Step 3 Develop potential strategy principles *with* the partner stakeholders

Step 2 *Jointly* establish conservation goals for the area <u>and</u> gather data on opinions and attitudes.

Step 1 Who will be most affected by the area's protection? Carry out a *stakeholder analysis* to identify the' key players' who will need to become your active partners.

Figure 9 - Steps to successful engagement

The key stakeholders should be carefully identified - they are **real** people, and it is necessary to get them 'on board' if goals are to be achieved while not alienating residents and neighbours. They will be more likely and willing to participate in positive action if they are **genuinely regarded as active partners** and recognise there are benefits for them.

In this approach communication is a two-way processes rather than 'top down'. The opinions of the key stakeholders are listened to *and valued*. Confrontation and conflict are reduced; negotiation, compromise and co-operation in finding a mutually acceptable solution are enhanced. There is a commitment to implementing the agreed action plan. Experience is showing that this approach can be an important means of reducing the risk of *not* achieving conservation results. The key to converting favourable attitudes to positive action usually comes through 'ownership' of the conservation actions by the target groups in the local community and beyond.

Part Three - Case Studies

Public Participation in the Management of Protected Areas through Effective Education and Communication Programmes

1 DAPHNE Foundation, Slovakia[2]

The Slovak DAPHNE Foundation considers the democratic participation of local communities in the decision making process to be of paramount importance. The decisions taken affect the lives of local people as well as the protected area. It is putting its ideas into practice in the Morava (March) River flood plain in the westernmost part of Slovakia in the Protected Landscape Area known as "Zahorie". This is a Ramsar Site and an Important Bird Area, and is also one of the areas chosen by the Global Environmental Facility for support. Through the project the DAPHNE Foundation, in co-operation with local representatives, have concentrated on improving and protecting the natural value of the Morava River flood plain region.

Involving the local communities has not been easy. The following problems were encountered:

- the environmental awareness of the local population was very limited
- the local municipal administrations provided no opportunities for people to participate in the decision making process
- representatives of the local community did not know how to get involved in the strategy making process nor in the implementation of the management plan
- there was a lack of information about the unique value of wetlands; the possibilities of public participation in the decision making process, Environmental Impact Assessment and in the management plan for the protected area.

Recent activities have been focused on solving these problems:

- the DAPHNE Foundation has accumulated experience and knowledge from earlier work and this helped determine the most effective way of informing people at local and national level
- a public opinion poll has helped determine the level of local knowledge about regional issues and the local concerns. Using this information a relevant information strategy has been worked out including both local and national campaigns
- co-operation between the environmental sector, farmers and local people through a forum, and the groups are actively involved in implementing the management plan.

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[2] Source : European Programme IUCN, *Newsletter Central and Eastern Europe* March 1998 by Miroslava Cierna

Community involvement in environmental action is signalling a shift away from a "top-down" environmental activity imposed on local communities by outside agencies. There is now a climate for successful and effective collaboration and communication with local communities.

What has been learned?
- Take time to understand the thinking of the local community.
- Find out the level of awareness about the issues before developing an information strategy.
- Communicate in the style and the language of the local people. This can be difficult for experts!
- Strengthen existing mechanisms for involving people in the decision making process (or help create them if necessary).
- Avoid the purely 'top down' approach.

2. The Development of a Management Plan for the Mountain Meadows, Central Balkan National Park

The Central Balkan National Park was established in 1991 and is one of the youngest of the 12 Bulgarian National Parks. There are nine strict nature reserves within it to ensure the preservation of representative ecosystems. The complexity of the task required a large team of specialists to study the area mainly drawn from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the Agricultural Academy.

Success would not have been possible without the participation of the local authorities in the planning process. The first management plan has been produced showing that a significant part of the highland zone can be maintained by traditional grazing. There are also recommendations for soft tourism that can provide local people with an income.

Parallel to the development of the management plan for the highland meadows there was a broad public awareness programme. This introduced the local and national public to the significance and purpose of the Central Balkan National Park. An important part of the programme was setting up the Club of the Friends of Central Balkan National Park. This brought together local people, ranging from the mayors to the farmers, scientists from the Bulgarian Academy of Science, journalists from the local and the national media, NGOs and foreign specialists committed to working for the well being of the Park.

What has been learned? Successful conservation requires:
- the support and participation of experts and local people
- a forum for discussing common concerns
- clear benefits for the local people.

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3. Decision Analysis for Environmental Management, the Danube Delta[3]

Multiple and conflicting objectives, uncertain or incomplete information and multiple interest groups frequently characterise the situation in which environmental managers have to take important decisions. The difficulty is compounded when there are several possible courses that may be followed to achieve the conservation objectives. Fishing in the Danube Delta has always been very important for local people, both as a source of income and for subsistence. However, as a result of pollution and habitat destruction, the fish population in the Delta has declined substantially. However, there is little data available on the real fish catch making management of the fisheries almost impossible.

HIVIEW and EQUITY are computer programmes that can help the decision-making process in an objective way. They analyse the many variables identified, and rank them according to their importance to various interest groups.

In the Danube Delta, a new licensing system was needed that would take account of different interest groups that include:
- the Biosphere Reserve governor
- fishing people
- major companies
- researchers.

A professionally facilitated workshop was held at which specialists and interest groups were brought together to agree a goal for the licensing scheme and to come up with options for the scheme itself. Seven licensing schemes were agreed as possibilities. The advantages and disadvantages of each were discussed and the facilitator constructed a value tree by which the different schemes could be compared. This involved allocating priorities to such issues as illegal trading and then allocating a number on a scale to each one. A further number was allocated to each scheme to indicate its potential to resolve that particular issue. All the figures were processed by the computer and each scheme received a score that represented how well it would resolve the issues.

From the insight gained, the participants were able to construct two further schemes. These were added to the original data and a new evaluation undertaken.

All the participants expressed enthusiasm for the method and said they had learned a lot from each other. Just as important as having a good solution was the fact that the persons who have to justify, implement and live with the recommendations were *active participants in the decision making process*.

What has been learned?

[3] Source: HIVIEW and EQUITY: Decision analysis for environmental management Axel J Kravatzky *Parks* Vol.5 No 1 February 1995

- People are more likely to support decisions in which they have been involved.
- A range of solutions needs to be considered before one is finally chosen.
- All the key stakeholders need to be involved in reaching an agreed solution if it is to be implemented successfully.
- Computerised decision making can be a useful aid to finding the best solution.

4. Community Participation: a key element to the conservation of protected areas, The Brazilian Atlantic Forest[4]

Many countries with rich concentrations of biodiversity have few resources to spend on protected areas. This is often due to the ever increasing social and economic pressures on available funding. Conservation is rarely a priority in this scenario, and protected areas are frequently far from being protected effectively. In addition, programmes which involve education and public participation may not be actively encouraged by politicians because it increases people's awareness of the situation and its causes, and leads to demands for change to a status quo which may suit the politicians. Bringing everyone on board is difficult, but essential for effective protection of areas such as the Brazilian Atlantic forest.

In the Morro do Diabo State Park in Sao Paulo, efforts have been made to integrate local people with conservation. Through regular activities developed with a communicator / teacher, the people began to feel empowered and able to actively participate in the Park's protection. The activities included:
- plays
- running contests
- building floats
- a T-shirt competition
- tree planting, and
- conservation campaigns.

A key feature of the programmes has been making them *fun*. Initially the programme focused on individuals, but institutions rapidly became involved - including the Forestry Institute and the Education and Agriculture departments, NGOs and businesses. This participatory approach to environmental education proved to be effective in a just a short time. Logging has stopped and there has been a decrease in hunting, forest fires and unsightly garbage disposal. However, this programme suffered when the person responsible for the programme, who was a strong leader, left the area.

Based on the experience of the initial programme, another was developed for the Caetetus Ecological Station in Sao Paulo. This time, however, the programme was designed to make it capable of continuing and developing after the departure of the 'leader'. The local departments of Education and Agriculture, landowners from around the park and interested community members were all key supporters of the education programme that developed. An important success factor for getting local involvement was the development of a management plan that involved the participation of local groups in its implementation.

The Station's director began an open process, with meetings that all interested people were invited to and encouraged to attend. Problems and viable alternatives were discussed, and specialised professionals collected data for the chosen plan. In this process everyone felt responsible as they were all co-authors of the decision. As a consequence, all segments of the local community participated in the implementation of

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[4] Source paper by Suzana Padua, Institute for Ecological Research for IUCN ECEE meeting 1998

Station's conservation plan. Landowners lent tractors and other machinery when needed; the Department for Education allocated a teacher to co-ordinate the school visiting schedules and other education activities; the Agriculture Department taught or helped with specific issues and the local governments provided transportation and meals so students could visit the Station. New conservation NGOs were created locally and now a group of very committed individuals supports the Station's protection. In only 4 years Caetetus became a landmark among the five surrounding counties and a focus of local pride. Today, the model is being repeated in another protected area.

The key element has been the use of participatory processes where steps are built together with local people.

What has been learned?

- Strong leaders can achieve a lot in a short time, but for a project to survive the loss of a strong leader, the participants need to feel a sense of ownership of the project.
- Participation helps develop commitment to a project.
- Schools can be effective focal points for education programmes, but audiences should not be restricted to students alone.
- The programmes need to be designed for a broad range of audiences.
- Educators need to become facilitators and work through respect for local people and groups. In turn, these increase their self-esteem and empower them to act.
- Local involvement can begin with motivated individuals.
- Encourage the involvement of local and national institutions.
- Look for a goal that everyone can give their consent to.
- Education should not just be about informing people - it should help build the capacity of local people to work towards sustainable lifestyles.
- Evaluation is necessary to obtain sound data on the effectiveness of education projects.
- Success should be judged by the impact on the community as well as conservation.
- Those wanting to achieve sustainable development goals need to learn how to communicate more effectively with people at all levels from local farmer to federal administrator to avoid isolation, opposing objectives and lack of support.
- Strong arguments should be made to convince donors that education is an important but long term process and needs long term financial support.

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5. Let's design our own park: a project aimed at promoting an active participation of the local people[5], Guadiana Valley Natural Park, Portugal

Protected areas are frequently created in sparsely populated areas with weak economies. In other words, the local people are poor. Local communities often object to a protected area because they consider it yet another burden of restrictions and prohibitions to the area's development that they think might take them out of poverty. This is to be expected when a management plan is developed without giving local communities a say in how their area is to be used.

The Guadiana Valley in Southeast Portugal includes some of the best riverine ecosystems in the Iberian peninsula and, indeed, the whole Mediterranean. It hosts a rich endemic flora and several threatened animal species including the black stork, Egyptian vulture, great bustard and otter. Since its foundation, the Association for the Protection of the Mértola Heritage has had the objective that the area should be protected. Their intense lobbying was strengthened when it joined a World Wide Fund for Nature international project. In 1991 it was designated as a Park.

The Association has emphasised the benefits of the area becoming a Park and is now working with the various stakeholders to involve local people in the development and use of the areas for education and other activities. A network of local teachers is supported to carry out environmental education in the area. It has become a centre of excellence, locally and nationally. Farmers, hunters and labourers are increasing economic activities that are linked to conservation.

The management plan is being drawn up at a series of workshops attended by the stakeholders. Experts are available for local people to question and to learn from. It represents a forum where common goals can be built up and any conflicts aired and resolved. A manual is being prepared which will have a high profile public launch. The involvement of stakeholders from the start means that the final management plan will be welcomed and actively supported by the local community.

The project is being paid for by WWF in the first year only. After that it will put in a decreasing proportion until the project is self-financing.

What has been learned?

- People often perceive conservation as restricting their opportunities for economic development.
- Conservation and sustainable development need to be presented as beneficial developments.
- Financial benefits from implementing sustainable development helps get support for the programmes.

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[5] Source: Paper for IUCN ECEE meeting 1998 by Rosario Oliveira - Association for the Protection of the Mértola Heritage

- Seeking the involvement of local people in the development of a local area management plan can help it gain acceptance.
- Involve local people from the start - at a time when they can have most influence over the outcomes.

6. Community and visitor participation in dune repair activities, Kuronian Spit National Park, Russia

The Kuronian Spit National Park is a 98 km long sandy peninsula covering some 16,000 ha created by the work of the sea and winds on the south-eastern shore of the Baltic Sea. It has some the highest sand-dunes in Europe. Some 250 years ago damage to the forest cover caused the dunes to become active, burying roads, villages and forest. Restoration is possible by means of forest restoration and fixing the dunes with a net of plants.

There are three small villages within the active area, their small permanent population being joined by many visitors during the summer months, visiting tourist centres, summer camps and health resorts, to total some 2,300 people. They are joined each day in summer by a further 2,300 day visitors. It is essential to inform and educate these people about the fragility of the dune system. To achieve this, a series of pedestrian trails, a museum and an information centre have been provided. Local people, especially the unemployed, have been trained as guides and to organise a range of youth and visitor activities. More recently both local people and visitors have been encouraged to participate in practical work to help protect and restore the dunes. This has proved especially popular with youth environmental camps.

Residents and visitors working together as volunteers to protect the environment has brought about a deeper understanding of the interrelationships between people and nature and the need for protection. It has also encouraged a greater sense of environmental responsibility among the visitors when they return home.

What has been learned?

- Protection of an important natural area can be achieved through training local people to act as education and communication guides, thereby helping the local unemployed to become gainfully occupied
- Local people and visitors can be encouraged to work together in practical activities to protect the environment
- Participation by visitors in practical conservation has a spin-off as it increases the visitors sense of environmental responsibility when they return home.

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7. Communication and participation in the designation of a conservation site along the River Lugg, England[6]

Managing communication

In England most land is privately owned, therefore conservation efforts need the support and agreement of landowners. If the government agency, English Nature, is of the opinion that an area has particular conservation merit because of its flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features, it notifies it as a Site of Special Scientific Significance SSSI. In the UK, SSSIs are the principle legal site designation instrument on which all other designations, both national and international, are based. This means that the conservation merit must be taken into account in any planning decisions or changes in land uses that affect the site.

The River Lugg crosses the border of England and Wales. The river and a 10 metre strip of its banks were notified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). There are 260 owners on the river and its banks and their support was important. The landowners didn't like the idea at first. Letters of protest were sent to the Agency Director and Environment Minister. Protests mounted as groups of farmers talked amongst themselves and national organisations, the National Farmers' Union and Country Landowners Associations were asked to become involved.

Among the concerns voiced by the farmers were fears of more people walking on their riverside land once it became a SSSI, fencing off of the river and a possible increase in canoeists and anglers. One of the main concerns of farmers was that they would be asked to refrain from ploughing parts of riverside fields, to reduce chemical run off from the fields into the river, soil wash and bank stabilisation.

Communication and stakeholder dialogue helped turn the situation around. In the end 28 farmers objected to the notification.

What was learned?
The following lessons were applied in subsequent notifications of river SSSIs with some success, though notification itself did not solve the nature conservation problems. Specific programmes to assist selected farmers have been necessary but would not have been possible without dialogue and effective communication.

Preparation
- Seek a preliminary discussion. Include key stakeholders, identify and seek allies and a good opposition leader. Local staff helped identify key farmers who were friendly or at least not enemies.
- Have a thorough knowledge of the issues and the site. Draw on knowledge of people on the ground who know the situation. The Director spent the morning walking along the river to learn about the issues at first hand.

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[6] From the presentation given by Eddie Idle to the IUCN CEC communication training course in Poland 1998

- Consider likely questions that will be asked, and prepare answers in advance.
- Hold meeting/s at times convenient to the farmers.
- Make the meeting/s somewhere the farmers' feel comfortable, eg in a farmer's home.
- Keep the numbers small so relationships can be built.
- Open with points of agreement (including the beauty of the river and how farmers had looked after it all these years. The reasons for classification, "just in case" there is a change of ownership of the land).
- Include experts on key issues in the team, eg on fishing.

Conduct of the meeting

- Open with points of agreement.
- Treat participants as customers or clients.
- Set the issue into a wider context.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the site.
- Explore problems and discuss solutions.
- Listen to and answer points of concern - without jargon.

Follow up

- Review the process of interaction so that lessons can be learned from it.
- Assess financial implications of the discussions and actions.
- Ensure local delivery of follow up actions.

8. Communication between farmers and government about nature - De Peel region the Netherlands:- a new approach to policy development.

Background

In 1990 the Dutch Parliament accepted the Nature Policy Plan (NPP). It was based on a network of areas with special conservation value. Farmers in these areas are encouraged to restrict certain farm operations with compensation for any loss of productivity. Implementing the plan was difficult because there was hostility from the farming community and decisions are voluntary.

Farmers look at the natural world differently from the policy makers. Nature for them is everything that grows and lives around them, and they react negatively to the idea of 'wild nature'. Farmers did not think the current condition of nature was that bad and government intervention was seen as unnecessary. Moreover they have other government interventions in the area of environment and are fed up with regulation.

For the Government, the process of having the policy accepted had different dimensions. The problem had to be understood as serious. Government intervention had to be understood as inevitable. The policy as well as the specific measures had to be accepted. The measures had to be perceived as effective, realistic and adapatable to the farmers' practices and fair compared to what is asked from other people.

The communication activities organised by the government set up a chain of mistrust. The government expected farmers to listen to their information. The farmers were more intent on talking about their own problems. From both parties there was one way communication, causing ever more frustration than understanding.

These problems stemmed from the usual way of policy making, with the government setting the goal and constructing a set of instruments to implement it. Contacts with the agricultural community were restricted to the top level representatives and there was little discussion with the groups that would be affected.. The rationale of the farmer, and how they perceive nature and nature related policies has not been dealt with in a serious way.

The problems extend also to the communication strategy. One based on the model *Decide, Announce* and *Defend*. In many encounters farmers were told to to accept NPP ideas using arguments and data, but farmers could not be convinced in that way. They considered the Government as an unimportant source of information.

A new approach

A more interactive policy approach was tried in one area where areas of great conservation value were being threatened by intensive agriculture. The government adopted a more flexible approach to give room for new regional proposals. Relationships between three groups were critical to its success:.

1. The government: A special team was appointed to bring people together and link the regional ideas with the national policy process.
2. Environmental organisations, some of whom were taking out law suits against the farmers.
3. The agricultural community only a small proportion of whom were willing to engage in the negotiation process in a proactive way. Only gradually and with encouragement from their organisation did they open their minds.

The process of interaction resulted in a common plan to develop the region in an ecological and economically viable way. It was supported by all the parties. The Government has accepted it as an experiment. The improved relationships are still fragile and the differences between farmers and environmental groups still enormous.

What has been learned?

- Involve stakeholders from the outset.
- The process of talking needs to continue because acceptance is not based on outcomes alone, but also on participation in the process itself.
- Integrative negotiation is more productive than distributive negotiation.
- Scientific facts alone cannot persuade people to change. People can change if they are involved in discussions on issues they think are important.
- Top level representatives involved in negotiations cannot always represent adequately the varied views of their constituencies.
- If people cannot accept the messenger they are unlikely to acccept the message.
- Have money available to try new ideas.

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9. Islay and Jura Conservation Awareness Project

Summary

Islay and Jura are islands off the west coast of Scotland. They are remote and some traditional farming practices remain, enabling a rich diversity of wildlife to survive. It is for example, one of the few areas in Europe where corncrakes survive. Pressure for change is mounting and to ensure that the people could benefit from development without damaging the wildlife heritage, a conservation education programme was developed which started with schools and extended into full community participation

Setting up the Project

The aim of the project was to strengthen existing understanding and acceptance of the natural environment as part of the culture and lifestyle of the whole community. On Islay and Jura people have a long association with the land and have come to depend on it for their livelihood but as elsewhere, there is pressure for more development that could threaten the wildlife heritage.

Much of the environmental teaching material used in Scotland is general and does not relate closely to the experience of children or local people on the islands. In April 1996, a Project Officer was employed for the Islay and Jura Schools Environmental Education Initiative (IJSEEI). The post was funded by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) with management help from the schools of Islay and Jura and the Islay Natural History Trust (INHT).

The Project

There are six primary schools on Islay and one on Jura. The project officer worked closely with teachers to develop curriculum-linked projects related directly to the local area. The projects focus on field work and are designed to be used beyond the life of the project. In addition, it was recognised that children had to be offered ownership of and responsibility for, the environment in which they spend their formative years if they were to become caring and active members of the community. Creating interesting school grounds became an important component of the Islay and Jura Schools Environmental Education Initiative.

Teachers, and staff at both the RSPB and the INHT, were keen to provide opportunities for visits to the INHT'S Field Centre at Port Charlotte and to the RSPB Loch Gruinart Reserve because schools on Islay and Jura have very few environmental education facilities.

Primary Schools

Several informal meetings were held between teachers and the project officer and the following aims were set:
1. Develop environmental themes and assist in the planning of teaching programmes.

2. Assist with the development of school grounds schemes.
3. Develop field work exercises

For the first aim an extensive range of locally-focused resource materials were developed for 'resource boxes' in schools. The contents could be adapted to meet the different needs of pupils and classes throughout Islay and Jura. The contents include books for teachers and pupils, lesson plans, curriculum planners, equipment and information about suitable fieldwork sites on local habitats and topics including a specially designed game in the grass land section called "Corncrake Corners". The boxes allow good practice to be shared. Their contents and use provide a means to evaluate the success of the project.

During the project, a corncrake took up residence in a field adjacent to one of the schools. This was extremely well-timed, as the pupils were learning that low intensity agriculture in Poland is ideal for this rare bird. The class teacher expanded on this and the children visited Loch Gruinart RSPB Reserve to find out how RSPB manage their farm for birds such as lapwing, redshank and corncrakes.

In February 1997, an In-Service training event on Earth Education was held and attended by all primary teachers as part of their in-service training programme.

Developing School Grounds

Children on Islay and Jura grow up surrounded by a rich and varied natural environment but spend more than a quarter of their school day in playgrounds of closely mown grass and large expanses of asphalt. Improving school grounds provides more creative play areas and as well as direct experience of nature which helps them develop a personal connection with the natural world. Children were involved from the start helping to plan and maintain the outdoor classrooms. This has the benefit of developing leadership skills, a sense of responsibility and encouraging them to work towards positive change. School grounds were a major focus of interest during: a 3-day visit to Islay by the Main Board of Scottish Natural Heritage in October 1997 and the Islay, Jura and Colonsay Agricultural Show in August 1997. At the show the project worked closely with the local National Farmers Union and the Health Promotion Unit to promote healthy local produce.

Secondary Schools

The secondary school on Islay serves both islands. The objectives here were to:
1. Develop and pilot curricular materials on features of the Islay and Jura environment, in particular dealing with corncrake, chough, geese, peatlands, native woodlands, Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) schemes, acidification of freshwater and marine issues.
2. To implement the 5-14 Environmental Studies curriculum
3. Develop fieldwork exercises at various sites linked to themes outlined above, and to develop them to a stage where they could be undertaken on a regular basis by school staff.

Contact was made with science and social subjects staff. There were visits to RSPB's Loch Gruinart Reserve, Tallant Wood and Duich Moss to help gain an understanding of existing practice. Time was spent with teachers planning follow-up work in class and outdoors. The latter was linked to biodiversity. Exploring biodiversity inevitably led to discussions amongst pupils, many of whom came from farming backgrounds.

Link to health education

In 1998 an Earthwatch Project was undertaken with the Islay and Jura Health Promotion Unit particularly in the context of the World Health Organisation's definition of health - Looking after Myself; Caring for Others; Protecting the Environment. Earthwatch has its origins in Australia where it is known as *The Council of All Beings* and is primarily run for adult groups. A major objective of the programme in Islay was to explore attitudes and feelings to the environment with the hope that the young people involved would translate and apply the outcomes of their learning experience to their everyday lives. They need information that is both understandable and accessible if they are to become effective and responsible citizens, regardless of their future occupations.

The programme included overnight camping, team-building exercises, activities which focused on sensory awareness, music, storytelling and drama. It finished with a very positive, dynamic and profound role-play called the "Council of All Beings". Teachers continued to build on the pupils experiences of the programme to look at the concept of sustainable development.

Care was taken to ensure that Earthwatch was not only enjoyable and informative but also memorable. An element of magic, a bit of showmanship and even a touch of the bizarre were introduced. Although this could be a risk with pupils of this age, each participant appeared to enjoy the theatrical element and took part in every activity enthusiastically. Teacher and pupil evaluations were very positive.

Plans are being taken forward to develop and expand the programme in 1999, with continued commitment from Argyll and Clyde Health Board. This will include a farm visit and use of the concept of "Ecological Footprints" which is based on the belief that the human economy is grounded in, or dependent on a steady flow of resources and a continuously available waste sink from the natural world. The examination of these ideas will readily support the 5-14 Environmental Studies Curriculum.

Publicity and Promotion

This was a key element. Photographic displays featuring the projects work were placed in the Leisure Centre, Banks, Doctor's Surgeries, RSPB Visitor Centre at Loch Gruinart Reserve, INHT Field Centre, and others. The displays attracted a great deal of interest from members of the local community and visitors to Islay. A display was also set up each year at the annual agricultural show held on Islay in August. This was part of the joint venture with the local National Farmers Union for Scotland (NFUS) and the Health Promotion Unit in 1997.

Letters were sent regularly to schools to keep them up to date with events, articles appeared in local newspaper. Wider publicity was achieved when the BBC Natural History Programme carried a feature on the IJSEEI in June 1997.

Links with Health Education

It is widely accepted that there are strong links between environmental education and health education. This relationship has become more apparent in recent years with the acceptance that the natural world has been fundamentally altered by people. Although it is arguable whether nature is restorable or beyond recovery, the certainty of detrimental change is a constant aspect of everyone's lives. It stimulates international agreements on the control of air pollutants and it influences local politics. In effect, the health of an individual cannot be separated from the health of his or her environment.

The most obvious way to link health education and environmental education was through school grounds initiatives. Within each school garden, there was a small area for growing vegetables organically. This provided valuable opportunities to promote a healthy diet. Health professionals recognise the need to instil healthy eating patterns in childhood and the island teachers quickly reported that children were far more enthusiastic about eating fruit and vegetables that they had grown themselves. School gardens were to become the catalyst for a great deal of collaborative work.

Best by Miles

School gardens and a study of Food and Farming led to a partnership with a local award-winning chef, the local National Farmers Union and the Health Promotion Project to promote healthy local produce. It would be no exaggeration to say that almost everyone on Islay and Jura visited the "*Best by Miles*" stand at the annual agricultural show.

Scotland's first sustainable development company was established on Islay in 1998. The Development Company have outlined plans for every aspect of island life from renewable and sustainable energy through transport, employment, health, land use, natural heritage to green tourism. This is of great relevance to the project.

What has been learned?

- **Integrate school and community**. Environmental education should change the way people live not just how they talk. This requires a detailed knowledge of, and identity with place. It also involves developing a sense of responsibility and citizenship. All of this is best accomplished through the integration of school and community. Working with a community on the broad issue of sustainability may take several years - an important consideration in light of the relatively short time scale of the Islay and Jura Schools Environmental Education Initiative!
- **Form partnerships**. recently the Health Promotion Project has established a formal partnership with Community Education on Islay. Both are committed to a sustainable future for the island and place importance on environmental education.
- **Develop relevant materials**. The Project Officer developed an extensive range of teaching materials, some written by herself, which could be given on loan to schools in the early months of the project. Many of these were later duplicated in the resource boxes and head teachers are incorporating these materials into their development plans for Environmental Studies.
- **Get the support of the head teachers**. The presence of two very supportive primary head teachers on the steering group was invaluable. In schools the support of the head and senior staff is essential.
- **The direct route is not always the best**. Flexibility of approach has allowed links to be forged with community and health education initiatives on the island.
- **Involve the local authority**.
- **Provide training**. Training for the teachers has been invaluable giving them the time and the opportunity to explore concepts such as environmental sustainability, values and citizenship.
- **Communicate**. Internal communication within schools can be uncertain - don't assume that the kitchen staff know what's going on or that finance administrators are clear about grant-aided projects! Equally don't assume that even in a small school, staff in different departments meet on a regular basis.
- **Assign responsibility**. One member of staff needs to co-ordinate the programme in schools.
- **Be patient**. Secondary teachers in particular need time to pilot, assess and develop new ideas. Three years is not unrealistic. New programmes at secondary level have to dovetail into very tight timetables. For example, after piloting and evaluating of the Earthwatch programme, it was nearly a year before changes could be tried and tested. With this in mind, it can be seen that a part-time post for a period of 2.5 years which involved working with primary and secondary teachers meant some of the aims with respect to secondary schools was unrealistic.

10. Public participation in the protection of the Fertö-Hanság National Park, Hungary

The Fertö-Hanság National Park is the area bordering Neusiedler See in Hungary. Much of the area was sparsely populated and relatively undeveloped for tourism during the Communist regime due to its position so close to the international border with Austria. The problems it faces are those caused by drainage and mono-culture under the policies of the Socialist Government. This has led to conflicts between the farming community and conservationists. The area is increasingly popular with tourists, primarily day visitors requiring such facilities as picnic areas. The participation of local communities in solving problems resulting from tourism and the alteration of the human and natural landscapes of the area by drainage and plantations of non-native tree species has been crucial to its conservation and protection.

The following problems were encountered:
- the local population had limited awareness of the conservation importance of the area
- there were few opportunities for local people to participate in the decision making process
- the local community had little previous involvement in drawing up plans for the park and in implementing the plan
- there was little information about the impacts of farming, forestry and tourism on this wetland area and its wildlife.
- Recent activities have been focused on achieving successful outcomes for nature conservation. The variety of methods used include:
- collecting information about the conservation awareness and goals of the local community through 'Focus Groups'; questionnaire surveys and interviews;
- organising activities for key target groups such as:

> **schools**
> > - teacher training in environmental education
> > -fieldwork activities
> > -forest schools'
>
> **farmers**
> > - talks
> > - displays in visitor centre
> > - establishing a forum for partnership
>
> **researchers**
> > - implementation of Local Agenda 21 programme
> > - forum for discussion

The forum has established co-operation between the Park Authorities, the environmental sector, farmers and local people, and the groups are actively involved in implementing the management plan.

Community involvement has resulted in much exchange of information; critical reflection and discussion, decision-making and implementation of action plans. There is now a willingness of local people to participate and communicate.

What has been learned

- The importance of establishing action oriented goals based on collective planning and ownership by all key stakeholders in the local communities.
- Discovering peoples' levels of awareness about the local conservation issues before developing a communication and management strategy.
- The importance of participative planning and careful evaluation of the outcomes of action taken before planning and taking the next step.
- Working with the media to ensure widest possible communication with all people in the local communities, inviting their views and keeping them informed about decisions made.

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