CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION

How-To: Stakeholder Analysis

Why Stakeholder Analysis?

Because forests, watersheds, rivers, and rangelands do not follow the rules of social and geopolitical boundaries, collaboration is often inevitable when working towards a conservation goal. Collaborative efforts involve different individuals and entities who may hold contrasting values and motivations working together across these boundaries. These individuals work together to support the design and implementation of policies, plans, and projects. Understanding each stakeholder's needs is vital for perceiving and mitigating potential conflicts, helping to efficiently work toward achieving a shared vision.

This how-to sheet will provide tools that can be used for analyzing the needs of and relationships between stakeholders. The person or organization performing stakeholder analysis should strive to be impartial in this process in order to build trust and connect with each stakeholder.

Understanding Stakeholders' Values and Relationships

The basis of stakeholder analysis is understanding the different stakeholders' values and identifying the history and status of relationships between and among them. To best understand these values and relationships, we suggest trying to:

- Understand what each party has to gain or lose in the situation
- Create a timeline of events leading up to the present to better understand relations between stakeholders
- Be sensitive to parties that may feel marginalized, realizing they may not feel comfortable openly discussing certain issues in group settings
- Consider meeting with these stakeholders individually to create a space for openness and trust
- Be transparent with stakeholders on how their input will be used and explain how they can stay involved in the analysis process
- Discern the core needs of each entity and the deeper reason why they are taking a particular position on the issue
- Begin the dialogue process by focusing on common interests to develop trust
- Start this process early. Understanding and addressing differences in stakeholder values and relationships early on can set the collaborative effort up for success.

These strategies can be carried out through the use of many different resources and tools. In the next sections, we'll walk through a few of our favorite tools for stakeholder analysis

Defining Stakeholder

"Any individual, group, or institution who has a vested interest in the natural resources of the project area and/or who potentially will be affected by project activities and have something to gain or lose if conditions change or stay the same."
- (WWF 2005)

When to Analyze Stakeholders?

"Conservation and environmental planning initiatives are best developed with key stakeholders identified and diverse viewpoints considered even before the stakeholders formally meet"
- (Vogler et al. 2017)

Stakeholder Analysis Takes Many Forms

Stakeholder analysis can mean many different things to different people. For more background on stakeholder analysis, its various forms, its history, and the implications of who is included, we recommend:

"Who's in and why? A typology of stakeholder analysis methods for natural resource management" by Reed et al. (2009)

and

"Stakeholder Analysis, Natural Resource Management and Governance – Comparing approaches" by Vedeld (2020)

How-To: Stakeholder Analysis

Creating a Timeline

A timeline is used to create insight into past events and relations between stakeholders. Listing events as viewed by each party will create a broader perspective of how each party perceived a certain situation and can be used to facilitate discussions between stakeholders. This tool can also enable people to realize that their perspective is only one part of the picture.

The length and detail of a timeline will depend on the relevant context of each collaboration and the history of its stakeholders, but one example of what a timeline might look like follows below (adapted from Fisher et al. 2000).

Perspective of Indigenous people living on the land	Perspective of governmental conservation agency

1990-Attention is brought to a forest ecosystem service area	
This forest is sacred land that supplies resources upon which the people depend	Resource use needs to be restricted in order to preserve the ecosystem

1995-Land is designated as a federal conservation area	
Infringement on religious practices and freedom to use depended upon resources	Implementation of conservation policy to preserve forested land

Present Day
Complete the timeline with as many relevant steps as needed until you arrive at present-day perspectives.

Tips for Interviewing Stakeholders

When interviewing a stakeholder, especially in an organization, be sure to ask who was involved with this issue before them and reach out to that person for more long-term context surrounding the issue.

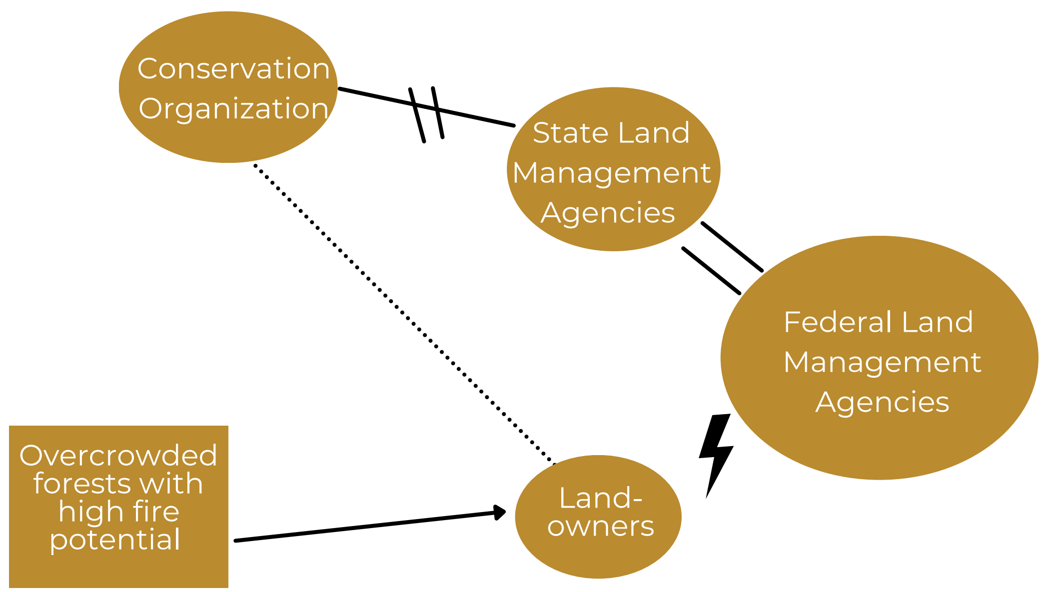
Also try using a snowball sampling technique. Ask your interviewees who they suggest you talk to, who might not yet be at the table but should be, or for any other relevant contacts they might have.

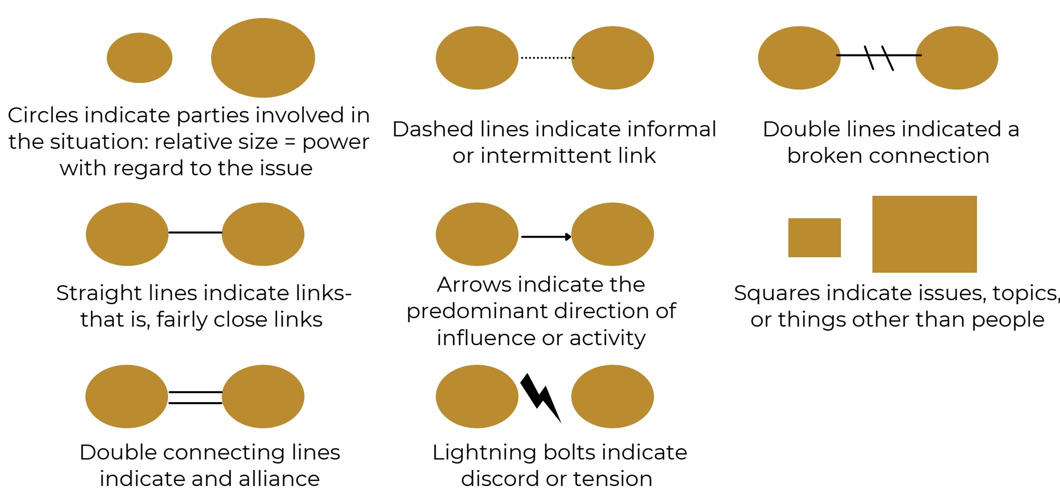
How-To: Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder Mapping

Stakeholder mapping helps collaborators to see tensions and identify allies between all participants. The straight arrows represent little or no tension, the jagged arrows represent an area of conflict, and the size of the circle represents the amount of influence or power that stakeholder holds. It is helpful to create a few maps from different stakeholder perspectives. Consider including yourself or your organization on the map to remember that you are a part of the situation, not above it. The example below illustrates a potential stakeholder conflict map for a forest restoration project, where tensions are present regarding the strategies to restore the forest between land management agencies, private landowners, and conservation organizations.

Example of a Stakeholder Conflict Map for a Potential Forest Restoration Project , adapted from Fisher et al. (2000)





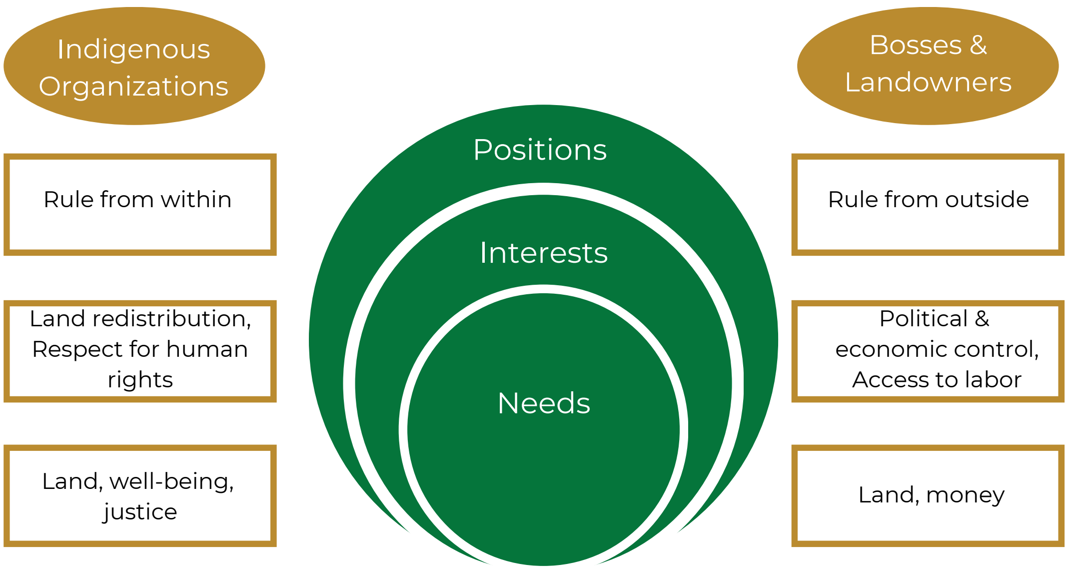
Other Organizations' Examples

Oftentimes the context of of the issue and the organization conducting the analysis can drive the type of stakeholder analysis being conducted. For additional examples and tips for stakeholder analysis, check out these approaches from Conservation International and the World Wildlife Fund.

How-To: Stakeholder Analysis

The Onion

The onion is useful for parties in negotiation. The onion model is set up to present three layers, the positions that we take publicly, for all to see and hear, underlying this layer is our interests – what we want to achieve from a particular situation, and the most core is the needs we require to be satisfied. When a person feels threatened, they may act from positions rather than needs in order to decrease vulnerability. Understanding the needs of a person develops empathy and may create a more transparent situation as a foundation for effective negotiation. Stakeholders' needs can often be aligned even if their positions are not.



Worksheet: Understanding Positions and Interests of Parties

Worksheets, like the onion concept, can be useful to identify the positions, interests, and underlying beliefs of stakeholders. This worksheet (adapted from the U.S. Forest Service's Collaboration Cadre (2021)) takes the additional step of identifying ways to address these interests. Try this format to identify these characteristics yourself.

Stakeholder or Party	Issue Important to This Party	Party's Position on This Issue	Party's Interests Underlying This Position	How Can Interests be Addressed?
Indigenous Organization	Land development & loss	Rule from within	Land redistrib., Respect for human rights	Creating more land access opportunities
Bosses & Landowners	Land development	Rule from outside	Political/econ. control, Access to labor	Identify alternative econ. opportunity

"The basic problem in a negotiation lies not in conflicting positions, but in the conflict between each side's needs, desires, concerns, and fears." - Fisher & Ury (2011) in *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*

Interest-based decision making

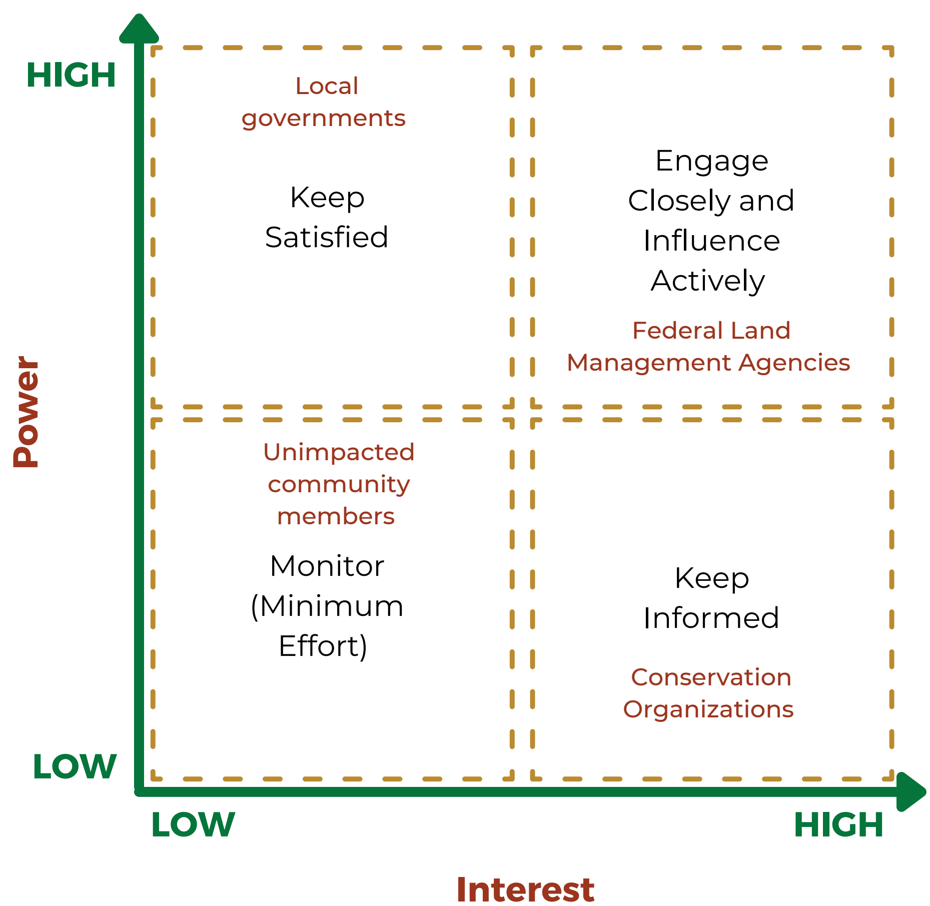
While each stakeholder may start out with a position, it is often necessary to go beyond positions and find common ground in the realms of interests and needs. For more information about navigating interest-based decision making, see the U.S. Forest Service's information sheet on the topic.

How-To: Stakeholder Analysis

Power and Interest Matrix

This matrix can be useful to visualize the interest and power levels of your identified stakeholder. Some stakeholders may hold little power but have lots of interests while others may hold significant power with little interest in your work. Organizing the differences between stakeholders will help you to prioritize your engagement strategies with stakeholders. Considering your stakeholders' relative power and interest in your work, classify them along the axes. The quadrant that your stakeholder falls under may suggest the most appropriate communication and engagement strategy for that stakeholder.

In the example presented here, different stakeholders are placed in their respective quadrant (in red) for the hypothetical example of a forest restoration project. It is important to note that the relative power and interest of each stakeholder will vary on the context of the issue being addressed.



Aligning expectations to minimize conflict

One way to minimize the negative forces facing a collaborative group and to reduce conflict is to work towards aligning expectations between and among stakeholders. See this informational sheet from the U.S. Forest Service to learn more about the importance of aligning expectations and to find worksheets to help groups align.

Expectations and requirements may also depend on the level of required or desired public participation, some of which may be required due to agency policy or law. For more information about the spectrum of public participation, read IAP2's description.

Conclusion: Diving Deeper

Stakeholder analysis is a crucial step towards establishing a solid foundation for collaboration. Using the tools in this how-to sheet can help you get a better understanding of the parties, values, perspectives, and power at play. Consider further exploring the reasons beneath stakeholder conflict. Often conflict stems from power, culture, identity, gender, and rights. Understanding histories, relationships, and needs of participants in a collaborative project will establish a foundation to efficiently work towards a common vision.

Works Cited and Additional Resources

Conservation International, 2014. Stakeholder Mapping Guide.

Fisher, R., et al., 2011. *Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in.* Penguin.

Fisher, S., et al., 2000. *Working With Conflict: skills and strategies for action.* New York: Zed Books Ltd.

International Association for Public Participation, 2021. Core Values, Ethics, Spectrum – The 3 Pillars of Public Participation.

Reed, M.S., et al. 2009. Who's in and why? A typology of stakeholder analysis methods for natural resource management. *Journal of Environmental Management 90: 1933-1949. ***Contact author for article access (m.reed@abdn.ac.uk*)

U.S. Forest Service National Collaboration Cadre, 2021. Aligning Expectations for Effective Collaborative Work.

U.S. Forest Service National Collaboration Cadre, 2021. Interest-Based Problem Solving.

Vedeld, P., 2020. Stakeholder Analysis, Natural Resource Management and Governance - Comparing Approaches.

Vogler, D., et al., 2017. Stakeholder Analysis in Environmental and Conservation Planning.

World Wildlife Fund, 2005. Cross-cutting Tool: Stakeholder Analysis.

This How-To document is brought to you by the Center for Collaborative Conservation. Jessica Archibald was the primary compiler, designer, and author of this document . Donna Vogler—an expert on stakeholder analysis—generously reviewed a draft of this document sheet and offered suggestions that improved it. We are grateful to both Jessica and Donna. The CCC builds the capacity of individuals, organizations, and communities conserve land, water, and the many communities they support through collaboration. Please visit our website and sign up for our newsletter for more on collaboration efforts, tools, and resources.