LME LEARN

GEF LME:LEARN

LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY TOOLKIT

DISCLAIMER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms

GEF   Global Environment Facility

LME   Large Marine Ecosystem

NAP   National Action Plan

NDA   National Diagnostic Analysis

NGO   Non-governmental organization

NOAA   US National Atmospheric and Oceanographic Administration

OHI   Ocean Health Index

PACA   Participatory Analysis for Community Action

PCU   Project Coordinating Unit

RFMO   Regional Fisheries Management Organization

SAP   Strategic Action Programme

TDA   Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis

UNFCCC   United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNFPA   United Nations Fund for Population Activities

1. Introduction

Environmental policy and management only succeed if key stakeholders feel engaged and have bought into the design of the actions concerned. The Toolkit for Stakeholder Participation in Environmental Policy (in further text: Toolkit) provides practical guidance on how to achieve this, focusing on the Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) projects, which seek to advance ecosystem-based management approach and action in five modules: productivity, fish and fisheries, pollution and ecosystem health, socioeconomics, and governance.

This toolkit organizes and shares a range of approaches, gathering highly regarded tools for achieving effective stakeholder participation at all stages of environmental policymaking. It is intended to equip users with:

- A framework and principles for working collaboratively,

- Approaches for identifying relevant stakeholders,

- Specific tools for different needs in stakeholder engagement, and

- Strategies for reaching agreements.

The Toolkit was developed based on the lessons learned, best practices, and experiences gathered by Conservation International and partners in applying the Ocean Health Index (OHI) worldwide, with contributions from principles developed by the Consensus Building Institute.

1.1 Toolkit rationale

According to the US National Atmospheric and Oceanographic Administration (NOAA), all 64 LMEs combined produce about 80% of global annual marine fishery biomass[1]. And, using Costanza *et al.* (1997) estimation, LMEs (open oceans) account for about 40%, or US$ 8.4 trillion, of the total of marine $20.9 trillion of annual goods and services. Given the main role humans play in all five LME modules, stakeholder participation throughout all stages of an LME initiative (from Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis - TDA, Strategic Action Programme - SAP design, and National

---

[1] https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/ecosystems/lme/index

Action Plan - NAP adoption, all the way through to SAP implementation and revision) is an essential requirement to attain project objectives. While effective LME management is inherently a participatory endeavor, it is often the case that stakeholders with varying interests do not work together, leading to inefficient and unsustainable use of natural resources, as can be evidenced by the high rates of overfishing, pollution, and habitat destruction seen throughout most LMEs. Historical, political, and cultural factors continue to pose barriers for LME management to effectively engage stakeholders in project planning and decision-making. In the LME context, in particular, the sheer number and diversity of relevant stakeholders that need to be involved for effective project implementation, makes the participatory management task very difficult. Nevertheless, the rapid degradation of marine natural resources, which poses a threat to economies and human well-being, has brought renewed attention to the need of seeking greater coordination and cooperation among all the actors that affect and are affected by changes in coupled socio-ecological systems and the solutions proposed by various LME initiatives.

In general, most environmental management efforts only engage stakeholders to keep them informed about proposed actions or to understand what are the conditions that may be negatively affecting their well-being. However, few efforts seek to remediate the status-quo (which is often unsustainable) and create new development pathways that offer equitable distribution and sustainable delivery of marine ecosystem services, which are the key benefit people receive from nature. For LME projects to shift business as usual in ocean and coastal management, project managers and lead collaborators must be deliberate about designing and implementing a plan for working with all relevant stakeholders throughout the life of the project. The ecosystem, multi-scale, long-term, human centric multi-management scale approach inherent in the LME process necessitates the use of custom-made tools precisely designed to address the complexities intrinsic to this management approach. As such, this toolkit has been developed with a view to gather tools and approaches from known best practices for involving various stakeholder groups in active participation throughout all phases of an LME project.

1.2 Target audience

The main audience for this Toolkit is the individuals and teams involved throughout the stages of LME projects, which includes, but is not limited to, Global Environment Facility (GEF) personnel, scientific staff conducting TDAs, regional managers and consultants developing SAPs, country officers and Project Coordinating Units (PCU) implementing SAPs and NAPs, as well as stakeholder leaders involved in LME projects. The Toolkit, however, can also be used by non-LME audiences, as it is designed to be useful at multiple scales of management, from stakeholders working at the smallest relevant unit of decision making, such as the community or local levels, to stakeholders influencing national or sub-national decision making. This document will be most useful, however, to environmental managers planning new projects, programs, or activities whose success hinges on the degree of participation and collaboration of environmental actors.

The principles and tools presented in this document work best when efforts are guided by a strong convener, such as the PCU. That is, an actor who has a stake in the environmental issue at hand, has the willingness and legitimacy to engage other stakeholders for advancing common objectives, and has sufficient capacity (technical and financial) to drive the stakeholder process forward. While PCUs and government agencies often play this role in the LME project context, NGOs, civil society groups, and/or academic institutions can also serve as conveners, provided they meet the required criteria mentioned above.

2. When to use the Toolkit

This toolkit is designed in a modular fashion that follows an established process, so it can be used from the onset of designing an LME project. Yet, it was developed in a way that also allows users to pull individual tools and elements to meet specific needs without having to work through the entire process. This toolkit will be most useful as LME conveners begin discussions on a new project. However, the idea of this approach is to engage stakeholders throughout the entire process, so conveners could refer to this document for guidance on specific issues at any stage during a particular series of interventions.

This toolkit has been developed with the understanding that many of its users will be LME practitioners; therefore, it is closely aligned with the Large Marine Ecosystem Scorecard and the Capacity Development Guide for LME and Coastal Ecosystem-Based Management. LME users are advised to begin by completing the **>> LME scorecard** first as many actions and interventions will be identified through that process, which can later benefit from following the process presented in this guide.

2.1 Stakeholder participation in environmental governance

2.1.1 Environmental governance in the LME context

Environmental governance refers to the various policies, regulations, rules, actions, and affairs, both formal and informal, deployed to ensure the sustainable delivery of environmental goods and services to advance social and economic goals. Governance not only involves governments and their agencies, it includes civil society (NGOs, resource user groups, community members), academic and scientific institutions, and the private sector. Environmental governance is often organized around thematic and/or spatial issues (e.g. fisheries and biodiversity management; watershed and coastal zone management). It is grounded on the notion that natural resources are public goods, that is, they are non-rivalrous resources and attributes we all benefit from equally (such as clean water and stable biodiversity), while it recognizes that natural resources have value for human well-being, so they must be protected from destruction and degradation.

In the LME context, governance must be 'encompassing', meaning it should go beyond simply assessing and monitoring ecosystem function to integrate scientific knowledge and throughout project implementation to guide decision-making. Leaning on the principles of adaptive management, LME governance ought to be cyclical in nature starting with gathering and analyzing key information, institutionalizing data driven decision-making, implementing fact-based management actions, and evaluating the consequences of interventions. As such, LME projects should invest in cost-effective measures to address information, data, and knowledge gaps that can inform management, while providing measurements of impact and progress against pre-established objectives. Also, understanding the LMEs are by definition multi-scale management interventions, LME governance efforts should prioritize harmonizing policy and management actions across jurisdictions, beginning by distilling global agreements (ex. Law of the Sea), coordinating regional initiatives, strengthening national regulatory frameworks, and developing local management capacity (Mahon *et al.* 2009).

Given the varying spatial and temporal scales of environmental goods and services produced within the boundaries of LMEs, governance is usually approached within the scales of jurisdictional decision-making where specific issues or concerns exist. For example, agricultural run-off and marine pollution tend to be localized issues, so they are managed, for the most part, within the ecological and jurisdictionally boundaries of the issue (local scales).

At the national level, governance focuses on regulatory frameworks and enforcement of laws, such as designation of protected areas and management of key habitats and species. Benefits such as fisheries, which are highly migratory, are governed by regional bodies, as is the case with Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs). And at the highest levels of governance, there is management of global issues, such as climate change, which requires a coordinated global response; thus, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the leading treaty ratified by most countries whose objective is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations to prevent anthropogenic interference with the climate system.

This is not to say that efforts shouldn't be aligned — quite the contrary — and this is precisely the fundamental role LMEs can play in marine resource governance. Because many marine environmental management issues permeate across political and jurisdictional boundaries, LMEs can align environmental governance efforts across management scales, from the local community and national levels, all the way to the regional and global levels, both through bilateral (two countries) and multilateral (many countries) initiatives. Thus, by fostering and implementing encompassing ocean governance based on adaptive management, LMEs can bridge multiple management scales and bring together multiple stakeholders, all of which are indispensable components to cultivate sustainable ocean and coastal resource management.

2.1.2 Right-sizing the activities

One of the main challenges in environmental governance is achieving trust between and among the large number of players often involved in natural resource management. To overcome this barrier, it is often more effective to organize smaller management groups around specific issues that are "nested" within governance structures of larger scope. This "multi-level" governance, which is an aggregation of smaller groups, allows for autonomy and in-group trust building, while assuring members that their efforts are linked with initiatives at larger scales3. This implies that nested governance groups are only handling a few tasks specific to their level of management.

A good rule of thumb, however, is that as much as possible is done at the lowest level of governance since that is often where the resources and their users are interacting most directly. At this scale, resource co-management is regarded as the governance standard, which is where community resource users, governments, and businesses "share the responsibility and authority for decision making over the management of the natural resources" (Pomeroy and Rivera-Guieb 2006). When a co-management unit engages in activities and behaviors that affect other co-management units, governance of these resources should be assigned to higher management levels, often state or provincial levels. This process is repeated all the way to global governance of joint resources such as fresh water, oceans, biodiversity, climate, air quality, forests, etc.

2.1.3 Stakeholder engagement in the context of Good LME Governance

Stakeholder engagement includes a variety of practices to ensure involvement of the public and specific interest groups in public decisions and implementation. It is an essential component of good LME governance by promoting the principles of transparency, inclusivity, accountability, and fairness. It is expected to contribute to effective governance as policies and practices developed with stakeholder input are more likely to be adopted and fulfil their goals.

Stakeholder engagement is a process. A ladder of engagement is a framework designed to build engagement (Figure 1). The process works by getting stakeholders to contribute through increasingly important actions that contribute to the realization of the stated goal (Figure 2).
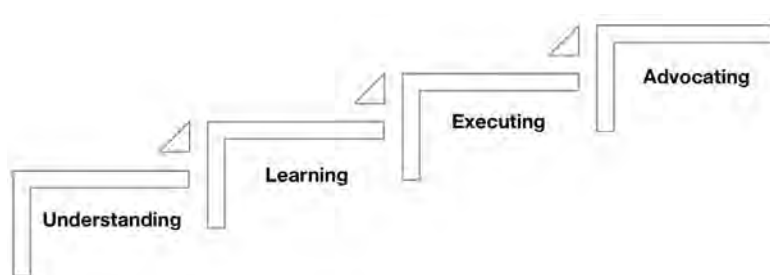
Figure 1: The ladder of engagement (LME Governance Toolkit)
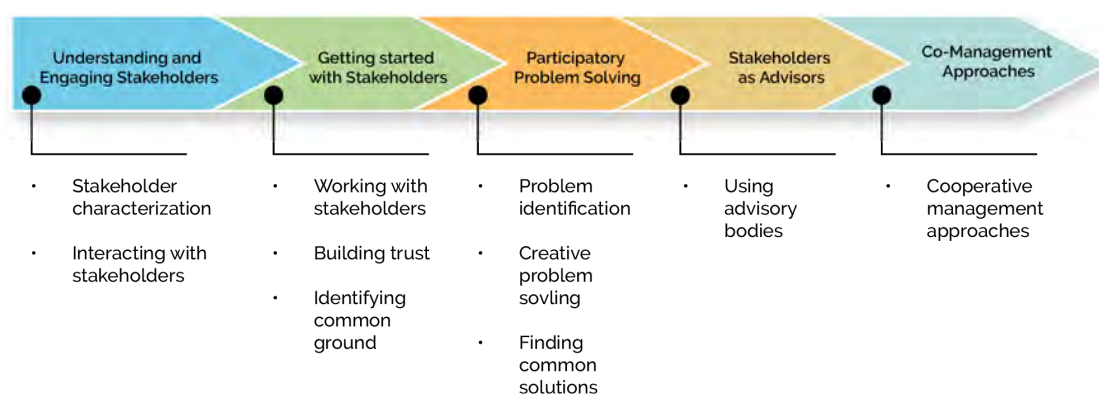
Figure 2: Steps of Traditional Stakeholder Participatory Processes (Walton et al. 2013)

2.2 Stakeholder participation in Large Marine Ecosystem management

LME project's management includes a number of processes where understanding of stakeholder groups and their interests, as well as their meaningful engagement, are critical for its success. To contribute significantly to building understanding and cooperation between stakeholder groups, the LME planning and management processes should always aim to effectively implement appropriate levels of stakeholder engagement. Ultimately, the trust built through these processes will contribute to achieving goals of an LME project.

The processes for the development of the National Diagnostic Analysis (NDA), TDA and SAP for an LME require deep understanding and identification of the relevant stakeholder groups. In each of these processes, stakeholders should be identified and their interest and thus their influence in relevant features of the LME determined. Understanding stakeholders in this way can be pursued through the Stakeholder Mapping process (summarized presentation starts in section 4.2.1 of this toolkit). It is important to consider stakeholder groups that are relevant to each of the five ecosystem-based five-modules of LMEs approach:

- Governance,

- Socio-economics,

- Productivity,

- Fish and Fisheries, and

- Ecosystem Health & Pollution.

For each module there are stakeholders which have a role in management of its key elements, as well as those who are beneficiaries of ecosystem services, and those who may be contributing to ongoing threats. With this in mind, the stakeholder mapping tool categorizes stakeholders into the following groups (Table 1):

Table 1: Generic stakeholder groups

Government
Private
Donors
Civil Society
Local Associations
Academia
International Organizations
Indigenous Peoples
Local Communities

In developing SAPs and NAPs, additional effort should be made to expand on Stakeholder Mapping to determine how different stakeholder groups will be best engaged in key strategic actions that will be pursued under the SAP at national and subnational levels. This may regularly require consideration of how to engage the different stakeholder groups in each proposed Strategic Action.

→ Nesting, subsidiarity, and community-based environmental governance beyond the local scale

→ Recording and using indigenous knowledge: A manual

3. Ways to define and categorize stakeholders

3.1 Environmental stakeholders

Environmental stakeholders are people, organizations, or social groups of any size that act at various levels (local, regional, national, and international; private and public), have a significant and specific stake in a given set of natural resources, and can affect or be affected by natural resource management decisions, actions and/or lack thereof. While environmental stakeholders vary widely depending on context, pressures and risks, and specific environmental issues, they can be grouped into four broad categories (English 2000):

- *"Losers*: those negatively affected by changes in environmental conditions, which are either directly affecting their health and economic well-being, or degrading social, cultural, and/or historically meaningful environmental features or areas.

- *Winners:* those that are positively affected by changes in environmental conditions, primarily through economic means.

- *Perpetrators:* those changing the environmental conditions themselves either directly or indirectly. These are often those causing alterations in the delivery of ecosystem services.

- *Managers:* those trying to maintain environmental conditions, particularly within the five-modules mentioned above".

3.2 Natural resource stakeholder groups

Some practitioners of stakeholder participation differentiate groups depending on the way in which they engage with the natural resources in question (Meffe *et al.* 2002). In Section 4.2.1 below, the process by which conveners identify stakeholders for their specific environmental management issue will be introduced.

Stakeholder participation in environmental management refers to the permanent processes of collaboration and empowerment in decision making and implementation for ensuring ecological functioning for human well-being. In practice, 'stakeholders' have been managing resources for thousands of years. For most of human history, natural resource management was a community-based endeavour, primarily focused on the harvesting and production of goods for human consumption. As the complexity of economic activities and social institutions evolved so did the complexity of environmental issues. Today, there are more diverse stakeholder groups than ever, and more potential for conflict.

Stakeholder engagement has a broad spectrum of participation beyond information sharing and consultation. It involves understanding needs and interests of stakeholders, collaboratively defining targets, seeking consensus and agreements, and jointly implementing initiatives and monitoring progress over time (Susskind *et al.* 1999b). Besides the moral rationale for increasing stakeholder participation, there are pragmatic reasons managers should want to involve multiple actors in decision-making: studies demonstrate that initiatives where stakeholders are involved through all stages, from design and planning to implementation and monitoring, yield better and longer lasting outcomes than those done with little or no multi-stakeholder participation.

4. Stakeholder Participation Processes and Tools

4.1 Attributes of the process

Engaging multiple stakeholders in all stages of environmental management requires that the concept of 'stakeholder engagement' is thought of as a process rather than an activity with a clear beginning and end. That is mostly due to the fact that most stakeholders are interacting with natural resources prior to, during, and after the proposed interventions, and as a result their stakes in the issues go far beyond the implications of one single project or initiative. It is also most often the case that there may exist arrangements, conflicts, and issues between various actors engaged in natural resource management that need to be carefully recognized and acknowledged prior to proposing a new course of action. Thus, the process of engaging stakeholders in environmental management and policymaking is iterative and cyclical, requiring that the outcomes and decisions reached in previous iterations be revised frequently to ensure management interventions are addressing changes in evolving socio-ecological conditions.

The process of participation in environmental management and policy primarily seeks to increase understanding about and among stakeholders, while leveraging knowledge and gaining support and commitment from key players. This process eases the adoption of joint resource management between resource users and their institutions to preserve valuable natural capital, strengthen environmental governance, and foster sustainable production. According to the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI 2011), effective participatory process should:

- Provide equal, informed, and active access to all stakeholders interested throughout the process,

- Allow stakeholders to present and listen to diverse views and opinions,

- Manage conflicts and build consensus among stakeholders,

- Increase stakeholder understanding of issues through adequate communication, so they are able to make informed decisions,

- Implement adaptive management principles so the process can address emerging needs,

- Seek broad support for the decisions reached and ensure continuity of efforts, and

- Acknowledge and actively balance the differences between stakeholders.

Wealth, social status, customary norms, seniority, age, and gender are some of the factors that influence the relative power of different stakeholders in negotiations during the environmental management process. Thus, negotiation conveners must recognize and compensate the power imbalances that are often at play when different stakeholders are involved in a decision-making process, to ensure fair and just outcomes for all.

The degree of participation in environmental management can also vary widely depending on the power and role of each stakeholder relative to the environmental issue at hand. On one end of the spectrum, users are fully in control of natural resources and decision-making, while on the other end, an agency with authority controls the resources and informs stakeholders of their decisions. In reality, both extremes are seldom effective or pragmatic scenarios for addressing environmental issues. This toolkit proposes arrangements where control over natural resources and decision-making is shared between stakeholders through formalized agreements that detail the roles and responsibilities of various actors. In recent years, multi-stakeholder collaborative working groups, or coordinating mechanisms, have demonstrated their capacity to successfully reach and implement environmental agreements at various scales of decision-making.

Broad stakeholder participation is often reserved for intricate situations with wide-ranging implications for multiple groups of people. Participatory decision-making process works best when: proactive engagement may avert future problems; resource conflicts already exist; decisions affect multiple groups; knowledge from various groups is needed; and, multiple parties have jurisdiction over the resources (NOAA 2003). While it is true that involving stakeholders in environmental management can yield better decisions, increase the support of various actors, and identify options for mutual gain, this process is lengthy and challenging, which implies additional costs for program management (NOAA 2007).

Because environmental management is inherently multidisciplinary, the varying interests at play may conflict through the process, delaying decision-making or making consensus practically impossible. These complexities call for skilled stakeholder participation facilitators with a wide range of experiences, from conflict resolution, to meeting facilitation, to collaborative decision making. However, provided that the process is deemed fair and legitimate by key stakeholders, the benefits of improved relationships between stakeholders often leads to agreements that are respected, implemented, and monitored, which far outweighs the financial and time costs associated with stakeholder participation.

⊝ National Marine Protected Areas Center 2004

Determine stakeholders, their interests, relative power dynamics, and how to involve them in the initiative

I. Mapping, assessing, and engaging stakeholders

II. Engaging stakeholders in planning and strategy development

Meeting facilitation
Conflict resolution and negotiation
Collaborative target settling
Strategies
Action planning and management
Roles and responsibilities

IV. Working with stakeholders on monitoring and evaluations

Measuring progress towards targets
Adapting objectives, actions, and timelines
Adaptive management

III. Involving stakeholders in implementation

Establishing coordination mechanism
Mobilizing stakeholder groups
Gathering and sharing baseline information
Co-management approaches

Figure 3: Four-phase Stakeholder Engagement Cycle

5. Phases of the Stakeholder Engagement Cycle

5.1 PHASE 1: Mapping, Assessing and Engaging Stakeholders

The process of stakeholder engagement often begins with understanding the interests, values, concerns, perspectives, and needs of various stakeholder groups, as well as assessing the relative influence and power of different stakeholders on the issues at hand. This step is usually referred to as the "stakeholder needs assessment".

5.1.1 Stakeholder mapping

Stakeholder analysis is a process of systematically listing and analyzing information to determine which groups have an interest in a project, which groups are typically included or excluded, whether each group is relevant to include, whether the groups support or oppose the project, or will the groups benefit or be harmed by it. The analysis also includes information on the concerns from various groups.

5.1.2 Tool: Stakeholder Mapping Guide

Conservation International's Stakeholder Mapping Guide was designed based on decades of experience working with stakeholder for environmental conservation projects. The process of identifying and analyzing key actors in a conservation project allows to know their interests, positions for or against a given policy, whether they will benefit or be harmed by a project or policy, alliances with other stakeholders, conflicts with other stakeholders, degree of

involvement in the policy process, lack of involvement in the policy process, and ability or inability to affect policy change. It is preferable to carry out the stakeholder listing and analysis before project implementation in order to facilitate alliance building and to foresee and prevent possible conflicts.

⊙ Stakeholder Mapping Guide For Conservation International *Country Programs & Partners*
• •

STEP 1: PLANNING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

It is important to start the stakeholder engagement planning process as early as possible in the project cycle. Identifying stakeholders can begin as early as the concept is formed and the project proposal developed. At this step, it is important to define and understand the purpose of stakeholders' mapping, namely, how will the information and findings generated from the analysis be used to benefit the project, as well as the stakeholders themselves. The following questions will have to be answered at this step:

- What is it that needs to be accomplished?

- Which stakeholders will need to be consulted?

- What is needed from specific stakeholders?

- Who will use the information? and

- In which ways they will use it to benefit the project?

STEP 2: IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholder Identification consists of listing groups known to influence or be impacted by the project or policy at hand. This process will provide an important basis from which to expand the number of known stakeholders as well as begin to analyze those listed. Next, a literature review needs to be conducted to survey the range of stakeholders involved or impacted by the project or policy. This takes place through searching and reviewing online and print documents related to the issue: websites, media sources, government reports, NGO reports, scholarly reports, legal briefings, company profiles, similar projects, etc.

At the outset, all stakeholder groups with a potential interest in the project should be listed, without limiting the list based on whether it is known the group will have a stake in the project or not. Later, during analysis and stakeholder engagement, the groups having a relevant stake in the project will be confirmed, ensuring that stakeholders who may not typically have a voice in the policy discussions and decisions are included in outreach.

STEP 3: GATHERING INFORMATION

The lists made through stakeholder identification are based on secondary sources, while further information collection should be done by seeking primary sources. There are three main ways to reach and collect information from the project actors themselves: (1) electronic communication – such as email or online surveys; (2) interviews – by phone or in person; and (3) focus groups of multiple stakeholders. In conducting an interview, a standard questionnaire can be developed based on the categories of the Stakeholder Analysis Worksheet.

⊙ Stakeholder Analysis Worksheet
• •

Interviews during outreach can also prove useful in collecting and adding groups to the list of stakeholders by asking each group to identify others who may have interest in or be impacted by the project or policy.

STEP 4: COMPLETING THE STAKEHOLDER MAPPING WORKSHEET

The purpose of the Worksheet is to provide key questions to stimulate analysis and understanding of stakeholder roles and responsibilities. The questions in the worksheet may be answered by the project implementation team or through stakeholder outreach such as emails, interviews, or focus groups.

STEP 5: ANALYZING THE WORKSHEET

With information entered on as many stakeholders as possible, in this step each question of the Worksheet will be considered, with the purpose of analyzing the information collected. Analysis is done in order to reach a better understanding of the interests, positions, relevance, partnerships, and conflicts of stakeholder groups.

In some forms of stakeholder analysis, the most politically influential or financially endowed decision- makers are considered to be at the center of any analysis. While these stakeholders remain important, in this analysis the goal instead is to consider the entire range of potentially impacted groups, which includes those that have a lack of influence or are excluded.

It is important to analyze the social and environmental barriers to inclusion and how to overcome those challenges. In any context, there are complex social factors that contribute to whether a group is involved, who is not, and why this is so. The Worksheet can help to answer some of the underlying questions through comprehensive analysis.

STEP 6: APPLYING THE RESULTS

It is not enough to collect and analyze information on stakeholder interest; in this step analysis will shape the design of the project or policy to reflect the feedback from stakeholders impacted by it. The project team and the stakeholders involved will benefit from a more extensive and improved understanding of who to involve, their roles, and their interests or concerns. This information can be used to shape the project or policy in order to address any concerns that arose during the outreach and to increase probability for success by incorporating any changes from the stakeholders and generating buy-in for the project or policy.

The results of the analysis can also be used to provide input on other projects and programs, increase support for policy reform, guide participatory decision- making, and engage stakeholders. Generally, the purpose of this analysis is to increase stakeholder engagement and build consensus, therefore the results should be disseminated to all groups involved.

⊙ Stakeholder Engagement: Participatory Approaches for the Planning and Development of Marine Protected Areas
. . . .

⊙ Participatory Analysis for Community Action (PACA) Training Manual
. . . .

⊙ Collaboration Mapping
. . . .

5.2 PHASE 2: Engaging Stakeholders in Planning and Strategy Development

Mapping stakeholders and understanding their interests, concerns, issues, and relative power is just the beginning of the stakeholder engagement process. As stated earlier, stakeholders should be involved throughout all phases of an intervention, including in designing strategies and action plans. Some of the most important resources for working effectively with multiple stakeholders are: skilled facilitation, conflict resolution coupled with negotiation skills, collaborative target setting, and development of management plans and strategies.

5.2.1 Skilled facilitation

In planning and implementing LME projects, there will undoubtedly be numerous meetings and workshops. These meetings may involve different stakeholder groups at different times in the planning and implementation process. How these meetings are designed and facilitated can make a big difference to the overall success of the planning and implementation process.

Meetings and workshops can be open, supportive, and positive or competitive, discouraging, and negative, largely depending on how they are designed and facilitated. The following basic principles for meeting design will help coordinate effective meetings:

1   **Advanced planning and design:** An effective meeting require advance planning and design including identification of the desired objectives and outcome of the meeting, deciding who will be invited, considering language and cultural factors, understanding the meeting culture where you are working, and developing an effective agenda.

2   **Providing meeting materials to participants well in advance:** It is very helpful if meeting participants have early information on the objectives of the meeting, the meeting agenda, and the decision-making process that will be used.

3   **Separating content from process:** The content, or what the meeting is discussing should be kept distinct from the meeting process, which is how the discussion happens and how the group makes decisions. It's very important that ahead of the meeting it is established how the meeting will run and how decisions will be made, especially if difficult decisions will have to be made.

4   **Effective facilitation:** Meetings that are well facilitated typically are more effective at achieving their intended outcomes than those that are not. Whenever possible, it is best to engage trained facilitators who can remain neutral on the meeting topics but who have enough topical knowledge to ask insightful questions of the participants. More detailed suggestions on effective facilitation techniques are provided below.

5   **Effective recording:** While, some planning processes may have legal requirements as to how meetings are recorded, for the majority of meetings the approach to recording is up to the organizing group. Some groups may want to take detailed minutes of the meeting noting all comments said and who said them. Others may find that it is only important to document key decisions and action items. In either case, it is critical that the meeting documentation is absolutely clear on decisions and agreements and provide enough context so that a person who was not at the meeting can understand. Bullet points or vague language may leave stakeholders confused in future months. For this reason, it's important to have experienced recorder who is comfortable with documenting key information quickly and to agree with them ahead of time on the documentation style.

6   **Identifying action items and responsibilities:** Before any meetings is over, it's important to identify the actions to be accomplished and who will be responsible. The list of action items and responsibilities should be shared with all participants along with other documentation from the meeting. In addition to action items, identifying what will happen next in terms of future meetings is also important.

To facilitate is to "make an action or process easy or easier." A facilitator helps to plan and design meetings and workshops, guides the participants to help ensure that the group's objectives are met, encourages participation, and where possible works to foster agreement on key decisions. Here, some suggestions on meeting and workshop facilitation techniques that can help to ensure that meetings are as effective as possible are offered:

1   **The facilitator must remain neutral:** For participants to feel comfortable in sharing their ideas it's important that they have a neutral guide. For many meetings, especially short ones, a project leader will end up facilitating the meeting. In these cases, the leader may find it most effective to ask the opinions of other participants before sharing their own and making it very clear when they are facilitating the meeting process and when they are shifting their role to provide their own non-neutral input. In longer workshops or more complex meetings, it's important to secure an independent neutral facilitator if at all possible. If budgets don't allow for this, it is key that the person who ends up in the facilitation role set very clear ground rules and clear language to signal when they are facilitating and when they are participating. They should not use their role as a facilitator as a way to control the floor to share their opinions.

2   **Ground rules for decision making need to be established up front:** Meetings can be easily disrupted when stakeholders with differing interests and opinions are asked to work together on management decisions. To help avoid conflict, it is extremely helpful if all participants are clear about how decisions will be made. For example, does a decision require the consensus of the participants or are the participants providing input that will be considered by a regulatory authority to make the decision? Clearly identifying the role that participants have in decision making is very important. That said, conflict may still arise, and facilitators should study techniques on how to diffuse conflict in meetings and workshops.

3   **Ground rules for participation need to be established up front:** Establishing ground rules about how participants must behave during the meeting can help address potential conflict. These can include: prohibitions on being disagreeable, raising voices, or targeting specific individuals with negative comments; requiring that people raise their hands and be acknowledged in order to speak; limiting the number of times in a row that a person can share their input, asking people to write down their input and asking everyone to share within a limited amount of time.

4   **Many participants may be out of their comfort zone and not be using their first language** (Ramsar 2008). In multi-stakeholder workshops, most participants are operating out of their normal cultural context. It is important to consider cultural elements that if not managed properly can make participants uncomfortable and impact the workshop. This can include protocol around workshop opening and process, speaking appropriately to show respect to participants, food, and language challenges. The following should be kept in mind:

- If participants' first language is different from the workshop language, facilitator should consider the way she/he speaks by trying to slow down, pronouncing words more clearly, and watching the use of idioms or expressions that may not be widely known. Sentences can also be rephrased if people are not capturing the meaning. Attempts to make things clearer should not end up being too simple, and thus sounding patronizing!

- If language interpretation is used, it should be remembered that this can nearly double the time needed for every meeting process. Working in multiple languages can be mentally exhausting so it may be important to provide longer breaks and many opportunities for people to work in groups that speak one language.

5   **Different approaches to encourage and manage participant engagement should be used:** Different people have different ways of participating in meetings. Some people will only talk in small groups, while others won't talk unless called on. The following approaches can encourage participation from all participants.

- Individual participants should be given an opportunity to write down their thoughts on a particular question. This way, everyone gets a chance to think at their own pace and everyone will have something to share. This can also help keep any one person from dominating the discussion as the facilitator can simply call on other people.

- Participants should be allowed time in groups of two. Even in small groups, it is common that some people talk more than others. But in groups of two usually both people will share.

- People should be allowed to get together with others who have the same primary language or who are from the same demographic group. This can increase comfort level and these groups may form bonds or have insights that can be important to the meeting outcomes.

6   **Culturally appropriate energizers and team building activities should be used:** Energizers and team building exercises are fun activities that allow the group to take their mind off the meeting topics, stand up, stretch and move, interact with one another, and have fun. Some energizers can be as quick as standing up and stretching while some team building type exercises may be more complex and involve group problem solving. If used effectively they can invigorate a meeting, encourage interaction among diverse groups, and help participants overcome mental roadblocks.

With diverse groups, it is especially important to include team building activities that help people work together and get to know each other as teammates. It can help the meeting process to mix groups of individuals who may have very different views on key meeting topics and ask them to work together on a completely unrelated team building exercise. Team building activities also enhance peer learning, as the focus of the exercise is between the participants rather than between the facilitator and the group. However, energizers and other team building activities need to be appropriate for the cultural and professional context.

A facilitator should give considerable thought to the appropriate use of energizers in each meeting and consult with local experts to make sure they are appropriate. If a facilitator is unable to find effective energizers and team building activities themselves, one option is to ask the participants to form small groups each of which will be responsible for one such activity during each day of the workshop. If your energizers and teambuilding activities are successful, the interactions will spill over into other workshop activities and even social time helping to build bridges between diverse groups that not might not otherwise interact.

7   **Group input needs to be synthesized:** One of the most important skills of a facilitator is the ability to synthesize and/or categorize the report out of groups or individuals on key workshop topics. This may include activities such as turning 20 individual responses into a synthesized set of just a few main categories. One helpful tip is to start categorizing and synthesizing the feedback from individuals as it is provided. By noticing patterns and relationships between individual responses as they are given, a facilitator can normally group all the report outs into categories very rapidly.

8   **Be ready to ask probing questions:** Often in workshops, individuals or small groups are asked to report out their conclusions on a particular topic or question. Usually this is followed by an opportunity for other participants to ask questions or make comments. However, it can be discouraging to the group or individual if no one asks questions or makes comments. A good facilitator should be ready to make an encouraging comment or ask a gently probing question in the event that others in the workshop do not ask any questions.

→ The Basics of Designing & Facilitating Meetings

→ The Role of a Facilitator

→ A Guide to Participatory Action Planning and Techniques for Facilitating Groups

→ Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA): A toolkit for National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) coordinators for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

5.2.2 Conflict resolution and negotiation skills

Conflicts over natural resources are one of the leading causes for violent confrontation and war in human history. Managing conflicts between stakeholders is an inherent and necessary component to ensure effective environmental management. In fact, conflict is at the heart of most environmental issues, as it is often the case that the activities of one group may be negatively affecting the economic and/or human well-being of another group. Skilled neutral negotiators can be very useful when the parties agree to sit around the table to discuss options for overcoming issues. However, all stakeholders can benefit from understanding the principles of conflict resolution and negotiation.

5.2.2.1   Tool: Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In

In this classic text, the authors Fischer, Ury and Patton (2011) (summary prepared by Oakwod Learning Limited) explain that a good agreement is one which is wise and efficient, and which improves the parties' relationships. Wise agreement satisfies the parties' interests and is fair and lasting.

Negotiations often take the form of "positional bargaining". In positional bargaining each part opens with their position on an issue. The parties then bargain from their separate opening positions to agree on one position. Positional bargaining does not tend to produce good agreements. It is an inefficient means of reaching agreements, and the agreements tend to neglect the parties' interests. It encourages stubbornness and so tends to harm the parties' relationship.

Contrary to the positional bargaining, "principled negotiation" provides a better way of reaching good agreements. The process of principled negotiation can be used effectively on almost any type of dispute. The four principles of principled negotiation are:

1	Separate the people from the problem,
2	Focus on interests rather than positions,
3	Generate a variety of options before settling on an agreement, and
4	Insist that the agreement be based on objective criteria.

The above principles should be observed at each stage of the negotiation process. The process begins with the analysis of the situation or problem, of the other parties' interests and perceptions, and of the existing options. The next stage is to plan ways of responding to the situation and the other parties. Finally, the parties discuss the problem trying to find a solution on which they can agree.

The authors also describe three common obstacles to negotiation and discuss ways to overcome those obstacles:

1	When one party is more powerful,
2	When one party won't use principled negotiation, and
3	When one party uses "dirty tricks".

⊝ Conflict Resolution Skills Managing and Resolving Conflict in a Positive Way

5.2.2.2   Tool: Harvard's Top 10 Negotiation Skills You Must Learn to Succeed

Increasingly, business negotiators recognize that the most effective bargainers are skilled at both creating value and claiming value—that is, they both collaborate and compete. The following 10 negotiation skills will help succeed at integrative negotiation:

1	Analyze and cultivate your BATNA (**B**est **A**lternative **to** a **N**egotiated **A**greement,
2	Negotiate the process,
3	Build rapport,
4	Listen actively,
5	Ask good questions,

6	Search for smart trade-offs,
7	Be aware of the anchoring bias,
8	Present multiple equivalent offers simultaneously (MESO),
9	Try a contingent contract, and
10	Plan for the implementation stage.

5.2.2.3   Tool: Harvard's 10 Hard-Bargaining Tactics & Negotiation Skills

1	Extreme demands followed up by small, slow concessions,
2	Commitment tactics,
3	Take-it-or-leave-it negotiation strategy,
4	Inviting unreciprocated offers,
5	Trying to make you flinch,
6	Personal insults and feather ruffling,
7	Bluffing, puffing, and lying,
8	Threats and warnings,
9	Belittling your alternatives, and
10	Good cop, bad cop.

5.2.3 Collaborative Target Setting

Establishing shared management targets is a common need for the effective management of large marine areas. However, deciding between the numerous options and the reconciling potentially competing interests can make this process extremely difficult. For example, should the management team strive to protect 10% of coral reef habitats or 30 % or identify another targ*et all* together and how will this target be determined? When numerous stakeholders are involved, it can become very difficult to establish shared management targets. Conservation biologists may make one recommendation considering ecosystem needs, while commercial operators or artisanal fishermen may have other interests that are counter to these recommendations.

A key distinction that managers will need to determine is:

- Will they simply identify resources that need to be managed as their targets without numerical targets (these may include coral reefs, mangroves, nearshore fisheries, and others), or

- Will they set numerical targets such as a certain percentage or extent of each ecosystem that should be well managed.

Some tips for Collaborative Target Setting are:

1. **Establish a Working Relationship and Build Trust Between Stakeholder Groups:** Collaborative target setting is often an early step in the planning process. But it is recommended that this only be pursued once a basic level of trust has been established between participating stakeholders. Ways to develop trust include spending time with stakeholder groups in their communities to understand their interests and hosting informational meetings that review the background of the managed area but don't try to set targets or advance planning steps. Starting out with a dedicated phase to get to know stakeholders and build trust before working on collaborative targets is time well invested toward the ultimately goal of being able to work effectively with stakeholder groups.

2. **Work to Develop a Shared Vision of the Future:** While many stakeholders' interests may at first appear to contradict one another, in reality the foundation, i.e. the ecosystems services needed to support each of these interests, may in fact be very similar. As a result, rather than focusing on individual interests it can be very valuable to focus on developing a shared vision of the future, discussing the underlying ecosystem services that support that vision, and discussing optional targets that can support that vision. Tourism operators, resource managers, and fishermen are very likely to share a similar vision for the future in terms of abundant resources and prosperous economies based on these resources. While their specific interests may vary considerably, demonstrating that they share the same basic vision of the future can help build trust and a spirit for collaboration.

3. **Focus on Interests Not Positions and Principles of Collaboration:** This tip applies to any effort to reduce conflict in planning or implementation of management efforts. One of the best ways to start to address a problem or set a shared target is to focus on the interests or principles, rather than on individual stakeholder agendas or positions. All parties must acknowledge that as many of their interests as possible must be met if the agreement is going to be sustainable. This will require innovative solutions, y*et all* stakeholder needs may not be fully met, so a willingness to compromise is essential. In addition to having interests met, it is very important that all relevant stakeholders are included, and that they feel like they have been heard and understood. It is also important that Stakeholder groups in positions of authority deeply consider the interests of groups with less authority. For example, a resource management agency must carefully consider the needs of artisanal fisheries as well as those of commercial operators. Targets must balance these interests, but rarely to both groups have the same level of input or authority in influencing these decisions.

4. **When Possible Apply Objective Guidelines and Criteria for Targets:** If at all possible, apply guidelines for management targets that have been established by law or through international conventions. For example, the Great Barrier Reef Management Authority was given a mandate to establish a certain percentage of no take area under the representative areas program. While the process was still extremely complex, having a clear target has been cited as a key element in the success of the process. Also, well established scientific principles can also provide effective guidance for target setting.

   For example, the USAID supported Coral Triangle Support Partnership undertook an extensive literature review of scientific recommendations on principles for designing marine protected area networks to achieve fisheries, biodiversity, and climate change objectives in tropical ecosystems. The Guidelines in this and other similar scientific reviews can provide key objective recommendations for establishment of scientifically rigorous management targets. (Green *et al.* 2013)

5   **Apply the Precautionary Principle:** We know that there is a limit to what ecosystems can provide; however, it is rare that we fully understand those limits. In most areas of the world, our scientific understanding of ecosystem productivity is limited. The Precautionary Principle was developed to help support decision making in natural resource management when there is insufficient scientific information on which to base decisions. (Kriebel *et al.* 2001)

The precautionary principle, which has been proposed as a new guideline in environmental decision making, has four central components: 1) taking preventive action in the face of uncertainty; 2) shifting the burden of proof to the proponents of an activity; 3) exploring a wide range of alternatives to possibly harmful actions; and 4) increasing public participation in decision making. When setting collaborative targets, the precautionary principle argues that as great an area as possible be well managed to maintain or restore ecosystem services since those services are the foundation of the interests of most stakeholder groups.

6   **Let History be Your Guide Make but Make Sure your Targets are Ecologically Meaningful and Evidence Based:** It is common that natural resource managers will want to establish targets that include restoring habitats or populations of key species to historical levels. This may include, for example restoring mangrove coverage to 1960 levels. However, if you chose to use temporal targets, be sure that these targets present an ecologically viable scenario for that ecosystem given contemporary demands on its services. Also, be sure that your target can be factually backed with available information. If you don't have information or data on the condition of resources at a certain time in the past, it may be important instead to consider setting targets based on geographic coverage of ecosystems or management approaches.

7   **Make it Clear that Numerous Spatial Management Options are Possible:** In establishing collaborative targets, it should be clear that the targets are just the first step. How to achieve the target will require intensive analysis typically including Marine Spatial Planning. Under Marine Spatial Planning approaches, numerous options to achieve the target are possible and these can be assessed based on their relative benefits and impacts to different stakeholder groups. Stakeholder groups should understand that setting ambitious collaborative targets does not automatically mean they will be negatively impacted, and the process of marine spatial planning is looking for solutions that optimize benefits and limit impacts as much as possible.

8   **Anticipate the Need for Alternatives:** The ability of ecosystems to provide for the interest of all user groups can be limited depending on the demand for ecosystem services. For management to be effective, approaches that maintain ecosystem services are critical. This can often mean that alternatives to current resources uses must be identified and can be a key aspect of diffusing conflict. For example, certain commercial or artisanal fishing practices may no longer be viable if management targets are to be achieved. It's important to acknowledging the need to assist stakeholder groups that will be impacted by these changes to develop alternative economic options. Following through with this assistance can help to diffuse conflict and pave a smooth path for adoption and pursuit of ambitious collaborative targets.

⊙ Harvard's Top 10 Negotiation Skills You Must Learn to Succeed

⊙ Harvard's 10 Hard-Bargaining Tactics to Watch Out for in a Negotiation

⊙ Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation

⊙ Stakeholder Engagement: Participatory Approaches for the Planning and Development of Marine Protected Areas

⊙ Facilitating collaborative public decisions

⊙ Stakeholder Engagement Strategies for Participatory Mapping

5.2.4 Developing Management Plans and Strategies

To effectively manage large coupled human-natural areas, it is important to develop, implement, and monitor multi-stakeholder plans. These plans take many forms including management plans, action plans, and strategies. The essential elements of these different formats are similar and include:

1	Setting a long-term collective vision,
2	Identifying resources that are important to different stakeholder groups and require management
3	Identifying collaborative resource management targets,
4	Identifying threats and problems that limit effective management of the resources and impede the achievement of the long-term vision,
5	Identifying the genesis and root causes of those threats and problems,
6	Identifying solutions or strategies to address those threats and problems,
7	Developing shared goals, objectives, and outcomes that the project will work to achieve and indicators to help in monitoring progress,
8	Developing actions and activities that will be pursued to achieve those goals, objectives, and outcomes, and
9	Monitoring and evaluating progress on implementation and adaptively managing projects as needed.

Tips for engaging stakeholders in planning for management of large marine ecosystems are presented below:

1	**Consider the practicality of planning, coordination, and implementation in identifying the area to manage:** When planning for management of large marine areas, it may be impractical to include all stakeholders in a meaningful way. As a result, it may be most effective either to limit the scale of the management area and/or to break the area into planning units where it is more practical to meaningfully include stakeholder groups. For example, Conservation International's Seascape Identification process is based on ecosystem characteristics but explicitly includes practical considerations about the feasibility of coordination, stakeholder engagement, and governance of a proposed seascape. In many cases, areas that may have been included in a Seascape based on biogeographic criteria have not been included because it would have been impractical or too costly to include these areas in planning and coordination. Additionally, even once a large marine area has been chosen, planners may find it more effective to develop detailed plans by management units of the larger area that are practical for coordination and management.
2	**Be clear about when and how certain stakeholder groups should be involved:** In developing the planning process, it is very important to identify when certain stakeholder groups should be involved and how they should be involved. For example, in planning with indigenous people's groups that have recognized tenure of marine resources, it is very common to focus first on supporting those groups to identify their vision, desired outcomes, and objectives before engaging with other stakeholder groups. The Stakeholder Mapping Tool can help understand the interests and authority of key stakeholder groups and to determine when and how to involve them in planning.

3 **Clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholder groups:** It is very important that stakeholder groups understand their roles and responsibilities in planning. For example, are they expected to contribute to decision making or are they just providing input, but decisions will be made by others? Are they expected to represent a group of people in the planning process? If so, are they expected to secure the input of this group for key planning steps and keep them informed as the planning process progresses? Likewise, it is critical that planners understand exactly which stakeholder groups the participants represent. Individuals often are not able to represent the interests of entire stakeholder groups. If clear representation is needed, it may be important to consult with elected leaders or their designees to determine who can represent that stakeholder group. When such leaders are not clearly identified, it may then be important to consult with numerous members of a particular stakeholder group throughout the planning process.

4 **Secure prior and informed consent and set clear agreements for use of information:** There is an unfortunate history of drawing on the knowledge and hospitality of stakeholders in resource management and research and not adequately protecting sensitive information or returning research results to these groups. Stakeholder groups should be approached as keepers of highly valuable and sensitive knowledge. As such, it should be clear and fully agreed to how any information provided by these groups can be used. Agreements whereby stakeholders provide prior and informed consent for use of their input are important. Likewise, Intellectual Property Agreements, Data Sharing Agreements, and Information Management Agreements are also important tools that can help to protect stakeholder knowledge and input in management planning processes. Ultimately these agreements not only protect this information, but they also work to build and maintain trust. While individual managers may be well trusted by stakeholder groups, everyone must recognize that these individuals are typically part of a larger system of which they may not have full control. As a result, establishing clear agreements and ensuring that institutions supporting management are aware of these agreements is very important. Finally, managers should understand that open and honest negotiation of these agreements can be very time consuming. Few stakeholder groups will be familiar with these agreements and typically the legal language can be confusing even in a person's first language. A conscientious effort to be sure that stakeholders fully understand these agreements before they are signed is very important.

5 **Consider the cultural and livelihood needs of stakeholder groups:** Some representatives of stakeholder groups are paid by their agencies or organizations to participate in planning processes, while others may have to spend significant time away from their livelihoods in order to participate. This can present a barrier to full participation. The coordinators of planning processes should keep this in mind and provide appropriate stipends or other support to remove barriers to participation and make sure that all invited stakeholders are able to participate in the process on an equal footing.

6 **Use planning tools that can be easily understood and interpreted:** Some stakeholder groups may be well versed in planning processes while planning for other may be completely new. It's important to use tools that fit with the level of experience and capacity of participating stakeholder groups. For example, one of the most challenging parts of planning can be the setting of objectives. The concept of establishing SMART objectives, which are now a standard for planning, can be difficult even for experienced planners. Finding easy to use tools that help with challenging processes can such as these are very important.

7 **Take breaks to engage as colleagues on fun, interesting, and productive activities**: The planning process can be intense and often exhausting. Taking periodic breaks from planning to pursue engaging field activities such as work days or learning exchanges can help to revitalize planning teams and strengthen their interpersonal relationships. In any planning process it is recommended that small breaks to encourage

team building be taken often during multi-day planning sessions. For planning processes that span several months, more significant breaks such as retreats, collaborative work breaks, and exchange visits be taken at least once or twice in the course of planning process.

8   **Apply engagement, facilitation, and conflict resolution techniques:** The Facilitation and the Conflict Resolution sections of this toolkit provide tips on how to ensure that stakeholders from diverse groups can participate effectively in meetings and in workshops and how to avoid and resolve conflict. These approaches apply very well to engaging with stakeholders in planning and should be reviewed regularly when organizing and implementing planning processes.

⊙ Large-Scale Marine Protected Areas: Guidelines for design and management
· ·

⊙ Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation
· ·

5.3 PHASE 3: Involving Stakeholders in Implementation

5.3.1 Establishing coordination mechanisms

Given the multiple human activities that converge in ocean and coastal areas, effectively managing these resources requires coordinating actions among and between various stakeholder groups, particularly government agencies. In the past few years, several countries have created a 'coordinating mechanism' aimed at organizing their marine affairs. For example, Indonesia created the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries and Mexico established the Intersecretarial Commission for the Sustainable Management of Seas and Coasts. These efforts bring together many government agencies under one single management authority with specific mandates, competencies, and dedicated budgets. At smaller scales, however, this mechanism can take the shape of an 'ocean health working group' that should include local government agencies, scientific and academic experts, civil society (resource users), NGOs (social, environmental), and private sectors. By assembling a multidisciplinary working group, you ensure the tasks for implementing specific initiatives are adequately divided among the participants based on their specific competencies, as well as counting with a pluralistic system to include various values and perspectives. This working group can be responsible for:

•   Coordinating implementation of tasks in the work plan,

•   Provide important guidance to the technical teams in terms of stakeholder engagement, prioritization, monitoring and evaluations, and ensuring research and studies align with management and policy needs,

•   Actively engage with key stakeholders and decision-makers through the project process and after assessments are conducted to develop action plans that integrate the findings of the study into management and policy interventions,

- Build capacities of specific stakeholder groups,

- Lead the implementation of demonstration projects, etc.

5.3.2 Gathering and sharing baseline information (reference points)

Gathering baseline information is key to determining how effective are the management interventions at getting closer to the targets established in a strategy. While it is tempting to begin implementing an action plan without gathering baseline information, doing so will hamper the ability to apply adaptive management principles throughout the life of the interventions. Baseline information is also an important component in reporting progress and communicating success to stakeholders and donors alike.

5.3.2.1 Tool: Creating reference points or baseline measures

In order to catalyze change, LME project managers and stakeholders need to understand what interventions/ actions are causing the change and what are the trends and magnitudes of these changes. Likewise, it is important to understand how prevalent any problems and tendencies are, how often things happen, the duration and intensity of incidents (storms, temperature changes, primary productivity changes), etc. The things you keep track of in order to obtain this sort of information are called baseline measures (sometimes also referred to as targets or reference points. The baseline is the standard against which LME project managers will measure all subsequent changes implemented by the project interventions. We call them baselines because they're usually shown as lines in graph form to easily show changes over time. Sometimes stakeholders may choose to establish an ideal condition or optimal scenario as a benchmark rather than using current conditions. This is often the case when baselines have shifted, where current conditions may represent significant changes from an even earlier state of the system, which may be deemed more appropriate. When reference points are used, it is important there are participatory processes involving all relevant stakeholders to establish consensus-based targets. Likewise, all parties involved should aim at setting targets that meet SMART criteria: Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, and Time-bound. A structured approach for choosing among three types of reference points includes: (1) functional relationships which establish capacity of a system to deliver its benefits under different environmental conditions; (2) time series approaches that compare current to previous conditions in a specific geography; and (3) spatial reference points which compare current conditions in a given geography against a desired condition across regional (or, if necessary, global) scales. (Samhouri *et al.* 2011)

For example, shrimp farming is known to be one of the leading causes of mangrove deforestation, yet it provides important revenue and food for local populations. In Indonesia, stakeholders have noticed a high rate of mangrove loss and want to do something about it. As part of the TDA, the LME project needs to know what the existing conditions before project intervention are, and establish a SMART target for project activities, perhaps based on historical mangrove extent. During the TDA, stakeholders and project managers may gather data over a fixed period (ex. 6-12 months) to measure the rate of annual mangrove loss at the beginning of the project. Once the SAP activities have begun implementation, the PCU and relevant stakeholders may want to measure mangrove coverage periodically, comparing the new figure against the established baseline or target to measure progress and changes. Increasing, decreasing, or stable conditions over time, also known as trends, can help stakeholders know whether or not LME project interventions are working.

An indicator is anything that is measurable that can be used to identify a change in trends. An indicator can be the total mariculture production per kilometer of coastline throughout your state, the number of people working in ocean dependent industries, or the number of coastal tourists visiting a community in a year. Once indicators have been chosen, it has to be decided what exactly is going to be measured, and for how long. For example, will catch throughout the year or only for a period be measured? Will the market value of a fishery once a year or multiple times be measured? It's possible that someone else has already measured these things; if so, then the information just needs to be verified (and, if necessary, updated).

⊕ Community Tool Box: Developing Baseline Measures

5.3.3 Co-management approaches[2]

Environmental co-management is an inclusive, consensus-based approach to resource use and development that takes stakeholders beyond their commitments to formal agreements. It requires a partnership approach that involves governments, local communities, private sectors, indigenous representative organizations, researchers and NGOs. The partners share the authority and responsibility for the management of specific environmental resources within a defined area.

Environmental co-management is proactive and moves stakeholders beyond simple regulatory compliance, while also providing benefits for the parties involved. Those benefits can include new investments and employment opportunities, and a means to access and manage landscapes and seascapes according to cultural traditions.

For co-management systems to be effective, they must recognize the value of traditional knowledge and its equivalence to modern science. In particular, the use of traditional environmental and cultural knowledge in the environmental assessment process could be recognized in legislation. This produces assessments that are more complete, apply to a wider array of risks, address issues of specific importance to local communities, are more relevant to indigenous people, and encourage meaningful participation and relationship building.

Adaptive co-management systems are variants of the co-management approach discussed above. They use "flexible community-based systems of resource management tailored to specific places and situations and supported by and working with various organizations at different levels" (Olsson *et al.* 2004). The main difference is that they incorporate a larger range of stakeholders to produce management outcomes that apply to a wider area and longer span of time

Adaptive co-management contributes to the ongoing resilience of social and environmental values by combining dynamic learning with the partnership aspect of collaborative management. To be successful, it relies upon:

- Enabling legislation and agreements that create space for collaboration in ecosystem management,

- Adequate funding to respond to environmental change and permit remedial action,

- Appropriate monitoring, including local people's involvement in monitoring

- Consultation of a variety of data sources to gain the most accurate information,

2 This section on co-management approaches has been adapted from Environmental Co-management by the Australian Government Department of Industry, Innovation, and Science

- Good information flow and social networks involving all people connected with ecosystem management,

- Strong values and a vision for ecosystem management, and

- Opportunities for collaborative learning.

Effective environmental co-management programs can be used to promote strong partnerships and high standards of environmental management on work sites and across entire geographies, creating potential benefits for local communities and the private sector. In particular, programs that respect traditional knowledge help build communities by supporting the local economy and enhancing the confidence and skills of the local workforce.

Partnerships between communities, governments, and the private sector to adopt environmental co-management practices can produce some of the following benefits:

- Maintaining and transmitting traditional knowledge and skills to next generations,

- Gaining a focus for trusted relationships and power sharing,

- Developing pride, confidence, work habits and a lifelong learning culture to support younger generations,

- Increasing business development opportunities for sustainable livelihoods and economic development, and

- Building community and cultural resilience.

Private sector companies and government agencies benefit by using community employees and knowledge as part of their environmental management programs. Sponsoring or contracting local people to manage their landscapes and seascapes for conservation and to re-establish customary management practices that have biodiversity or other positive environmental outcomes allows companies to offset some of the environmental impacts of their operations. They also place themselves and nearby communities in a position from which a skilled workforce, capable of managing environmental challenges, can be created and trained throughout the life of multiple initiatives.

⊙ Co-management of national parks with traditional owners
....

5.3.4 Seeking and implementing agreements and policies

Once priorities have been identified, clarifying interests, brainstorming to invent options, and determining potential solutions, agreements on how to proceed will still need to be reached. A consensus agreement is one that all participants can accept or "live with." Ideally, the group consensus will reflect strong support from all stakeholders. However, not all stakeholders need to strongly support all elements of the agreement for the group to reach consensus, defined as "no dissent."

It is recommended that consensus building groups seek—but do not require-- unanimous agreement of all participants within the time frame set at the outset of the process in order to complete the group's work. If unanimity cannot be achieved, it is very important that the group as a whole is not "held hostage" to one or a small number of

participants who might use an unanimity requirement to block agreement and implementation. It is also important to ensure that representatives have checked with their constituencies before indicating whether they can support the final package.

The way that a group deals with outstanding issues and dissatisfied participants at the end of a process can be key to whether or not the group is able to reach consensus. On issues where the group cannot easily find a solution that satisfies all participants, the group should pursue the following strategies:

- Seek wise trade-offs,

- Create contingent agreements, and

- Use agreed standards of fairness/objective people to make decisions.

In some cases, despite the group's best efforts, it is not possible to reach a full consensus, that is, an agreement that all participants can "live with." If it is not possible to achieve consensus, then there are several options for reaching decisions:

- Voting, perhaps with the requirement that a super-majority (e.g. 2/3) of participants support the proposed agreement,

- If the group is providing recommendations rather than making decisions, provide a report that explicitly distinguishes recommendations on which there is full consensus, recommendations on which a majority or supermajority of all stakeholder groups agree, and recommendations on which there is no (super)majority agreement, and

- Referring the issues in dispute to an independent individual or group that is recognized as competent and legitimate by all group participants and seeking a non-binding recommendation or a binding decision on how to resolve the issue.

Stakeholders are asked to endorse the final recommendations. It is extremely important to devise a means of holding the parties to their commitments. Some agreements can be nearly self-enforcing, because they are closely aligned with the interests of all stakeholders and no additional resources are needed to implement them. Others may require legal or regulatory changes, additional resources and/or organizational capacity building to be fully implemented. It is very important for the group to specify the steps that will be taken and who must take them to ensure that the agreement will be formalized and implemented.

Often, the results of a consensus building process are advisory and must be reviewed and adopted (partially or in full) by a set of elected or appointed officials. If there has been clarity from the beginning of the process about the relationship between the group consensus building process and final decision making, there should be no surprises at this stage. However, in some cases political and institutional forces beyond the control of the group, and beyond the control of the decision makers themselves, may cause serious problems. For example, a group could reach agreement on a plan to substantially expand the marine protected areas in a given geography with the understanding that the plan would be incorporated into the region's public environmental authority's budget. In fact, a change in government leadership after the process began might lead to a reduction in the public commitment to protected areas. Or, even if the government remained strongly supportive, there might be changes in the government's financial ability that made it difficult to gain a sufficient budget for the program.

When the results of the process cannot fully bind political or institutional leaders, it is very important to use whatever sense of common identity and common goals has been built in the group to develop a strategy for influencing decision makers. That strategy might include face-to-face meetings between a number of group participants and senior government officials; formal submission of group recommendations to the appropriate body, accompanied by media coverage, and/or dialogue with international aid agencies to encourage them to make the program a priority in their dialogue with government.

Even where adequate resources (financial, political and organizational) are available to support implementation, periodic monitoring and review are essential to assess whether implementation is achieving the group's goals, and to respond to new information and circumstances. Ideally, monitoring systems should be joint (i.e. involving representatives of all key stakeholder groups), and should periodically assess whether the agreed actions are achieving their underlying goals.

If the agreement included contingent commitments, then monitoring of those contingencies is essential, since they may trigger for further action. For example, if an environmental agency said that it could only support a river cleanup agreement if the water came into compliance with water quality standards within one year, it would have a strong interest in monitoring implementation to determine whether that requirement was being met. If monitoring raised serious questions, the monitoring findings might trigger a review of river cleanup activities, and/or a revised cleanup strategy.

Finally, whether there are contingent agreements or not, it is a good idea for any agreement reached by a consensus building group to include a mechanism by which participants can be re-assembled if there is a change in circumstances, a failure on the part of some participants to live up to their commitments, and/or a new opportunity to achieve joint goals through a different strategy. Periodic meetings of the stakeholders can promote stronger long-term relationships and reduce the risk that some representatives perceive others to be unresponsive if difficulties do arise.

⊙ Negotiating Environmental Agreements: How to Avoid Escalating Confrontation Needless Costs and Unnecessary Litigation

⊙ Knowing When not to Push for Broad Stakeholder Consensus: The Alaskan Way Viaduct Story

⊙ Multi-Stakeholder Consensus Building by the Consensus Building Institute

5.4 PHASE 4: Working with Stakeholders on Monitoring and Evaluations

Several tools (links provided below) explain the value of engaging stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for resource management and development projects. This approach is often referred to as Participatory M&E, and according to training developed by the World Bank (link below) is a "process through which stakeholders at various levels engage in monitoring or evaluating a particular project, program or policy, share control over the content, the process and the results of the M&E activity and engage in taking or identifying corrective actions." Conventional M&E approaches often rely on outside evaluators measuring the performance of a project based on a standardized

process and performance indicators. Participatory M&E on the other hand, emphasizes involving stakeholders in activities that help them to identify strengths and weaknesses of programs in which they are involved or that are relevant to them. This typically includes an emphasis on stakeholders identifying and solving problems themselves and as a result building their capacity for effective project implementation.

Stakeholders that are engaged in participatory M&E often include: the beneficiaries of a development project, government agencies engaged in implementation of the project, community members, NGOs, the private sector, and others that are either helping to implement the project or are intended to benefit from it.

The tools found in the links below summarize the following general elements of Participatory M&E.

1	Participatory M&E aims to build capacity, promote transparency, foster decentralization, encourage coordination and development of partnerships.
2	Measuring progress towards agreed objectives, understanding the trends of the ecological, economic, political, and socio-cultural conditions of the area as well as monitoring the impact of the interventions and overall goals by all stakeholders is critical to inform adaptive management.
3	For Participatory M&E to be effective, local, national and regional actors should be involved, learn and be trained to analyze, act and take responsibility over progress.
4	Stakeholder engagement mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation should be innovative, identify levels of participation possible at the different governance scales and determine the adequate entry point to ensure constructive feedback. This requires for the appropriate institutional arrangements to be in place to allow effective participation in decision making and feedback systems. Local public forums, policy dialogues, targeted debates, outreach campaigns should also have a role to ensure overall engagement of stakeholders.

Advantages of stakeholder participation in M&E, as summarized in the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) Programme Manager's Planning Monitoring & Evaluation Toolkit (link below) include:

- "Ensures that the M&E findings are relevant to local conditions;"

- "Gives stakeholders a sense of ownership over M&E results thus promoting their use to improve decision-making;"

- "Increases local level capacity in M&E which in turn contributes to self-reliance in overall programme implementation;"

- "Increases the understanding of stakeholders of their own programme strategy and processes; what works, does not work and why;"

- "Contributes to improved communication and collaboration between programme actors who are working at different levels of programme implementation;"

- "Strengthens accountability to donors;"

- "Promotes a more efficient allocation of resources"

A thorough review of this tool and other tools below is encouraged, because they provide detailed guidance on when and how to involve stakeholders in Participatory M&E.

⊙ Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation: Principles, Action Steps, Challenges
. . . .

⊙ Stakeholder Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation
. . . .

⊙ Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
. . . .

6. Case Studies

The following case studies provide examples of stakeholder engagement in large scale ocean management programs. Below we provide a short summary of each case study with links to documents that will provide more detail on stakeholder engagement in each case.

6.1 Case Study: Involving Stakeholders in Implementation: The Gulf of Mexico Alliance and Gulf of Mexico Regional Partnership Federal Workgroup

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance is a partnership initiated in 2004, of the U.S. Gulf of Mexico states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas, intent on significantly increasing regional collaboration to enhance the environmental and economic health of the Gulf of Mexico. The Alliance also includes participation by the Gulf of Mexico States Accord, which brings prospective collaboration with the Mexican Gulf of Mexico states.

Representatives from thirteen U.S. federal agencies came together form the Gulf of Mexico Regional Partnership Federal Workgroup to provide support to the Gulf of Mexico Alliance in addressing priority coastal and ocean issues identified by the Gulf States. This Working Group provides a good example of where multiple stakeholders across jurisctions, agencies, management authority, and user groups have come together to address major issues in a large marine area including: reducation in nutrient loading, improvements in Gulf water quality, restoration of coastal weland, idenificatin of Gulf habitats to inform management, and environmental education.

Coordinating Federal Support for the Gulf of Mexico Alliance

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance:	The Gulf of Mexico Regional Partnership Federal Workgroup:
Alabama Florida Louisiana Mississippi Texas Gulf of Mexico States Accord	Council on Environmental Quality National Aeronautics and Space Administration National Science Foundation U.S. Army Corps of Engineers U.S. Department of Agriculture: National Resources Conservation Service , U.S. Forest Service U.S. Department of Commerce: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration U.S. Department of Defense: U.S. Navy U.S. Department of Energy U.S. Department of Interior: Minerals Management Survey, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Food and Drug Administration U.S. Department of State U.S. Department of Transportation U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

6.2 Case Study: Implementing an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries in the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem (BCLME)

The Benguela Current LME is one of the most productive marine ecosystems on earth and an asset of global importance. It stretches from Port Elizabeth in South Africa to the province of Cabinda in northern Angola, encompassing the full extent of the cold Benguela Current. The BCLME sustains important artisanal and commercial fisheries. Angola, Namibia and South Africa are the countries bordering the Benguela Current LME.

Efforts to implement the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) in the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem provide a good example of multi-stakeholder cooperation on a complex set of management issues in an LME. The goal of an EAF is "to balance diverse societal objectives, by taking into account the knowledge and uncertainties about biotic, abiotic, and human components of ecosystems and their interactions and applying an integrated approach to fisheries within ecologically meaningful boundaries" (Garcia *et al.* 2003).

Implementing EAF in the BCLME involves three countries, multiple jurisdictions and agencies, numerous fish stocks, large-scale commercial fleets, small-scale fleets, artisinal fishers, and international private sector buyers. While implementation of EAF is an inherently complex and multi-stakeholder process, a review by WWF in 2015 indicates that "reasonable progress is being made in implementation of an EAF in the region." (Peterson *et al.* 2015*)*

6.3 Case Study: Pacific Ocean Alliance to Strengthen Collaboration Under the Pacific Oceanscape

The Pacific Ocean Alliance was launched in 2014, bringing together a group of stakeholders that represent the diverse range of ocean interests in the Pacific region. The Alliance was called for by Pacific Leaders to strengthen coordination and collaboration for the effective implementation of regional and national actions under the Pacific Oceanscape Framework. Together, partners will work to enhance the sustainable development, management and conservation of the Pacific Ocean.

The Pacific Oceanscape Framework is the world's largest government-endorsed ocean initiative. It is a collaborative agreement between 23 Pacific Island nations and territories covering an area larger than the surface of the moon (40 million km2). Endorsed by the Pacific Islands Forum leaders in 2010, the Oceanscape provides a framework for the integrated conservation management of the Pacific Ocean and Islands, with a focus on ocean health and security; governance; sustainable resource management; research; capacity building, and durable partnerships.

With its focus on strengthening conservation of the islands and marine territory of a vast area of the Pacific Ocean, the Pacific Ocean Alliance provides a great example of multi-stakeholder engagement for the management of a large, complex ecosystem.

6.4 Case study: Confronting Indonesia's Maritime Coordination Challenge

Indonesia is the world's largest archipelagic state with around 17,500 islands and a vast marine territory. At the crossroads of the Indian and Pacific Oceans, Indonesia's marine territory has been both a source of immense strategic significance and of acute vulnerability.

As Indonesia is striving to advance the strategic use of its marine area and defend its maritime boundaries, coordination of agencies and stakeholders is critical. To address this issue, the Indonesian Government has a created a Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs and established a new Maritime Security Agency (Badan Keamanan Laut - BAKAMLA).

Implementation has been challenging, given the complexity of aligning and coordinating the authority and interests of 12 maritime agencies including the including the navy, the transportation ministry, and the maritime affairs and fisheries ministry. However, the establishment of the Coordinating Ministry and the new security agency do provide a positive example where the Government has recognized the need to engage multiple stakeholders as they work to resolve complex and challenging maritime issues.

→ Confronting Indonesia's Maritime Coordination Challenge

References

GEF LME:LEARN

GEF LME:LEARN is a program to improve global ecosystem-based governance of Large Marine Ecosystems and their coasts by generating knowledge, building capacity, harnessing public and private partners and supporting south-to-south learning and north-to-south learning. A key element of this improved governance is main-streaming cooperation between LME, MPA, and ICM projects in overlapping areas, both for GEF projects and for non-GEF projects. This Full-scale project plans to achieve a multiplier effect using demonstrations of learning tools and toolboxes, to aid practitioners and other key stakeholders, in conducting and learning from GEF projects.

Project Components

1	Global and regional network of partners to enhance ecosystem-based management and to provide support for the GEF LME/ICM/MPA projects to address their needs and incorporate climate variability and change considerations.
2	Synthesis and incorporation of knowledge into policymaking; capture of best LME governance practices; and development of new methods and tools to enhance the management effectiveness of LMEs and to incorporate ICM, MPAs and climate variability and change, including the five LME Approach modules.
3	Capacity and partnership building through twinning and learning exchanges, workshops, and training among LMEs and similar initiatives.
4	Communication, dissemination and outreach of GEF LME/ICM/MPA project achievements and lessons learned.

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF)

Through its strategic investments, the GEF works with partners to tackle the planet's biggest environmental issues. The GEF is the funding agency for GEF LME:LEARN and the portfolio of projects we provide services to.

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

UNDP works to eradicate poverty and reduce inequalities through the sustainable development of nations. UNDP works in cooperation with other UN agencies, the GEF, international financial institutions, regional organizations, NGOs, the private sector and others to improve water and ocean management and sustain livelihoods at local, national, regional and global scales through effective water and ocean governance. UNDP is the implementing agency for the GEF LME:LEARN project. .

INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

IOC-UNESCO promotes international cooperation and coordinates programmes in marine research, services, observation systems, hazard mitigation, and capacity development in order to understand and effectively manage the resources of the ocean and coastal areas. IOC-UNESCO is the project executor and contributes capacity building, technical knowledge, data and information exchange, project management, and project sustainability.

INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE

IUCN provides public, private and non-governmental organizations with the knowledge and tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation to take place together. IUCN is responsible for development of the Environmental Economics toolkit and the LME Hub on the GEF LME:LEARN website.

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE EXPLORATION OF THE SEA

ICES is a global organization that develops science and advice to support the sustainable us of the oceans. ICES is responsible for the Governance Working group, delivery of the Governance Toolkit, organization of training courses and dissemination of best practices.

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

CI is a nonprofit environmental organization with a goal to protect nature as a source of food, fresh water, livelihoods and a stable climate. CI is responsible for the development of the toolkits on Stakeholder Participation and LME Assessment, as well as developing a guide on planning and implementing comprehensive marine management capacity development.

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (U.S)

NOAA is an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce that enriches life through science. NOAA has a diverse range of diverse skills and expertise that it shares as part of their continued science and technical support of LME projects and other related capacity building activities for ecosystem-based approaches in the management of coastal and marine resources.

www.iwlearn.net/marine