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An Emerging Paradigm for Managing Protected Areas with Examples from Europe and the United States

Abstract: *Parks and Protected Areas (PPA) have become increasingly important for societal well-being in Europe and the United States. Urbanization, detachment from nature, and demographic changes are fostering discussions about strengthening the social and cultural dimensions of management. The complexities and subtleties of incorporating PPAs into existing government and societal contexts are explored with a focus on institutional and governance principles and an emerging paradigm that might deal with some conflicts.*

We present two examples, in their respective institutional contexts, that illustrate different ways to address one PPA aspect, recreation management. One example, from the Black Forest of southern Germany, has management principles that were developed jointly by public and agency representatives. Notable among the principles were shifts in management objectives, permanent participative planning approaches, and the assessment of institutional fit. A second example, from California, addressed recreation in a typical forestwide plan. People were engaged through public comment on, and reactions to, proposed directions prepared by forest staff. Specific recreation conflict potentials were left to emerge in later, more specific programmatic plans.

The examples show how the suggested new governance principles are addressed in practice and how they might contribute to a better scientific understanding of the social functions of recreation. The challenges of moving from existing planning models to this new paradigm are also recognized.

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Public rural lands in Europe and the United States are used for many functions. Especially in areas that are managed to achieve the protection or conservation of some feature or process, heterogeneous and sometimes conflicting societal demands for biodiversity conservation, nature protection, landscape improvements, recreation and tourism, or contributions to the local economy often coexist and overlap. This multiplicity of values and policy options needs to be considered in planning and management approaches (Nohl 2001; Vos and Meekes 1999; Werner and Seyfarth 2000). Where diverse resource users are involved, differences will emerge between human demands and the capacity of the rural landscape to satisfy them (see Brouwer and Van der Heide 2009). Because the different uses are highly integrated with one another, actors often cannot pursue their activities as a single use without consequences for the others. This leads to conflicts about multiple land uses with uncertain effects on sustainable development.

Conflicts over land uses have some inherent characteristics that make them difficult to deal with. Land-use decisions involve complex social-ecological systems and processes, long time scales, and uncertainty. In addition, land-use decisions are often felt on the regional and local level, which may substantially differ in their institutional contexts. In recent years, cooperative and collaborative efforts as well as participatory planning approaches have become popular in ecosystem management, subsumed under terms such as "adaptive governance" and "co-management" (Folke et al. 2005).

Governance of Conserved Rural Lands

Over the past decade, awareness has grown among scientists and practitioners that governance reform should include a concern for sustainability (Diez, Ostrom, and Stern 2003; Ostrom et al. 1999). Governance is legitimized by institutions (Fisher et al. 2007) and includes a body of formal and informal rules, enforcement mechanisms, and interactive processes that coordinate actors and stakeholders toward a concerted outcome (Huppert, Swendsen, and Vermillion 2001). Applied to multifunctionally used landscapes, concepts of governance highlight the important role of institutional arrangements in land-use planning and management processes for sustainable development (Matthews and Selmann 2006; Rhodes 1996; Young 2002). Still, government has a major role in discourses for governance of sustainable land development. New to governance is a holistic approach to analyze the network of actors and institutions with an evolutionary view: business organizations, civil society, and the formal government have roles to play and have done so in the past, that is, a system with actors, inherent structures, and networks already exists, which is subject to social, economic, and personal changes. Therefore, this new governance approach has broadened the view of social regulations for land uses and the need for intensive inter- and transdisciplinary cooperation for planning and management (Voss 2007).

Achieving conservation goals can be problematic in periurban or other complex

social-ecological settings. The governance of these lands often compels some institutional flexibility (Connor and Dovers 2004; Fischer et al. 2007), especially when land-use objectives change. Parks and similar protected areas have been established with the intent to create identity, secure heritage, and establish an additional source of income from recreation and touristic activities. In such contexts, governance has to cover a broad range of issues, from regional policy to practice, from managerial investments to impacts and conflicts (Borrini-Feyerabend 2003). Moreover, often land-conservation types are based not on administrative borders but, rather, on the natural areas themselves, thus creating transboundary managerial units. These can be managed by various responsible units (Wood, Stedman-Edwards, and Mang 2000).

Röhring and Gailing (2005) divided institutions concerning the conservation of rural lands into three categories: institutions primarily concerned with utilization (e.g., agriculture, forestry, settlement activities), those concerned with the protection of ecological or aesthetic aspects (recreation, nature, or heritage protection), and institutions concerned with the integration of the two aspects (landscape planning, regional planning). While formal institutions tend to have a measure of stability in geographical or temporal terms and perhaps display fewer regional differences, informal institutions can be diverse as a result of the idiographic, heterogeneous attributes of local resource users, such as social, economic, cultural, and historic factors (Hagedorn, Arzt, and Peters 2002). These factors influence social cohesion and the degree to which regional goals are shared, which in turn affect the willingness to cooperate, respect the rules, and consider the need for sustainable development (Thomson and Schoonmaker-Freudenberger 1997). To ensure that all players act coherently, effectively, and efficiently in the pursuit of sustainable land-use demands, a deeper understanding of the interplay of institutions involved in governance is crucial (Cleaver 2000; Schlüter 2001).

Problems for Conserved Rural Land-Use Planning and Management

Because of the diversity of formal and informal institutions involved in conserved area planning and management it may be difficult to reach sustainability and policy consistency. Moving from generalized conservation policies and programs aimed at the protection of a given area to actual implementation of a more specific conservation goal (e.g., recreational use) it is useful to further specify the management challenges according to the potential problems of governance affecting success. These can be divided into issues of (a) institutional structure, (b) political embedding, (c) area-related conflicts (Stoll-Kleemann et al. 2006), and (d) sustainability.

Institutional Structure

Incorporating affected institutions explicitly into the governance scheme increases the chance that implemented policies will have the intended consequences of

promoting protection and sustainable use (see Theesfeld et al. 2008). Institutionally based problems frequently occur as problems of interplay, scale, or fit (Röhring and Gailing 2005). Problems of interplay can occur between sectoral policies and institutional regimes, for example, between tourism and nature protection, when the effects of one sector's policy on another's policy fields have not been taken into account. Beyond that, the interplay between formal and informal institutions may be hindered at a more fundamental level, for example, when different actor groups from one planning and management agency have differing objectives and strategies in mind. Further, institutional problems of "fit and scale" frequently occur between centralized institutional regimes and the regional/local requirements of conservation areas, leading to problems of spatial congruence or factual compatibility. These problems of interrelations between institutions or between institutions on different levels may not be recognized or fully considered.

Political Embedding

Conservation area management can substantially differ in the amount of autonomy that exists in relation to the specific (regional or local) political environment in which it is embedded. Political autonomy here refers to the degree to which conservation area objectives within a larger (e.g., state or regional) interest structure are actionable at lower (specific) political levels, and vice versa. In dynamic, large-scale social-ecological systems, a conserved landscape may frequently have to adapt to changing local conditions. Stoll-Kleemann et al. (2006) consider an enabling political environment as necessary for a conservation land-use objective to function effectively.

Furthermore, the political arena may be closely connected to other issues such as international environmental directives, or residential, rural, or recreational development. Together they make up a dynamic and complex set of concurrent and, at times, conflicting interests. Thus conservation concerns have to compete with several other (communal) political concerns. Chapin (2004) argued therefore for a more thorough and consistent political positioning as one essential component of sustainable conservation.

Area-Related Conflicts

In order to minimize unsustainable land uses, planning and management have to determine, and enforce, rules and use restrictions. Traditional use regimes are challenged by new people and forms of land uses such as commercial or residential development, recreation and tourism interests, or access to new markets. The increased competition for land resources induces further potential for conflict. Within land resource allocation approaches, conflicts are regarded as indicators for detecting diverse interests, ineffective resource allocation, and more equitable and sustainable use systems.

In the past decades, the planning, design, and management of conservation areas often could not handle these conflict problems in an adequate way. In the worst cases they did not concern themselves with conflicting issues in their planning scope. Some conventional approaches do not incorporate diversified use demands and therefore may fail to reduce conflict due to localized differences among user groups (Mann and Absher 2008). Today, in a multiagency context, conservation area management requires closer cooperation and collaboration among different user groups, nature protection, and landscape managing agencies (e.g., Roth, Jakob, and Türk 2003).

Sustainability

Sustainable development for future land use implies that ecological, social, and economic functions are balanced in space and time to maintain their potential to deliver goods and services for future generations (Termorshuizen, Opdam, and van den Brink 2006). Therefore, sustainability depends on the system of resource governance that mediates the relationship between the citizenry, the economy, and ecosystems (Opdam, Steingröwer, and Van Rooij 2006). It requires integrated planning and management of natural resources, ecological functions, and primary production across cultural landscapes and often includes changes to social norms, institutions, and organizational forms. According to Ostrom (1990), Berkes and Folke (1998), and Brunckhorst (2002), sustainable resource governance systems must have a number of key capacities: (a) spatial information to define ecosystem structures and processes they provide across landscapes, (b) the ability to identify functional influences (i.e., the interaction between resource use, the social system, and ecosystem functional processes), (c) coordinated resource governance, that is the ability of the local community to arrive at rules for resource use and collective decision making, (d) flexible adaptation, the ability to adapt these rules in response to new knowledge and changing framework conditions, and (e) the enforcement by community-established governance.

A Paradigm Shift in Governing Conservation Areas

Coordinated, community-based approaches may be useful in addressing the institutional, political embedding, area-related conflict, and sustainability challenges for conservation areas. These approaches offer flexibility to resource management through adaptive governance, and may provide a dynamic, tailored result that is specific to place and supported by various organizations at different levels. Fundamental to community-based conservation area management is the notion that it can be understood only within the particular historical and social context, with key indicators of institutional continuity, strength, or change (Borrini-Feyerabend 2003; Folke et al. 2005). It is important to emphasize that these new modes of governance are intended to supplement formal planning instruments with models of stakeholder

participation, project orientation, evaluation, and feedback. In this context, regional nature parks and biosphere reserves are seen as successful examples of integrative planning strategies for large-scale conserved public rural lands (Stoll-Kleemann et al. 2006). Regional stakeholders resolve institutional problems by localized collaboration among communities, authorities, and interest groups, where new "action arenas" are ideally coordinated by a central authority (Mann and Jeanneaux 2009; Röhring and Gailing 2005), and where the participants dynamically accept others' goals and preferences by incorporating them into their own view of the "correct" local conservation strategy (Berkes 2004). This process also offers the potential benefit of interactions that build trust and confidence that the conservation area goals will be carried out successfully and in a sustainable way.

To illustrate this shift in conservation area governance, two examples for recreation planning and management are presented. Each illustrates to some degree ways to analytically address the four problems of governance described above as they relates to large-scale conservation area management. This type of analysis may help managers avoid use-related conflicts and better ensure acceptance of sustainable land-use practices.

Two Examples from Recreation Planning and Management

Two examples with differing social-ecological contexts were chosen for comparison. One is in the rural Black Forest of Germany and the other from periurban Southern California. Although differing in their implementation context and perhaps complicated by differences between German and American cultures, they are made initially comparable by using a similar conceptual design for studying recreation governance and conflict perceptions. That is, the analysis is based on a shared scientific approach from the United States and from Germany, and by a focus on the functional value of implementing a community-based approach for planning and management. For each example, our focus is on recreational use of the conserved lands where the intention is to provide satisfying recreation experiences.

Conceptual Design for Identifying Recreation Value and Conflict

The recreation conflict theory by Jacob and Schreyer (1980) provides an initial theoretical basis for understanding recreation use and conflict for both case studies. They propose that conflicts are likely to occur if someone's behavior directly or indirectly interferes with someone else's goal achievement. Their theoretical model consists of four social-psychological activity factors describing a recreationist's style of use and sensitivity to conflict (Graefe and Thapa 2004: 210). For work in Germany, a fifth factor, "expectations," was added. This five-part activity factor model functions as a reference point for a comparison with a recreation experience focus (Absher and Lee 1981; Budruk et al. 2002; Fredman and Hörnsten 2001).

Motive factors are also important to understanding use and conflict perceptions.

This aspect suggests that value orientations and their resulting motives are fulfilled (or not) by a recreational stay (Opaschowski 1997). Nineteen leisure/sport motives from the German literature (Braun 1998; Feige and Feil 1997) were clustered into four groups to represent the diverse motivations that exist in outdoor/nature recreation. Together, the five activity factors and four motive groups encapsulate the recreationists' "social world" that exists prior to a recreational stay (pre-experience) (Mann and Absher 2008).

The next phase of the recreation experience is onsite impacts, including concerns about recreationists' justifications for participation and the acceptability of situations commonly encountered in the forest. These measures help gauge the role of the infrastructure, other visitors, and forest management to the experience. From this a recreation profile can be developed for a given protected area based on the social and physical conditions experienced by the users. More detail on this model is available in Mann and Absher (2008).

Setting and Methods

Black Forest Nature Park

The Black Forest Nature Park (BFNP) study analyzes user-group perceptions and preferences to develop land-use planning and management solutions that add conflict-oriented adjustments to the governance of the sites. The BFNP, located in southwest Germany, covers an area of more than 375,000 hectares with 100 communities and over 700,000 people living within the park boundaries. There is a mixture of private, communal, and state-owned properties, all established to produce value for the region by means of project-oriented regional management. It is a complex landscape that supports traditional agrarian and forestry uses where recreational and tourism uses are recognized as important landscape functions. Hence, it is a true multiple-use landscape and not primarily a single-use one as the term "park" might suggest. From this example we (a) identify potential conflicts over recreational uses, and (b) include recreationists as significant institutional actors in governance decisions.

A three-step methodological design was used. First, an initial quantitative-empirical part described recreational users, uses, and potential conflicts. The sample of outdoor recreationists was developed from selected user groups that, through initial discussions with managers, showed potential for conflict and were broadly representative of the diversity of recreational uses in the park. This phase resulted in 805 completed questionnaires from members of six recreation organizations: hiking, mountain biking, cycling, horse riding, jogging/walking, and hang gliding. Afterward, the analysis moved from a descriptive to a dynamic perspective. Interviews with sixteen representatives of different organizations within the nature park, including experts or leaders from nature sport groups, and representatives from agriculture, forestry, nature protection, tourism, nature park authorities and

local communities, should make it possible to learn about their self-perceptions, values, and positioning in the nature park's planning processes.

Finally, an expert workshop ("future factory") was organized as a last methodological step where the empirical results from all the recreation groups were shared with regional land-use and land-management representatives. They worked together to develop strategies they considered helpful and doable for reducing the described and analyzed conflict potentials from steps 1 and 2. The rationale behind this step was that potential ways to solve problems can be most consciously activated by the affected actors, and thus suitable for the regional institutional context.

Southern California

The Southern California recreation example comes from a plan for federal lands managed by the USDA Forest Service (USFS). Although recreation has always been part of the allowable uses of USFS lands, it has been increasingly recognized as a concern for planning and management: "Providing outdoor recreation opportunities with minimized impacts to natural resources is a primary goal in the Forest Service. . . . The expected outcome is high quality recreational opportunities that contribute to meeting the outdoor recreational demands while sustaining natural resources" (USFS 2007). Moreover, field staff must play a pivotal role, and often, they are expected to be "a facilitator of public dialogue about forest management policy within the local community. Communications have become more two-way in this era of interdisciplinary planning and extensive public involvement" (Apple 1997: 7).

Thus, the primary directions and forest recreation goals are contained in the individual forest plans. These are written and approved by professional staff following the many, varied federal laws that reflect the public demand for resource benefits, including recreation. Our aim is to evaluate the effectiveness of the plans in accommodating the institutional and governance issues, as described above. Employing a focused literature review and a qualitative content analysis we analyze the USFS plan for evidence that the planning process and the resulting objectives include these reforms (or not). The Southern California plan treated four forests at once, with a specific breakout for the San Bernardino National Forest (SBNF) (USFS 2005).

The SBNF comprises more than 240,000 hectares of shrub and forestlands adjacent to the eastern parts of the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area. Like the BFNP, it has a complex setting with roads, trails, embedded communities, inholdings (e.g., mines), and so on, and more than 6 million recreation visits per year. The recently completed ten- to fifteen-year forest plan (USFS 2006) is a convenient example for a recreation governance analysis framework because of the multiplicity of recreational uses on the land and because of the proximity to a large urban population as a differing socioecological context. The plan follows a broad set of instructions from national headquarters and regional staff. It largely

follows a rational-comprehensive planning model, which can be very briefly summarized as a process to inventory the forest recreation use (i.e., consumption data in econometric terms), propose one or more alternatives to accommodate future use (more or less of the main types of use), and turn to the affected publics for feedback and guidance on the development and selection of the course of action (decision). Recreational use is not studied in situ from a social-scientific perspective (i.e., theoretically based) as much as it is gauged from existing use patterns (e.g., road use, campground receipts) and data from previous inventory and monitoring efforts (e.g., a national visitor-use monitoring survey, census data), if available. Local communities and interest groups will participate to some extent. In the SBNF case there were numerous public meetings to involve user groups, residents, and communities, and there were many comments from affected institutions, especially those with an economic stake in the outcome.

Results

Recreation Conflicts and Management Solutions in the Black Forest Nature Park

The BFNP study results revealed potential conflicts between the six groups of recreationists. These can be subdivided into two conflict areas: infrastructural/managerial conflicts and social conflicts. The first conflict area includes impacts evidenced by a reduced infrastructural quality. For example, "garbage" and "vandalism" have the highest conflict potential across all of the nature sport groups, and most horseback riders felt disturbed by a "displeasing path surface." Others related to forest-management practices, for example, horse riders and hang gliders felt disturbed by ecologically relevant items such as "tree damage caused by forest workers" and a lack of naturalness or wild qualities. The second conflict area, social conflicts, arises due to value differences. Within this conflict area, asymmetric conflict lines were found with more sensitive and more conflict-tolerant groups. Most recreationists felt disturbed by "unleashed dogs" while "too many mountain bikers" was a criticism only from horse riders and hikers. Such interpersonal and value conflicts were among the main conflicts mentioned. They originate mainly on wide, heavily used forest paths (see Mann and Absher [2008] for more details and examples).

For local governance implications, developing better communication strategies with user groups was considered useful for handling the identified value/norm conflicts and to allow for diverse and multifunctional recreational uses. The final capstone workshop had three objectives: (a) to give feedback to all of the involved user groups; (b) to encourage cooperation between users and planners/managers; and (c) to develop and implement context-suitable strategies for land-use planning/management in the nature park.

In a first "critique phase" (Weinbrenner 2001), the participants were encouraged

to comment on current management and land-use planning practices. Among the main critiques were that too often the involved communities sought advantages only for themselves, which hampers the establishment of a regional recreational infrastructure, and that differing rates of involvement and participation among stakeholder groups unevenly influenced planning decisions. Participants also had the opportunity to develop a focus on what is possible in the nature park and with all of the users involved. It was decided that a regular roundtable for dialogue would be established. The nature park's management agreed to act as a neutral moderator, catalyst, and regional-political anchor. Evaluations at the end of the workshop revealed that the user survey as well as the workshop itself helped managers to gain valuable insight into potential conflicts in the park, to develop specific management strategies, and, based on this, to establish a communication platform for planning. This outcome allows for an ongoing exchange of ideas and fosters mutual trust among managers, planners, and users.

Conflict Potentials and Management Solutions in Southern California

In the Southern California forest plan, recreation is considered along with other resource uses such as forest health, wildlife habitat, endangered species or watershed management. Overall recreation is considered as a diverse set of activities (camping, hiking, fishing, driving, etc.) that occur throughout the forest. The forest takes direct responsibility for providing quality opportunities for recreation use. There is no focus on outcomes for the individual recreationist: the core planning process is dictated by compliance with various laws and their implementing regulations, especially any environmental impacts. Thus the draft plan and associated environmental impact statement must disclose the environmental consequences of the likely alternative management strategies and state how they will respond to known issues and concerns.

In part because of the need to maintain consistency with forest-planning efforts elsewhere and in part to assure an optimal result for many types of environmental impacts, planning follows a rather long, formal, and largely rational process. The plans follow a vision–niche–goals (desired conditions) format (USFS 2005). Overarching vision statements (e.g., "Provide high-quality outdoor recreational opportunities on forests and grasslands, while sustaining natural resources, to help meet the nation's recreation demands" [p. 54]) assure some nationwide consistency. Individual forest "niche" statements reveal the unique contribution of the individual forest to the agency's national and regional resource goals. The plan is not solely recreation-specific, and in fact is largely dominated by other resource considerations such as endangered species protection, water quality assurance, and wildland fire management. The forest-specific recreation goals are broadly stated, for example, "Recreation opportunities are provided that represent a variety of skill levels, needs and desires in partnership with permit holders, private entities, nonprofit/volunteer

groups, diverse community groups, state, federal and tribal partners" (p. 34).

Overall, recreation is considered an important forest use, especially in the urbanized areas of Southern California, and in this case the plan strives to achieve "public use and natural resource protection" (USFS 2005: 3). In the draft plan, forest staff identified possible conflicts by reference to unsustainable recreation use (primarily off-highway vehicle use) and the need to establish control measures in 'high use' use and/or concentrated use areas" (USFS 2005: Appendix D).

With such a broad scope and complexity, it is not surprising that the SBNF plan is comprehensive and took a long time to complete (about four years: September 24, 2001, to October 30, 2005). It included five rounds of public involvement, including numerous "open house" meetings, and reviewed literally thousands of written and verbal comments on all types of resource issues (USFS 2006). The resulting document was a "strategic framework" rather than a detailed plan of action. Although slow to complete and often challenged in court by one group or another, implementation proceeds with agreed-upon forest-wide resource objectives and provides the basis for localized actions. Monitoring of desired conditions is usually specified in the plan. For the SBNF recreation visitor satisfaction and various measures of site conditions are suggested for performance monitoring in the future but no specific monitoring plans are detailed (USFS 2006, 2007).

Recreation actions, site improvements, regulations, and so on, are implemented through project-by-project plans on an annual or similar periodic basis as funds become available. Because staff and budgets are quite limited, recently much of this level of action is taken with diverse partnerships, that is, working with permit holders (e.g., ski resort operators), private entities, nonprofit/volunteer groups, community groups (e.g., fire lookout host associations, friends groups) and state, federal, or tribal agencies.

Comparison of Central Governance Issues for Both Recreation Management Examples

The two case studies revealed differences and commonalities in recreation governance approaches. Broadly, the BFNP case typifies many issues in instituting a smaller scale, collaborative approach to recreation-use governance, whereas the California example shows the large-scale and somewhat strict approach typical of the rational comprehensive planning style. Table 1 summarizes these differences across the governance issues suggested by Röhring and Gailing (2005). The sectoral interplay more easily involves informal groups and the institutional differences seem to be brought into sharper focus in the BFNP example. Conflict is brought closer to the surface for them as well. These issues might be addressed to a degree with explicit attention to user segmentation and adequate population surveys in the USFS setting. Nonetheless, political embedding is left largely to the public involvement process in the USFS setting, whereas it is considered a process goal by the BFNP actors; that is, in the latter they are explicitly sought out whereas in

the USFS setting they are expected to come forward by virtue of a public meeting or comment request (and many times they do so). Finally, sustainability is also different. A more localized community type of sustainability is achieved through the BFNP process whereas a more landscape or national-scale consistency is targeted by the USFS process. Because sustainability requires both types of processes to be balanced, some vigilance seems to be required in either setting to achieve success in this aspect.

Thus, overall, the BFNP example promises closer articulation of local values and preferences with a strong claim to long-term community sustainability. The USFS example will likely yield strong consistency across large scale resource issues, but its broad scope and process make it slightly harder to implement solutions at a more localized scale.

Discussion, Conclusions, and Implications

Recreation planning and management is just beginning to more fully utilize the strategies of adaptive governance, resilient practices, and the social sciences. Much of the planning work in the two examples above show very different approaches—yet both are successful examples of recreation planning in their respective agencies. Clearly, more might be done to incorporate the dynamic governance principles we reviewed at the outset, and in either case, recreation management by these standards is a "work in progress." Whether more is done in this expanded conceptualization will depend on a number of distinct issues. Certain settings would benefit from localized collaboration, especially as it might also engender greater support for, and trust in, agency directions. Furthermore, regardless of whether the management is federal, regional, community-based, private, or some collaborative effort, recurrent difficulties with communication are likely to arise where there is interaction among actors with distinct concepts of nature, conservation, development, and each other.

For planning and management of conservation areas, new forms of governance (Fürst 2004) and institutional arrangements specifically designed to allow for multifunctional uses and to involve regional and local stakeholders in these processes are needed. The BFNP case study has shown that land-use planning concepts can be improved to accommodate current and future recreational situations by participative planning methods. The creation of growing and open local networks helps to exchange ideas, create local identity, and foster the common development goal of a nature park. Therefore, collaboration in governance networks requires leadership and regional political anchorage. Relying on a formal authority is an important factor in adaptive governance to bridge local actors and communities with other scales of organizations. In addition, such bridging organizations can serve as filters for external drivers and also provide opportunities by bringing in resources, knowledge, and other incentives for ecosystem management (Alcorn et al. 2003).

There is neither a single blueprint nor a set of fixed rules for conservation area planning and management. Any intervention must be adapted to the institutional

Table 1

Governance Issues in Conservation Area Management with Application to Recreation Management in the Black Forest and a Southern California Forest

Governance issue	Description	Black Forest	Southern California (National Forest)
Institutional structure	Sectoral interplay; spatial and factual fit; scale and important role of informal institutions.	Roundtable connects administrative and user interests on the regional level; strategy of multilevel governance (local projects, intermunicipal working groups, regional management organization); mix of formal and informal institutions included in planning and management considerations. Recreational and nonrecreational values and use habits addressed.	Mostly formal institutional action. Agency staff seeks out known stakeholder opinions. Individuals' comments from public participation events. Forest plan includes multiple sectors and multiple resource objectives. Recreation analysis included to some degree, notably for consistency of vision, niche, and "known" management challenges.

Political embedding	Political autonomy, connection of conservation objectives to other political issues.	Large-scale conservation area as regional political objective, interest orientation consciously localized: user groups and planning meeting attendees usually from local area, linkage to other political objectives through nature park management as central coordinator.	Forest-wide considerations predominate. Overall process and objectives from national guidelines and applicable laws. Input from local individuals as replies to draft alternatives. Detail left to action plans, for example, recreation facility analysis, project-level implementation.
Conflict	Based on social theory: goals, norms, and experiences (outcomes) for social, ecological, and managerial issues.	Identified as preferences or differences in opinions, in surveys, and also qualitatively evaluated through feedback and ideas in subsequent steps. Participatory development of accepted and doable conflict solutions.	Primarily inferred from use statistics, known resource conditions (e.g., roads), and periodic, limited visitor-use monitoring surveys. Qualitative aspects in public comments to drafts.
Sustainability	Assurances of balance between landscape functions, institutional fit, and policy consistency.	Localized solutions stable to extent possible by use of local experts and stakeholders. May not have policy consistency across sites. Rather flexible policy implementation, controlling difficulties.	Long-term consistency assured as a response to legal mandates and broader planning guidance. Directions not especially flexible except as part of localized project implementation.

context in which it is to be implemented. Generally, participatory capacity cannot be built quickly; it must be developed. Therefore, permanent communication platforms could be established by local authorities to create partnerships between individuals and between individuals and authorities, allowing local actors interested in the quality of the living environment to participate in a common vision and consensus building in their region with shared interests (Masschelein and Quaghebeur 2006). Moreover, opportunities for local people to take part in the decision-making process could be created by action programs and projects where stakeholders are invited to participate. There are various reasons to foster new forms of governance for recreation planning and management. Besides questions of natural resource allocation, society should have equal chances to experience environmental quality in times of growing urbanization and health problems. Knowing more about use preferences and conflict perceptions, together with the provision of a platform for mutual exchange and participatory decision making, helps to facilitate the design and management of sustainable future conservation areas (Sievänen et al. 2008).

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