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# 12 Participation: a pillar of sustainable forest management in the Mediterranean

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## What are participatory approaches and the conditions for their implementation?

### *What are participatory approaches?*

**Overall concept.** Participation is one of the founding principles of good governance and democracy (UN-ESCAP, 2009). It raises local community awareness and empowers its members by sustaining rights and responsibilities. This improves the quality, acceptance, stability and sustainability of management decisions, resulting in the more efficient use of available public resources (FAO *et al.*, 2000; Stringer *et al.*, 2006; Kuper *et al.*, 2009). Participatory approaches strive to embrace the diversity and complementarity of stakeholder views, balancing their multiple and sometimes conflicting interests and establishing coherent and accountable rights and obligations to manage forests according to a shared vision and shared objectives, for the common good (Borrini-Feyerabend, 1997a,b).

Participation can be promoted at all levels and stages of the forest planning, management and decision-making process. It can work towards various goals, from defining and prioritizing forest management objectives, implementing, monitoring and evaluating local forest management activities, to the design of national, regional and international forest strategies and policies (see Chapter 11).

Participation by stakeholders (public/private, including local populations) in the sustainable management of natural resources in general, and in the management of forests in particular, is at the heart of many issues such as food security, poverty alleviation, rural development and environmental protection.

Participatory management can be defined as joint actions by local people and management staff with the objective of formulating management objectives and selecting the best available alternatives for their implementation. It relies on practices, discussion spaces and institutions that allow local actors/stakeholders, including those outside the formal politico-administrative circle (citizens, communities, associations, administrations, businesses, etc.), to take a more active role in local affairs. This includes influencing decisions affecting their territory and participating in formal and informal meetings, consultations and exchanges (FAO, 2005).

Participation begins from the observation that projects which are conceived and implemented without participation by the social groups for which they are intended, generally yield poor or unintended results. Moreover, controversies surrounding sustainable development are gradually changing the way development is conceived. Indeed, the existence of a formal, local organization supporting participation

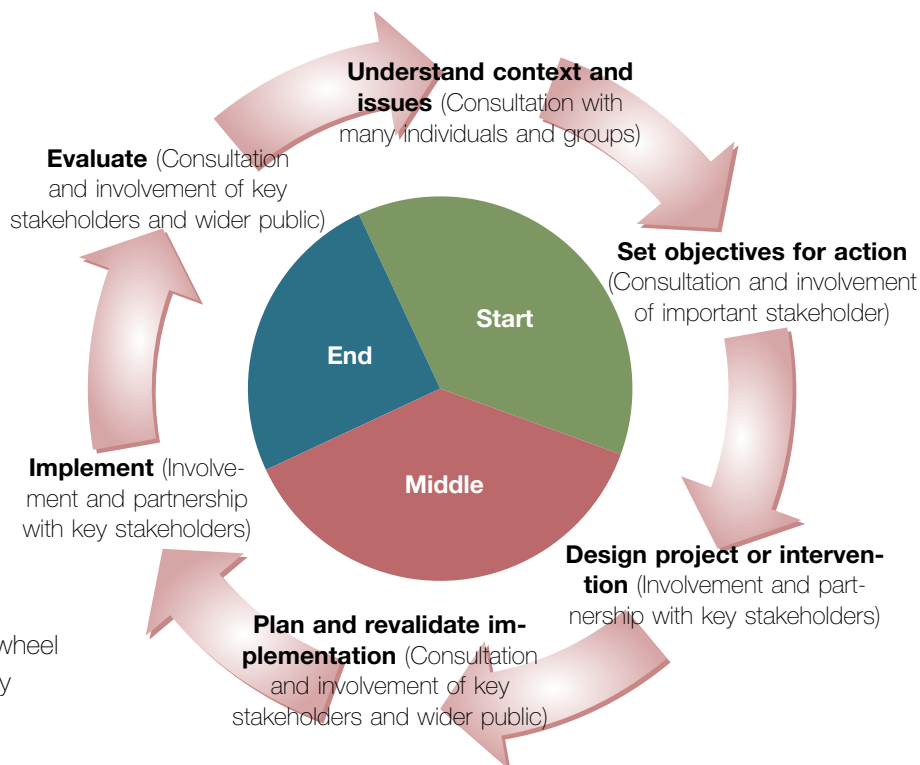
by rural communities has almost become a prerequisite for donor assistance. Participation aims to solve serious problems by redefining access to resources and reorganizing relationships between local communities and the state. Flexible, dynamic, proactive, long-term decision-making processes are therefore required to overcome factors such as: uncertainty; large and diverse spatial and temporal scales; complex intersections between multiple levels; and the ambiguous nature of responsibilities and impacts. These factors require an approach that facilitates management of conflicts sometimes anchored in an irreducible plurality of values and facilitating the progressive integration of qualitatively different information.

Participation has been increasingly promoted over recent decades in the Mediterranean region. This has already had significant impacts on the design and implementation of projects targeting vulnerable populations more likely to be involved in biodiversity conservation and development activities. With the advent of climate change, participation occupies an even more prominent place in current debate and action.

**Concertation: a preliminary step.** According to Beuret (2006), “concertation is based on a horizontal dialogue between the participants, whose objective is the collective construction of visions, objectives and joint projects, in order to act or decide together. Sharing the decision-making power between the participants is not a requirement and the decision is not the primary objective of the consultation, the interest of which lies above all in building common objects together.”

For a project to be sustainable, actors must have ownership of it, and actors must therefore be consulted during its design and implementation. Concerted environmental management, which also refers to notions of understanding and collective action that go beyond consultation, would be a subset of participation, which is a broader and inclusive concept. Indeed, for Beuret, participation means to “take part in something,” whereas “concertation” implies that parties project something in common.

Concerted management is a process in which actors collaborate to manage one or more shared/common good, space or territory or influence actions and decisions that determine the future of these common assets. Concerted management could include simple information-sharing and dialogue



**Figure 4.8.** The engagement wheel  
**Source:** Adapted from Forestry Commission (2011).  
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with participants, consultation with certain social groups, negotiation, etc.

Concertation is a preliminary step prior to the negotiation process and involves looking for compromises and consensus on the sustainable and participatory management of natural resources. Negotiation outcomes should result in stakeholder engagement and the conclusion of win-win contracts.

**Rural grassroots communities: a focal point of participatory development policies.** Natural resources – land, water, forest, pastures – often form the foundation of rural economies and are located in territories in which community members have individual, familial or collective rights inherited over a long period. A community's territory forms not only the physical foundation of its economy but also the basis for its members' cultural and social identification and the geographically-defined support of the local political system.

The rhetoric of sustainable development thus places an emphasis on the participation of rural populations and communities. Local or traditional knowledge is increasingly valued within the framework of grassroots participatory approaches, which should allow local actors to take responsibility for their own development (self-reliance). Emphasis is placed on the need to empower and strengthen communities' capacity to self-govern. As social bodies, they must therefore attain legal status and competence to authorize the conclusion of contracts and budgets, in recognition of their ownership (either individually or collectively) over the natural resources falling within their territory (Lazarev, 1993). Although theoretically straightforward, this framework is not widely developed or uncontested.

**From the “participation injunction” to the negotiated management of natural resources.**

Despite the repeated “injunctions” to participation, it is now recognized that the approaches adopted by many development projects do not consider the complex changes affecting societies and the need to genuinely negotiate the terms and conditions for the implementation of other forms of multi-actor governance. Participatory approaches have been widely used in the field of natural resource management, in which they are presented as a solution to environmental problems analysed through the lens of “the tragedy of the commons” (Hardin, 1968). Several authors argue that participation encourages consideration of stakeholder interests, promotes transparency in decision-making and hold public services accountable, even making it possible to avert the above-mentioned tragedy (e.g. Ostrom *et al.*, 1999). By applying participatory programming techniques, the management of natural resources can play an educational role by changing the communication style of bureaucrats and populations. In short, it would be a school of local democracy. This implies reaching explicit and negotiated compromises between multiple actors involved in structures that become the locus of power and decision-making.

*Levels and forms of participation*

**Participation at different levels.** Participation follows an iterative process, taking place at different levels/stages of forest management and including different goals (Figure 4.8), including:

- Design of national/regional forest strategy and policy within the international context and in concert with different sectors;
- Diagnosis of a territory's assets, strengths/weaknesses and opportunities;
- Definition and prioritization of the objectives of local forest management within a national/international policy framework; and
- Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of forest management activities.

Different stakeholders generally participate at different stages in a given project and process, with various degrees of decision-making power.

Participatory approaches can take different forms depending on the people/institutions implementing them, their objectives, available means and local contexts. They can include stakeholder information and

### Box 4.10. Model Forest

**What is it?** A Model Forest is simultaneously a place, a partnership and a process. The place is a large landscape or ecosystem that typically contains a forest. The partnership is voluntary and inclusive, with partners ranging from local farmers to national policy-makers. The process is a journey towards sustainability through dialogue, experimentation and innovation.

A Model Forest is a voluntary association of people living in a particular territory, interested in discovering, defining, enhancing and guaranteeing its sustainability and sharing their experiences and knowledge to contribute to global environmental goals. The three pillars of the Model Forest are Landscape, Partnership and Sustainability.

**Key figures:** Instituted in 1992 in Canada, the initiative is now international, involving 71 sites in more than 30 countries (2016). Model Forests cover more than 30 million ha of forest landscapes.

**Actors involved:** All actors with an interest in forests, including: users, owners and managers of natural resources; forestry and other industries; NGOs; local authorities; local communities; universities and research centres. The structure of Model Forests is a partnership involving all stakeholders, which can take a legal form (organization, legal agreement or other) depending on the country's legal system.

**Funding:** Member fees, local, national and European public subsidies, and private contributions (gifts and sponsorship).

**Governance:** Lead structure and partners (i.e. people or organizations with an interest in forest use/management such as foresters, hunters, farmers, mushroom pickers, visitors, students, environmentalists, local elected representatives), steering committee, technical committee, working groups.

**Actions:** Improving forest exploitation (timber, biomass and non-wood forest products extraction, transformation and certification), afforestation/reforestation, organization of actors in the forest value chain, infrastructure development, forest fire prevention, developing value of recreational amenities (environmental education, eco-tourism, etc.), soil, water and biodiversity conservation and monitoring, pests and disease control, awareness-raising, etc.

consultation, shared management, co-management, collaborative management or joint management, co-innovation, etc. (Figure 4.11).

The roles of institutional and other actors will differ according to the type of land involved and its legal status. Some legal texts governing rangelands and forests have been ratified independently, without any reference to or links between the uses of the elements supporting the rural population's primary economic activity (e.g. livestock husbandry).

The implementation of so-called participatory projects aimed at sustainably managing natural resources and improving the living conditions of rural populations have often failed due to a lack of coordination between the numerous stakeholders.

The complexity of participatory resource management lies mainly at two levels:

- numerous stakeholders interact with rural areas: several departments/authorities have responsibility for managing specific areas but their actions are not coordinated on the ground. Stakeholders include institutions, organized groups or individuals who interact with and benefit from the management of a rural area. Moreover, they are located both inside and outside the managed

area, so identifying (and justifying) boundary judgments (de Loë and Patterson, 2018) is key;

- stakeholder roles, objectives and strategies: each department/authority adopts strategies relating to the domain or sector it manages without any common strategic vision. Stakeholders have various expectations and their compatibility or contradictions are not necessarily known.

Therefore, it is critically important to:

- encourage mutual understanding and consensus between stakeholders on the objectives and management of natural resources;

### Box 4.11. Forest Territory Charter (FTC)

**What is it?** The FTC is a context-specific, local development project typically involving a diagnosis, the identification of orientations, the development of scenarios and the implementation of an action programme. It results in an orientation document signed by local stakeholders, which encourages concerted, inclusive and sustainable forest management that reconciles their environmental, economic, social and cultural functions (i.e. their multi-functionality). It frames contracts and/or conventions between forest territory owners, managers and users to facilitate the effective implementation of agreed conservation and valorization activities.

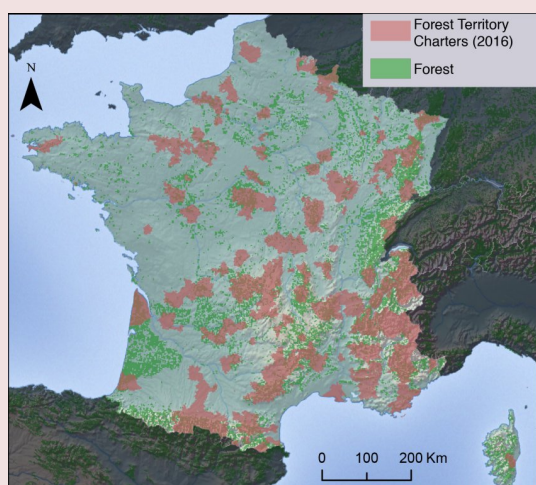
**Key figures:** The FTC was established in France in 2001 following the ratification of its Forest Orientation Law. In 2016, 143 FTCs were implemented in more than 6 000 municipalities and covering about 5 million forest hectares (i.e. 32 percent of all forest area in mainland France, Figure 4.9), including 72 percent of private forests (Data from FNCOFOR, 2016).

**Actors involved:** National and local administrations, regional nature parks, forest owners and managers, forest value chain actors, farmers and their organizations, chambers of agriculture, NGOs, forest users, etc.

**Funding:** Public subsidies at the European, national, regional and local levels, and partial funding from lead organizations.

**Governance:** Consisting of a lead (e.g. local administration/municipalities, regional nature parks, agricultural chamber) and partners (people or organizations with an interest in forest use/management such as foresters, hunters, farmers, mushroom pickers, visitors, students, environmentalists, locally-elected representatives); a steering committee, technical committee and working groups.

**Actions:** Improved forest exploitation (timber, biomass and non-wood forest product extraction, transformation and certification), afforestation/reforestation, organization of forest value chain actors, infrastructure development, forest fire prevention, recreation and amenity value development (environmental education, eco-tourism, etc.), soil, water and biodiversity conservation and monitoring, pest and disease control, awareness-raising, etc.



**Figure 4.9.** French national network of FTCs

**Source:** FNCOFOR (2016).



- identify external or broad linkages between interests, such as power and political relationships, and monitor them over long periods as societal expectations evolve.

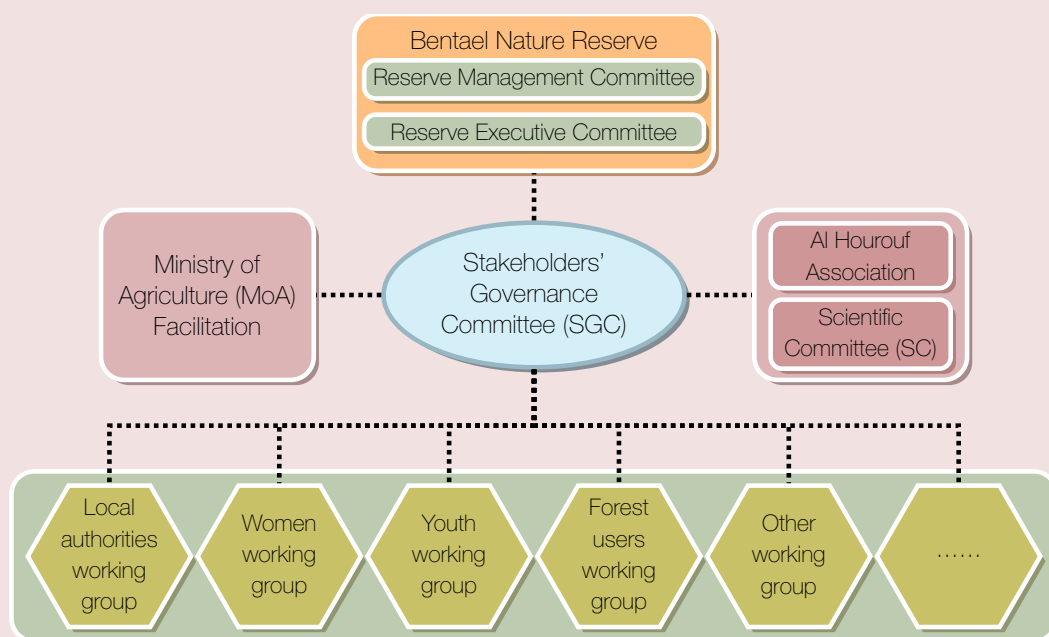
### Box 4.12. Participatory forestry in Lebanon: improving forest governance through participatory approaches

Lebanon's Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) monitors the management of forest resources through its Directorate of Rural Development and Natural Resources, the lead national authority responsible for developing the strategy for the protection and management of forests and rangelands.

Lebanon's decision to manage its forest resources using participatory approaches through its 2015 National Forest Programme has put the MoA ahead of neighbouring countries in terms of the adoption of participatory initiatives to manage forest resources.

A participatory governance model would support adoption of protection measures and regulations, enforced by the responsible public entity. The approval of neighbouring communities would increase acceptance of these decisions, leading to the implementation of successful management practices.

A process for engaging local communities in the management of resources is designed and tested in pilot forest areas to improve governance practices (Figure 4.10).



**Figure 4.10.** Process for engaging local communities in the management of forest resources in Lebanon. The current structure and methodology is an important tool for improving forest resource management. It is anticipated this process will be replicated, which will further consolidate improved management practices. It is therefore important to test this methodology at different sites and in different management contexts to encourage continued improvement.

**The diversity of participatory approaches in the Mediterranean region.** Mediterranean forests have been shaped over centuries by human activities and biotic and abiotic factors, giving rise to very diverse and often resilient ecosystems. Today, however, anthropogenic activities, coupled with global warming, are exerting significant pressure on forests. These are contributing to forest decline and reduced resilience, and to the degradation of their capacity to provide the goods and services that are at

the foundation of Mediterranean societies' socioeconomic development and well-being (Potschin and Haines-Young, 2016). Participation by local stakeholders (especially forest users) in the decisions and activities affecting forest development is thus critical to reconcile socioeconomic activities and resource conservation.

The implementation of participatory forest management is relatively recent and not yet widespread in Mediterranean countries, although the concept itself is not new. Participatory initiatives are, however, spreading and increasingly recognized at the institutional level. Most of these initiatives, which consist of establishing participation processes and implementing concerted actions in given territories (whether protected or otherwise), do not have dedicated names. Nevertheless, among other well-known and institutionalized participatory approaches are the Model Forests (e.g. Provence in France, Ifrane in Morocco and Yalova in Turkey) (Box 4.10), the Forest Territory Charters (FTC) (e.g. Albères and Aspres Cork Oak Forest in France; Bouhachem Regional Nature Park in Morocco) (Box 4.11), Mountain Forest Planning Plan (MFPP), Mountain Forest Strategic Plan (e.g. in the Alps); Concerted Operations for the Planning and Management of the Rural Space (OCAGER; Languedoc-Roussillon), Réserves de Biosphère (e.g. Jabal Moussa in Lebanon) and Participatory Management Plans in Tunisia (Box 4.12).

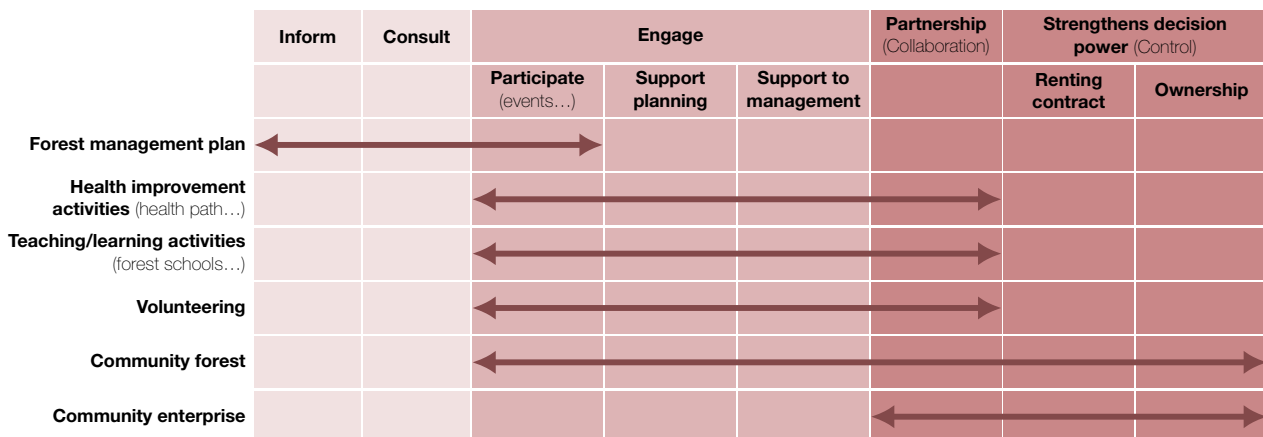
The mechanisms established for participation and collaboration will depend on the relationships between various actors, particularly those encouraged by the instigators of these mechanisms. The effectiveness and success of such mechanisms will often depend on the quality of human relationships established locally at the first instance (Box 4.13).

**Planning and designing a participatory project.** Planning stakeholder engagement throughout the project cycle and beyond is crucial (Figure 4.12).

A common general approach is presented by the logical framework. Proposed by USAID in the 1960s, the logical framework is the basis of most methodological tools. This technique allows stakeholders to identify and analyse problems, define their objectives and the activities they wish to undertake (Figure 4.13).

### *What are the enabling conditions for participatory approaches?*

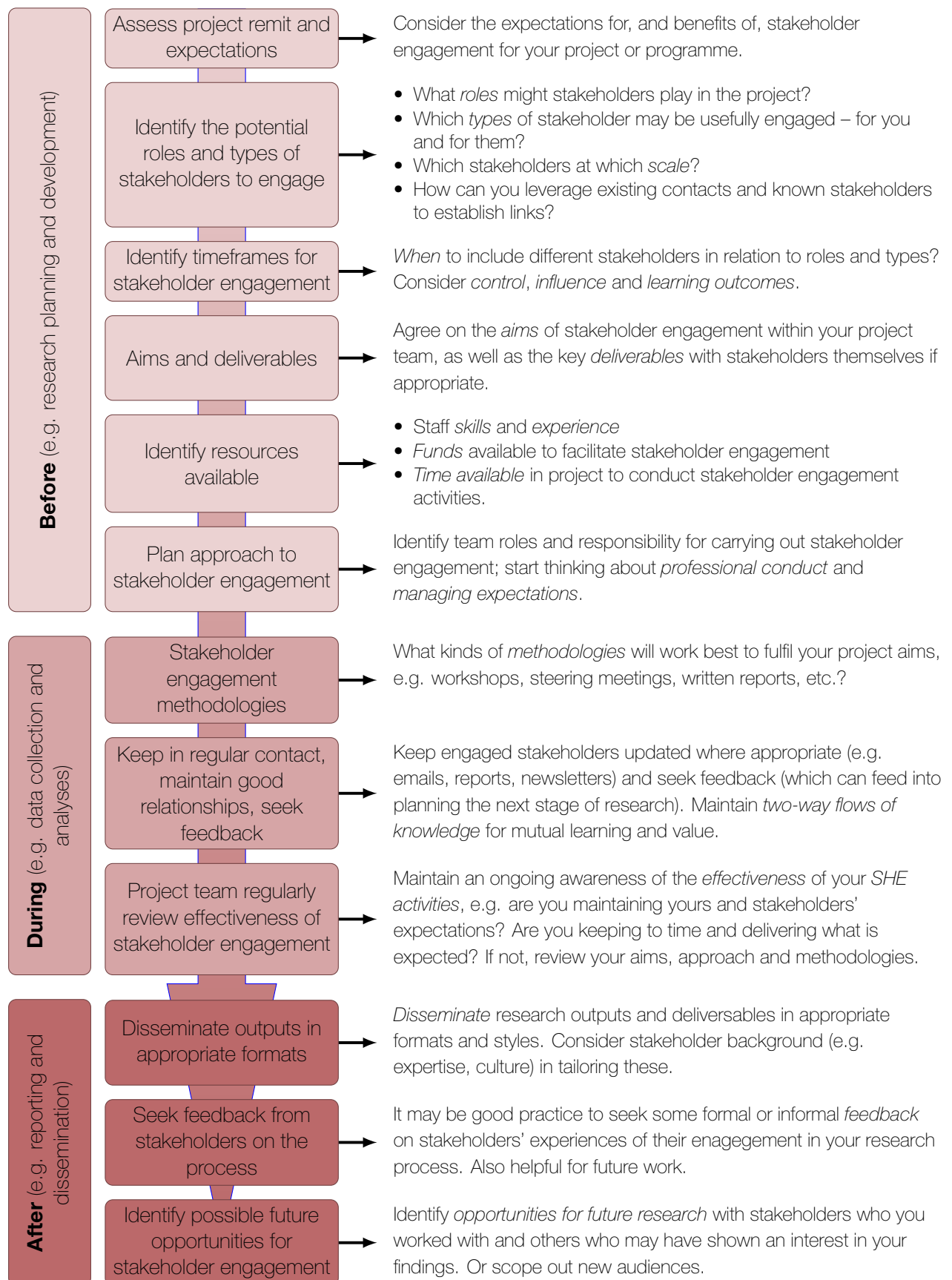
As mentioned above, the rationale behind applying a participatory approach lies in the distinct expectations of forest managers and beneficiaries of ecosystem services. Because of diverse socioeconomic factors, including historical and cultural heritage, there are no strict rules for effective implementation of participatory approaches. However, experience shows that successful management requires the establishment of appropriate governance conditions. These concern both administrative settings (including political commitments and supporting regulations) and societal preparedness



**Figure 4.11.** Opportunities for public engagement in forest management

**Source:** Adapted from Forestry Commission (2011) © Crown Copyright 2011.





**Figure 4.12.** Engagement planner  
**Source:** Nicholson-Cole and Whitmarsh (2008).

(relevant to the degree of knowledge and empowerment of the various stakeholders). Some essential considerations are worth emphasizing:

- Without a certain degree of *ex ante* political will, participation will not produce results or impact.
- A certain equivalence of cognition and power must exist between actors. If this is not present, external support must be provided to under-represented actor/s.
- It is futile to propose a participation exercise among actors that are not mutually dependent to some degree. To the extent possible, these inter-dependencies should be identified, analysed and acknowledged.
- Whether at the starting point or as a result of the process, a common vision should guide participation.

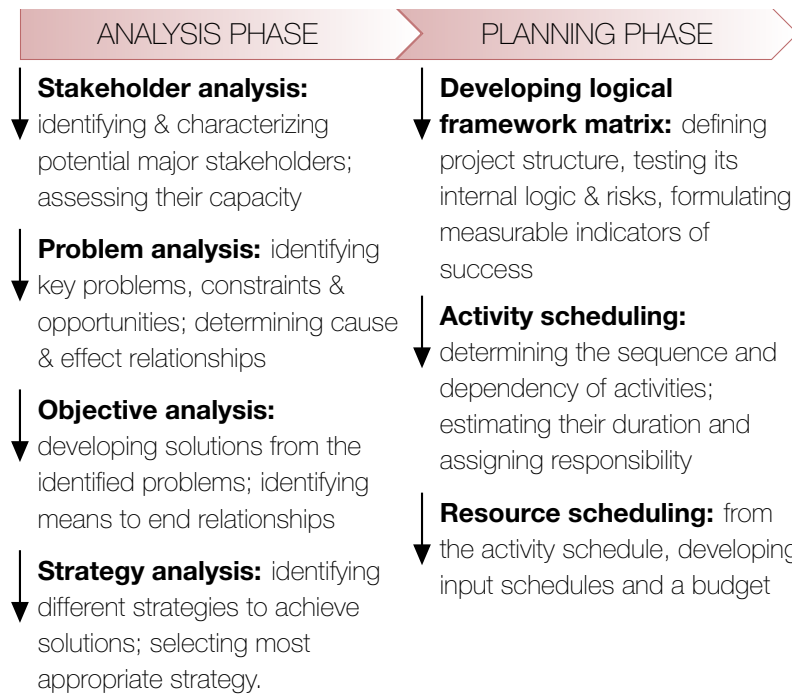
### Box 4.13. Forty forest resource management projects in Morocco

By analysing about 40 forest resource management projects carried out in Morocco over the last ten years (2002-2014), a typology of the adopted approaches was established by distinguishing between four main approaches:

1. Ethno-spatial approach for the management and development of silvopastoral resources: this approach is based on ethno-spatial units (fraction or sub-fraction) as the basis for concerted implementation of silvopastoral and socioeconomic development actions;
2. Socio-territorial unit approach for integrated development: this approach involves local populations with projects on the scale of land exploited by the inhabitants of one or more territory unit (e.g. douar). As an example, the Douar Development Plan brings together actions implemented in all areas, including silvopastoralism;
3. Community approach focusing on the management of forest periphery: this also involves organizing community groups based on territory (e.g. douars in Maghreb), but the interventions focus on agriculture, infrastructure and socioeconomic development;
4. Contract-programme approach with local organizations: this approach has been developed by GIZ within the framework of the "Protected Areas" project, which consists of delegating the execution of annual programmes to local associations. These programmes are based on the DPDs established above.

**Policy support towards increased stakeholder participation: What international and national strategies say.** As highlighted in many international processes, participation by local communities in decision-making is a promising way to improve global well-being. As a general rule, the sustainable development goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2015) see stakeholder participation as a major step towards peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development (SDG 16). The forestry sector recognizes that increased stakeholder involvement – particularly by local communities – is a requirement for sustainable forest management. The FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment provides an overview of countries that have established a national platform to promote stakeholder participation in forest policy development, as well as countries in which stakeholders are consulted or contribute to the management of public forests. These two elements show a willingness to implement participatory approaches at the highest level. Although it is not a prerequisite, this commitment can facilitate the establishment of appropriate administrative and regulatory conditions to develop local initiatives.

All countries in the Mediterranean basin are involved in at least one international sustainable forest



**Figure 4.13.** The Logical Framework approach

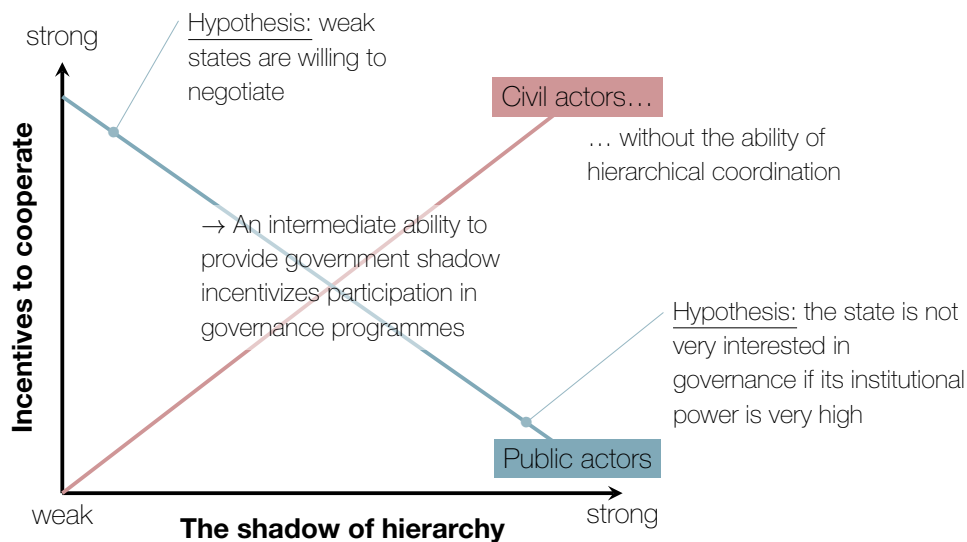
**Source:** European Commission (2004).

management process. Northern Mediterranean countries from Portugal to Turkey are part of Forest Europe (Oslo, 1993), while countries from the southern and eastern rims (including Cyprus, Malta and Turkey) are involved in the Near East process (Cairo 1996, extended to North Africa). In both processes, the participation of stakeholders is one indicator and is therefore encouraged.

Consistent with international processes, certification schemes such as the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) acknowledge the importance of considering local communities when defining a management plan. The production of certified wood products is still limited in the Mediterranean. However, increased demand for labelled products will favour improved integration of social needs in forest management.

**What the law says.** Acknowledging historical practices, most national forest laws provide local communities with the right to collect dead wood, hunt or graze cattle in public forests. On the one hand, forest degradation occurs when these rights are misused. For example, overgrazing reduces a forest's regeneration capacity. Some countries have added temporary protection regimes to their legislation in order to reduce these risks of forest degradation (e.g. deferred grazing in Morocco and Tunisia). However, these measures are not always well understood and respected by local beneficiaries. On the other hand, forest degradation is also more likely to occur when these rights are not used at all. The absence of grazing and deadwood removal leads to an increase of the biomass that, in the Mediterranean, can increase the risk of forest fires. In order to participate more effectively in management of forest ecosystems, local communities should seek to better understand the impact of their behaviour. This need for awareness-raising is now reflected in forest policies.

**Participatory approaches in the Mediterranean context.** In the context of global change, the Mediterranean's highly diverse forest ecosystems face numerous environmental and socioeconomic threats. Increases in temperature, reduction in precipitation, higher frequency of extreme events and fires are a challenge for the maintenance of the ecosystems and the services they provide. A large portion of Mediterranean forests, particularly those in the south, are public and managed by administrators. Forest management by a public administration responds to political, economic and environmental objectives that are not necessarily shared by local communities.



**Figure 4.14.** The shadow of the state

At the same time, population increases lead to higher pressure on lands and natural resources, as well as higher demand for forest ecosystem services such as erosion control and water regulation. Moreover, rapid urbanization has changed and redistributed stakeholder needs. In the northern Mediterranean, the demand for ecosystem services in cities, such as recreation and water filtration, has increased, while demand for firewood and grazing by local populations has decreased. A similar change can be observed in the southern rim. However, the pressure from local populations remains high and desertification has become a serious threat. Changes to demand for ecosystem services and the geographic distribution of stakeholders has increased the complexity of forest management. This calls for an inclusive and adaptive form of planning and management, which can be facilitated by a participatory approach.

Stakeholders are not necessarily aware of their impacts on forests and the all the benefits they derive from forest ecosystems. In particular, people living in cities enjoy recreational opportunities, but also climate regulation, erosion control protecting infrastructure, water purification, etc. Most of them do not understand the impact of high frequentation, intensive mushroom picking or seed collection. Rural populations also lack information on the sustainable use of forests. The participatory approach facilitates awareness-raising and mutual learning between stakeholders.

The structures of southern Mediterranean communities have changed over recent decades. The hierarchical management of the community, in which the head makes decisions for all, has been replaced by higher individualism in many places. If each individual competes for access to public resources, the resultant pressure on that resource increases beyond what the ecosystem can withstand. This is an illustration of the tragedy of the commons. Stakeholder involvement in the decision-making process can provide the basis for an alternative way to regulate harvesting of wood and non-timber forest products. Forest managers may encounter difficulties in establishing restriction measures (e.g. a ban on grazing or on nut harvesting) and controlling their application. The participatory approach helps define measures that beneficiaries can accept and even control themselves, increasing their chances of success, while also being more cost-efficient.

The need for coordination comes from: (a) the pursuit of greater efficiency and reduced transaction costs and (b) the need, exceptionally acute in forest management, to work in stable, adequate temporal-spatial scales for the activity. These two main factors demonstrate need to recognize and utilize interdependencies (Jessop, 1998). On the other hand, competition (e.g. in markets) can make these interdependencies challenging. The shadow of the state (Héritier and Lehmkuhl, 2008), remarkably big in Mediterranean forest environments, can be an additional obstacle (Figure 4.14). The provision of sufficient and fair information, knowledge and skills (including financial) (Table 4.4), recommended by expert reviews (Sayer *et al.*, 2008; CBD SBSTTA, 2011), is also frequently lacking.

# How can these approaches be put in place for effective and efficient participatory management?

## *Initial conditions*

Prior to the establishment of a participatory management process, the situation must be diagnosed and the territory in question must be established. This includes the land, its resources, its owners (public, private or collective), its managers and the various stakeholders living on or deriving benefits from it. Second, the relationship between stakeholders, the objectives of management and possible conflicts must be identified. If the diagnosis confirms interest in a participatory approach, regulatory, administrative and social contacts must be analysed.

Stakeholders must be empowered to put forward and discuss proposals. In other words, participating bodies should understand their role in the process and know which decisions and responsibilities are theirs. In most cases, participating stakeholders represent larger groups such as residents or shepherds. These representatives should be trained to prepare for the meetings and commit at the appropriate level.

Stakeholders should trust the institutions responsible for running the participatory process and implementing the resultant plan. In particular, when public forests are at stake, local or national authorities must be committed to ensuring an equitable relationship between actors. In places where the state is weak, some stakeholders may refuse to participate because they feel powerless or are apprehensive about potential manipulation by other stakeholders. The process is facilitated when official documents such as forest laws, strategies or policies clarify the relationship between actors, including their respective responsibilities and duties. The authorities should also be prepared to devolve power to local actors. The project facilitator is key to the successful preparation and conduct of the process. The organization responsible for the facilitator must have sufficient funding capacity to allocate resources and time to the process. Generally, for limited territories, at least one full time equivalent is needed.

## *Making participation happen: steps, methodologies and tools*

### **A participatory approach is:**

- a pluralistic approach to the management of natural resources involving diverse partners assuming a variety of roles and generally aiming towards environmental protection, sustainable exploitation of natural resources and equitable sharing of benefits and responsibilities;
- a political and cultural process par excellence: the search for a form of “democracy” and social justice in the management of natural resources;
- a process that must be built upon certain basic conditions (full access to information about relevant issues and solutions, freedom and ability to get organized, etc.).

The main steps to follow when implementing the participatory process are summarized below:

**Table 4.4.** Enabling conditions for participatory approaches

Pre-requisites			
Normative framework		Knowledge	
Regulation	Economic disincentives	Competency	Awareness
Stimuli			
Social licence		Risk awareness	
Seed capital		Market incentives	
Coordination mechanisms			

1. Choice of territory and shared diagnosis.

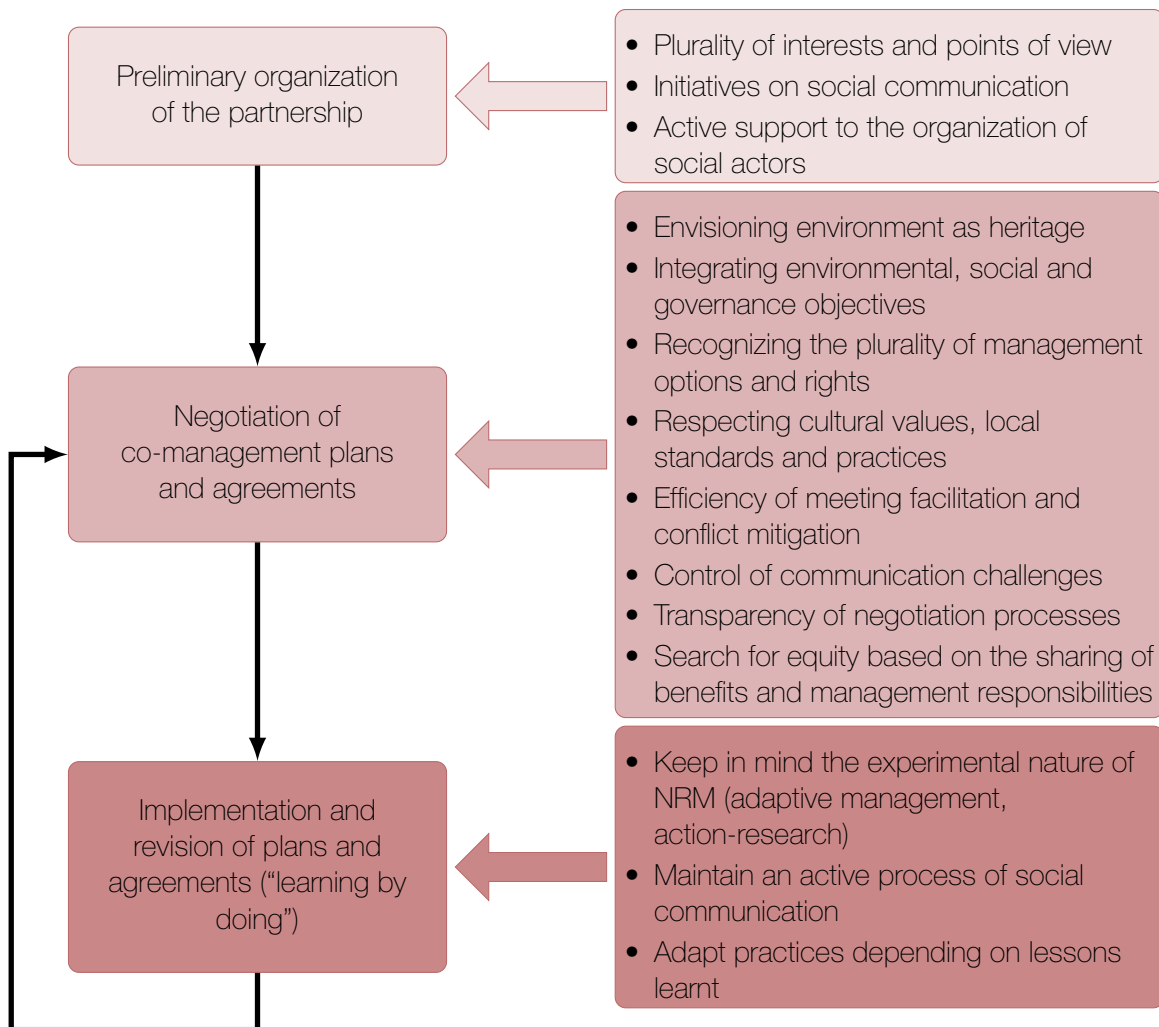
The territory or natural resource (forest, grazing track, etc.) must be characterized by traditional users (users, right holders, etc.) identifying themselves according to this territory or resource. This involves working to merge these traditional uses by ethnic groups with the corresponding space. The territory or natural resource should not involve two different ethnic groups; doing so would give rise to potential conflict regarding traditional usage.

A shared diagnosis of the territory must be carried out with the population to analyse and quantify its environmental and socioeconomic resources, identify actors (stakeholder mapping), understand their visions and expectations, build on existing local dynamics and jointly design a desirable future (prospective analysis).

2. Governance structure and mechanisms of the participatory approach.

Participatory approaches may rely on different structures at various administrative/territorial levels, which could include:

- Lead Entity (“coordinator,” e.g. a nature park, an association, etc.). The lead entity mobilizes stakeholders, drives the work forward, carries out the monitoring and evaluation and ensures the cohesion and efficiency of the different structures and processes;
- Steering/management committee (elected officials, representatives of government services and



**Figure 4.15.** Schematic representation of the concepts, approaches and values in the participatory management process



stakeholders). It manages the process, drives the project forward, helps reach a consensus and has the greatest decision-making power (e.g. Provincial Coordinating Committee (Wilaya in Morocco) whose role is to oversee the participatory process and help remove constraints);

- Stakeholder committee (stakeholder representatives). This influences decisions and agrees on the activities of the working groups;
- Working group or implementation committee (anyone interested in working on the project at the local level). This works on the technical aspects of sector-specific or cross-sectoral themes;
- Consultative technical and/or scientific committee (renowned experts and scientist from the academic and research/innovation sector). This provides an opinion on management, decisions and activities.

### 3. General mapping and objectives/interests and relationships between actors.

Two modes of representation can facilitate a formulation of the actors identified a priori, including their potential role in the participatory process:

- actors with a direct interest in the natural resources of the area concerned, i.e. directly extracting ecosystem goods and services;
- actors with indirect interests, i.e. indirectly extracting ecosystem goods and services;
- surface or groundwater users, i.e. exploiting ecosystem-related water resources;
- actors with professional interests, i.e. having professional duties and interests in the sustainable management of natural resources in the area.

### 4. Implementation of the communication, collaboration and negotiation process with stakeholders.

**Main tools of the participatory approach.** The concepts and approaches contributing towards understanding and practicing the participatory approach are:

#### 1. Adaptive management is a management approach that recognizes, on the one hand, the lack of definitive knowledge about the behaviour of ecosystems and, on the other hand, the uncertainty that governs our interaction with them.

The main stages of adaptive management throughout the participatory process are:

- Assessment of the situation and problems of Natural Resources Management (NRM) (usually in workshops, with several stakeholders);
- Identification of NRM activities (usually in workshops) on the basis of a comparison between several possible options;
- Implementation of NRM activities in accordance with the chosen plan (which may include land zoning and experimenting with different activities in different areas – referred to as “active management”);
- Monitoring the results obtained on the basis of indicators chosen to reflect expected changes;
- Evaluation of results to test the effectiveness of the actions undertaken;
- Adjustment of activities based on lessons learned (this may include problem re-wording, NRM objectives, activities, indicators, etc.).

#### 2. Plurality.

Participation by several categories of social actors (e.g. governmental and non-governmental bodies, groups and individuals, local and external communities with rights to local resources), is key to successful natural resource management. Communities are, per se, actors and constitute the most natural and convincing unity of identity, integration and defence for many disadvantaged groups and

individuals. Communities are not homogeneous entities and their internal differences must be taken into account. Allowing space for this multiplicity of views and voices is a fundamental condition of fairness and justice during the negotiation process, including negotiations towards participatory management plans and agreements.

**Table 4.5.** Tools and methods to promote participatory forest management

Tools and methods for participation and communication	Planning	Implementation	Monitoring & evaluation	Finalization
Conferences		••		••
Consensus building	•••	••		
Courses and study programmes		•		
Events		••		
Experimental plots		•••	••	••
Focus groups	••	••	••	
Imagine	•••			
Internal and external audits			•	•
Interviews	•		•••	
Logical frameworks	•••			••
Meetings (annual, extraordinary, strategic)	••		••	
Method sheets		••	••	
Multi-part monitoring programmes			••	••
Newsletter	•	•••		••
Online social networks (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)		••		••
Open days		••	••	••
Participatory budget	•••	•••		
Participatory mapping and GIS	•••	••		
Participatory platform for monitoring and evaluation			••	••
Postal surveys and questionnaires	•		•••	
Press	•	•••		•••
Radio	•			•••
Scenarios method	•••	•	•	
Seminars	•••	•••		
Sheets with indicators of performance, results, impact, etc.			•••	••
Site visits	••	•••		••
Stands		••	••	••
Surveys and face-to-face questionnaires	••		••	
Telephone surveys and questionnaires	••		••	
Website	•	•	••	•
Working groups	•••	•••		
Workshops	•••	•••		

**Note:** GIS = Geographical Information Systems.

**Source:** Forestry Commission (2011).

3. Governance.

The effective exercise of authority depends on the legitimacy of a political system and the population's respect for its institutions. It also depends on its capacity to respond to problems and reach a social consensus through agreements and compromise. Governance is neither a system of rules nor an activity but a process. It is based not on domination but compromise and involves both private and public actors. Governance is not necessarily formalized and is usually reliant on ongoing interaction.

4. Heritage.

Heritage refers to the set of material and immaterial elements contributing to the identity and autonomy of an owner by adapting to a changing environment. The patrimonial representation of a territory, a zone or a set of resources allows for:

- linkages between past, present and future generations of land managers;
- greater emphasis on owners' obligations than their rights;
- a common vision of sustainability bringing together the needs and opinions of various actors.

5. Social communication seeks to establish an identity of views within a community. It involves exchanging messages (communication) to give meaning to actions and enrich common knowledge, often as a way of coping with change. Effective communication generally has remarkable individual effects such as improved well-being, strengthened sense of personal worth, dignity and self-esteem, and strengthened social solidarity and cooperation. Communication can be personal (face-to-face), interpersonal (between a few individuals) and social (when it involves social groups like a local community) (Table 4.5). In the context of participatory approaches, communication aims to provide favourable conditions for conscious decision-making in society, encouraging information exchanges and discussions about problems, opportunities and action. It is generally a complex phenomenon, encompassing a variety of situations, one-on-one dialogue and group meetings (aspects of personal and interpersonal communication) for use in media such as radio, television or online.

6. Conflict management/resolution.

Conflict management is a process of dialogue and negotiation with constructive rather than destructive results. It consists of:

- resolving disagreements before they escalate;
- helping stakeholders to consider various options for agreement before choosing one that is acceptable to all;
- identifying and eradicating the root causes of conflicts to avoid their recurrence.

7. The three main phases of the participatory management process (Figure 4.15) are:

- (a) partnership preparation and stakeholder involvement/participation;
- (b) negotiating participatory management plans and agreements;
- (c) implementing and revising the plans and agreements (learning by doing).

## How can these approaches last over time? What affects their sustainability?

*What matters for the sustainability of these approaches?*

To ensure an enduring process, trust between stakeholders should be developed and maintained. The moderator has a key role. She must ensure that all stakeholders have an interest in participating,

anticipate conflicts and prevent non-collaborative behaviour. Meetings must be organized regularly to maintain connections and facilitate exchanges.

Stakeholders must stay motivated. At the outset, they often hope to derive some benefit from the process. Connecting stakeholders with different perspectives will stimulate creativity. The meeting should lead to decisions and effective implementation. Repetitive discussion should be avoided to prevent stakeholders from becoming bored. The outcomes of participatory management should be monitored and presented to stakeholders to facilitate continuous improvement. The decision-making process, use of resources and outcomes should be transparent at all stages to maintain trust in the process. Finally, as in any project, sufficient allocation of human and financial resources is important.

Over a ten-year period (2006-2015), the Mediterranean Model Forest Network tracked a total of 30 Model Forest initiatives (attempts to develop a Model Forest) in the Mediterranean region (Table 4.6). Of these, 33 percent were still active after four years and 29 percent had reached full Model Forest status by the end of the study period. The question of permanence is not, therefore, an inconsequential one for participatory approaches in Mediterranean forests.

Some elements of the above-mentioned best practice stand out when dealing with permanence over time: Sayer *et al.* (2013)'s Principles 1, 8 and 10 and Lally Principles (Sayer *et al.*, 2008) 2, 3, 6, 8, 16 and 19. The first case focuses on how a participatory process should incorporate mechanisms for (a) monitoring (i.e. devolving meaningful data to participants on the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of activities), (b) adapting (changing course when the situation changes) and (c) learning at all levels (to enhance participants' capacities over time) to maximize longevity. The Lally Principles assert the need for (d) (lasting) skilled facilitation, (e) shared ownership and (f) careful expectation management.

Beyond these structural and process features, it has been observed during real processes occurring in the Mediterranean that participatory processes tend to persist by carrying out (g) step-by-step, innovation-driven, small activities with a bold problem focus, only to (h) expand when sufficient trust has been established. This iterative practice has the important consequence of providing opportunities for enhanced cooperation in matters of interest to specific stakeholders (while at the same time not seeking their participation in activities that do not fit their skills).

### *Monitoring and evaluation*

A good framework regarding what to monitor is provided by CBD SBSTTA (2011). Only implementation monitoring, effectiveness monitoring and project monitoring, however, are of special relevance for participatory processes in the Mediterranean.

As mentioned above, effective and creative monitoring is key to the sustainability of participatory processes, since it provides actors with motivational information that keeps them engaged. This happens even when monitoring results show no major progress.

Evaluation is made on dissimilar criteria and on diverse temporal-spatial scales by different actors, and can easily be based on incorrect assumptions. For example, one participant in the Urbión Model Forest (Segur *et al.*, 2014) established a seven-year timeframe for evaluating participation in the local Model Forest process. By the time that evaluation became due, the Model Forest had already failed.

If participatory processes are evaluated based on whether they have solved the problem they were established to address (impact evaluation), they will most probably be deemed a failure unless: an apolitical temporal scale is used, or the whole context (and not just the participatory process itself), is evaluated. On the other hand, process evaluation should focus on "continued commitment to dialogue... locking... partners into a range of interdependent decisions... and encouraging solidarity among those involved" (Jessop, 1998).

In 2012, FSC Spain began a participatory process to review and transfer Spain's FSC forest

**Table 4.6.** Model Forest attempts 2006-2015

	Initiative	Region	Country	Date	2015 status
1	Urbión	Castilla y León	Spain	2016	Model Forest
2	Tlemcen	Wilaya of Tlemence	Algeria	2009	Model Forest
3	Forêt Modèle de Provence	Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur	France	2009	Model Forest
4	Corsia MF initiative	Corse	France	2009	Dismissed
5	Volos MF initiative	Magnesia	Greece	2009	Dismissed
6	Kozani Model Forest	Western Macedonia	Greece	2009	Initiative
7	Arci-Grighine	Sardinia	Italy	2009	Dismissed
8	Ifrane	Province of Ifrane	Morocco	2009	Model Forest
9	Dehesa Charra	Castilla y León	Spain	2009	Dismissed
10	Sierra Espuña	Murcia	Spain	2009	Dismissed
11	Kroumirie et Mogods	Kroumirie et Mogods	Tunisia	2009	Dismissed
12	Yalova	Yalova	Turkey	2009	Model Forest
13	Montagne Fiorentina	Tuscany	Italy	2010	Model Forest
14	Serranía de Cuenca	Castilla La Mancha	Spain	2010	Dismissed
15	Pinares del Duero	Castilla y León	Spain	2010	Dismissed
16	Cansiglio MF initiative	Veneto	Italy	2011	Dismissed
17	Lebanon MF initiative	n.c.	Lebanon	2011	Unknown
18	Mirna Watershed	Istria	Croatia	2012	Model Forest
19	Dalmatian Model Forest	Dalmatia	Croatia	2012	Initiative
20	Delta del Po MF	Emilia-Romagna	Italy	2012	Initiative
21	Voskopoja Model Forest	District of Korca	Albania	2012	Initiative
22	Tesanj Model Forest	Sarajevo	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2012	Initiative
23	Pećini	Vojvodina	Serbia	2012	Initiative
24	Igoumenítsa	Epirus	Greece	2012	Dismissed
25	Golija-Kopaonik initiative	Golija and Kopaonik Natural Parks	Serbia	2012	Initiative
26	Montenegrin Coastal MF	all Montenegro coast	Montenegro	2012	Initiative
27	Buçak	Anatolya	Turkey	2013	Model Forest
28	Massa MF initiative	Tuscany	Italy	2014	Dismissed
29	Páramos Palentinos	Castilla y León	Spain	2014	Initiative
30	Etna initiative	Sicily	Italy	2015	Initiative

**Note:** MF = Model Forest. Date is commencement date.

management standards to Version 5 of FSC's international Principles and Criteria. The process, which was due to be finalized in December 2017, has led to continuous monitoring and evaluation, resulting in substantial improvements in the future field application of the new FSC forest management standard for Spain, largely due to active stakeholder participation (Martínez Martínez *et al.*, 2017) (Box 4.14).

### *Case study: Win-win contracts for oak forest management in Morocco – The Maâmora Forest*

In the Maâmora forest, the objectives of the participatory approach were:

1. To build an appropriate and effective participatory approach to contribute to the development and successful implementation of the revised Maâmora Forest Management Plan.
2. To ensure collaboration/negotiation with relevant stakeholders, including the local population, to

promote their involvement in the rational management of natural resources (monitoring, conservation and valorization) and the conservation of sensitive sites.

3. To design and promote participatory eco-socioeconomic models (for the organization of value chains and valorization of non-wood forest products).

#### **Box 4.14. The process of adapting the Spanish FSC standard of sustainable forest management to the new FSC principles and criteria (Spain)**

**What is it?** The process follows the international system established by FSC International to transfer the current Spanish FSC forest management standard to the new structure and requirements of the FSC International Principles and Criteria version 5-1. To this end, a participatory and transparent process has been carried out, balancing environmental, social and economic interests in order to guarantee a reliable standard adapted to the Spanish context. In addition, this adaptation has been used to extend the scope of the national standard, including the possible certification of ecosystem services, all timber and non-timber production, as well as to promote adaptive forest management to cope with global change.

**Key figures:** from September 2012 to October 2017 more than 45 meetings were held throughout the transfer process (mostly online and some in person), which were later transferred and developed. One hundred and eighty-eight indicators were analysed and responses were provided to more than 1 350 comments received during three public consultations. In addition, 11 face-to-face workshops and two Iberian meetings were held (FSC national offices and stakeholders from Spain and Portugal), as well as multiple meetings with stakeholders. The FSC standard for forest management will apply to those holding FSC certificates in forest management in Spain. In October 2017, 26 certificate holders managed more than 260 000 ha and more than 14 000 forest management units.

**Stakeholders:** FSC-certified forest management certificate holders, certification bodies accredited by Accreditation Services International, forest owners and managers, consulting forestry firms, homeowners' associations, industry associations, industries, forest products, environmental NGOs and social unions, local administrations, autonomous communities and the national government, FSC Spain (Standards Committee, expert group, advisory forum and national partners), as well as FSC International.

**Funding:** funds provided by FSC Spain and FSC International.

**Governance:** Standards Development Group or FSC Spain Standards Committee comprised of a coordinator and two members for each of the FSC Spain partners (environmental, social and economic). The decisions of the standards committee were ratified by the Board of Directors and FSC Spain's members assembly.

**Actions:** More than 45 FSC Spain Standards Committee meetings, 11 face-to-face workshops in different cities in north, central and southern Spain and multiple meetings with stakeholders have been held. Progress has been reported to FSC International, the Board of Directors and FSC Spain partners. In addition, news has been published in FSC Spain's social networks and the web, as well as in sectoral media.

Seven types of eco-socioeconomic development models were proposed using the strategic axes



and variables identified by stakeholders based on the “integrated and concerted development of the territories.” The primary goal was to establish effective conditions for the success of the technical actions identified in the Maâmora management plan. The “Agroforestry management of trees and stands of cork oak” Model case study below is a good example of a win-win contract relating to the collection of acorns.

Since state-imposed sanctions proved ineffective in combating wood, foliage and acorn collection, a new negotiation and partnership approach was proposed to reconcile the interests of the two stakeholders, i.e. the land manager and user. It aims to ensure the rational management of cork oak stands while allowing users to take advantage of resources, namely acorns and foliage, without damaging the trees. This approach is based on three essential actions:

1. organization of users by territory (socio-territorial unit): existing silvopastoral associations can be empowered and made responsible for the oak stands (acorns and foliage). If needed, specific silvopastoral associations can be established;
2. establishment of partnership contracts establishing rights and duties for the rational exploitation of cork oak stands, while providing specific training and permanent supervision of users;
3. support for the autonomy of local organizations through their involvement in forestry activities.

**Expected results / outcomes.** Harvesting of acorns by users organized in associations or cooperatives has several advantages, mainly:

- creating an atmosphere of collaboration and partnership between users and forest authorities based on a common interest in forest resource conservation: the imposition of fines has not represented a threat for users, who consider fruits and local products a gift from God and the environment;
- enhancing user participation and empowerment: bringing users together and providing support and the conviction that their well-being will be improved, will greatly facilitate involvement by local populations in the conservation and management of forest resources;
- improved user revenues by increasing both the value-added component of the product and interest in organizing the value chain/sector: organizing this sector will provide significant added value to users, increasing their feelings of responsibility for the conservation of oak trees as fruit trees;
- improved traceability and availability of forest tree seeds, some of which will be destined for forest regeneration and development under the terms of the contract. The reserved product is thus characterized by its exact origin (organization, plots, zone, etc.), thus maintaining the performance and origins of the oak stands;
- changing social consensus on forest harvesting: organizing users to participate in fruit harvesting and marketing facilitates the transition from an uncontrolled and competitive harvest to a respectful (mature) harvest using techniques that are not detrimental to trees. The community will change its perception of the oak tree from a purely forest tree to a multi-purpose tree (fruits and others).

### **The win-win contract for the harvest of acorns encourages:**

1. Engagement by local organizations. They undertake to:
  - Ensure the successful execution of commitments under contract (e.g. respecting the acorn harvest commencement date and techniques (ground pick-up, tree climbing, other techniques, etc.) and reserving a portion of the overall harvest (negotiated and adapted to agreements and territories; e.g. 20 percent for the supply of nurseries and 20 percent for the supply of forest seedlings);
  - Ensure compliance with the measures taken, technical supervision and population awareness;

- Manage conflicts and disputes that may arise between managers and users.

2. Commitment of the Water and Forest Administration. It undertakes to:

- Provide technical guidance and training on harvest techniques to local organizations;
- Organize awareness-raising and information workshops for users to encourage them to join the process of participatory, sustainable natural resource management;
- Study and promote the valorization and marketing of the acorn sector. Comparison between the current situation and expected results following implementation of the proposed measures/activities (Table 4.7).

**Table 4.7.** Comparison of the current situation and expected results following the implementation of the proposed measures/activities for the collection of acorns in the Maãmora Forest

Current situation	Measures and activities	Future desirable situation
<p>Chaotic harvesting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Users</li> <li>• Non-users</li> <li>• Inappropriate harvesting methods</li> </ul>	<p>Organization of users in an association or cooperative (it will also deal with delimiting). On the ground demonstration of the techniques of rational acorn harvesting for the benefit of users</p>	<p>Creation of an atmosphere of collaboration and partnership between the Forest Authority and a common interest in the conservation of forest resources</p>
<p>Social consensus based on competition and mining</p>	<p>User training and awareness on acorn harvesting techniques and sustainable tree management</p>	<p>Encourage constructive and empowering involvement by user populations</p>
<p>Unorganized marketing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intermediaries: non-users and derive more added value</li> <li>• Uncontrolled marketing channel</li> </ul>	<p>Organization of the acorn marketing circuit at national and international level</p>	
<p>Difficulties in supplying cork oak seeds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong demand for human consumption</li> <li>• Existence of uncontrolled circuits for acorn exports to Spain</li> <li>• Difficulties in ensuring the traceability of acorns locally</li> </ul> <p>Local products and forest goods and services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not very profitable for users: about 30 percent of the selling price in city markets</li> <li>• Local sellers: about 50 percent of the selling price in city markets</li> </ul>	<p>Establishment of a win-win contract between the Forest Authority and the user organization (association/cooperative), setting out the following rights and duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fixing and respecting the harvest period</li> <li>• User share (e.g. 60%)</li> <li>• Share to be transferred to the Forest Authority (e.g. 20%)</li> <li>• Share to be transferred to nurseries (e.g. 20%)</li> </ul>	<p>Traceability and availability of mature cork oak seeds. Changed social consensus on the irrational exploitation of acorns. Increased user incomes by increasing the value added to the acorn product and interest in the organization of the sector/value chain</p>