

A participatory (collaborative management) approach is now recommended when establishing and managing protected areas, experience having shown that this leads to greater success. There are numerous methodologies and an extensive literature relating to this topic. This sheet provides some general guidance on the key tools that can be used.

The success of an MPA depends to a large extent on the active involvement of the stakeholders in all aspects, from planning through to implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Shared responsibility and ownership are key to effective participation, but are not always easily achieved. MPA staff may not have been trained in participatory methods or fully understand their importance.

Levels of participation range from passive (stakeholders informed by unilateral announcements by administration and or management), to informed and active (people are given information, are consulted and may play some active role), through to interactive and decision-making (stakeholders play a major role or even lead an initiative). For some MPAs, a passive level of participation may be appropriate, but MPA managers should aim for as interactive a role as possible. However, participation does not mean that everyone must be involved in everything, as this would be costly and inefficient. Use should be made of representatives from elected committees or interest groups.

An essential first step is to identify the stakeholders, i.e. those who use and depend on the MPA, whose activities affect it or who have an interest in it. They may include government agencies, NGOs, local users and residents, universities and researchers, the private sector (tourism, coastal developers), the MPA staff, and even those living far from the MPA (e.g. migrant fishers and overseas visitors).

To ensure adequate participation it is important to establish the following:

- Who will be affected?
- Who needs to have input, be involved and how?
- Who has the key information?
- What are the most appropriate languages and methods for communication?

COMMONLY USED TECHNIQUES

Most MPAs in the WIO will be familiar with participatory techniques even if the terminology is not known. These can be adapted and built on to suit any particular situation.

Natural group or informal interviews - Casual conversations with groups of people in their natural surroundings; these provide a broad overview of key issues.

Focus group interviews - Semi-structured discussions with groups of people with common interests or characteristics. Participants are chosen using either statistical or non-statistical sampling methods (e.g. cross-section of ages; different villages); useful for identifying and describing group perceptions, attitudes and needs.

Semi-structured interviews with key informants - Interviews using a checklist of topics instead of a detailed questionnaire. The interviewee is encouraged to speak generally on each topic without interruption by the interviewer, who may prompt on items that have been overlooked; gives opportunities for issues unforeseen by the interviewer to be raised.

Observational walks and boat trips - These are undertaken through an area with a group of local people; useful for identifying social and environmental issues (e.g. livelihood issues, evidence of environmental degradation). Valuable for managers' induction phase and for participatory monitoring. Often helps locals to get a new perspective on resources.

Participatory mapping - Large sketches/maps of the area, created with local materials, are discussed in a group, and used to gather data on both natural resources and social issues, and to get stakeholders to air their views. Data can be incorporated into more formal maps through ground truthing and GPS recording.

Venn diagrams - The use of overlapping shapes to illustrate and summarise relationships, conflicts and issues amongst different stakeholders. Stakeholder groups can draw on the ground, or use pre-cut paper shapes. The final overlapping diagram is captured on paper by the interviewer. This technique can be used during a focus group discussion.

Gender analysis - The study of gender relations and roles and how they might be affected by an intervention, e.g. establishment of the MPA, or introduction of a new fishery (see sheet B3).



Participatory techniques in use in Mafia Island Marine Park.

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Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) - A general term for one or a combination of the above activities. Using several methods help to corroborate (or ‘triangulate’) the findings. Can be used to identify stakeholders, critical issues and priorities.

Issue-action analysis - The process of identifying specific remedial actions for each management issue, and assigning a responsible person or organisation for implementation.

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation - Involvement of stakeholders in monitoring of the physical, organisational and management aspects (see sheets in section G).

KEY POINTS FOR THE MPA

- ❑ Arrange for training in participatory techniques for MPA staff. Participatory techniques demand greater effort and skills of the interviewers, and training is essential to ensure reliable data collection.
- ❑ Use participatory methods in daily interactions to strengthen relations between stakeholders and MPA staff and to encourage stakeholders to participate.
- ❑ Build an attitude of respect for stakeholders' knowledge.

Sources of further information

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www.planotes.org. IIED PLA Network, IIED, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H0DD, UK - PLA notes and participatory methodology series free to Southern subscribers.

www.odi.org.uk/nrp ODI Natural Resource Perspectives - short papers on natural resource management, local livelihoods and community based management.

www.iucn.org/themes/pmns IUCN/Ramsar/WWF Participatory Management Clearinghouse (PMC) Website – aims to share information on participatory management of natural resources and disseminates IUCN field experience.

CASE STUDY

Developing full community participation in a Marine Park in Tanzania

The process of building full stakeholder participation into the management of Mnazi Bay – Ruvuma Estuary Marine Park is ongoing, having started before the park's creation. By the mid-1990s it was known that the area was of high biodiversity value but under serious threat. A local NGO called Shirikisho, with the support of other NGOs and local government, initiated efforts with local communities to stop dynamite fishing. In 1998 this was achieved with support from national enforcement agencies. A multiple-use marine park was proposed, as the national legislation requires that stakeholder institutions be set up to assist with management. In 1999, government, local community leaders, private sector representatives and NGOs, strengthened by the successful stakeholder-based initiative already in place, reached unanimous agreement to adopt this approach, and the Marine Park was gazetted in 2000.

The first step in ensuring full participation was the formation of an Advisory Committee that includes representatives of local government, NGOs, private sector and local communities. This committee provides the park managers with advice, and helps to integrate park activities into the wider setting of Mtwara District. Village Liaison Committees (VLCs) (comprising eight members with at least three women) have been set up in each of the 10 main villages in the Park. The VLC elections were supervised by the park staff to ensure that they were democratic and that there would be gender representation. In addition, two communities outside the Marine Park requested they form VLCs due to their historical dependence on the park's resources. The Park now works with 12 VLCs in activities such as enforcement patrols, scientific research and awareness raising. As the process to develop the general management plan begins, the VLCs will work towards ensuring that community interests are taken care of and they are involved in decision making.