

Conflict Management

in the context of Integrated Landscape Management

Key concepts and guidance for
practitioners



Purpose

This learning module aims to:

1. Provide the facilitator with a solid understanding of conflict management within the framework of Integrated Landscape Management (ILM).
2. Guide the design of interventions through conceptual and methodological tools to prevent, analyze, and address conflicts among stakeholders.
3. Serve as a stand-alone resource on the links between conflict management and ILM.



Contents

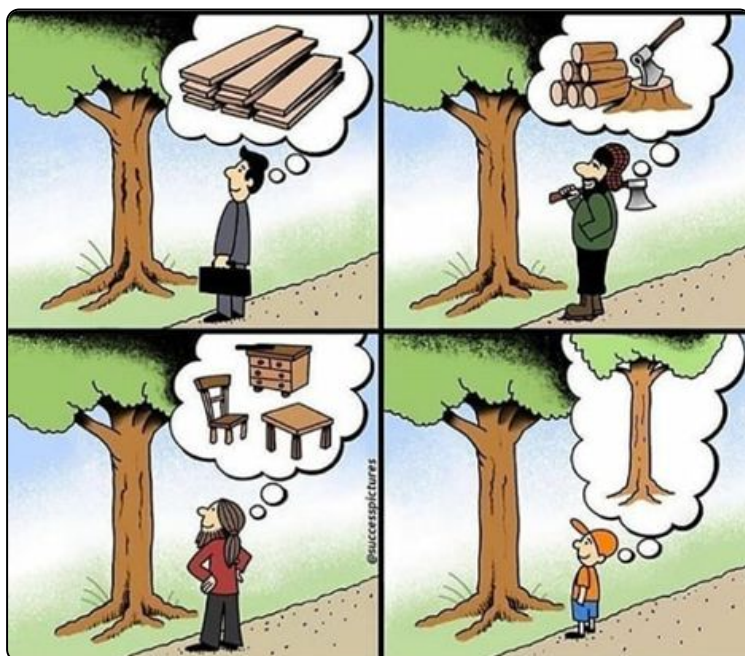
1. Understanding Conflict
 - Identifying Stakeholders
 - Clarifying Concepts: What is a Difference or Dispute?
 - Definition, Stages, and Origin of Conflict
2. Addressing Conflict
 - Conflict Analysis
 - Practical Actions for Addressing Conflict
3. Summary
4. Notes
5. References

Understanding Conflict

Imagine you are in a landscape or dialogue table with various social actors representing institutions with their own voices and interests, which are often polarized. Has this happened to you? Or perhaps everyone speaks at the same time defending their point of view and no one listens to anyone else.

These scenes represent **tensions, disputes, and conflicts**. Sometimes it is only a matter of differences of opinion; other times it can be something more serious and deep-rooted, related to the social, economic, political, and cultural structure, as well as to the different ways of understanding and inhabiting the territory. They are also shaped by historical processes, power relations, and multiple internal and external influences that mold the positions of the actors. This is why a systemic, complex, and ecological view of human interactions is needed, of which conflict is considered to be a natural part.

Let's look at the following image:



Source: @successpictures

Figure 2: Different perspectives, needs, and interests

Each actor looks at the same tree with different interests; none of them is wrong, they are simply driven by different **perspectives, needs, and interests**. What would happen if they had to agree on how to make use of this tree to meet their needs and interests? A conflict would probably arise. Now, in terms of the landscape, we don't just find one tree; there are more elements, resources, and conditions that converge and interrelate. The number of actors is likely to increase, which calls for ongoing conflict management and prevention in order to move an initiative forward under an integrated landscape management approach. This approach seeks to bring together the different actors to balance social, productive, and environmental objectives within the same territory. To do this, the first step is to know **which actors are present in the landscape**.

Identifying Stakeholders

Among the actors that typically converge in a landscape, we find a wide diversity of groups with different levels of influence, interests, and forms of relationship with the territory. Some examples include those with the longest-standing presence in the territory, such as **Indigenous peoples**, who hold ancestral rights and valuable traditional knowledge, as well as **local communities** living in the area, who hold communal rights and depend directly on the natural resources of the area (López, 2015).

There are also **national and local governments**, responsible for establishing and monitoring policies, regulating the use of resources, and addressing conflicts that can no longer be resolved through other negotiation channels. **Companies** are also relevant actors that coexist with the community by sharing space, using natural resources, and providing employment in the area. Added to this list of actors are **non-governmental organizations** (local or international) seeking either the conservation of the territory, respect for human rights, or influence over public policy, as well as providing technical support for development. Finally, we must also mention the **media**, which inform and influence public opinion.

All these actors converge in the landscape, responding to their own needs, interests, and ideas about the use and management of the land and its resources. They see the landscape differently, depending on their history and culture, and to varying degrees, are connected to it, and therefore take part in the conflicts, because these are inherent to human relationships and to life in society (Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano, 2015).

This diversity of actors, with their perspectives, interests, and voices, inevitably generates tensions, power imbalances, disputes, and conflicts that are difficult to address and can hinder landscape management. What should be done about this? How can it be managed? Conflict can be approached as an **opportunity to build and strengthen collaborative relationships** and motivate people to cooperate for the common good, through understanding and the agreement of rules, actions, and norms (López, 2015).



Figure 2: Potential actors in a landscape

Clarifying Concepts: What is a Difference or Dispute?

Building collaboration requires an effort to understand and manage the opinions and tensions that naturally arise in a landscape. As a first step, it is important to identify what we are dealing with: is it a **dispute** or difference that will escalate into **conflict**?

Several authors have addressed differences, disputes, or conflicts, each with their own approach and tools. **Friedrich Glasl** (Glasl, 1999) emphasizes the discrepancy in opinions, judgments, ideas, beliefs, or interests between people or groups that do not necessarily lead to antagonism. **D. Johnson and R. Johnson** (Johnson, 1999) take an academic approach, focusing on when one person's ideas, information, conclusions, theories, and opinions or come to oppose or fail to align with another's, with both seeking a way to reach an agreement. For his part, **Bernard Mayer** (Mayer, 2015) explains that differences are not necessarily negative and can, on the contrary, enrich the interaction between stakeholders.

In concrete terms, a *dispute* can be understood as **a disagreement between two or more stakeholders over a specific issue** (in our case, the management and conservation of natural resources and the territory). This involves an open debate (with arguments and counterarguments) about the different perspectives, values, and interests at stake, which can be handled constructively through dialogue and negotiation (PLASA, 2007).

Let's take a closer look at what this definition involves:

- **Disagreement between stakeholders:** This situation occurs when two or more people or groups perceive that their goals, needs, or positions are not aligned with regard to a specific issue.
- **Open debate with arguments and counterarguments:** This involves transparent communication of ideas, viewpoints, and reasoning, in which stakeholders openly present and discuss their perspectives on an issue, as well as a willingness to listen to different points of view (Lederach, 1998).
- **Different perspectives, values, and interests:** It is essential to recognize and respect the different ways in which stakeholders understand, prioritize, and seek to meet their needs and aspirations, in order to address the roots of the dispute.
- **Dialogue and negotiation:** A space is needed where stakeholders can interact to express their needs and concerns in order to reach agreements and solutions.

As we can see, it is essential to recognize the complexity of disagreements within ILM, the diversity of stakeholders and their perspectives, and the possibility of handling these situations constructively. And it is through **mediation** mechanisms, such as open communication and dialogue, that we can contribute to building shared goals and interests.

Definition, Stages, and Origin of Conflict

Now that we have distinguished dispute from conflict, it is worth taking a closer look at the latter: what it is, how it evolves, and where it comes from. Understanding it is the first step toward addressing it.

What is a conflict?

So, *what is a conflict?* Authors such as Galtung (Galtung, 2003), Dahrendorf (Dahrendorf, 1996), and Kempf (Kempf, 2003) have defined it depending on their theoretical background and context, but they agree that a conflict exists when there is some form of **incompatibility**, whether of actions, goals, tendencies, or plans, between at least two stakeholders. It can manifest itself in latent or explicit form, which means that, in order to label it a conflict, there must be stakeholders with opposing positions and interests. From a socio-environmental standpoint and considering the complexity of social and human interactions, a conflict is:

"A process of collective interaction characterized by a dynamic of opposition and controversy between interest groups, resulting from their real or perceived incompatibilities regarding the control, use, and access to the environment and its resources"

Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano, 2013, p. 19

Let's take a closer look at what this definition involves:

- **"Dynamic of opposition and controversy"**: Confrontation and disagreement between two or more stakeholders, because they perceive that their goals, interests, or needs are incompatible. This dynamic is not static; rather, it evolves and changes over time (Lederach, 1998).
- **"Real or perceived"**: A conflict can arise both from real threats and from threats that one or more parties perceive or believe to exist, acting on the basis of that perception.
- **"Incompatibilities"**: These arise when one or more of the parties feels it cannot achieve its goals if the other party achieves its own.
- **"Control, use, and access to the environment and its resources"**: Control, management, and conservation of natural resources (water, land, forests), property rights or access to land, conservation vs. economic development, traditional practices vs. new technologies, and distribution of project benefits.

As we can see, the main difference between dispute and conflict lies in the **degree of opposition** that is expressed and the dynamics that this triggers. Dispute, for its part, focuses on **debate** and **negotiation**, while conflict leads to a more intense **confrontation** that can evolve through the various stages already mentioned.

Identifying if there is a dispute or a conflict is key to adopting the most appropriate measures and tools for addressing it, which in turn helps build sustainable solutions and more peaceful relationships between stakeholders.

Stages of conflict

Conflict is dynamic, as it originates in the realm of human intentions and perceptions. It changes through ongoing human interaction, and it in turn continuously reshapes the people who gave rise to it, exerting an effect on the social environment in which it originates, develops, and perhaps dies (Kriesberg, 1973, cited in Lederach, 1993, p. 92). Likewise, it has a progression that moves through several stages (Lederach, 1993)¹:

1. **Latent:** During this first stage, stakeholders are not aware that they are experiencing an unjust situation. Once they become aware of it, they are more likely to seek to improve it.
2. **Confrontation:** During this stage the conflict comes to light because the parties recognize an imbalance of power or interests; some groups may not want to lose their advantages, and reactions may or may not be peaceful.
3. **Mediation:** Here, stakeholders recognize that they have a problem that affects both them and the landscape. The facilitator or conflict mediator helps stakeholders listen to and understand one another, with the aim of building more peaceful relationships, knowing that not all conflicts are fully resolved. This stage seeks to give all parties equal decision-making power so they can collaborate and find solutions.
4. **Resolution:** Once relationships have been restored, an agreement is reached expressing the commitment made by the stakeholders, as well as the follow-up that will be carried out and the accountability that will be applied.

Origin of conflict

It is worth mentioning that conflicts do not arise out of nowhere; understanding their origin will help in addressing and resolving them.

According to Lederach, *the identity-based origin of conflicts emerges when a person's way of being or living is threatened* (Lederach, 1998).

Conflicts arise from disagreements around:

- **Resources:** There is disagreement over the use, care, or distribution of resources such as water, land, or forests.
- **Interests:** The stakeholders' goals appear to be heading in different directions.
- **Values:** Stakeholders differ on what they consider important or right.
- **Information:** There are different perceptions of the same issue, and only one is considered correct or relevant.
- **Structural causes:** These are related to the composition and organization of society, laws, or institutions.
- **History:** There are unresolved past conflicts that influence current relationships and tensions among stakeholders.

Disagreements arise, for example, when a **development project** is seen by some as a threat to their traditions or way of life, while it is seen as a source of progress and new opportunities by those promoting the project.



So far we have identified some of the conflict situations that ILM faces. Not all conflicts are fully resolved. In some cases, this is due to the dynamics that have developed; in others, it is due to more complex situations, such as illegal activities or situations that put the lives of those involved at risk. The latter are considered outside the scope of conflict management, remaining the responsibility of government bodies and the legal system. Conflicts of other levels and intensities, however, can indeed be addressed through this approach.

Before intervening in a conflict, it is essential for the facilitator to bear in mind a basic principle: *any action, however well-intentioned, can influence the dynamics of the conflict, either easing it or making it worse*. This principle, known as “**conflict sensitivity**,” means constantly assessing how interventions interact with the context. In practice, this means asking:

Could this action exclude any stakeholder?

Could it create perceptions of favoritism?

Could it trigger latent tensions?

Keeping this in mind does not paralyze action; rather, it makes it more conscious and responsible.²

Addressing Conflict

Now that we know the difference between dispute and conflict, as well as some basic concepts, its stages, types of origin, and characteristics, *how can we address them? From what approach? What is my role, my scope, and my limitations?*

To answer these questions, it is useful to start from a practical distinction:³ it is not always possible to resolve a conflict definitively, especially when it has deep structural roots. What is within the facilitator's scope is to **manage it**, that is, to address it sensibly and fairly, preventing its escalation and promoting positive change; and, in the best case, to contribute to its transformation, gradually modifying the relationships and structures that sustain it.

This is the perspective from which ILM operates, drawing on two key references: Jean Paul Lederach, through his *contributions to peacebuilding*, and the *multi-stakeholder conflict management paradigm*. Both promote an ecological view within a framework of **joint collaboration** and **mutual learning** among the actors of the landscape.



Conflict analysis

Information

In this line of thinking, Lederach explains that the first step is to *gather information and analyze it* in order to get a broad view and plan how to intervene (Lederach, 1993). This information may not be accessible at first; that is why it is essential to keep supplementing it as more information becomes available:

Table 1: Key elements for the analysis of actors and conflicts in the landscape

Type of information	Description	Examples
Stakeholders	Knowing who they are (whether they represent the government, civil society, communities, or companies), and what they can contribute to resolving the situation (knowledge, resources, connections, etc.).	• Municipal or departmental council (access to information) • Local NGO (community engagement) • International NGO (working models and human resources)
Level of awareness among stakeholders	This refers to how clear each party is about the existence of a conflict.	The local NGO has had confrontations with the mining company; however, the mining company has not expressed the same perception in meetings.
Stated interests of each stakeholder	These are the things explicitly expressed about what is wanted or desired.	• Mining company: improving its public image • Local NGO: conserving natural resources • International NGO: establishing an already proven conservation model
Perceived interests of the other stakeholders	This is what others imagine, perceive, or believe a stakeholder wants. This point is fundamental in conflict management.	Local NGO: perceives that the international NGO will establish its models, gather information, and leave without supporting real, sustainable change.
Issues related to the conflict	These are the problems connected to the main conflict.	• Kidney diseases are on the rise due to water contamination. • The water reaching the community is decreasing. • Crops are not producing what they should.
Level of influence or power of stakeholders in the landscape	It is important to know the power each party has to influence and change things in the landscape.	• Mining company: has a direct relationship with the government and provides jobs to a large part of the community. • Local NGO: has community management power, as well as the recognition and respect of the population.
Previous history of the conflict	This involves understanding why things are happening now, whether there was a similar problem before, or why people are concerned about this issue now.	The landscape's residents belong to various ethnic groups; the Indigenous people of the highland forest were the first to settle there after being displaced from their lands to make way for a foreign mining company, which also uses the river's waters for its processes.

Matrix for understanding conflict

It is possible that all of this information is already available; however, it is advisable to bring it together in a single place so that it is organized and can help provide a broader perspective on the present circumstances.

The matrix for understanding conflict is a useful tool for organizing each element and analyzing the conflict overall. There is no single right way to do this. Here, the recommendation is to use the available information starting from the most concrete elements and moving toward those related to the context. The order of the rows can be adapted according to your needs, those of your team, and the type of analysis you want to carry out. In addition, the matrix makes it possible to systematize conflicts and keep a record that can serve as a reference for future developments.

Table 2: Example of a *matrix for understanding conflict*: used to condense basic information about the conflict. It can be adapted to add additional information and rows according to the specific needs of the context.

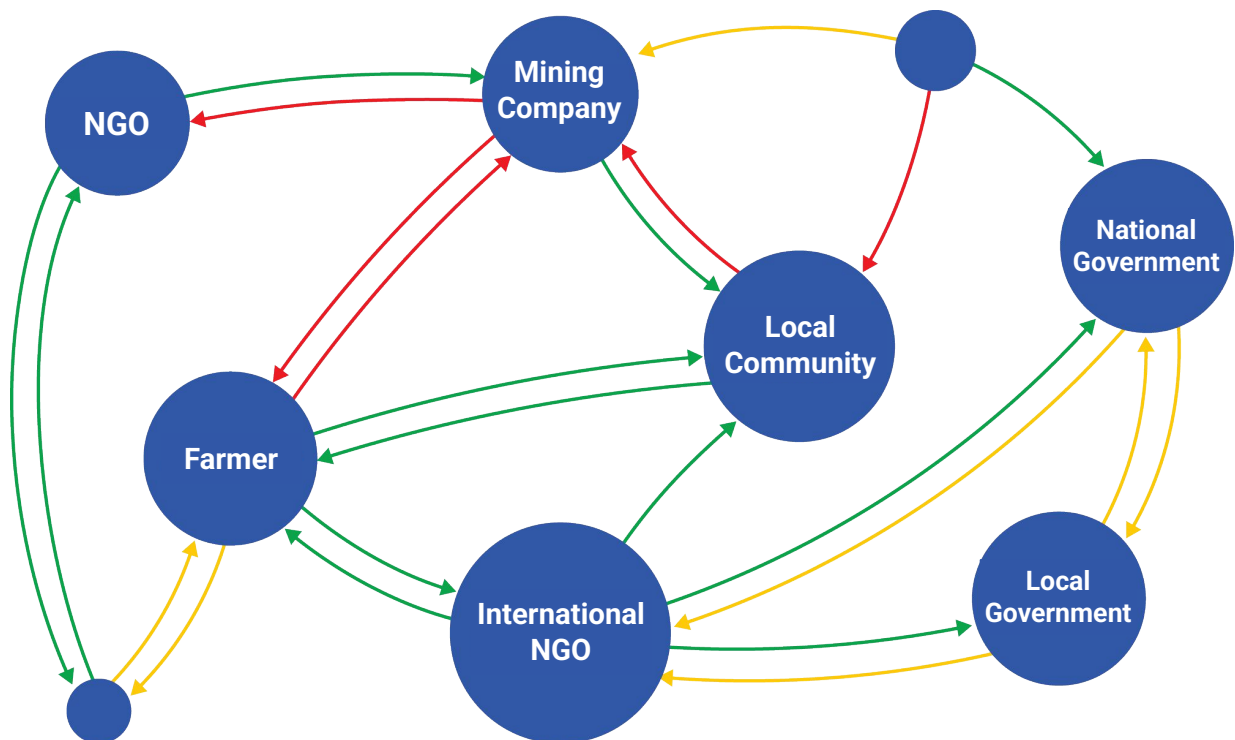
Matrix for Understanding Conflict	
Type of conflict	Resources / interests / values / information / structural causes
Stage of the conflict	Latent / confrontation / negotiation / mediation
Stakeholders	Who are they, and what can they contribute to the situation?
Level of awareness among stakeholders	To what extent are people aware that there is a conflict between some of the stakeholders?
Interests of the stakeholders	What interests are explicitly stated by each party?
Issues related to the conflict	Are there other problems connected to this conflict?
Level of influence or power of stakeholders in the landscape	How much influence could the stakeholders have on the conflict and the landscape?
Previous history of the conflict	Was there a similar problem in the past?

Conflict mapping

A deep understanding of the context and the conflict can be synthesized by mapping existing tensions and disputes, manifest conflicts, and the degree of influence of each stakeholder.

Based on this, a **conflict traffic light** system can be established to guide the strategic actions to be implemented. For example, marking *green* when the aim is to maintain positive relationships; *orange* when it is necessary to facilitate preventive dialogues or another tool that allows for greater fluidity in communication; and *red* when a negotiation intervention and restoration of trust is needed, without acting as an adjudicator. For example:

Figure 3: Example of a *conflict traffic light* based on stakeholder mapping. The colors of the arrows show the traffic light established to identify tensions, disputes, and conflicts; for this, the information gathered previously is extremely useful.



As shown above, this tool complements the **mapping of key actors** carried out during the initial stage of ILM and, together with this new advancement, they support the prevention and mitigation of conflicts.

Practical Actions for Addressing Conflict

ILM as a strategy for conflict management

ILM is conceived as a collaborative approach to addressing the socio-environmental challenges of a territory. It views conflict as a natural and potentially constructive element of social and environmental change, deepening mutual understanding, strengthening relationships among stakeholders, and catalyzing positive transformations in the landscape's socio-ecological system. In other words, ILM forms an umbrella that seeks to build shared understanding, collaboration, and the search for conflict resolution.

Within its processes, it seeks to create a space for dialogue where the diversity of perspectives enriches decision-making and fosters comprehensive, sustainable solutions.

ILM seeks to address not only the visible aspects of conflict but also its *structural roots*, with a view toward sustainable development that respects and values the diversity of the landscape and its inhabitants. To this end, it proposes building a space for dialogue and collaboration where power differences are leveled and adaptable to the particularities of each context and landscape. In this way, it aims to find points of convergence among stakeholders, strengthen long-term relationships, and foster mutual trust, pillars that are built on the following principles:

- **Inclusion:** that all voices are heard, particularly those of groups with less presence or that are structurally marginalized.
- **Transparency:** that all relevant information is openly shared with stakeholders.
- **Equity:** seeking to balance power differences among stakeholders so that they can participate effectively.
- **Flexibility:** promoting adaptation to the specific needs and contexts of each landscape.
- **Focus on common interests:** identifying and working on the points where stakeholders' interests converge.

Neutral facilitation

Successfully addressing the points mentioned above is closely tied to the **neutral stance** taken by the conflict **mediator**. Without this, it is impossible to catalyze constructive change (Lederach, 1998). Their contribution lies in building the trust and legitimacy of ILM, creating conditions for genuine, sustainable collaboration among stakeholders.

Kempf (Kempf, 2003) proposes that *the neutral facilitator have the ability to reframe conflicting narratives, helping stakeholders see beyond their immediate positions to a deeper level and thus explore shared interests*. For this, they need to be skilled in using various tools and methodologies, such as dialogue, to address situations that at first glance may seem unresolvable.

The effectiveness and credibility of mediators will depend on their ability to maintain their neutrality over time and in highly complex situations, always positioning themselves as a **trustworthy third party** for stakeholders. This requires maintaining a constant balance between empathy and professional distance, being able to understand the landscape as an interconnected system (Lederach, 1998), with precise knowledge of the stakeholders, of the latent tensions and manifest conflicts, as well as of the structural patterns that could trigger a future conflict.

Finally, it should be noted that neutrality does not mean passivity; quite the opposite: the facilitator must constructively mobilize stakeholders when necessary, in order to keep shared objectives at the center of the process at all times. Bearing in mind that every intervention is inevitably influenced by the mediator's own perspective, neutrality should be understood not as an absolute condition, but as an ethical and practical commitment that guides their actions.

Creating spaces for dialogue

Spaces for dialogue are extremely valuable for mutual understanding between the parties and for strengthening relationships. Under this approach, these are not merely physical spaces, but rather a **social fabric** within landscape management that allows for constructive and safe interaction among stakeholders. These spaces are important because within this framework, diverse interests coexist that sometimes clash, and they can be leveraged to foster coexistence and mutual understanding among the parties from other angles, giving way to collective learning and growth. For this reason, **diversity of opinion** must prevail within them, where social, cultural, and environmental aspects are also considered important, drawing on the qualities of a neutral facilitator.

To establish spaces for dialogue, it is necessary to understand **local dynamics** based on the information gathered, and to adapt how they operate according to the type, intensity, and nature of the conflict. For example, in a low-tension situation, the space can be more informal, as long as it encourages the free exchange of ideas and the building of healthy relationships.

On the other hand, in a more conflictive situation, it will be necessary to implement a more formal structure, placing emphasis on **clear rules of participation** and creating an atmosphere and climate of neutrality, both physically and symbolically. To ensure that all stakeholders feel safe and respected, it is advisable to carefully select the physical location, as well as to be mindful of local cultural practices and equity in participation.

These spaces must be flexible enough to adapt to the dynamics of the landscape and the existing relationships among stakeholders. Their sustainability and effectiveness will depend on the **capacity for adaptability and evolution**. It is important to promote permanent, long-term spaces rather than isolated events that only encourage dialogue and address the visible symptoms of conflict. Spaces sustained over time enable collaborative action and continuous learning. They also help transform the structures that underlie and generate conflicts.

Spaces for dialogue contribute to creating or strengthening a governance platform, in which joint forums and training initiatives form a common thread. This can help make these spaces **dynamic and productive**, since they are connected to decision-making and planning processes, and it helps ensure that agreements translate into concrete actions and meaningful changes within ILM.

Capacity building

Fostering constructive dialogue and effective collaboration to strengthen the social fabric of the landscape requires capacities and skills not only at the individual level, but also at the institutional and community levels; this, in turn, benefits the resilience of the socio-ecological system. These capacities include observation and analysis of the context, assertive communication and active listening, dialogue as a tool, building and maintaining relationships, mediation, group facilitation, and interest-based negotiation, among others.

It is advisable for these capacities to be planned and designed participatively, involving stakeholders in identifying their own learning needs and adopting relevant and appropriate training and professional development methodologies.



Clear rules

A set of clear rules provides an ethical and operational framework to guide interactions among stakeholders, including formal decision-making procedures, norms of interaction, mutual respect, and the handling of disagreements. This is the foundation on which trust and collaboration are built; in other words, it is not a mere formality, but a peacebuilding exercise in which all stakeholders engage in open, equitable dialogue.

Establishing this set of rules is intended to promote shared values, address underlying inequalities, and foster dialogue and collaboration as part of a collaborative governance framework.

Rules should not be seen as something restrictive, but rather as a construct that recognizes disagreements as part of interaction, as well as a potentially enriching element of the process.

Building rules is part of **conflict mediation**, since it fosters transparency and shared responsibility, and balances the representation of power among the parties involved, through mechanisms such as consultation, consent for the use of information, decision-making, and the review and adjustment of the rules themselves.

These rules do not operate in a vacuum; rather, they interact with the social, cultural, and power structures that exist in the landscape (Lederach, 1998). They require a commitment from all stakeholders to establish a regular evaluation of their **effectiveness**, **relevance**, and **fairness**, to ensure that they remain appropriate over time.

Some examples of these rules could be:

- **Participating actively**, knowledgeably, and in good faith in dialogue and decision-making processes.
- **Treating one another with respect**, empathy, and consideration for differences, avoiding confrontations and put-downs.
- **Sharing** relevant information for decision-making openly and in a timely manner, including data, studies, plans, and projects.
- Making decisions that seek the greatest possible **consensus** through processes of dialogue and negotiation, avoiding unilateral imposition.
- Providing spaces and mechanisms for participation proportional to the **level of interest** and impact on each stakeholder.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation

One of the goals of multi-stakeholder conflict management is to *foster collective learning and shared responsibility*, because this increases stakeholders' trust and commitment by sharing processes and results. In this way, the likelihood of success and sustainability of the collaboration increases.

Following this principle, **monitoring** and **evaluation** make it possible to verify that what is planned and stated is actually achieved. This analysis assesses how the process unfolds, allowing timely decisions to be made to course-correct, improve the intervention, and plan the next cycle.

Its design is not left to chance, but relies on **joint participation**, with skilled facilitation ensuring that stakeholders contribute. It also needs to be **flexible** in order to respond and adapt to different moments of tension and conflict at their various levels of intensity. In this regard, it is essential to design indicators and evaluation methods that capture both tangible and intangible components, that is, concrete progress as well as changes in relationships, perceptions, and power dynamics, in ways that all stakeholders can understand.

The data obtained also serve as a vehicle for dialogue, reflection, and decision-making to adjust strategies when necessary.⁴ This step is part of ILM's **learning and adaptation cycle**.



Summary

To manage a conflict, it is first necessary to understand it in depth. This makes it possible to address it through an approach that connects all stakeholders, recognizing conflict as something natural and necessary, as well as an opportunity for growth and for building long-term shared projects, with tangible effects on the relationships between stakeholders.

As a summary, but not as a recipe, the following elements can be identified as necessary:

- **Conflict mapping:** to identify everyone involved, their relationships, and any disputes and/or conflicts.
- **Creating spaces for dialogue:** aims to establish spaces where stakeholders can interact safely and constructively.
- **Capacity building:** so that actors can develop communication, negotiation, and conflict resolution skills.
- **Clear rules:** agreement on how decisions will be made and disagreements will be handled.
- **Neutral facilitators:** people with the skills to guide the process without favoring any stakeholder.
- **Participatory monitoring and evaluation:** involving all actors in following up on agreements and evaluating results.

1. Although there is no rule determining the length of each phase, nor any certainty that a conflict will go through all of them, since conflicts can be suspended or ended at any time, depending on the will of the parties involved.
2. This principle is known in the field of development cooperation as "*do no harm*" and has been extensively developed in the context of natural resource management. For more detail, see: Rüttinger et al. (2014). *From conflict to collaboration in natural resource management. Collaborating for Resilience (CoRe)*.
3. The distinction between conflict management, resolution, and transformation is developed in: Rüttinger et al. (2014). *From conflict to collaboration in natural resource management. Collaborating for Resilience (CoRe)*. This distinction is especially relevant in natural resource contexts, where the structural causes of conflict frequently exceed the scope of intervention available to local facilitators.
4. An illustrative example of this process is presented in the case of the Sierra Volcánica Biocultural Landscape (Jalisco, Mexico), where implementation of the *LandScale* framework not only made it possible to generate data on the landscape's sustainability status, but also to turn this data into a vehicle for multi-stakeholder dialogue. Through participatory workshops and validation processes, the technical information was collectively reinterpreted, facilitating the building of a shared understanding and guiding decision-making. See: Rojas, G., Ramos, J.C., Levy, M., Machado, S. (2025). *Paisaje Biocultural Sierra Volcánica: Acción Colectiva para una Transición Regenerativa de Paisaje*. Rainforest Alliance and EcoAgriculture Partners, on behalf of 1000 Landscapes for 1 Billion People.

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Acknowledgements

This learning module is part of an ongoing effort to generate practical learning and reflection around integrated approaches to sustainable landscape management. It is designed as a resource for landscape practitioners and leaders who seek to understand how Integrated Landscape Management (ILM) can contribute to the prevention, management, and transformation of conflicts, strengthening collaboration and decision-making among the different stakeholders in a territory. It can be used as the theoretical basis for developing learning sessions or as a stand-alone document.

This learning module is part of the **Forest Leaders for Integrated Landscape Management** project, which seeks to strengthen the capacities of landscape leaders to enhance the resilience of landscapes and **Model Forests in Latin America** by promoting alignment and collaborative, inclusive governance among multiple stakeholders within a landscape.

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EcoAgriculture Partners

EcoAgriculture Partners (EcoAg) is a global nonprofit organization advancing collaborative action so people and nature flourish. EcoAg helps local leaders, communities, governments, businesses, and funders envision, design and implement landscape approaches that build climate resilience, strengthen food systems, and sustain ecosystems and livelihoods. For more than 20 years, EcoAg has worked across Africa, the Americas, and Asia to strengthen leadership, foster inclusive governance, unlock catalytic financing, and build strategic partnerships that amplify impact.

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Latin American Model Forest Network

The Latin American Model Forest Network is a voluntary alliance of 32 Model Forest territories in 14 countries across Latin America, the Caribbean, and Spain, covering more than 38 million hectares. It promotes sustainable and inclusive development through participatory, landscape-scale governance, strengthening collaboration, knowledge exchange, and local capacities as part of the broader International Model Forest Network.

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International Model Forest Network

The International Model Forest Network (IMFN) is a voluntary global community that promotes sustainable management of forest-based landscapes through a partnership-based Model Forest approach. Model Forests bring together diverse stakeholders — such as communities, governments, academia, and the private sector. The network fosters collaboration, knowledge sharing, and practical solutions to address environmental, social, and economic challenges at the landscape level.

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International
Model Forest
Network

1000 Landscapes for 1 Billion People

1000 Landscapes for 1 Billion People (1000L) is a coalition of organizations united in a shared mission to advance local landscape efforts to sustain and restore ecosystems, build rural prosperity, confront climate change and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. 1000L is building the infrastructure to help landscape partnerships connect and ally with one another, strengthen their capacities and leadership, access digital data and tools for greater impact, and mobilize financing to scale landscape investment.

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