

# POSITIONS, INTERESTS AND NEEDS (PINs)

## Conservation, Livelihoods and Governance Programme Tools for participatory approaches

February 2013

This tool can be used to identify and analyse the positions, interests and needs of different stakeholders in order to seek common ground as a basis for negotiation and collaboration.

### What is it useful for?

- Identifying the mutual interests and needs underlying the different, perhaps conflicting, positions of different stakeholders and thus providing some 'common ground' on which to negotiate.
- Distinguishing between statements (positions) and the factors (interests and needs) that lay behind these.
- Provides a visual representation of the positions, interests and areas of common ground between different stakeholders.
- Can enable different stakeholders to understand each other better and to clarify their positions, interests and needs, both for themselves and for others.
- Can be used in a range of situations when negotiation is required, not just in situations of conflict. This may include processes to analyse the potential impacts of climate change and explore adaptation options, or negotiating trade-offs between stakeholders as part of a process to value ecosystem services.

### Suggested steps

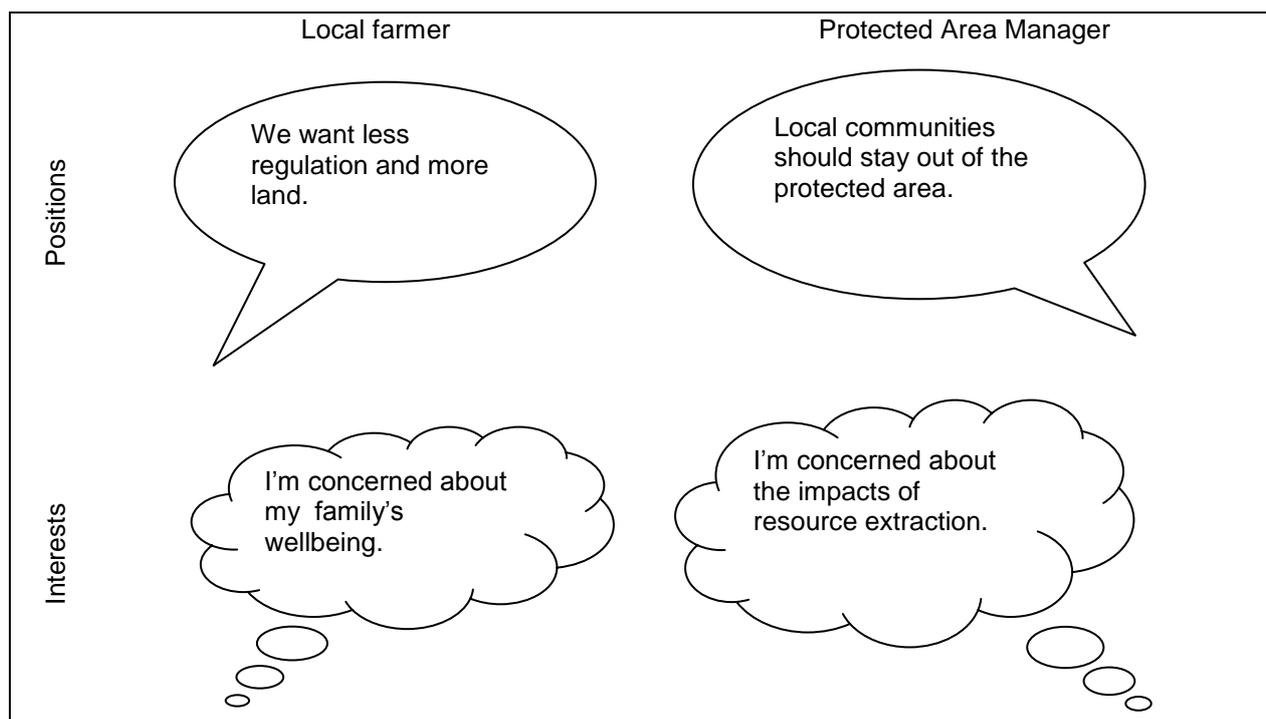
Allow approximately **2 hours** for this exercise.

- 1) Discuss the concepts of positions and interests with participants, illustrating with examples (such as those in Figure 1).
  - **Positions** – the tangible things stakeholders say they want; public statements about the situation.
  - **Interests** – the things stakeholders want; the underlying motivations that lead stakeholders to take a particular position.
  - Positions are what can be easily seen whereas interests may be less visible.
- 2) The theory of positions, interests and needs is based on the idea that there are a few basic universal needs. On the basis of these needs people pursue certain interests and create positions that they believe will satisfy their interests and needs.
  - **Needs** – the goals pursued by stakeholders in order to survive. These can be subjective, i.e. perceived needs, when they are not actually a direct factor in survival.
- 3) Explain that exploring the underlying interests and needs of apparently conflicting positions can lead to the identification of mutual interests. This in turn can illustrate that different stakeholders may actually have the same or similar fundamental needs, although their public positions may appear to be conflicting. Whilst it may be helpful to differentiate between

interests and needs it may be difficult and is not essential – the key element of the exercise is to identify areas of overlap between two stakeholder groups with seemingly opposing positions.

- 4) Ask participants to select two major stakeholder groups with apparently conflicting positions in relation to a resource (or site, project, or specific intervention). The exercise is most effective when participants are analysing their own situation with, and in relation to, another stakeholder group with whom they have an opposing position. The preparation of a PIN diagram can be carried out as one group or in smaller sub-groups (depending on the number of participants and the number of stakeholders for analysis).

**Figure 1: Examples of positions and interests**



- 5) Ask participants to use the concepts of positions, interest and needs to analyse a real situation and prepare a PIN diagram to illustrate this. An example diagram is shown in Figure 2.
- 6) If time allows, when they have finished the first one and are familiar with the analysis, the participants can prepare another diagram for a different pairing of stakeholders.
- 7) An alternative way of presenting PINs could be through an onion diagram (Figure 3). In both diagrams, both livestock owners and protected area managers have an interest in maintaining grasslands. Conflict could be resolved by identifying this mutual interest and negotiating possible solutions, such as controlled access or zoning.
- 8) Discuss and analyse the diagram(s).

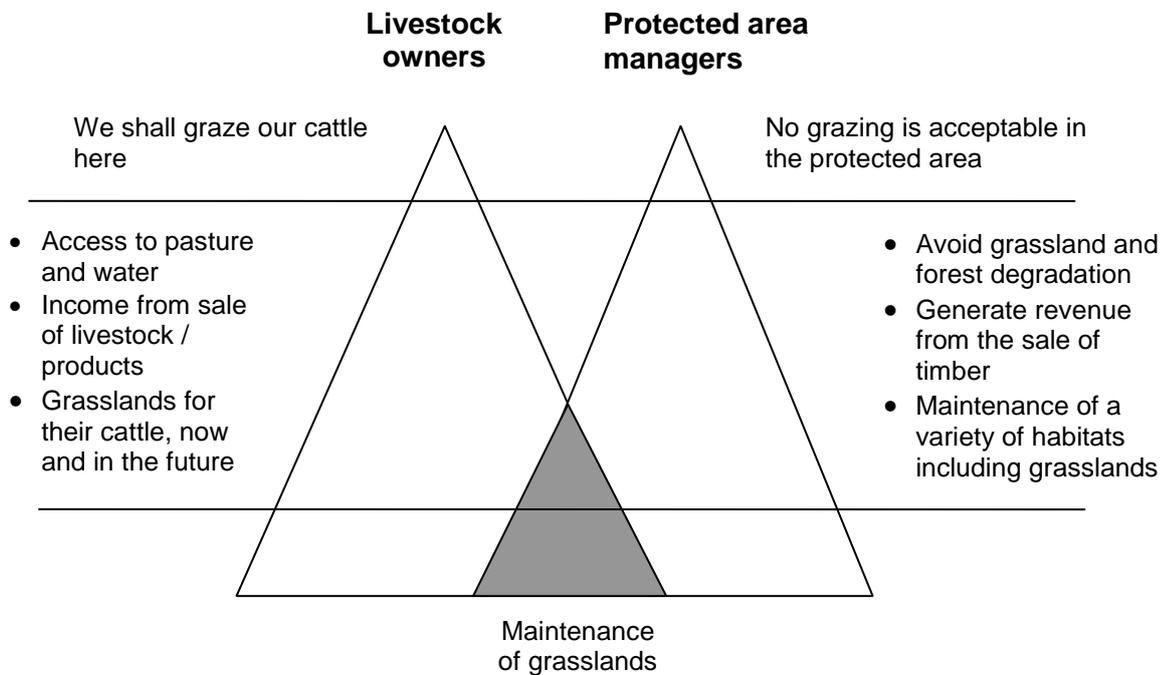
### Questions to guide discussion and analysis

The following questions can be used to guide the discussion but should be adopted and adapted according to the focus of the exercise.

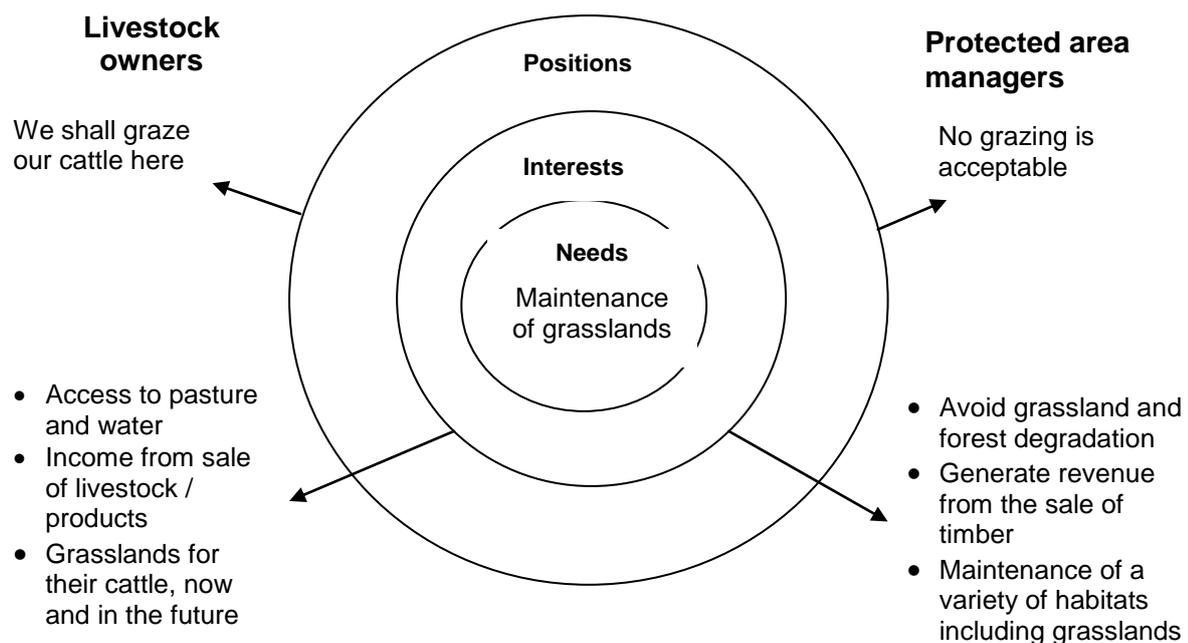
- What is the basis for the conflict or disagreement?
- What is the public position of the different stakeholders?
- What are the underlying interests and of these positions?

- What are the needs of the different stakeholders? What are the long term needs? What are the short term needs?
- Are there differences according to gender, age, social group or other factor?
- Are there any areas of overlap between the different stakeholders' interests and needs?
- Are there any potential areas of compromise?

**Figure 2: Example of a PIN diagram**



**Figure 3: Example of an onion diagram**



### Points to remember:

- ❖ This tool is most appropriate in analysing conflict between two stakeholder groups only.
- ❖ Political or social relationships might inhibit group discussion, and stakeholders may be unwilling to reveal their true interests and needs. A one-off exercise is unlikely to break down barriers but over time, and as trust develops, further layers may be revealed.
- ❖ Use of this tool alone cannot lead to resolution of long term or deeply entrenched and complex conflict situations, but it can be used as part of an analysis to understand the dynamics of conflict and as part of a negotiation process.
- ❖ Local participants should be encouraged to build as much of the diagram as possible without interruption and to suggest anything else that should be recorded.
- ❖ Before using this tool read the accompanying document, *A guide to using tools for participatory approaches*.

### For further information

Fisher, S et al (2004) *Working with Conflict: Skills and Strategies for Action* Zed Books

Irenees.net A website of Resources for Peace (2011) *Positions, interests and needs*  
<http://www.irenees.net/fr/fiches/experience/fiche-experience-770.html> Accessed 21/08/12

Worah, S (2008) *Participatory Management of Forests & Protected Areas: A Trainers' Manual*  
RECOFTC  
<http://www.recoftc.org/site/resources/Participatory-Management-of-Forests-and-Protected-Areas-A-Trainer-s-Manual.php>



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