

**Constructive
dealing with conflicts**

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Summary

Constructive dealing with Conflicts

1. Development cooperation promotes changes. By being engaged in this kind of work, there is always the possibility that projects become entangled in conflicts. There is a high potential for conflict in the often densely populated transition zones of protected forest areas. On one hand, different groups assert various use claims and, on the other hand, pressure increases to introduce restrictions of use in order to protect the forests.

2. Major conflict areas in transition zones are: Competition for arable land, game on or near cultivated plots; different valuations of the forests by different technological institutions; procedures for the demarcation of reserves; methods of implementation of regulations for protection as well as the basic legal conditions. Such conflict situations are often discussed under "assumptions" in projects' plans. Because of this they are often not specifically dealt with. However, if existing conflicts are not dealt with then the success of the project can be endangered.

3. Projects with the objective of the forestry protection can, depending on their strategy, strengthen one of the conflict partners. Participative approaches strengthen the sections of the population with interests of use of the forest. If the forestry commission is promoted in order to protect the forests more effectively and manage them sustainably, the institution with the duty of protection becomes stronger. Projects may well themselves become a conflict partner and, as such, carry a part of the responsibility for the later course of the conflict.

4. Conflicts expose interests openly and mobilise energies. Skills of how to constructively work with conflicts are learnable and represent an essential competence in social skills.

5. Conflicts proceed in phases. In early phases every partner can win provided that negotiations are undertaken which lead to agreement. A project can contribute to the constructive use of the conflict particularly within the early phases by offering a framework for communication and moderation.

6. Frequently no direct exchange takes place concerning interests, strategies and visions between the population in transition zones and the institutions for protection. With the analysis of the conflict a project creates for itself the prerequisites to be able to become active as a constructive conflict partner. Here it is of central importance to understand the relationships between the stakeholders.

7. Conflicts can only then be used positively in negotiations if all parties involved are prepared for this. State institutions are often so powerful that they are able to implement regulations for protection without consideration of the population's interests of use and do not need to show any readiness to negotiate. By a project repeatedly bringing in the various perspectives of the conflict partners, the polarised perspectives can be broken up and negotiations can be promoted.

8. For this it is necessary to expose the interests of the different parties during the course of project. This is a pre-condition to open opportunities for the project and for the conflict parties to identify options which accommodate both sides.

9. The negotiation of interests is an instrument to steer away from the escalation of the conflict. It can only occur if the conflict partners are dependent on each other and therefore must reach an agreement. It can be an essential function of the funding bodies of projects to demand its resolution through reaching verifiable agreements. It is the role of the project to promote exactly those processes which lead to agreements.

10. Mediation methods for dealing with conflicts during a dispute with citizens movements for environmental protection (particularly like those used for infrastructural or industrial large-scale projects), are only usable in exceptional circumstances in the transition zones of forest reserves. Essential prerequisites are often missing for this approach.

1 Introduction

Whilst in private life the positive effect of an argument is more or less accepted by society because it clarifies and releases tension, in the professional world conflicts are approached cautiously, generally found to be embarrassing and are avoided rather than accepted openly.

(No) fear of dispute

Arguments can clarify and release tensions

In the field of technical co-operation it is only hesitantly appreciated and taken seriously that the project-induced changes initiated in the partner countries can result in conflicts.

Especially the call for participation of the target groups can, when efficiently realised, lead to changes in the existing relationships between the agents of state services and their 'clients'. This causes a loss of security in roles and relationships on both sides and might create new conflicts or reinforce old frictions. To create conflicts does generally not represent the aim and the philosophy of development work which is the reason why conflicts are often not being recognised early enough. The longer they are denied the more difficult it becomes to reach constructive solutions.

Change brings insecurity and creates conflicts.

Potential conflicts are frequently mentioned in the project plans in the chapter "assumptions". They are therefore often excluded from the work of the projects. This is surely sensible, as long as the competence for conflict management is not available in the projects and as long as such a policy can be justified. If technical co-operation projects engage themselves in conflictive issues and areas this approach is inadequate. Where projects induce changes of power structures and traditional roles between the parties involved through application of the principles of

Excluding conflicts can endanger the success of the project

German development co-operation work (participation, self-help, promotion of women, sustainability) then the exclusion of conflicts can endanger the success of the project.

*Many users –
many interests*

This is the case in projects concerning transition zone development. Here various user groups with partly contrary, partly complementary interests of how to use the forest areas conflict with each other. Not only do openly admitted interests come into play, e.g. the sustainable protection of the forests by the forestry department, but also hidden interests – like additional income from fines for illegal forest use – are involved. Industrial precious-timber users form another powerful interest group who are unlikely to give up their supposed rights simply because participatory approaches are applied. For elaboration and implementation of participative management plans geared towards protection of natural resources, instruments are needed to bring user groups with conflicting interests to a conference table and achieve effective results.

*Buffer zone
development is in
the field of tension
between desires
for protection and
interests of use*

As soon as existing claims on the resources by the various stakeholders are further complicated by conservation interests, conflicts about rights of resource utilisation reach a new dimension. On one hand this is characterised by the financial allocations which are provided by the international community to secure the protection of the biodiversity and the conservation of the forests. On the other hand, with reference to global interests and new statutory laws or regulations, established rights of the different state and private user groups can be drastically reduced. Transition zone development intends to support processes of adaptation to conservation-induced resource restrictions. These type of projects are right in the centre of conflicts between conservation interests and the interests of resource user groups.

With this background, group discussions and a short workshop took place in the framework of the sector project LISTRA in an attempt to formulate and clarify the theoretical and conceptual basis of the principles of conflict management¹. During field trips we encountered conflict situations which surprised us in their severity. This working paper attempts an initial discussion of the topic. It should be viewed as a state of the art model which will evolve over time in the light of the contribution from projects which are most welcome.

The following chapter first introduces the kinds of conflict which occur. To reduce the complexity, we focus only on the conflicts between the local population and conservation agents (forest and nature protection). In doing that, three case studies are discussed to provide a context for the rest of the discussion. The individual conflict situations are analysed in view to origins of conflicts, the actors and the stumbling blocks for con-

¹ A reader on key issues of the workshop is available from LISTRA.

conflict resolution. In the following chapter some common features and conflict phases are presented - these also form the starting point for project support. In the last chapter the role of projects is described and first steps towards a positive use of conflicts with projects being constructive conflict partners is introduced.

2 Conflicts in areas around protected forests

Conflicts are inevitable, if ...

In the following, three conflict situations are introduced as case histories which have occurred in projects in transition zones of forest reserves. Not all of these projects are GTZ projects. These case histories can serve as examples of how conflicts occur in transition zones around protected forests and are used as a basis for further discussion.

...new settlers, indigenous groups and tourists compete for the use of the forest

Case 1: Wild animals, new settlers and tourists

Formerly the land was used by nomads and was interspersed with thick gallery forests and wooded hilltops. Cattle and sheep grazed the land. Peasants were resettled here by the government from densely populated regions. More peasant families moved there without official permission and also richer families bought land there to create farms. Within two decades the settlement quickly grew. The purchasing power of the rich families put pressure on the traditionally common land, which soon became a marketable commodity.

Also elephants used the gallery forests on this land to raise their young. Zebras, giraffes and antelopes grazed the vegetation in a similar manner like the cattle of the pastoralists. Like the elephants they are protected and may not be shot. Farmers sometimes must accept considerable damage caused by game and the occasional injury to people when the game are expelled from the land. On the pastures unpalatable grasses which compete with fodder grasses are gaining ground.

Forests are located within this area which today is used for farming and pastures. The status of these forests is that of state-owned forest. These are also used by the local population for making building timber and for collecting non-timber forest products. The forests serve game as an area of retreat and can only be developed as arable land if protective measures against erosion are implemented. While the agricultural extension service advises the population to implement such measures, the forestry department, however, considers the management of these forests as its main task. The legal status of this land is a protected state forest, but land tenure is unclear. Laws passed at national level suggest that traditional common-law applies to these forests, but the regional administration also appears to make legal claims upon these forests.

The high density of game and the beautiful position encouraged foreign investment in a small hotel. The animals are lured near the hotel by the provision of salt-lick blocks, providing a pleasing sight for the tourists. One day the hotel was levelled to the ground by the pastoralists.

...forestry protection and agricultural consultancy are not aligned

Until the arrival of the strangers, anybody could collect timber in the forest

Case 2: The demarcation of a protected area

Until now anybody could collect timber in the forest and sell it as boards or use it for firewood. When a financial problem arose, women went and collected mushrooms and when a family had money or time left over they cleared a bit more of the forest to grow cash crops. In addition, there were smaller forests, which lay at the edge of the main forest and everybody knew to which family they belonged. Strangers came into the area one day and one talked about the fact that a national park had been established and that the forests should be protected.

The demarcation of the forest reserve was prepared in the capital and a local enterprise received the order to survey and to mark the area according to the decree. With this the environment authority decided to include the forests adjacent to the forest reserve to protect them also.

The measuring process took longer than planned because attempts were made to work according to the previously marked borders. As the rainy season approached, a subcontractor was consulted. The subcontractor's workers, in order to expedite the process, marked borders outside of the forest on the pasture land of the cattle farmers. The border markings were set in place to record the results of the survey. However these did not remain in place for very long as the outraged farmers removed them. The department of environmental protection called the police to help. The police explained that removing border stones was illegal.

...reserves are established without the participation of the local population

Case 3: The village has to be removed

Before the colonial times the village, tired of constant fights with superior neighbours, had retreated behind an inaccessible massif and reorganised its community life. Because of this the people in the village did not realise that the colonial government had established a forest reserve within which the former village borders lay. In the early 1970s one government official came to the village to extract taxes and inform the villagers of new regulations. He was completely exhausted by the journey, and the stony path was so rough that his feet bled. Consequently he ordered, in no uncertain terms, that the villagers should leave this rough place and return to the old site. The village collected its movable property and moved back again.

The old village area was measured and given back to the population by local officials. Nearby, in the meantime, a main road had been built. This allowed fast access to the regional market and to the hospital and schools. Consequently, the agricultural activities became more diverse. More money came into the village mainly because the women began to produce vegetables for the market nearby. This was additional to the production of traditional market fruits.

During this period the national government had realised the necessity of improved protection of the forest resources. At first smallholder families had been encouraged to search for fertile arable land to emigrate to in the forest regions and lay out plantation crops there. The government now wanted to make sure that the protected woodlands remained and engaged the forestry commission to guarantee the protection and to plan and implement activities in the forest which did not conflict with protection. This plan excluded areas of the village which were already within the forestry reserves.

The documents, with which the village at the local level tried to establish the traditional laws of the land and to obtain the consent of the then regional management of the settlement, were not accepted. Also, the responsible official was no longer in the service. The village was ordered to leave the protected area, crops and the blacksmith's workshop of the village were destroyed and tillage equipment was confiscated to counter the further destruction of forest. The village starved and lived on external remittances. The village population signalled its readiness to return to the old site again provided that the terms under which the village had been producing are created there. This seems impossible because of the lack of resources available.

*... land and user
rights are not clear*

2.1 Hypotheses of conflict situations and the active parties

The characteristics of the case descriptions which appear in many situations of projects are briefly summarised in the following table and are discussed in more detail below.

Conflict area: population density

From the perspective of governments of developing countries woodlands were always an area suitable for relocating people because of their suitability for permanent crop production which earns foreign currency. From the farmer's view the higher rainfall in many regions was an additional advantage. It also made the provision of food for the family more reliable than in drier regions from which the relocated families often came. In addition, areas were still available in woodlands and the soil was hardly depleted. The dramatic rise of the relocated population in the marginal zones of woodlands is one of the main reasons for placing forests under protection, i.e. forbidding its colonisation. The relocation of people was promoted by state policies ("the land belongs to whoever clears it of forest"). Because of this, the original population and their land-use systems experienced difficulties. At first the gifts and work performance of the new-comers were very welcome in the scarcely populated forest regions. However within a few decades it became clear that the forest reserves for the settlement of the following generation were exhausted especially when the constant intensity of use was maintained.

"The land belongs to he who cultivates it" – with this the state promotes settlements in the forests

In high potential areas also urban groups, with money to spend, compete for land. This demand increases the pressure on the forests if the families which sell land do not move out of the region. The land-use systems of urban landowners, also, are mostly extensively organised and they develop or buy new ground rather than investing in soil fertility conservation methods.

The agricultural support services have ways and means of intensifying the use of land. However, it should be taken into account that, in certain regions, certain measures must be subsidised if resource-poor farming and household systems cannot provide the necessary investments themselves. Also, urban landowners are mainly economically orientated.

Soil protection is too expensive for livelihood systems with limited resources

If projects become active in this region, the influx of settlers can even increase as the development measures are attractive. If the measures are effective, incomes can rise for individual members of the enterprises. There is the possibility that the increased incomes are invested in an expansion of arable land. With this, the project would become a further driving force of the development which leads to the destruction of the forests.

Projects can also contribute to the extension of cultivated areas in forest areas

Conflict area: wildlife

Wildlife are only wonderful to look at from a distance. If they are in the field and eat the reserves of staple food of a family for the forthcoming months, then the farmer considers them as pests which endanger their own survival. If they attack when the farmers try to chase them off the land, they become an enemy.

For pastoralists their coexistence with wildlife is less difficult as long as they are able to herd their animals away from predators. Only if pasture land becomes limited because of increased cropping does the competition for food from the grazing wildlife become a problem. From the farmer's perspective, whoever protects these animals by forbidding their destruction and prosecutes the farmers when they protect themselves against them, acquires the responsibility for the damage caused by the animals. Wildlife as a tourist attraction is only acceptable for farmers when they do not reduce the fodder availability and do not cause any additional damage in the fields.

Overview 1: Situations and actors of three conflicts

- 1 If the population density increases through the influx of settlers, rural households come under pressure to change their livelihood system because the natural resource base is dwindling due to overuse.
- 2 The survival strategies of farmers and pastoralists are threatened by the competition of the wildlife
- 3 Agricultural extension agents and the forestry department do not agree upon the role of the forests. Shall it be developed as agricultural area or remain protected as forests?
- 4 If protected areas are identified and marked off, this is carried out according to ecological and topographical criteria - criteria which are not known and not accepted by the local population. When implementing forestry reserve, forest conservation officers tend to extend the protected areas as far as possible.
- 5 Institutions in charge of the protection of forests consider themselves obliged to strictly implement regulations for protection. Their identity and their budget depend on protecting the forests.
- 6 Land tenure and rights of use of forest areas are frequently not clarified in detail and the state of knowledge and perception of the different groups and institutions varies.

Conflict area: function of the forests

The contradictory perception of the forests of forest wardens and of agriculturists is, generally, a conflict between institutions and specialist areas of knowledge. Smallholders know and appreciate the value of both forms of vegetation. Though they often reach for the axe and the machete because only in such a way can rights of use be secured. In relocated groups from other ecological zones this trend is stronger and is enhanced by ignorance of the local situation.

many functions - not all of the local population are aware of them

Conflict area: demarcation of a protected area

Nature conservation departments and projects are ecologically oriented. They want to make a contribution to regional and global problems and they know the international community of states, with their instruments of financing and sanctioning, is behind them. They are, almost always, in a hurry because the government could change and the agreed upon facilities for the protected area then would be no longer secure and project support is limited in time.

For nature conservation organisations the forests have priority

Nature conservation agents generally assume that protected area only exist if there is a clear boundary as otherwise local people would not know where the restrictions on use start. So, the local people are often being confronted with the zonation which took place in the capital after all decisions were made. Often people do not even know that they are neighbours or inhabitants of a protected area. When ecological demarcations are implemented on the basis of maps of the vegetation and fauna studies, traditional common laws and areas of utilisation are not recorded. And, as a rule, the smallholders, gatherers, hunters and woodcutters of both gender are not consulted. Moreover the forest regions are often thinly and patchily populated and hardly developed. Because of this, news spreads slowly.

When establishing reserves, traditional land rights and rights of use are often not taken into account

If the process of the demarcation intrudes too strongly on the rights of the residents and neighbours, it can meet to resistance and conflict explodes.

Conflict area: conservation laws and regulations

Forestry commissions and the institutions for the protection of forests which often were set up by the forest departments have, particularly in Africa, a rather authoritarian, military style culture. Their most essential source of income has always been the protected state-owned forest which they defended against neighbouring groups and allowed only those people who could pay well to use the forest. The institutions' income from concessions was extended by penalties and confiscation of property for unlawful use at the local level.

Sanctions and bans provoke resistance

To implement regulations for protection the old methods are still used. Penalties, strict controls² and informer systems are the cornerstones of the repressive strategy for protection. The local population reacts with mistrust, passive resistance and illegal use of the resources.

Conflict area: legal framework conditions

Frequently national laws are not implemented at the local level

Frequently the legal regulations at national level deviate from the instructions given for implementation at regional or local level or are not made precise. In many countries the respect of traditional common laws in indigenous settlement areas along with participative forest management has been legally established, but has not yet been implemented at the local level.

On the other hand, regulations for protection are frequently interpreted more narrowly by the protection representatives, as demanded by management plans of the forest areas or by laws. This happens because of the fear that once the people go into the forests to use something they soon would exploit everything.

User groups often do not know the regulations for protection and see restrictions as being arbitrary

Often, it also is not clear to the sections of the population who want to use the forests what is legally permitted and what is forbidden. Every restriction on use runs the risk of being seen as being arbitrary. The annoyance about penalties and taxes is particularly high in impoverished areas with an undeveloped infrastructure. Farmers, in principle, imply that these moneys do not go to the state but to individuals.

2.2 Common characteristics which keep conflicts going

The shown areas of conflict have some things in common which ensure that they persist. These include the following characteristics:

² The forest warden of a forest protection project in west Africa reported that the collection of medical herbs was only possible with permission which was only granted in certain cases. First he examines the sick person to check whether it is really necessary to collect a plant. If he finds it necessary he gives his permission and accompanies the person into the woods. In this case the warden belonged to an ethnic group which had migrated from a Savannah region into the forest areas.

- Communication about interests, strategies and visions does not take place. Agreements are not identified and understanding cannot be developed.
- The participants see themselves (or the forests which they protect) as victims, the other party as perpetrator. Partner style relationships are excluded.
- The respective projects are not aware that they are a conflict partner and therefore can contribute to the escalation of the conflict.

The lack of communication keeps conflicts going

3 Learning to assess conflicts

To address conflicts often seems more difficult than to silently endure them

It is often preferred to avoid conflicts rather than address them. To put up with the situation can seem less unpleasant than to deal with the conflict. Some cultures tend "to remove conflicts between groups by denying them and trying either to assimilate or to suppress minorities".³

3.1 Conflicts are usable

A conflict exposes interests and mobilises energies. To be able to work with conflicts constructively, it is useful to become aware of their positive aspects. They can serve as:

- **Signals:** They highlight problems and create awareness of norms,
- **Impulses:** if they arouse interest and prompt the search for solutions.

They promote

- **Group cohesion,**
- **Self-observation and self-insight,**
- **Change,**
- **Competence in communication.**

As long as a conflict does not escalate it represents a potential which can be used especially in development co-operation, provided that it is recognised and addressed.

Skills for constructively working with conflicts can be learned

The ability to work constructively with conflicts is a key qualification for individuals and groups in the process of change. This skill can be learned.

3.2 Conflict types

Conflicts are pushed away, delayed or ineffectively resolved if it is not clear which type of conflict is being dealt with and of which sub-conflicts it consists of. Overview (2) shows some conflict types. They can overlap in the real conflict situation. As different interests are hidden behind this, they can be negotiated separately and treated differently.

³ Cf. Geert Hofstede: Interkulturelle Zusammenarbeit. Kulturen - Organisationen - Management, Wiesbaden 1993, p. 150.

Overview 2: Conflict types

- **Conflict of values:** participants have different, incompatible values and religious ideas.
- **Conflict of judgement:** participants assess the situation, as well as cause and effect, differently.
- **Conflict over distribution:** participants do not agree upon the (just) distribution of a good with limited availability.
- **Conflict of goals:** participants strive for different objectives.
- **Conflict of methods:** participants have disagreements over the way to reach the aim, despite agreement about the objectives.
- **Conflict of information:** participants have different information; information is kept back or used inconsistently; transparency is missing; information sources are defamed; the reliability of information of the other one is doubted.
- **Conflict of roles:** The mutual expectations of the conduct of participants are not complementary.
- **Conflict of culture:** participants do not get on together because they are irritated or displeased by what is strange to them, makes them insecure or threatens them; their own culture provides misleading explanations.
- **Power conflict:** participants do not accept decisions; power competence is claimed inappropriately or is not legitimate; participants question it and try to evade it.
- **Conflict of competition:** rivalries between people and groups over status, power and material advantages, mingled with personal antipathies.

From: Seminar reader of the seminar "Organisation Consultation" of the GTZ programme for further education.

The following conflicts are in the foreground for projects concerned with transition zone development and forestry protection:

- **Conflicts of value and judgement** regarding the role of forestry protection in relation to the strategies for survival and development objectives of the rural population,
- **Distribution conflicts** regarding the use of the forests and the costs associated with protecting the forest (also the costs involved in not using the forests),
- **Information conflicts** regarding the legal position, the actual damages of use and the legitimacy of repressive measures,
- **Power conflicts** over questions of who is authorised to participate in decisions and who is to perform control of the protection.

Other types of conflict also appear.

Become aware of the positive aspects of conflicts

3.3 Conflict phases

In early conflict phases there is still the possibility that both partners can win

Conflicts proceed in phases which can, roughly, be distinguished from each other. With a simplified view one can say that there are three stages, each with three phases: At the beginning every party can win (win-win), in the second stage one party wins, the other one loses (win-loose), and in the third phase both parties lose (lose-loose).

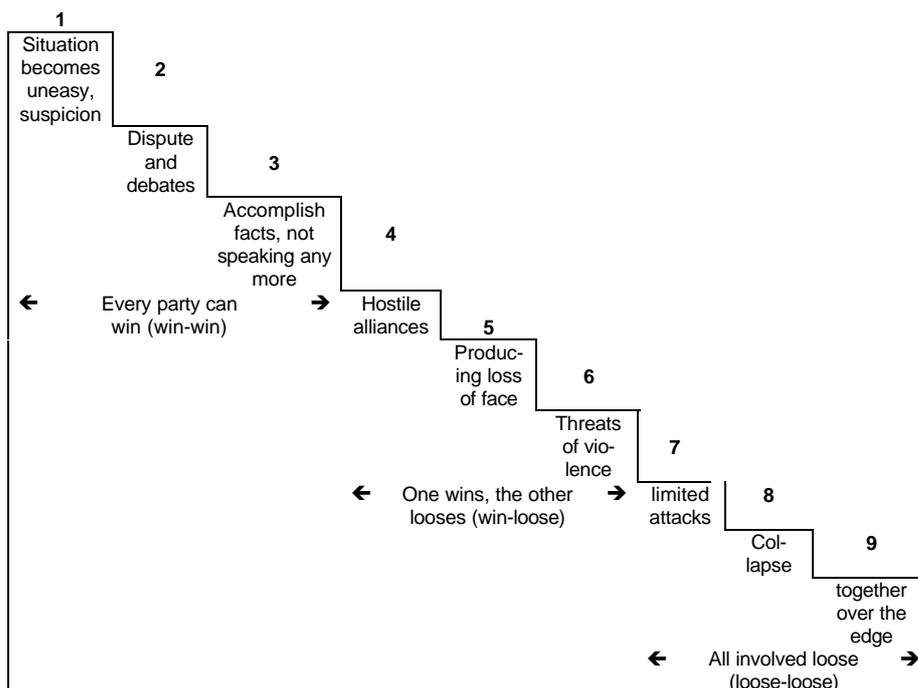
Conflicts have a history. The more definitely the previous relationship between the conflicting parties has proceeded in the direction of escalation, the stronger and faster are the driving forces which strengthen a conflict. Influences which weaken conflict are however clearly less effective than those which strengthen a conflict.

The conflict phases are represented in a model in overview 3. Overview 3 shows:

- with which instruments the respective phase can be recognised
- with what the further development of the conflict can be counteracted.
- which mechanisms can lead to escalation of the conflict
- which possibilities of action are conceivable in the respective conflict phase for a co-operative development work project.

Once a conflict is in the violent stages 7 to 9, projects can hardly have positive influences any more. Therefore these are excluded from our discussions here.

Overview 3. Simplified representation of the phases of the course of a conflict (After F. Glasl, 1994, p. 216)



To assess the severity of a conflict, it is important that the respective characteristics of the phase are clearly distinguished. For example, it is a question of valuation whether the destruction of the hotel in case 1 or that of the blacksmith's workshop in case 3 is to be considered as phase 3 (accomplish deeds) or as phase 7 (carry out limited attacks). The demarcation of a protectorate like in case 2, (see chapter 2.2) can, under circumstances, be a brusque step into the third phase: If facts are accomplished without communicating or negotiating the danger of escalation exists. Principally, with increasing levels of escalation, it becomes increasingly difficult to find solutions through negotiations without an external mediator (for instruments and organisation of arbitration processes compare PVI: Conflict management, 1995).

In which phase is the conflict?

Escalated conflicts need external mediators

Overview 4: Phases, characteristics and instruments in the course of a conflict (initial phases, win-win situations).

After F. Glasl (1994, pp. 216), changed.

Conflict phase	Characteristics of the phase	Instruments for the recognition and assessment of the phase	Instruments of the counter-steering	Mechanisms which worsen the course of conflict	Possibilities of action for a technical cooperation project
1. Hardening	The situation becomes uneasy; communication may ease tension; rigid positions are not prevalent, but start to form.	Observation of the behaviour and the manner of communication formulation of positions	Attempt for clarification in the Form of "I"-messages; (Mutual) analysis of interests, which are support participant's positions.	Formulation of positions and counter-positions; "You"-messages, side-swiping, allusions	To offer terms of communication; Observation of communication; If project has a mandate then give instruction to analyse interests and, if necessary, the input of knowledge.
2. Debate	Positions harden, are presented in a black and white manner; quasi-rational arguments, verbal violence and discrepancies in over and undertone appear.	Analysis of the form of communication; formulation of positions connected with the form of the representation of the positions; pay attention to either - or formulations	Systematic problem analysis with the help of circular questions; allegories; mechanisms to create distance; Conversion of "you"-messages into "I"- messages; Presentation of the positive power of conflicts; Convert "either-or" strategy into "neither-nor" and "as well as" strategy	Missing mutual acceptance of the other's situation, Accusations; Selective perception, Arguments about the relationship - instead of about the subject matter	If the communication is blocked and when mandate is given to the project, suggest and moderate an analysis of interests and trust the "powers of self healing" and/or indicate this trust to other participants.
3. Deeds instead of words	Accomplishment of facts; feeling arises that talk no longer helps; pessimistic expectations and suspicion dominate; empathy loss; danger of the misinterpretation.	Analysis of the course of coordination processes and the information exchange; assessment of the reluctance of the persons affected; analysis of the non verbal communication; examination of expectation to accept in comparison with the readiness to accept.	Bringing subject level in focus; analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the created facts/the situation; pointing out the loss of win-win solutions; conflict moderation techniques like above, but they have only limited effect.	Consciously not listening to positive statements; waiting for signs of weakness, and then reacting negatively; project takes position	Offering and undertaking further education in negotiating techniques and conflict management; offering terms for negotiations; negotiate compensation and confidence building measures

Overview 4 (cont.): Phases, characteristics and instruments in the course of conflict (middle phases, win-loose situations).

After F. Glasl (1994, pp. 216), changed

Conflict phase	Characteristics of the phase	Instruments for the recognition and assessment of the phase	Instruments for counter-steering	Mechanisms which worsens the course of conflict	Possibilities of action for a co-operative development project
4. Coalition	Parties manoeuvre themselves into negative rolls and fight each other; Supporters are recruited; rumours and deniable and incorrect conduct appear; perception is restricted, which leads to self-fulfilling prophecies.	Documentation of legal unfriendly acts; watch for the appearance of negative stereotypes; to analyse coalition relationships: are they based on common interests or common concepts of an enemy? to analyse methods of the "deniable sanction behaviour".	Move interests to the foreground; analyse cost effectiveness of non co-operation; careful paradox intervention to return to the subject level; exaggerating positions, so that positions are reconsidered, made conscious and withdrawn.	To pay less and less attention to the subject level and to put emphasis "on the nature of the other", to deny each other the will for conflict solving, extension of the conflict matter.	are getting few: check if conditions for mediation can be brought about negotiate mediation and prepare mandate, carry out mediation
5. Loss of face	Public or direct attacks on the sense of honour, Exposure of such are attempted; opposition shifts on an ideological, principal level; Solutions are seen with the exclusion or isolation of the opponent.	Analyse the parties' concepts of interpretation of each other, pay attention to reinterpretations of the past, analyse the extent of the idealisation of the conflict.	Fighting against breach of trust; do not mix positions with principles.	Connection of the conflict matter with the "sacred values".	
6. Threat	Threats and re-threatening statements are formulated.	Analyse the kinds of threat and the extent of commitment.	Gaining time - in conversations point out the loss of win-loose possibilities.	Using irrationalities "rationally"; e.g. believing that the other party "forces" me to behave as I do.	

Overview 4 (cont.): Phases, characteristics and instruments in the course of conflict (final phases loose - loose situations)

After F. Glasl (1994, pp. 216), changed

Conflict phase	Characteristics of the phase	Instruments for the recognition and assessment of the phase
7. Limited attacks	Human quality of the relationships disappears completely, opponent becomes an object.	Analysis of the unrewarding damage; analysis of the extent of one way communication.
8. Collapse/fragmentation	Armed conflict in which participant's own losses rise, opponent turns into the deadly enemy.	
9. Together over the edge	Appearance of readiness for suicide as long as the opponent also perishes.	

Within early phases a conflict can still be positively influenced

Particularly in the two first phases good possibilities exist to positively influence the course of conflict with classical instruments of development co-operation. As soon as the communication ends between the conflict partners and "deeds speak", the risk of escalation increases considerably.

The communication between locals and employees of the institution for protection is often disturbed

Especially in project situations in which the population groups in comparison to state protection institutions are relatively powerless, the first two phases, in which the relationship hardens and disputes take place, do not take place. Communication is interrupted mainly between the neighbouring population of the forest reserve and employees of the protection institutions. There is a lack of co-ordination of interests, strategies and visions between the partners. Deviations, therefore, cannot be recognised and the conflict does not become apparent. These deviations cannot be observed and judged by the manner used to communicate either.

An activity like in case 2 – the demarcation of a forestry reserve – can be, in some circumstances, a brusque step into the third phase: Facts are accomplished without any communication or negotiation and the danger of escalation exists.

4 The role of the projects

4.1 Project strategy "Exclude the conflict"

Projects want to contribute to the solution of existing problems. How they react to the initial situation is influenced by the objectives and target groups of the project and which approaches to the solution are envisaged. The project contributions are deduced from the strategies for solutions. Under "assumptions" are listed those areas which are not under the control of the project, but nevertheless have influence on the success of the project. **Overview 5 shows this for the cases described above⁴.**

Projects want to solve problems. Their strategy depends on their objectives and on the target groups

The stronger the pressure is on a project to quickly achieve measurable results and the more the project is sectorially oriented, the lower its scope of action is to address the complex causes of the conflict and the more risky it becomes to participate actively in a conflict. Furthermore the project employees are seldom trained in techniques of conflict management.⁵ Therefore, the danger of escalation or failure is placed outside the project's responsibility in the assumptions. See the last column of overview 5.

Projects can contribute to conflicts by strengthening one or other of the conflict participants and in doing so disturb or change the balance of power. It depends on the technical orientation and methods of the project strategy whether the local population is fortified by forestry protection projects. For example, processes of opinion forming can be promoted within the population or information given about legal terms of references. Through this the local population's potential grows to enhance their own interests and their readiness to oppose protection strategies which repress their interests increases.

Supporting the local population by informing them about their rights

The forestry protection institutions are strengthened by the framework of classic strategies of nature conservation by supporting the management of reserves. Often, only projects working in this area create the financial and organizational structures for protecting the forest from the local population. This also can lead to a situation where it is said in the villages that the government has sold the forest to the white people.

Classic nature conservation strategies strengthen forestry protection

The assumptions represent the intended situation after settlement of the conflict, although it is not certain that this occurs spontaneously. The national and regional partners, whom the safeguarding of the assumptions frequently obliges, are also involved in the conflict. If it is accomplished

⁴ This presentation is not based on any real project document, but was created independently from the projects in order to make the point clear.

⁵ The project Environmental Protection - Conservation of Natural Resources (PVI) of the GTZ, OE 402, offers publications and further education courses which include instruments and methods of conflict management.

During consultations about conflicts projects concentrate on moderation

to include the assumptions in the sphere of influence of the project, the project can contribute to the work on the conflict. By doing so the project should concentrate on the role of moderator.

The following section shows briefly how a project could proceed with this.

4.2 Project strategy "Using conflicts positively"

It is assumed that German transition-zone development projects do not pursue their own interests and do not make any exclusive valuations of the groups involved. A project contributes to a conflict, if it, for example, defines in advance the behaviour of the local forest officials as corrupt, or the farmers as such as forest destroyers. As such it can not use the conflict positively, as it has become part of the problem by its biased approach. This implies that a project does not take a one-sided position but, rather, appreciates the legitimacy of the different interests.

Drawing conclusions about the severity of the conflict by observing the course of communication

In principle, especially in the conflict phases 1 to 3, good possibilities exist for projects to act. **Projects can, through clarification of the project context and work, create a conducive framework for communication.** By observing the course of communication the severity of the conflict can be assessed at the start of the project.

When a project responds to and works on conflicts, processes which were not originally considered in the planning of the project can be stimulated. Consequently the time schedule for the project is no longer realistic. However, it is assumed that the task of the project can only be fulfilled by working with the conflict.

Overview 5:

Examples of a possible framework for project work with the strategy "exclude the conflict"

Objectives and target group	Hypotheses	Project contribution	Assumptions
1. Intensification of the production; Farmers and pastoralists.	With technical innovations the productivity of the pastures and fields can be again increased and the situation of the smallholders and live stock keeper are improved.	Support of the agricultural extension and development of innovation, support of marketing and input supply etc.	The settlement of new rural settlers decreases. Purchase of land by urban elites is stopped.
2. Use of the wildlife for tourism; local population with sufficient qualifications.	With the development of tourism the game populations can be used for the creation of jobs.	Education of workers, market analyses, conception of publicity campaigns etc.	Smallholders and pastoralists accept the presence of wildlife in the area of settlement.
3. Joint forestry; farmers, pastoralists.	If the local population receive sustainable benefits from the forests it will contribute towards the protection of the forests.	Informing about legal framework, support of the formation of groups for the joint management and for controlling arrangements etc.	Legal regulations secure the usufructs of the population. The forestry service and the local administration management appreciates the usufructs. The consultation service supports the protection of the forests.
4. Participative zonation and land use planning; farmers, pastoralists, other user groups	If the population is involved in the zonation and land use planning, it will accept restrictions more readily.	Execution of zonation with sections of the population, assignment of zones of use, support of use according to zones.	Departments of protection accept the user interests of the population. Urban groups and their political lobby respect the implemented assignment of uses.
5. Forest protection; employees of the forestry authorities, park wardens.	Only if the forests are withdrawn from the grip of the smallholders and pastoralists, can it be maintained. The management of the forests by the forestry commission secures its long-term survivals.	Erection of an efficient control system, forest inventories and reforestation. Resettlement, in environmental education, measures of compensation.	The forestry officials actively support the effective forest protection. The legal frameworks are effective and secure the protectorate's status in the long term. The local population accepts forest conservation.
6. Consultation with the national forest authority; national and regional forestry officials.	If the legal terms of references are clarified and formulated, the forests can be sustainably protected and jointly managed.	Formulation of draft laws, working out of management plans, organisational development in the forestry authorities, training	Regional administration and technical services support the implementation of the laws and regulations. Local population is willing to co-operate with forestry commission.

Working with the conflict starts with diagnosing the problem

Understanding the conflict situation

Questions for the diagnosis of the problem...

Working with the conflict starts with diagnosing the problem.⁶ A diagnosis is made by the project by consulting and questioning every conflict party individually.

...are based on hypotheses

The persons who ask the questions must be aware that the questions, just like the answers, are subject to basic concepts of human communication. The transmitter decides what he sends and the receiver decides what he hears i.e. what arrives. The initial hypothesis with which the conflict situation is approached substantially influences the questions with which we, supposedly objectively, try to analyse the conflict situation. The manner in which the questions are asked and the target of the questions mould our perception of reality.

Therefore it is advisable to examine the questions as well as the people questioned – "the questioning system" – in detail.

The initial hypotheses characterise the questions

The questions are formulated on the basis of certain hypotheses or assumptions. If the questions were based on other assumptions, the questions would be different and other answers would be given in response. This interaction must be taken into account when diagnosing the problem.⁷

A simplified view of this shows that for projects concerning forest reserves or transition-zone development two groups of hypotheses can be seen from which two project types follow:

⁶ For the moderation of the conflict analyses competent experts are available in the sector projects of GTZ or from consultants.

⁷ Questions which are worked on in a systematic problem diagnosis are presented in the appendix.

- Projects which strive for participation and the taking-over of the responsibility for the protection of forests by the population, and
- Projects which promote protection institutions in their classic tasks by protecting woodlands from use by sections of the population.

Both often strive for mainly identical objectives and can, in parallel, be active in a region and at the edge of the same forests. The hypotheses on which their view of the things and their strategy are based on are:

Projects can strive for the same objectives but use contrary initial hypotheses as starting points

for the **project type "protection through utilisation"**

- Smallholders and other users of resources have a personal interest in the preservation of the forests.
- They are able to organise their use of resources in the forests more ecologically and sustainably provided that secure usufructs are assigned to them.

and for the project type **"protection against utilisation"**

- Smallholders and other user groups destroy the forests by using forest resources or areas and want to take them into their possession.
- The local population does not understand the meaning of forestry protection because their short-term interests of use are in direct opposition.
- Only the institutions for protection can maintain effective protection.

Whoever wants to understand the conflict situation should formulate questions from both perspectives and for this use the hypotheses from the contrary viewpoint as well as their own. Circular questions which focus on relationships, changes, valuations, rules of precedence, differences and alternatives are particularly useful for this. They promote an atmosphere in which dialog and the expression of opinions becomes possible (once more). They are not intended to reveal the hard facts of the situation but, rather, to initiate a process of understanding. (Overview 6 gives examples of circular questions). Such methods of dialog contribute to a situation where smallholders and farmers, hunter and gatherers as well as employees of the institutions in the village communicate more frequently and more intensively.

Formulate questions from the perspective of every conflict partner

Overview 6: Examples of circular questions for analysing problems in transition zones

	Questions for project type "protection against utilisation"	Questions for project type "protection by utilisation"
Questions about relationships		
To qualified officer of the partner organisation	How are the forest protection commissioners received in the villages?	What possibilities do you see to co-operate with the village population? How can the co-operation be improved?
To representatives of the local population	What do you gain from the protection of the forest and from the presence of the forestry conservation officer?	What possibilities do you see for your village to co-operate with the forest conservation officer? What could you do to enhance this?
Questions about change		
To qualified officer of the partner organisation	How has the use of the forest resources by the local population changed within the last 10 years? How do you judge the change?	In your opinion, which functions of protection could be transferred to village groups? How could the villages control these?
To representatives of the local population	How has the work of the forestry commission changed within the last 10 years? How do you judge the change?	How should functions of protection be controlled? Which part should the forestry authority play in this?
Questions about judgements		
To qualified officer of the partner organisation	How do you judge the relationship which the village population of X now has with your officials?	How do you judge the current use of the forests by the village population? What is positive and what do you judge as negative?
To representatives of the local population	How do you judge the contribution of the forestry officials to the protection of the forests?	How is the present co-operation with the forestry commission useful for you? What is positive and what do you judge as negative?
Questions about the order of precedence		
To qualified officer of the partner organisation	In your opinion what are the most important limitation which the smallholders face after their use of the forest was forbidden?	In your opinion what are the biggest successes of the joint management of the forests? What dangers do you foresee?
To representatives of the local population	For you and your family which resources of the forests are most important? What is this importance?	What are the most important reasons for co-operation between the villagers and the forestry officials?
Questions about differences		
To qualified officer of the partner organisation	What are the interests of the smallholders and hunters/gatherers to improve the co-operation with your	If you would end your consultation and control, how would the village population change their use of the for-

	authority? How do these interests differ from yours?	est?
To representatives of the local population	What would be the difference tomorrow if there were no longer a forestry protection officer in the village? What would it be like in 10 years?	What is the most important difference for you between the use of the forest today and that of 10 years ago?
Questions for alternatives		
To qualified officer of the partner organisation	What possibilities do you see for organising the protection of the forests differently?	What starting-points do you see to negotiate with the villages a change of use of the forests? What ways of use could be discussed?
To representatives of the local population	How could the need for your family to lay out fields in the forests be reduced?	What possibilities exist in the village to actively take part in the protection of the forest

Recognition of interests and negotiations concerning them

Conflicts can only be "evaluated" if some prerequisites are fulfilled. Some of the prerequisites are:

- **The principle "accepting the conflict"**

The solution of the conflict must be wanted by all partners and parties involved. Every step of the conflict negotiation must be secured by a mandate of the participants.

At the beginning of a development co-operation project there is, from the view of state institutions, often no necessity to work on conflicts. The relationship between smallholders and state institutions is structured hierarchically and a class difference has been established. Movement in the relationship occurs only with an endeavouring participation, a change in legal conditions or knowledge of such. Then the conflict reaches a head, and a dynamic for change arises.

If state institutions with the duty of protection are threatened by a considerable loss of power and income by effective models of participation, it can be sensible to negotiate about measures of compensation in favour of the institutions for protection.

*Conflicts –
dynamic for
change.*

- **The principles of "directness and openness"**

The conflict parties should, if their culture and the course of conflict permits, tell each other directly what they want of the opposite side. If this is not possible, analyses of interests and contributions for the solution can be carried out at separate locations then exchanged and negotiated about further. Only if the underlying interests have been publicly discussed can they be dealt with constructively.

- **The principle of "no winner and no loser"**

*To reach
consensus...*

Only solutions which are accepted by all parties involved can end a conflict or at least deactivate it. Single-sided concessions are not a solution.

*...much creative
intuition is needed*

Much creative intuition is needed for the development of alternatives which are acceptable to the different conflict partners. At first, the interests which are hidden behind the negotiating positions of the conflict partners should be analysed.

The principle of „No winner and no loser“

In case 3 "A village in the forests without demarcation" (see chapter 2.3) the position of the smallholders: "We want to stay in the forests! The forests belong to us!" and the position of the forest protection institution: "No settlement allowed in the reserve! The forests belong to us!" stand apparently in incompatible opposition to each other. However, it can be that similar interests are hidden behind these contrary positions.

Before possible options are negotiated the conflict partners should, during the first stage, examine their own interests

*Clarify own
interests ...*

and possible scopes of negotiation . Every side should ask: What are our interests? What can we demand? What are our potentials? What can our contributions be? What do we want to offer?

In the second stage the conflict partners should reflect upon the position of the opposite side: What do we suspect their interests to be? What can we offer to this? Where do we suspect potential? From our perspective, what can the opposite side contribute? What can we demand?

...and those of the others

Every side has a variety of interests which are represented concretely so that they can be recognized as part of the problem and its solution.

For example, in case 3, the forest conservation authorities are interested in:

- preventing the further decline of forest areas;
- preventing precedents being established;
- demonstrating strength against neighbours and showing the contract funding bodies that the management plan is actually implemented; securing recognition and income for themselves.

The villagers want:

Look for options where all can win

- to gain an income from agricultural production;
- to have an infrastructural connection to the markets of the town;
- not to be sent forth and back.

Options by which all gain something must contribute something to the interests of every conflict partner. Measures which lead to "either-or" solutions are thus impossible. The way to the solution is via "both - together" options. In our case example this means:

"either-or" measures are excluded

if

- the village is ready to change its agricultural ways of use so that the damage to the vegetation in the forests is minimised;
- alternatives to income from agriculture are developed;
- the contract giver and ministry support negotiations about an experimental special ruling for the village;
- it is made clear and accepted by the village that the protection department implements consultations and a controlling function;
- the protection department gets from this additional appreciation and achieves long-term security of its co-operation with the funding bodies,

then

- the forests can be protected without the village having to be removed and possibilities for constructive co-operation are created.

Find "both-and" measures To develop "both - together" options:

- rash judgements should cease;
- the readiness should arise to also solve the problems or satisfy the desires and interests of the other parties;
- one perfect solution should not be sought after, but different options should be considered;
- it should be made clear to all that one party does not necessarily lose if the other party gains.

Reach agreements and check that they are kept

To make the results of the negotiation verifiable criteria are collectively decided upon. After this, agreements are reached and whether they are kept or not is checked upon. The complete process needs, again and again, neutral, trained supervision.

- **Principle "self-help" instead of "external help"**

Compensation without negotiation are not a solution

A solution imposed by outsiders excludes the possibility that communication qualitatively changes between the conflict parties so that they cannot help themselves in the next conflict. Compensations which are granted without negotiations and without objectively verifiable agreements are not solutions, but just calm the situation down, if only temporarily.

Only if the conflict parties are not able to speak to each other any more or the task at hand suffers because of this, should a third party be consulted.

Mediation methods

Methods of conflict management and the mediation of conflicts are described in detail in a number of publications. For development co-operation work the pilot project environmental protection / conservation of the natural resources (PVI) has evaluated and processed, particularly north American, methods. Training in these methods is offered by PVI.

These methods are favourable if

Mediation methods are only favourably, if ...

- Both conflict parties have an interest in the improvement and stabilisation of the relationship, because they are dependent on each other;
- the conflict can no longer be solved by direct negotiations;
- all involved partners are sufficiently represented in the procedure and strive for a conjoint solution;

- Interests, and not fundamental values or religious ideas, are the object of the conflict;
- no serious power differences between the conflict partners exist; otherwise initially the weaker party must improve their position of power or the more powerful party must be ready to forgo their position of power;
- the negotiating parties can make decisions on behalf of the groups they represent – for this, institutions must be granted sufficient scope;
- the conflict partners have a common basis of expressiveness and ability of self-assertion.

... certain conditions are fulfilled

(compare also Besemer, 1995).

Conflict management and mediation methods can only then be used in projects of transition-zone development if the above mentioned prerequisites for their use are created. Usually this is not the case. Often:

- Governmental partners only seldom have a personal interest in the improvement of co-operation because they can carry through their interests alone. This is particularly the case when financially strong donors support them.
- The power differences between institutions for protection and the neighbouring population can be considerable. It is not to be expected that positions of power are voluntarily given up.
- Representatives of the participants will only seldom have enough scope for negotiations. Hierarchical structures stand contrary to this.
- The ability of self-assertion of sections of the population is often so low that conducive situations for negotiations cannot begin.

Projects can promote the prerequisites of mediation processes

Projects can contribute to a constructive use of conflicts by promoting the conditions for mediation processes, namely by

- Pointing out the personal interests of the state protection representatives in constructive co-operation with them;
- Strengthening the negotiating positions of the neighbouring population by providing information and methodic support;
- Negotiating the scope of negotiation with partner organisation and to demand scopes;
- Strengthening the ability and self-confidence of the population by a participative approach and comprehensively considering the interests of the population in transition zones.

By using participative approaches, conflict analyses and negotiations of interests in the early conflict phases, the prerequisites for mediation are also promoted.

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Appendix

Questions for a systematic process of diagnosis

(after Jarmai, H., Königswinter, R.: Problemdiagnose. In: Königswinter)

1 →	2 →	3 →	4 →	5
Diagnosis is lead by the motivation to change, therefore concentrates on things which are not the way they should be. Leading question: What is the problem?	Only one who knows one's own filters of perception, can accept as "another-reality" the different interpretations of the others against their specific background.	A system reacts in a particular way (and not in other ways) to certain environments (and not to others). Each of its actions make, in some way, sense for its specific way of functioning. Valuations of Good/bad, right/wrong etc. prevent or aggravate the understanding of these ways of functioning.	Systems are self-organising. They process external influences to be able to remain the way they are. These processes are only seldom describable by simple causalities. Look for information about topics, relations and courses which change the perception of the system.	By the diagnosis the complexity, interlinkage and mutual dependency of the event are made clear. With this, however, the view becomes also more complex and unwieldy. To be able to act, we must simplify and summarise further. We must stand back from the system again, to be able to become more effective.
Who sees the problem like me? Who sees it differently?	What is my concrete interest in the solution of the problem?	What are the disadvantages, what the advantages of the situation as it is?	What is the main outspoken and unspoken expectations (norms) which are relevant to the problem?	How do I define the problem now, in which context do I see it?
What will happen if no action is taken?	Which similar experiences have I had? How have I dealt with these?	Which chances, which dangers arise?	Which institutions, persons, and areas are relevant to the problem?	What must remain as it is? What changes should be made?
What is the history the problem? When did it start?	On which criterion, values and assumptions does my observation build up?	What is gained, and what is avoided?	Which relationships with respect to the problem do they have to each other?	Whom must I include (persons concerned, powerful people, experts)?
Who is/was involved in this?	Who is directly or indirectly important for the problem?	What is typical or symptomatic for the project situation?	Against which background is the problem usually discussed?	What must I particularly pay attention to, what I should avoid?
How have we anyway made it up to now,?	By what are these lead in their perception?		In which context is it seen?	How do I have space and time left for the reflection of what will happen?
Are there comparable unsolved problems? What is typical for these?	Which various problem descriptions have to be assumed therefore?			

