



Caribbean Natural Resources Institute



Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

Forestry Department of Jamaica and Trees for Tomorrow Project

Understanding and Managing Forestry Conflicts

Twickenham Park, Spanish Town, 7-9 May 2001

Workshop report

### Introduction

The workshop *Understanding and managing forestry conflicts* was held at the Farmers Training Centre, Twickenham Park, Spanish Town, Jamaica from 7-9 May 2001. The Jamaica Forestry Department identified a need to provide key frontline staff with conflict management techniques and had originally made nominations to a regional course that CANARI had designed on this subject. Demand from departmental staff was such that discussions began on the feasibility of holding an in-country workshop on conflict management.

This process resulted in a three day workshop for forestry staff from all levels and each of the Department's three regions. Provision was also made for participants from the civil society organisations that the Department is collaborating with as part of its pilot initiative to involve stakeholders in the management of the Buff Bay and Pencar watersheds.

### Participants and resource people

The workshop was designed for up to 20 field and supervisory staff of the Jamaica Forestry Department, and collaborating agencies. The format and content of the activity were geared towards participants with practical experience of forestry conflicts and those working in circumstances where these exist. The Department reported high levels of interest from staff and it was over-subscribed. This was evident on the first day of the workshop, which was attended by nearly 30 people.

Of the 19 participants that attended all three days of the workshop, 16 were from the Forestry Department and three from civil society organisations represented on Local Forest Management Committees in Buff Bay and Pencar. These participants received a certificate of attendance from the Department. Forestry Department staff from across the country were at the workshop as shown by Table 1.

Head Office	Western Region	Central Region	Eastern Region
3	4	4	5

Table 1: Forestry Department staff attendance at conflict management workshop by region.

The workshop was jointly facilitated by Vijay Krishnarayan (Associate Director at CANARI) and Claus-Martin Eckelmann (Forestry Officer at FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Caribbean). A full list of participants and resource people is attached at Appendix 1.

### Funding

The workshop was a collaborative effort and drew on the resources of several agencies. The FAO provided funding to CANARI for the activity and the Institute was also able to draw on

support from their European Commission funded programme “Capacity building for participatory forest management.” The local costs for the workshop were met by the Jamaica Forestry Department’s Trees for Tomorrow Project, funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

### Objectives

The workshop was developed on the basis that forest management often takes place against a backdrop of simmering or outright conflict and that the participation of users can help find answers to difficult questions posed by disagreements over forest rights and responsibilities. It also recognised that forest managers work in situations where conflict is an ever-present theme, and that a better understanding of the dynamics involved, would improve the effectiveness of their responses.

Based on this rationale, the workshop aimed:

- to improve the understanding of Forestry Department field staff and partners of the nature and dynamics of the conflicts that they encounter during the course of their work; and
- to equip frontline and supervisory staff with skills and methods that can help them to analyse and manage forestry conflicts.

At the beginning of the workshop participants were asked about their expectations of the activity. From their responses needs were expressed for:

- specific guidance on how to respond to forestry conflicts once they arise;
- an opportunity for reflection and personnel development;
- approaches to making compromises and negotiating.

These were re-visited at the end of the activity and participants felt that their expectations had been fully met.

### Methods and content

The workshop combined presentations, delivered by resource people with plenary discussions and group work. The presentations were used to introduce topics, clarify concepts and raise issues for discussion. Time and other resource constraints meant that a field trip was not included in the programme, however steps were taken in the workshop’s design to draw out participants’ field experiences.

These experiences provided the practical backdrop for the workshop and these came out during plenary discussions and group work. The workshop started by introducing and clarifying concepts. Following this the participants exchanged their experiences and in small groups identified four cases.

The cases were used throughout the workshop to apply specific concepts and methods. These cases are summarised at Appendix 3. On the second afternoon the participants selected one of the cases to be used in a role playing exercise. This method helped participants to identify and analyse stakeholders using an example that they were all familiar with. The agenda for the workshop is included at Appendix 2.



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Appendix 1 Participants and resource people

Name	JobTitle	Location
Sigismond Bailey	Forester 2 (Acting)	Eastern Region
Patrick Barrett	Forester 2 (Acting)	Western Region
Radcliffe Beckford	Forester	Central Region
Noel Bennett	Rural Sociologist	Head Office
Glenroy Berry	Forest Warden	Eastern Region
Cecile Burgess	LFMC	Buff Bay Watershed
Churton Douglas	Forester 2	Western Region
Adam Francis	Forester	Eastern Region
Ainsworth Grant	Forester 2 (Acting)	Eastern Region
Durval Grapine	Forest Supervisor	Western Region
Donna Lowe	Watershed & Soil Conservation Officer	Head Office
Samuel Martin	Forester Warden	Central Region
Keith Minott	LFMC	Buff Bay Watershed Eastern Region
Natalie Powell	LFMC	Pencar Watershed
Patrick Reynolds	Extensionist	Rio Minho Watershed Central Region
Harlington Sweeney	Forest Warden	Central Region
Michael Thomas	Forester 2 (Acting)	Head Office
Ian Wallace	Forester 2	Western Region
Lemuel Williams	Forest Supervisor	Eastern Region
Claus-Martin Eckelmann	Resource person, FAO SLAC	
Vijay Krishnarayan	Resource person, CANARI	



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### Appendix 2 Agenda

#### Monday 7 May

- 9.30- 10.00            Opening of the workshop  
Opening prayer:        Rev. Clarence Brown  
Welcome:                Ms. M. Headley, Conservator of Forests  
Greetings:              Mr. C-M Eckelmann, FAO Forestry Officer  
                                  Mr. K. Porter, Technical Director, Forestry  
                                  Department  
Course overview:      Mr. V. Krishnarayan, Associate Director, CANARI
- 10:00- 10:30    Break
- 10:30- 12:30        Introducing key concepts (e.g. conflict management and resolution)
- 12.30- 13:30      Lunch
- 13:30-14:30        Sharing participant's motivations and expectations  
Sharing participant's experiences
- 14:30- 16:30        Selecting and developing forestry case studies  
(group work and presentation)

#### Tuesday 8 May

- 9.00- 12.30            Identifying issues and themes  
Identifying causes and effects of forestry conflicts  
Developing a methodology for analysing forestry conflicts  
Applying key concepts to selected case studies in working groups,  
presentation of group results
- Who are the parties?
  - What are the boundaries?
  - What is the problem?
  - What is the interest of the Forestry Department?
  - Who may have a hidden agenda and what is the issue?
- 12.30- 13.30        Lunch
- 13.30- 16:30        Identifying the range of responses to a selected forestry conflict using a

role-playing exercise and analysing key issues raised

**Wednesday 9 May**

9.00- 12.30

Using stakeholder analysis as a tool for conflict management  
Introducing negotiation as a conflict management tool: what is it and how can it be used?

12.30- 13:30

Lunch

13:30- 16:00

Applying concepts and approaches to the selected case studies  
in working groups and presentation of group results

Evaluating workshop and close



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Appendix 3 Summary of key points and case studies developed

The main concepts used during the workshop are set out in the following panels.

Conflicts are a feature of natural resource management because:

- Ecological systems and social structures are complex and overlap in ways that can result in conflicts;
- Where resources are finite there is competition between individuals, groups and institutions;
- Natural resources are valued differently depending on the varying interests of individuals, groups and organisations.

Natural resource management conflicts can be grouped into four types:

- conflicts over the accuracy of facts or data;
- conflicts between different interests in the resource;
- conflicts over the ways in which resources are valued (particularly culturally or socially)
- conflicts between personalities (particularly leaders of groups and organisations)

#### Conflict management vs. Conflict resolution

Conflicts reflect the underlying power structures in our societies (power is distributed differently among and between people and their organisations depending on for example their gender, race, culture, and age). These differences are not easily resolved and so it is more accurate to describe efforts to minimise the negative impacts of conflicts as conflict management rather than conflict resolution.

#### Conflicts: positive or negative?

Conflicts are often seen as a negative thing, but they can often have positive aspects. For example they signal breakdowns in systems, they can provide the impetus for creative solutions to problems and they can help to identify those groups with an interest in forest resources.

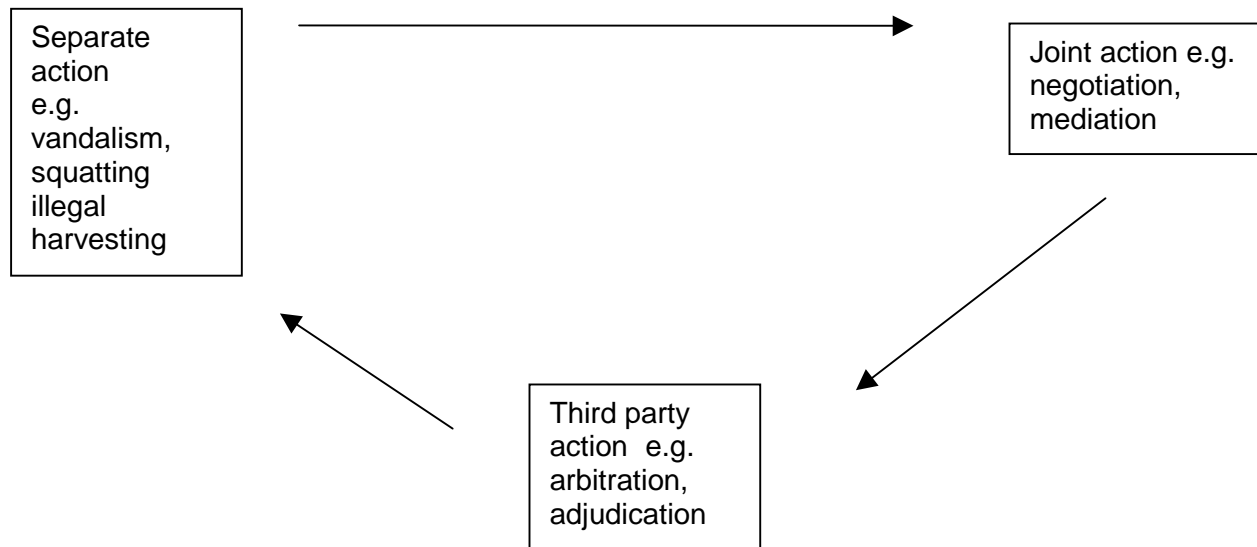
### What is a stakeholder in a forest management conflict?

Parties to a conflict are sometimes referred to as stakeholders. Stakeholders were described as individuals, groups, organisations and institutions with an interest in forest management. That interest was defined as the use of forest resources for economic gain, social, cultural or aesthetic benefit. Participants also felt that stakeholders could have an interest in forest resources if they:

- made an investment in the resource (i.e. an investment of time, money or labour); or
- had a concern for example based on environmental, cultural or political grounds.

The concept of a stakeholder was further defined as a body that: has power over forest management outcomes; has an urgent claim on forest resources; has a legitimate claim to being called a stakeholder. Stakeholder analysis can help to: identify the main parties to a conflict; understand their interests; assess their legitimacy; assess what alliances are likely; identify possible trade-offs; and develop communication strategies for specific audiences.

### Different kinds of conflict management strategies



### Negotiation

Negotiation is one of the strategies that can be used to manage conflict. Before choosing that strategy the following questions should be asked:

- Can the key stakeholders be identified, and are they willing to participate in a process of negotiation?
- Can the power differences between the various parties to the conflict be balanced out in the negotiation process?
- Can spokespeople for the various parties to the conflict be found?
- Is there sufficient time for a negotiation process to take place?
- Can the parties to the conflict be moved from a focus on positions, values and beliefs to a focus on interests?

### BATNA

The concept of the Best Alternative To A Negotiated Agreement (BATNA) summarises the choice that a party makes before negotiating. Where a group feels that they have more to gain outside negotiations or other mechanisms aimed at managing a conflict they may choose not to participate. This strategy is usually associated with the very powerful as well as those with little or no power (or confidence) in institutions.

Participants discussed their experiences of forestry conflicts and felt that these arise where there have been:

- misunderstandings within and between groups and organisations;
- disagreements over access to forest resources;
- individuals and groups that have placed their own interests above all others;
- differences of opinion;
- a lack of interest in the Department's management objectives.

In four smaller groups the participants identified one case that could be used to test the concepts and techniques promoted at the workshop. Having identified their cases, the groups were asked:

- who are the parties to the conflict?
- what are the boundaries to the conflict?
- what is the problem?
- what are the interests of the parties (including the Forestry Department)?
- what are the hidden agendas?
- how should the Forestry Department respond?

#### Group 1: Case "Political Interference"

An instance of illegal timber harvesting was detected and investigated by local Forestry Department officials. The offenders were identified and apprehended. Their tools (chainsaw, fuel and cutlasses) were seized. The people who were caught identified their employer as a political representative.

The local departmental staff tried unsuccessfully to set up a meeting with the politician, who in turn initiated dialogue with other staff in the Department and this resulted in the return of the tools. The group's description of the case was questioned by other participant's some of whom thought that more information was needed.

The stakeholders in the conflict were listed as:

- the politician;
- the politician's brother (the actual employer);
- the employees (the offenders);
- the Forestry Department (following discussion, further broken down into field staff and management, regional office and headquarters).

The boundaries of the conflict were defined by the Crown Land contained within the watershed

The problems identified included:

- rights of access to the watershed;
- illegal harvesting;

- a challenge to the authority of the Forestry Department;
- the misuse of political power;
- the loss of morale within the Department caused by the incident.

The interests of the Forestry Department were listed as:

- carrying out its mandate effectively; and
- minimising any loss of revenue to the government.

#### Forestry Department strategy

Participant's felt that the Department should continue trying to meet with the political representative using formal and informal methods (including a letter, that would: set out the Forestry Department's position and mandate; offer to meet at a convenient date; and fix the meeting venue at the Department's office).

Participant's detailed the form and structure of a potential meeting. They felt that:

- Forestry Department staff should be represented by the field office and the regional office (with the latter chairing the meeting) and that the meeting should be written up;
- the political representative should be commended for his role in reporting other contraventions of the Forestry Act and provided with an opportunity to state his position;
- the Forestry Department would then outline its understanding of the case and offer the political representative an opportunity to respond;
- throughout the meeting the Department should highlight the environmental impacts and stress the positive outcomes of the current management strategy for stakeholders;
- the legitimate procedures for obtaining a permit to harvest should be outlined;
- the meeting should end with a warning on the consequences of further breaches of the Forestry Act, giving a copy of the Forestry Act to the political representative and the return of the confiscated equipment.

#### Group 2 Case "Lumber Theft and Illegal Harvesting"

Rather than focus on a particular site Group 2 chose the issue of illegal harvesting and lumber theft as a matter of concern to most of the Department's staff. They described the case as having its roots in:

- economic pressures including unemployment, an increased desire for material wealth, a growing population and the need for a basic income;
- a strong demand for timber products (e.g. for fence posts, furniture, craft, fish pots and yam-sticks);
- a need for shelter (materials for housing);
- the need for fuel (due to the high cost of cooking gas, and to supply the growing jerk and baking industry);
- a lack of information and awareness among the public of the importance of trees to the environment.

The stakeholders were listed as:

- Forestry Department officers;
- individuals from rural communities;
- squatters;
- vandals;
- charcoal producers;
- woodcutters.

The boundaries of the conflict were described as forestry reserves and water catchment areas.

The problems identified included:

- encroachment on reserves by squatters;
- hazards to health caused by contamination of water courses;
- deforestation;
- vandalism;
- changing weather patterns (especially reduced rainfall);
- soil erosion.

The interests of the Department were listed as:

- managing forest resources so that they last for generations;
- ensuring a healthy environment;
- maintaining ecological stability;
- proving that the Department can fulfil its mandate.

Forestry Department strategy

In response to this case the Department actually established a dialogue with community members and found that a combination of unemployment and the high cost of obtaining a licence to extract timber made it difficult for harvesters to stay within the law. At the same time many of the harvesters were cutting wood for larger contractors for a very small return.

The Department took the decision to reduce the licence fee to a lower rate of J\$ 8,000, with a deposit of J\$ 5,000 payable initially and the remainder payable on completion. This system is now well established and the Department feels that it is working well.

Group 3 Case “Reforestation”

An area of teak and mahoe was cleared by Hurricane Gilbert and not re-planted. Due to the favourable price of bananas the land was soon occupied by farmers. In the meantime forestry objectives focussed on salvaging blown down timber as re-planting would have required considerable resources. The re-planting effort began 10 years after Gilbert, by which time the banana farmers were well established. Discussions have been held between the Department and the banana farmers.

The stakeholders were identified as banana farmers and the Forestry Department.

The boundaries were defined as the buffer zone surrounding a forest reserve and the private land that had not been planted with bananas.

The main problems associated with this case were:

- encroachment;
- vandalism;
- trespassing;
- soil erosion;
- loss of habitats;
- air and water pollution;
- environmental degradation.

The interest of the Forestry Department was seen as being to:

- reclaim the land planted with bananas using “paid tangya” – a variation on the established tangya system;
- reforest the land (quickly);

- avoid conflict.

#### Forestry Department strategy

The suggested Forestry Department strategy in this case was based on the idea of getting the banana farmers to plant the area with seedlings supplied (at a cost of J\$ 2.00). The group envisaged that over time the banana farmers would leave the area either as a result of a decline in banana prices or the effect of the growing forest cover. This assumption was questioned by other participants. The group set out the following technical steps:

- survey area to ascertain the number of seedlings required;
- conduct site analysis to determine which species to be planted;
- request seedlings from nursery, prepare the site, and supply first set of seedlings when the site is ready;
- supervise planting, issue second set of seedlings for planting;
- undertake mortality survey and undertake aftercare actions;
- patrol the area regularly.

#### Group 4 Case “Rastafarian Community Settlement”

A Rastafarian settlement became established in an important watershed area on the basis of visions, that community leaders cited as guidance to settle in that area. There was hostility between the Rastafarians and the neighbouring established village. Concerns about land tenure, environmental health, deforestation and increasing tension between the neighbouring communities, led to interventions by the Forestry Department, the National Water Commission, the Commissioner of Lands. An alternative site for the Rastafarian settlement was identified by authorities and attempts made to re-locate the community.

The parties to the conflict were identified as:

- the Rastafarian community;
- the community of the established village;
- the Forestry Department;
- the National Water Commission;
- political representatives;
- the Commissioner of Lands;
- the community neighbouring the alternative site that had been identified.

The boundaries of the conflict were defined as the gazetted forest reserve.

The problems were listed as:

- deforestation;
- soil erosion;
- threats to water quality and quantity in the watershed.

The role of the Forestry Department was seen as “protecting and preserving the Forestry Departments reserves and other forested Crown Lands.”

#### Forestry Department strategy

The Forestry Department’s strategy was set out in the following steps:

- develop a public awareness plan to provide information to the members of the new host community and the Rastafarian community setting out rights and responsibilities;
- provide incentives to the Rastafarian community to re-locate (e.g. timber seedlings and technical support for tree planting);
- employ one member of the Rastafarian community to assist in “policing” the area;

- undertake a re-planting programme at the previous site;
- monitor reserves to prevent future occurrences.

This case generated a lot of discussion and was chosen for use in a role playing exercise, where participants took on the identities of the various parties to the conflict. This saw participants use negotiating skills, broker alliances between parties to the conflict and understand the ways in which global forces can affect local conflicts.

Participants discussed the interests of the various parties to the conflict and found that:

- the Rastafarian community was being assisted by a US Peace Corps, sponsored by USAID;
- the neighbouring community consisted of a number of sub-groupings including a citizens association, a farmers group and a number of other community based organisations;
- the National Water Commission had a main focus on water quality and quantity, but also had an interest in watershed management;
- politicians wanted to be able to provide and upgrade social amenities for their constituents and be recognised as philanthropists;
- the Commissioner of Lands focussed on issues of land tenure, but was mainly influenced by politicians;
- the Forestry Department was part of the Ministry of Agriculture, and influenced by politicians and the Commissioner of Lands as well as other agencies such as the NRCA. It was also the implementing agency for international treaties such as CITES;
- the new host community would have concerns over over-crowding, the capacity of existing infrastructure and social segregation.

Having listened to the presentations of the four cases, the participants identified the following common themes, all the cases...

- featured some illegal activity (i.e. the contravention of a statute such as the Forestry Act)
- involved trespassing;
- resulted in economic gains for offenders (who ranged from those with power to those without);
- involved parties or factors that were external to the Forestry Department, with conflicts on a number of different levels;
- required some response from the Forestry Department;
- revealed that a wide cross section of society has an interest in forest resources;
- revealed an indifference towards the environment and the consequences of misuse;
- revealed the need for more information or clearer information about forest management objectives.

They described some of the characteristics of conflicts over forest resources and observed that:

- at first sight conflicts may focus on two parties or a single issue, but below the surface there are usually a number of different interests and a range of causes. These interests and underlying causes may not be immediately apparent;
- it is difficult to define conflicts as being specifically related to forestry, as they often overlap with broader social or economic issues that lie beyond the scope of the Forestry Department
- a conflict has to be expressed, but the conditions that lead to that expression can exist under the surface and are shaped by different factors including social relations between groups and the nature of their relationship with the resource;

- the Forestry Department itself has an interest in conflicts and is not a neutral party. It has values, objectives, rules and structures that affect the way that it deals with conflict;
- negative impacts on the resource that can trigger conflicts may not always be intended or desired or in the interests of the group that inflicts them. Where this is the case there maybe an opportunity for dialogue and negotiation.
- the factors that determine the Forestry Department's response to conflict include: the level of resources available; the degree of urgency over the matter at hand; the availability of an easy or expedient option; the expectations held of the Department.