COMMON METHODS TO IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS AND INTERACTIONS

Sustainable Heritage Areas: Partnerships for Ecotourism
Deliverable DT1.1.1

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Acronyms

SHA Sustainable Heritage Areas

1. Introduction

One of the objectives of the SHAPE project is to establish enduring stakeholder partnerships that maintain and develop cultural and natural heritage assets in SHAs through ecotourism initiatives that contribute to the sustainable growth of local communities, and transnationally share the experience gained.

SHAPE has the challenge of bringing together stakeholders who have not traditionally worked together in the past. In some cases this may involve managing local conflict and overcoming a lack of motivation among individuals and organisations.

The purpose of this document is to provide common methods and guidelines for those working in Sustainable Heritage Areas to i) identify stakeholders, ii) engage stakeholders in successful regional activities e.g. workshops and learning journeys, and iii) maintain good engagement among regional stakeholder groups both during and beyond the SHAPE project.

The methods proposed here are based on those that have been reviewed in the academic literature and others which have been successfully used in other projects. The authors of this report have had direct experience of the proposed methods and therefore have some knowledge of their advantages and drawbacks. The methods have been adapted to the SHAPE context as part of discussions among the project team during the SHAPE kick-off meeting held in Dumfries in May 2017.

Although Sustainable Heritage Areas have certain characteristics and challenges in common, they have varying historical and ongoing stakeholder engagement processes and therefore different stakeholder dynamics at the present time. Some areas may already diverse stakeholder networks working effectively together on local issues while others may have little history of stakeholder partnerships or have experienced conflict between stakeholders or low motivation and engagement.

The purpose of these methods is to employ a common approach to some aspects of stakeholder engagement in the SHAPE project while ensuring that they remain flexible in the way they are applied in different contexts by partners. The common approaches presented here provide a clear starting point and set of guidelines for developing new partnerships and will also be useful for expanding the scope of existing stakeholder engagement processes to meet the specific objectives of the SHAPE project. Applying common methods will also allow us to learn how stakeholder engagement processes work across a range of contexts and this learning process will inform best practice implementation of these methods in other sustainable heritage areas and other regions. This document provides common methods and templates for stakeholder identification. Subsequent documents will focus on methods to be used in stakeholder workshops and for maintaining engagement among regional stakeholder groups.

2. Common methods for stakeholder identification

These methods will allow stakeholder groups to be identified, and their existing and potential interactions characterised e.g. strong existing partnerships, lack of communication, trust or presence of conflict. The objective of these common methods is to ensure that all groups who may potentially be influenced by the management of natural and cultural assets and new ecotourism initiatives are identified and given an opportunity to participate SHA networks.

The first step is to define the groups of stakeholders that should be included in the stakeholder identification process. The groups given in Table 1.1 may be used as a guide to help identify organisation and individuals. There is overlap between the examples given for the different stakeholder groups but the purpose of this it to ensure that the relevance of all potential stakeholders have been considered with each SHA. It should also be recognised that some individuals may have multiple stakeholder roles simultaneously e.g. land manager, member of community organisation, accommodation provider etc. so it's important not to attempt to place stakeholders in a single category, and to acknowledge their different roles. The stakeholders for each SHA can be listed in the third column. Alternatively this exercise can be done using a visual 'mind-mapping approach' as illustrated in Figure 1.1.

Questions to consider during stakeholder identification

Reed and Attlee (2015) pose a set of questions that should be considered during the identification of stakeholders. These have been adapted for the SHAPE project as follows:

1. Who will be affected by SHAPE project activities?
2. Who will be able to influence the outcomes of the project?
3. Who are the potential supporters of SHAPE and who be opponents or disinterested?
4. What partnerships might build around the issues involved?
5. Whose voices or interest in the issue might not be heard?
6. Who will be responsible for managing the project outcomes (end users)?
7. Who can facilitate or impede the outcomes through their participation or non-participation?
8. Who might contribute financial or technical resources as a result of project outcomes in the longer term?

We encourage the SHA teams to use these questions to help them draw up their stakeholder lists.

Table 1.1. Stakeholder groups

Stakeholder group	Examples	Stakeholders in SHA
Government departments, politicians, policy makers/advisors (local national, international), those involved with relevant national/regional strategies	Departments and public bodies for environment, culture, tourism, community development and climate change Local authorities/municipalities National tourism bodies	
Non-governmental organisations	Natural conservation, cultural heritage, land management, climate change action, recreational interest organisations	
Business and industry	SMEs, farmers, tourism enterprise, large commercial interests	
Landowners and managers	Individual land owners; reserve managers, farmers	
Professional groups	Tourism and hospitality, Nature conservation, Cultural heritage	
Tourism sector/tourists	Visitors/tourists to SHAs National tourism bodies Regional/local tourism groups	
Educators	Schools, Colleges, Universities	
Youth groups	Youth groups providing social, educational and leisure activities; young famers/crofter groups	
Community groups	Community trusts; Community councils; relevant community action groups	
Minority groups	Indigenous groups, young people,	
The media	Local and national media: newspapers, websites of organisations (above)	
The general public	People who may have a general interest in the area and its cultural/natural assets, potential visitors/tourists	

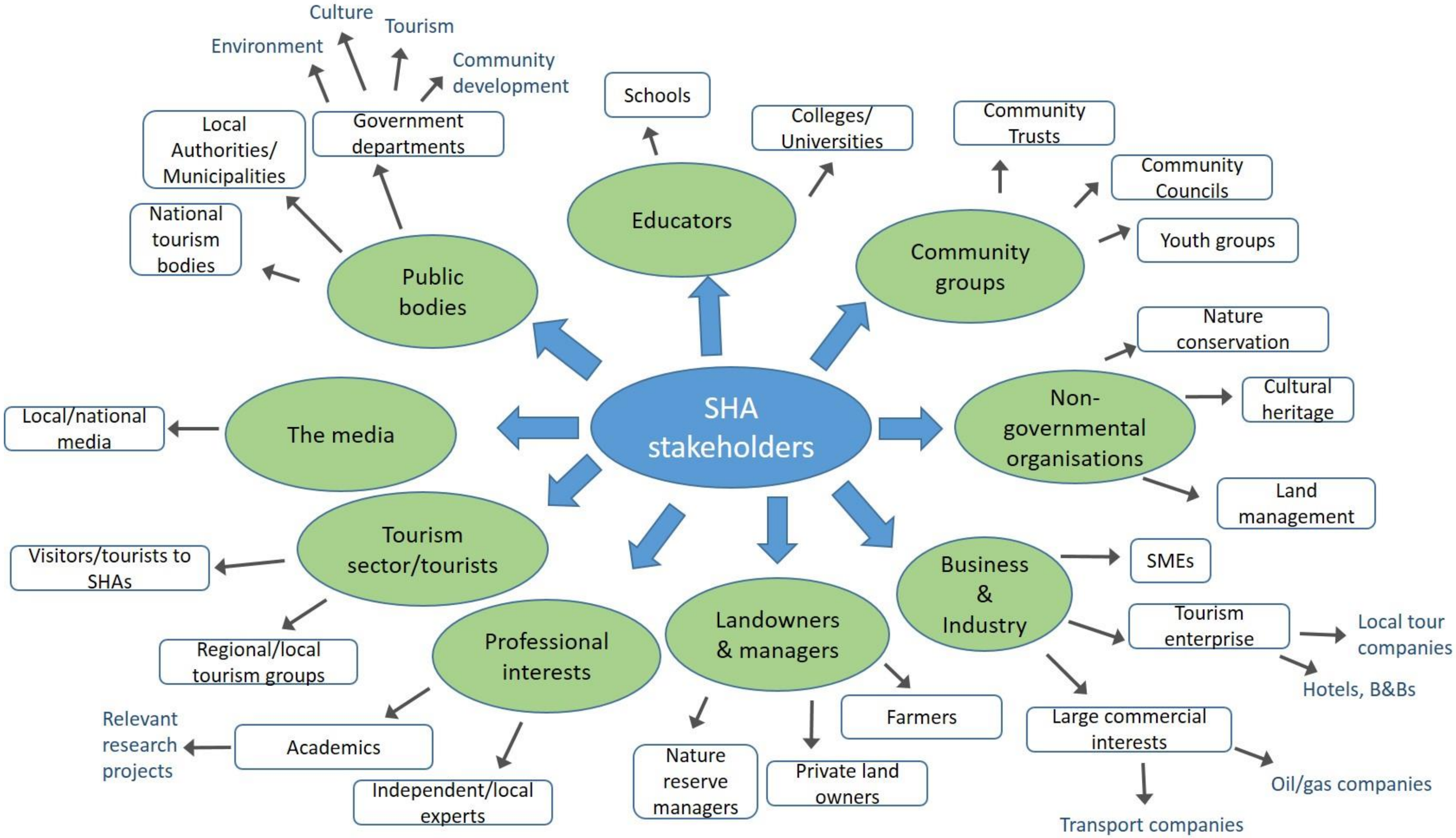

Figure 1.1. Stakeholder identification mind-map

Who should conduct the stakeholder identification?

This task is best done as a collaborative exercise among the SHA team in order to draw on the knowledge and networks/contacts of several people. It may also be useful to invite some key stakeholders to take part in this process to ensure that there is sufficient discussion and information about interactions between identified stakeholders i.e. discussing where there are strong or more difficult working relationships between stakeholders. This can work well in an informal workshop setting (2-3 hours) using flip charts and the visual mind-mapping approach (Figure 1.1)

A matrix will be used to characterise the nature of interest that each stakeholder group identified in Table 1.1. will have in each SHA network. We have adapted the extendable stakeholder interest-influence tables developed by Reed et al. (2009) for use in SHAs (Table 1.2). Additional information on ways in which these templates can be used can be found in Section 3 of the BiodivERsA Stakeholder Engagement Handbook (Durham et al. 2014).

We would expect the initial stakeholder identification in each SHA to be relatively broad as the first regional stakeholder meeting will be focussed on mapping of cultural and natural assets and identifying successful initiatives and challenges. There may therefore be a high number of stakeholders selected to be invited to the first regional workshops. At this stage it may be advisable to allow attendance by as many interested parties as possible as this will lead to a richer range of information gathered. If necessary there might be more than one meeting held, especially in areas where stakeholders are widely dispersed geographically (if this is allowable within the project budget). This will be discussed further in Part 2 (DT1.1.2). Subsequent regional meetings may involve a more focused approach on particular stakeholder groups depending on the SHA challenges and initiatives that the SHAPE project team chooses to focus on after the first regional meetings.

Stakeholder name (group or organisation)	Interest High/ Medium/ Low	Aspects of the project likely to be of interest	Ways in which we might motivate engagement in project	Key messages from SHAPE to this stakeholder	Influence High/Medium/Low	Comments on how influence of stakeholder may affect SHAPE	Key relationships with other stakeholders	Participation of stakeholder in previous networks and projects	Key contact(s) and best way of contacting them	Suggested form of engagement
Organisation 1 (Environmental agency)	High	Highly interested in habitat and species conservation	Likely to be easily engaged and responsive to email information and workshop invitation	i) promoting understanding/awareness of the value of habitats and species to visitors ii) ensuring protection of vulnerable sites maintained during development of ecotourism initiatives	High	Statutory say in management of natural resources in designated sites	Work closely with other government agencies concerning natural resources. Weaker links with cultural heritage organisation	Regular participant in local partnerships and research projects concerning natural resources.	Name 1) team leader Name 2) Area officer Name 3) Subject specialist Email addresses	Inclusion in general project communications; invitation to workshops
Organisation 2 (Local school)	Medium	Educational opportunities associated with local area	Innovative communication material; involvement in mapping assets; communication with schools in other SHAs	Local cultural and natural assets can be used to communicate value of area to others; opportunity to learn about other areas.	High	Engagement of schools lead to widespread awareness of area and project activities	Educational projects with nature based organisations		Name 1) Head teacher Name 2) Local authority	Specific events e.g. school visits; provision of educational material
Organisation 3										
Organisation 4 etc.										

Table 1.2 Stakeholder interest/influence matrix adapted from Reed et al. (2009)

It was also agreed during the SHAPE partner workshop on stakeholder engagement, that a call would be put out to organisations and communities in each SHA inviting people to get involved in SHAPE with attendance at the first regional meeting being one way of doing so. Thus, targeted stakeholder selection could be accompanied by an open request to those who might be interested in SHAPE, but who may not be individually identified by the stakeholder selection process. The latter method may be particularly effective in targeting potentially interested members of local communities. This call for interested people could be advertised in a number of ways through the range of communication channels used by SHAPE e.g. inclusion in local media/newsletters or specific SHAPE leaflets/posters.

It was emphasised during the SHAPE partner workshop that different strategies would be required to encourage the engagement of different groups. Invitations to different groups of stakeholders should therefore be tailored to their particular interests to convey the potential benefits to each stakeholder of participation. It was also agreed that it would be good to try to involve new people in stakeholder partnerships, as stakeholder representatives invited to participate in projects often tend to be the same individuals. While individuals with considerable experience of the area and previous initiatives are important to involve, added value can be brought by participants who have not been involved in previous projects and may have new and innovative perspectives. It may be possible to include these individuals through an inclusive call for interest or by deliberately inviting different individuals from organisations (after discussing options with organisation team leaders for example). Snow ball sampling is also a very useful approach where stakeholders are asked for names of people who might provide good contributions to the project; and those people are asked in turn for other names etc. A call for interest that is inclusive, clear and positive will be key for attracting interest.

3. Summary of steps for stakeholder identification in SHAs

1. Decide who should be involved in stakeholder identification for SHA
2. Invite a small number key stakeholders to take part in a stakeholder identification meeting if possible
3. Identify key stakeholder groups and then organisations/individuals within these (see Table 1.1 and complete Form 1)
4. Characterise stakeholders using extended interest/influence matrix (see Table 1.2 and complete Form 2)
5. Consider which stakeholders should be invited to first regional stakeholder meeting and how others can be engaged in SHAPE through other means of communication.
6. Consider ways of calling for local interest in the SHAPE project e.g. invitation to join the project mailing list; open invitation to register for first regional workshop etc.
7. Complete evaluation of stakeholder identification process (Form 3). This will provide valuable information for the SHAPE e-service

References

Durham E., Baker H., Smith M., Moore E. & Morgan V. (2014). *The BiodivERsA Stakeholder Engagement Handbook.* BiodivERsA, Paris (108 pp). http://www.biodiversa.org/706/download

Reed, M. S., A. Graves, N. Dandy, H. Posthumus, K. Hubacek, J. Morris, C. Prell, C. H. Quinn, and L. C. Stringer. 2009. Who's in and why? A typology of stakeholder analysis methods for natural resource management. *Journal of Environmental Management* 90(5):1933-1949. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvman.2009.01.001

Reed, M,S., Atlee, A. (2015) Knowledge exchange training for research impacts. Unpublished training manual, Sustainable Learning project and Living with Environmental Change Programme 2nd Ed.

Form 1: Identification of stakeholder groups

Name of Sustainable Heritage Area

Table completed by

Stakeholder group	Examples	Stakeholders in SHA

Continue on another sheet if necessary

Form 2: Stakeholder interest/influence matrix

Name of Sustainable Heritage Area

Table completed by

Stakeholder name (group or organisation)	Interest High/ Medium/ Low	Aspects of the project likely to be of interest	Ways in which we might motivate engagement in project	Key messages from SHAPE to this stakeholder	Influence High/Medium/Low	Comments on how influence of stakeholder may affect SHAPE	Key relationships with other stakeholders	Participation of stakeholder in previous networks and projects	Key contact(s) and best way of contacting them	Suggested form of engagement

Continue on another sheet if necessary

Form 3: Partner evaluation of stakeholder identification process (to be completed after stakeholder identification is complete)

1. How useful was the process of stakeholder identification in your area? Please circle a number from 1 to 5 where 1: not at all useful and 5: very useful

   1 2 3 4 5

Please comment on your answer

2. Please list up to three challenges you have experienced when identifying stakeholders in your area

1. 2. 3.

3. Please list up to 3 'lessons learned' or recommendations that you would like to pass on to other Sustainable Heritage Areas who need to carry out stakeholder identification

1. 2. 3.