

Part II

A Generic Framework for the Development of Conflict Reconciliation Action Plans

**Klaus Henle, Irene Ring, Reinhard A. Klenke, Niels Jepsen,
Andreas Kranz, Carsten Neßhöver and Felix Rauschmayer**

Abstract Attempts to reconcile human-wildlife conflicts are usually developed on a case-by-case approach. A generic framework can offer help in the reconciliation of such conflicts by building on common elements and the experience gained in case studies. Here we introduce the concept and structure of such a generic framework that is based on the experience from the joint work of natural and social science researchers. It is a structured collection of good advice presented as

K. Henle (✉) · R. A. Klenke · C. Neßhöver
Department of Conservation Biology, UFZ—Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research,
Permoserstraße 15, 04318, Leipzig, Germany
e-mail: klaus.henle@ufz.de

I. Ring
Department of Economics, UFZ—Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research,
Permoserstraße 15, 04318, Leipzig, Germany
e-mail: irene.ring@ufz.de

R. A. Klenke
e-mail: reinhard.klenke@ufz.de

N. Jepsen
National Institute of Aquatic Resources, Section of Freshwater Fisheries Ecology, Technical
University of Denmark, Vejlsøvej 39, 8600, Silkeborg, Denmark
e-mail: nj@aqua.dtu.dk

A. Kranz
Institute of Wildlife Biology and Game Management, University of Natural Resources and
Life Sciences, Gregor Mendel Str. 33, 1180, Vienna, Austria
e-mail: andreas.kranz@aon.at

C. Neßhöver
e-mail: carsten.nesshoever@ufz.de

F. Rauschmayer
Department of Environmental Politics, UFZ—Helmholtz Centre for Environmental
Research, Permoserstraße 15, 04318, Leipzig, Germany
e-mail: felix.rauschmayer@ufz.de

guidelines for people who have to deal with human-wildlife conflicts. Its purpose is to both facilitate the identification of gaps in existing reconciliation approaches that may hamper their success and to help design reconciliation action plans for newly arising or previously ignored conflicts. The generic framework is designed in a modular way, each module addressing a different main topic in the assessment and reconciliation of conflicts. The following chapters in this book explain these modules in detail.

Purpose of the Generic Framework

Competition between humans and wildlife for biological resources has led to the persecution of wildlife for centuries. With changes in civil society's attitudes towards wildlife and success of conservation management wildlife species increase again in number and return to areas from where they had disappeared. Consequently, conflicts between humans about wildlife and biological resources are on the rise in many parts of Europe and throughout the world.

The need to reconcile such conflicts is the logical response to this change in fundamental paradigms in human-wildlife relationships. Reconciliation means managing the competition between people and wildlife as well as the conflict among different interest groups that are quoted in these changing attitudes.

Attempts to reconcile conflicts are usually developed on a case-by-case approach. As a consequence, attempts differ greatly among conflicts and among countries, both in approaches followed and in their successes and failures. Nevertheless, there are many common elements to human-wildlife conflicts around the world. A generic framework can offer help in the reconciliation of human-wildlife conflicts by building on such common elements and the experience gained in case studies. Increasing demands for harmonizing management, especially across the EU but also elsewhere in the world, also calls for the development of a generic framework for human-wildlife conflict reconciliation.

The generic framework presented here is based on the experience from the joint work of natural and social science researchers who studied model conflicts over a 3-year period within the EU project FRAP. It is a structured collection of good advice presented as guidelines for people who have to deal with human-wildlife conflicts. Its purpose is to both facilitate the identification of gaps in existing reconciliation approaches that may hamper their success and to help design reconciliation action plans (RAPs) for new or previously ignored human-wildlife conflicts. It suggests approaches to characterize the conflicts and to identify and assess key elements that drive the conflicts, as well as measures that may help to reconcile them and thus ultimately supports the sustainable use of biological resources.

The target groups are mainly managers and decision makers in such conflicts, representatives of the affected stakeholder groups that are involved in negotiations for reconciliation action plans, and scientists that contribute to conflict analysis and the development of reconciliation strategies.

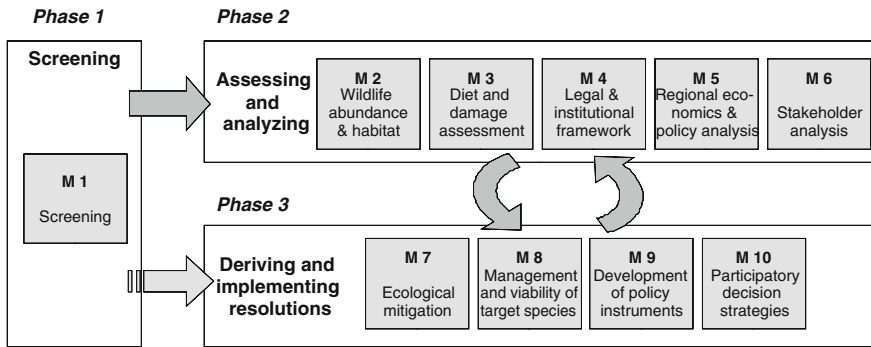


Fig. 1 Generic framework for the development and implementation of reconciliation strategies or action plans, consisting of 3 phases and 10 modules (M)

Content and Use of the Generic Framework

We designed the generic framework in a modular way, each module addressing a different main topic in the assessment and reconciliation of conflicts (Fig. 1). The modules are allocated to three essential phases in the development of reconciliation action plans: the screening phase, the assessment phase, and the phase for deriving and implementing resolutions.

The development of reconciliation strategies is an iterative process. At the beginning (screening phase) one should develop an impression regarding what approaches may be particularly relevant for the derivation of resolutions, i.e., which modules in phase 3 (deriving and implementing resolutions) will need to get which level of attention. This first impression will then be refined through the information collected in phase 2 (assessment phase), since the data might be challenged by some stakeholders, if the method to create them has not been agreed upon beforehand. This notwithstanding, the information gained through the modules in phase 2 may necessitate a change in the initial impression about potentially successful ways of mitigating the conflict. Therefore, it is necessary to cover all modules of phase 2, as each of them represents different though essential aspects of conflict management. This may just result in a change of focus for phase 3, but it may also require re-addressing one or several modules in greater depth. Conflict resolution may need to proceed repeatedly through phases 2 and 3 in an iterative way to find optimal solutions (Fig. 1).

Phase 1 “Screening the conflict”, contains one module. Its purpose is to raise awareness of different aspects to consider in the development of a reconciliation action plan by a preliminary evaluation of the history, intensity, and dimension of the conflict. It facilitates identification of the relevant area/region for the assessment and reconciliation. Thus, the screening phase helps to identify relevant scales: ecological (activity range and distribution of wildlife, type, and magnitude of damage), political and administrative (administrative units, relevant decision bodies, laws, and policy instruments), economic (economic activities and sectors

affected, including relevance of economic damage), and social (intensity of conflict, main stakeholder groups and their perceptions). It further helps to identify major gaps in knowledge and reconciliation approaches and thus facilitates conflict assessment and solution in phases 2 and 3 by helping to evaluate, which of the modules of phases 2 and 3 are likely to be of particular relevance (Fig. 1). The screening phase is crucial, because it is in the beginning, where decisions are made about where and how much money and time will be spent and whether it is an effective method.

Phase 2 “Assessing and analyzing the conflict” has the purpose of improving factual knowledge and understanding of the conflict by evaluating the ecological, legal, and socio-economic basis of the conflict. This understanding is essential to identify opportunities and limitations for conflict reconciliation. The modules of phase 2 are designed to help identify major ecological, institutional, economic, and social drivers of the conflict. Phase 2 comprises two ecological and three socio-economic modules. Module 2 provides guidelines to assess wildlife abundance as well as key habitat and landscape factors that determine a spatially variable exposure of the biological resource to wildlife. Module 3 provides guidelines for an assessment of direct and indirect damage caused by wildlife. Module 4 addresses the legal and institutional framework for conflict reconciliation at various governmental levels, with a special emphasis on European regulations. Module 5 provides guidelines to assess the regional relevance of the conflict in economic terms and relevant policy instruments. Module 6 is dedicated to a stakeholder analysis to assess their perceptions and viewpoints. The ecological and socio-economic key factors of the conflict as well as opportunities and limitations identified by the modules of phase 2 point to promising resolutions and thus help to identify which of the modules of the resolution phase are of particular relevance (Fig. 1). This process may confirm the assumptions of the screening phase or lead to an adaptation and change of focus.

Phase 3 “Deriving and implementing resolutions” is dedicated to supporting the development and implementation of reconciliation strategies or action plans (RAPs). Note that a single approach rarely works for conflict resolution. Therefore, the modules of phase 3 facilitate the identification of combinations of effective approaches, their opportunities, limitations, and risks, and of relevant persons and institutions for the implementation process. The results of this phase will be a conflict management strategy or a RAP, which includes actions on the ground, work with stakeholders, and recommendations for policy changes, but may also include a return to phase 2 for more in-depth scientific assessment of specific components. Phase 3 contains four modules. Module 7 helps to assess ecological mitigation methods. Module 8 provides guidelines for monitoring wildlife abundance and discusses the advantages and limitations of various modeling approaches to assess wildlife population viability under different management scenarios. Module 9 evaluates policy instruments and provides advice for their improvement and the development of new instruments. Module 10 delivers

guidelines for effective stakeholder interaction and the design of participatory decision strategies.

Except for the screening phase and module 4, we identify for each module minimum requirements and make recommendations for standard and advanced approaches. In general, we recommend following standard approaches. In conflicts that are difficult to reconcile or in which stakes are particularly high, we suggest using advanced approaches at least for the key elements for assessing and reconciling the conflict. Background and technical information regarding each module are provided in boxes.

To use our generic framework efficiently, we recommend starting with module 1, the screening phase. Then continue to the modules indicated by the results of your screening process, unless you are well familiar with the multidisciplinary and temporal facets of human-wildlife conflict reconciliation and are looking only for recommendations and support material in relation to specific components of conflict assessment and reconciliation.

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