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Finding Common Ground: Environmental Conflict

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Anotace

Práce se zabývá tématem environmentálních konfliktů v chráněných územích a zkoumá možné způsoby jejich řešení. Hlavním cílem práce je prozkoumat, jaké jsou příčiny těchto konfliktů a jak konflikty vnímají lidé, kteří bydlí či pracují v blízkosti těchto území. Teoretická část problematiku představuje prostřednictvím Frame Theory a Progress Triangle. Praktická část zkoumá případovou studii konfliktu v Národním parku České Švýcarsko z pohledu místních obyvatel prostřednictvím polostrukturovaných rozhovorů.

Abstract

The thesis studies the topic of conservation conflicts in protected areas and examines possible ways they can be managed. The main aim of the thesis is to explore the root causes of these conflicts and how are they understood by the local community. The theoretical part introduces the matter through the frameworks of the Frame Theory and Progress Triangle. The practical part of the thesis examines a case study of an ongoing conservation conflict in Bohemian Switzerland National Park as viewed by the local inhabitants via semi-structured interviews.

Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci na téma **Finding Common Ground: Environmental Conflict** zpracovala sama. Veškeré prameny a zdroje informací, které jsem použila k sepsání této práce, byly citovány v textu a jsou uvedeny v seznamu použitých pramenů a literatury.

V Brně 3. ledna, 2024

.....
Anna Tabášková

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Introduction

Protected areas are regarded as critical to mitigating climate change, and slowing the present biodiversity collapse (Dudley et al., 2010; IUCN, 2012) and current research on social-ecological systems of protected areas highlights their role in improving the well-being of local populations (Jiricka-Pürerer et al., 2019; Naidoo et al., 2019; Pullin et al., 2013). Protected areas, however, also often contain potential for conflicts over environmental and social rights, diverging interests, ways of knowing, restricted access, or management practices (Aastrup, 2020; Adams & Hutton, 2007; Ainsworth et al., 2020; Buijs et al., 2011; Feeney, 2023).

In this context, nature disturbances such as insect epidemics or fires can function as triggers of such conflicts while they result in massive transformation of both ecological and social systems and consequentially cause tensions as elements of the systems attempt to adapt to the newly established state (Fisher, 2022, p. 27; Müller, 2011). Due to the multiple challenges forest landscapes currently face (e.g., higher temperatures and past human disturbances, more extreme weather events), they are becoming increasingly more vulnerable when hit by a combination of major natural disturbances. Consequentially, several have claimed increased frequency of conservation conflicts is to be expected which reinforces the need to find ways conservation conflicts can be successfully managed (Blicharska et al., 2020; Hlásny et al., 2021; McFarlane et al., 2006; Mezei et al., 2017; Müller, 2011). Furthermore, public participation and meaningful stakeholder engagement within management and decision-making processes have continuously been advocated for in the field of environmental conflict management for its promise of reducing the destructive conflict dynamics, increasing mutual trust or legitimacy of the process (Buono et al., 2012; Fienitz et al., 2022; Fiorino, 1990; Reed, 2008; Young et al., 2010).

The general aim of the thesis is to explore the underlying causes and processes behind conservation conflicts, which is important for developing suitable conflict

management strategies and moving towards better social and environmental outcomes. In the theoretical section, I pursue this by reviewing relevant recent studies on environmental conflicts, emphasizing those that occurred in protected areas or that have been triggered by natural disturbances. The empirical part focuses on the main aim of the study which is to gain an understanding of the views on conservation conflict by those living or working in the close vicinity of protected area and pursues to attain the goal through a case study of an ongoing conservation conflict in Bohemian Switzerland National Park (Czech Republic) consisting of an analysis of semi-structured interviews with the local residents.

Aside from Müller's (2011; 2009) notable studies, the majority of research on the social aspects of natural disturbances and the environmental conflict they may trigger has been conducted in Northern America and Australia, being a relatively understudied theme in Central Europe. In this light, while each environmental conflict is inevitably unique – and therefore generalizations are not attainable – I hope this study could contribute a small piece to the larger puzzle of environmental conflict research. Additionally, through directly engaging with the local community, the current study may be able to voice their perspectives on the conflict and carry them forward to the parties involved. As a result, I hope that the study could at least partially enhance the current state of mutual understanding and the conflict's future trajectory.

1 Theoretical Part

1.1 Take a walk on the wild side: Labyrinth of Environmental Conflict

A variety of definitions has been proposed to characterize environmental conflict. According to Fisher (2022, p. 28), environmental conflict is “a situation in which an environmental factor is the primary source of tension or incompatibility among the needs, interests, positions, and values of multiple stakeholders.” Others (e.g., Deutsch, 1973) emphasize that in addition to differences in perceptions of opposing interests or points of view, actions are another crucial qualification criterion for conflicts.

For the purposes of the present study, the environmental conflicts are defined by the following components: (1) involvement of two or more parties¹, (2) competing interests of these parties, and (3) perceptions of these interests that are influenced by a variety of determinants (4) the distinction between the environmental problems at stake in the conflict and the actual conflict situations. That was the most widely used conceptualisation in the reviewed papers (e.g., Niemelä et al., 2005; Rechciński et al., 2019; Redpath et al., 2013, 2015; Soliku & Schraml, 2018; Young et al., 2010) focusing on conservation conflicts which are the primary focus of the present study.

Furthermore, the realities of environmental conflict will be approached through the lenses of the theoretical framework outlined by Hellström (2001) that is based on ideas derived from a holistic view of natural resources, social constructionism, and conflict regulation theory. According to the holistic perspective, which is closely related to the social-ecological system theory by Ostrom (2009), natural resources, are not only aspects of the physical environment, but also aspects of the political, cultural, social, and economic systems. Societal constructionism, the second element of the

¹ In the conflict context, these parties are referred to as stakeholders. These are the individuals or groups that will be affected by, or will affect, wildlife respectively ecosystem management (Decker & Chase, 1997).

framework, sees social issues (such as environmental and conservation conflicts) as dynamic and collectively defined. This goes in line with Glasl's impairment approach to conflict (1982; 1999), i.e., environmental problems will lead to social conflict only when people *interpret* such issues as a cause of impairment. The third component, conflict regulation theories is based on the idea the destructive nature of conflicts can be regulated, and on the view that conflicts have a potentially positive role in driving positive social change (Hellström, 2001, p. 16).

The definition of environmental conflict provided above encompasses a wide variety of conflict processes and types. The objective of the following paragraphs is to explore these and provide further insights into what constitutes an environmental conflict.

1.1.1 Conflict Dynamics

Intense conflicts seldom arise out of thin air; they grow in intensity over time. Conflicts are sparked by conflict triggers (also called drivers), which can be single events (e.g., windstorm, wildfire) or series of events and forces (e.g., gradual deforestation of an area, climate change) that produce clashes and tensions in society (Barrow, 2010; Cusack et al., 2021; Fisher, 2022). Triggers result in a system regime shift, a fundamental shift in the structure and function of the system and the ecological services on which human stakeholders rely (Folke et al., 2004; Kinzig et al., 2006). Until the social-ecological system returns to its initial state of dynamic equilibrium (if the conditions allow so), the triggers push both parts of the system (society and ecosystem) to reorganize themselves and find ways to adapt to the change.

To illustrate this, changes in precipitation and the ability of the soil to absorb rainfall have an effect on food security and water availability, requiring the renegotiation of social structures and relationships in the affected areas (Homer-Dixon, 1991; Kevane & Gray, 2008; Opiyo et al., 2014). Conflict arises when involved actors find diverging and incompatible answers to the questions raised by the triggers including the nature of the problem generated by the shift, its causes, and adequate solutions (Fisher, 2022).

p. 37; Redpath et al., 2013). In this light, conflict is an intrinsic part of social-ecological systems because conflict is fundamentally a product of change, which is an inherent property of socio-ecological systems.

The potential spectrum of conflict processes ranges from latent value differences to policy debates to violent armed conflicts. Previous work has attempted to define conflict intensity. For example, Hellström (2001) categorises conflict intensity in four stages: (1) existence of on-site protests, (2) litigation, (3) strong campaigning and (4) milder types. However, Hellström considered defining conflict intensity problematic, especially in the context of the different cultural contexts in which they occur. For instance, as stated by Matiru (2000), since some societies (or their cultural norms) ask their members to avoid open conflict, the absence of apparent or visible manifestation of conflict in the interaction among different stakeholders does not necessarily imply the absence of conflict as such. A situation in which a potential for conflict is present but the incompatibilities between the parties have not yet become apparent or active is commonly referred to as latent conflict (Cusack et al., 2021; Fisher, 2022, p. 172).

Glasl (1982; 1999) provided a nine-stage conflict escalation model that describes a generic pathway of conflict escalation. More importantly, Glasl coupled the various stages with recommended strategies for de-escalation (Figure 1). Following insights from Glasl's studies, Yasmi et al. (2006) examined 118 case studies of conflicts related to natural resource management and identified eight stages of conflict escalation. Gritten et al. (2012) then categorised these into four areas: restrained conflict (1. feeling anxiety, 2. debate and critique, 3. lobby and persuasion), open conflict (4. protest and campaigning, 5. access restriction, 6. court), violent conflict (7. intimidation and physical exchange), and *geographical expansion of conflict* (8. nationalisation and internationalisation).

Phases of conflict escalation have also been identified in the arena of conservation conflict. Cusack et al. (2021) used a model originally used for armed conflicts and developed an intuitive and comprehensive model of the Conservation Conflict Curve.

The resulting conservation conflict curve defines six conflict intensity levels: coexistence or collaboration (level 0); latent disagreement (level 1); expressed disagreement (level 2); unilateral action (level 3); multilateral action (level 4); and physical violence (level 5).

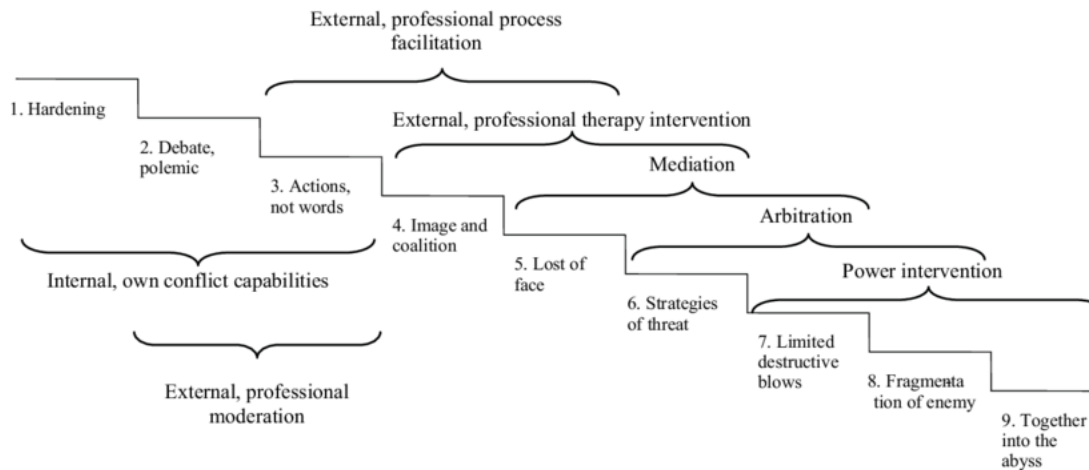


Figure 1 Glasl's model of conflict escalation

It should be noted that the outlined conflict models may falsely impose artificial linearity on conflict processes. However, both the study on natural resource management and conservation conflict show that environmental conflict escalation is not a linear process and that there are several common paths of escalation, in contrast to the single generic path described by Glasl (1982; 1999) for inter-individual conflict. This, coupled with a wide array of potential environmental issues at play, makes the notion of environmental conflicts seem amorphous at best. Nevertheless, the use of the mentioned tools in identifying the stage/level of escalation has proven to be insightful when examining how environmental conflicts evolve over time and considering an

appropriate management strategy (Gritten et al., 2012; Soliku & Schraml, 2018; Yasmi & Schanz, 2010).

1.1.2 Types of environmental conflict

There are numerous ways of categorizing environmental conflicts. Some of the most common typologies classify conflict based on their substantive theme or apparent root cause of a conflict (e.g., Bingham, 1986). However, because of the wide range of environmental issues, these classifications tend to be very selective, incapable of covering the entire spectrum, and the categories are not typically mutually exclusive. Moreover, Deutsch (1973) claims that the substantive theme may or may not be the most essential aspect of the dispute, and it does not necessarily have to characterize the conflict as a whole.

O'Leary and Bingham (2003) classify environmental conflicts as upstream, midstream, or downstream. Upstream environmental conflicts entail planning, policy development, and often the enactment of laws, typically at the national or regional level. Midstream environmental issues include administrative permitting for actions that have an environmental impact and are more site-specific. Lastly, downstream environmental conflicts often revolve around compliance and enforcement and commonly include allocation or distribution of natural resources, ways of land use or siting industrial facilities.

The most frequently cited categorization of conflict types (Redpath, Gutiérrez, Wood, Sidaway, et al., 2015, pp. 6–7; Sidaway, 2005; Young et al., 2010) in current conservation conflict literature differentiated between:

- Conflicts of interest: when there are incompatible objectives from the habitat or species among stakeholders
- Conflicts over beliefs and values: when stakeholders hold diverging normative perceptions, such as views on what types of human behaviour should be permitted or which species should be protected

- Conflicts over process: when there are incompatible perspectives and expectations over processes of decision-making, justice and fairness
- Conflicts over information: when information is lacking, misunderstood, or perceived in different ways by different stakeholders
- Structural conflicts: concerning social, legal, economic, and cultural structures, inequalities (commonly latent)
- Interpersonal conflicts: relate to relationships among stakeholders, including issues of communication and trust

To conclude, the key difficulty with typologies is that conflicts often occur in unique and often complex contexts. Creating categories is thus a matter of inevitable simplification. Nevertheless, it is of value to briefly illustrate a few categorisations of environmental conflicts as they are useful when examining the various aspects of environmental conflicts and consequentially orientating in various management techniques. For example, if the conflicts are primarily over diverging information, a plausible management strategy could include practices stemming from collaborative learning, conflict transformation and knowledge integration (e.g., Ainsworth et al. (2020); further in the Chapter 1.3). In Table 1, I list some of the most common typologies of environmental conflict with a specific focus on the ones used within conservation conflict studies.

Despite the diversity of concerns covered by environmental conflicts, they all share fundamental characteristics. The specific nature of environmental conflict and its components will be characterised in the following paragraphs.

Table 1 Typologies of Environmental Conflict

Author	Conflict type
Deutsch (1973)	1. Constructive conflicts 2. Destructive conflicts
Bingham (1986)	According to the primary environmental issue at the centre of the conflict: 1. Land use 2. Natural Resource management and use public lands 3. Water resources 4. Energy 5. Air quality 6. Toxics
Chandrasekharan (1996)	According to the actors involved and the value associated with the conflict and the resources: 1. Conflicts over access 2. Conflicts due to changes in resource quality and availability 3. Conflicts regarding authority over resource 4. Conflicts that are value-based 5. Conflicts associated with information processing and availability 6. Conflicts occurring for legal / policy reasons.
Hellström (2001) as adapted from Walker and Daniels (1997)	1. Conflict themes (substance dimension) I. Forest protection II. Forest management (emphasis on utilisation) III. Social impacts of forest protection (e.g., employment, regional economy) IV. Amenity use of forests V. Private ownership rights. 2. Conflict intensity (procedure dimension) I. Existence of on-site protests II. Litigation III. Strong campaigning IV. Milder types 3. Conflict actors (relational dimension) I. Forest industry II. Different administrations III. Media IV. Others with diverse interests
O'Leary & Bingham (2003)	1. Upstream conflict 2. Midstream conflict 3. Downstream conflict
Young et al. (2010), Redpath et al. (2015)	1. Conflicts of interest 2. Conflicts over beliefs and values 3. Conflicts over process 4. Conflicts over information 5. Structural conflicts 6. Interpersonal conflicts

1.1.3 Characteristics

To paraphrase Game et al. (2014), management of environmental conflicts is no rocket science – it is much more complex. The process of engineering a rocket spaceship is predictable and controllable, has jointly agreed-upon goals and when it is confronted with an issue, the definition of the problem is unambiguous and can be usually addressed via controversy-free technological measures. Contrastingly, almost none of the stated could be said when characterising environmental conflicts. Like many other public policy-related issues, environmental conflict and ecosystem management can be labelled as "wicked problem," (Balint, 2011; DeFries & Nagendra, 2017; Game et al., 2014; Walker et al., 2008). Rittel and Webber (1973) distinguish "wicked" from "tame" problems in that "wicked" problems have no definitive definition and no finite set of potential solutions. Other aspects of wicked problems identified by Rittel and Weber include the interrelatedness of many problems, scientific and technical complexity and uncertainty, and transcendence of political jurisdictions (DeFries & Nagendra, 2017; Fisher, 2014). Therefore, authority and accountability are ambiguous, various causes and issues must be handled simultaneously, and knowledge resources are commonly incomplete.

Problems of this nature are also referred to as "*messy*", particularly in the ecosystem and natural resource management arenas. In characterizing messy situations, Reid, et al. (1996, p. 9) argue that "environmental problems are a tangle of interacting processes whose manifestation and interpretation are warped by the vagaries of time, weather, expectation, and economics...(they involve) livelihoods, values, and numerous specialized disciplines." Ecosystem management and environmental conflict can be, according to Walker et al. (2008), characterised by three elements of the so-called "Tangle Triad": complexity, uncertainty and controversy. The characteristics pose considerable obstacles to conflict management and are therefore worth further exploration.

Complexity

In their book, *Working through Environmental Conflict* (2001), Walker and Daniels identified seven root causes of environmental conflict's complexity: multiple parties, multiple issues, deeply held values and worldviews, cultural differences, legal requirements, scientific and traditional knowledge and the presence of a conflict "industry," (i.e., organizations, professions, or people who may benefit from the persistence of conflict, rather than its resolution).

Additionally, since the socio-ecological system is continually changing due to endogenous and exogenous factors, the interactions between social and ecological components are constantly changing as they respond to diverse forces. Once an action has been taken—may that action be inaction, naturally occurring or anthropogenic—the system will have been altered and new problems or dynamics will arise. Every effort and every decision is consequential because of the set of changes it initiates, so there is no returning to the start to try again. Instead, stakeholders, policymakers, and third-party intervenors need to consider a new starting point at each moment (Balint, 2011; Daniels & Walker, 2001; Fisher, 2014; Fisher & Rucki, 2017; Messier et al., 2016; Wittmer et al., 2006).

Another difficulty in managing conflict in social-ecological systems is that ecological and social processes occur at different spatial and temporal scales (Balint, 2011; d'Estree et al., 2002). Consequently, delays may occur between the implementation of a management measure and its ecological or environmental impact. These delays can fuel perceptions among affected groups that their needs are not being taken into account in potential management strategies and further escalate the conflict situation (Fisher, 2014).

Finally, environmental conflicts are typically inter-jurisdictional, i.e. they do not respect geographical boundaries and frequently impose questions that are beyond the legal reach of a single institution (d'Estree et al., 2002; Fisher, 2014; MacNaughton &

Martin, 2002). Therefore, in addition to the interdisciplinary approach that is required to sufficiently reflect the socio-ecological complexity, an inter-organizational approach needs to be employed as well if the management is to be successful.

Controversy

Environmental conflicts commonly spark heated debates. There are numerous sources of controversy in the context of environmental conflict. First, “*environmental conflicts are always multicultural—in the broadest sense* (d’Estree et al., 2002, p. 589).” Participants come from various backgrounds: conflicts involve urban and rural interests; old-timers as well as new inhabitants; mushroom pickers as well as loggers, farmers, tourists, or mountain bikers. Due to the factors such as diversity of values, frames they engage with or past experiences, stakeholders tend to have highly diverse and conflicting views on the problems at hand (e.g., Baynham-Herd et al., 2018; Buijs et al., 2011; Lewicki & Gray, 2003; Niemelä et al., 2005).

Furthermore, while each stakeholder is experiencing a common root environmental issue, everyone deals with unique environmental problems. However, when they come together to discuss solutions, they will very likely presume that each understands the other completely when addressing the issue, e.g., “the drought” or “the bug.” Until mutual understanding, a common definition of a conflict is reached, “*issues look different to opposing partisans, who think their own perceptions—and emotional reactions—are the only ‘natural’ ones*” (Susskind & Field, 1996 in Leong & Forester, 2009, p. 27) And since each stakeholder has his own definition of conflict situation, there is no enumerable or finite set of solutions to solve the issue (Balint, 2011; Fisher, 2022, p. 37).

Lastly, the conflict controversy is also strongly related to emotions. Whether it be the river in which they learned how to swim or a forest they love to go for a walk in with their dog, actors often hold strong emotional ties both to the landscape itself and the

issue of the conflict (Baldwin et al., 2017; Buijs & Lawrence, 2013; Creighton et al., 2008; Flint, 2006; Kennedy & Vining, 2007; Lewicka, 2011; O'Brien, 2006).

Uncertainty

The system complexity described above causes high levels of uncertainty in the context of the management of environmental conflict. This uncertainty manifests in various ways including: 1) uncertainty related to the drivers of the change that triggered the present conflict 2) the effects or cascade of change that a potential managerial measure or decision could initiate 3) what sorts of information and data are needed to reduce uncertainties in these systems (Messier et al., 2016).

Many environmental conflicts escalate due to the adversarial use of scientific data on which successful management relies on. Knowledge can be produced and –more importantly– interpreted in different ways, depending on the main interests, beliefs and values of stakeholders, often linked to their professional identity (Redpath, Gutiérrez, Wood, Sidaway, et al., 2015). In the context of highly complex interconnected issues, the inherent uncertainty of scientific knowledge is hyphenated and this often results in what d'Estree et al. (2002, p. 593) referred to as the “*battle of the experts*”.

Costanza and Cornwall (1992, p. 15) conclude: “Uncertainty should be accepted as a basic component of environmental decision-making at all levels and be better communicated”. A common approach to coping with the presence of uncertainty in a social-ecological system is the adaptive management (DeFries & Nagendra, 2017; Walker et al., 2008), which promotes “learning by doing” and will be further described in Chapter 1.3.

1.2 Born to be wild? Conservation Conflicts in Protected Areas

Protected areas (PA) are considered to be the cornerstones for reducing climate change and decelerating the current biodiversity crisis (Dudley et al., 2010; IUCN, 2012; Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2020; Thomas & Gillingham, 2015). They function as the key tools for biodiversity conservation both at the global level (Andam et al., 2008; Di Marco et al., 2015; Geldmann et al., 2019) and the continental level (Naughton-Treves et al., 2005). Additionally, a contemporary method of studying the social-ecological systems of the PA emphasizes their function in enhancing the well-being of local communities (Jiricka-Pürerer et al., 2019; Naidoo et al., 2019; Pullin et al., 2013).

At the same time, PA can be perceived as minefields of potential conflicts over rights, issues of access, environmental and social justice, and ways of understanding nature and management practices (Aastrup, 2020; Adams & Hutton, 2007; Feeney, 2023). Global political incentives that aim to halt the collapse of biodiversity drive the growth of the world's PA system. According to Dudley (2008), worldwide PA coverage has grown over the past 40 years from an area the size of the United Kingdom to an area the size of South America. Currently, over 24 % of the world's terrestrial, marine, and freshwater ecosystems are protected (UNEP-WCMC & IUCN, 2023) and according to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the area must enlarge to at least 30 % by 2030. Most recently, in July 2023, the EU established a new Nature Restoration Law that will implement recovery measures on 20% of EU land and sea by 2030 and expand to include all degraded ecosystems by 2050 (Taylor, 2023). As the intensified global policies drive the increase of protection and restoration including actions such as the creation of PAs, and in the context of a massive land-use change induced through environmental policies, possible conflicts relating to conservation are unavoidable (Baynham-Herd et al., 2018).

The literature review by Soliku and Schraml (2018) identifies the most common reasons for conflict emergence in PAs based on the central issue of the conflict and the

geographical location of the PA. In the study, the most common conflict types within Europe were “human-wildlife conflicts”, “restricted access conflicts”, “exclusion in participation and information sharing” or “law, legislation and policy” (Blicharska et al., 2020; Niemelä et al., 2005; Young et al., 2005).

The contexts, in which the other types of conflicts occur, are usually self-explanatory from their names. However, the well-established term of environmental conflict studies ‘Human-wildlife conflicts’ has recently been labelled as misleading by many (e.g., Redpath et al., 2013; Young et al., 2010). The reasoning behind the critique of the term is twofold: 1) It falsely implies that wildlife species are intentionally hostile towards humans in conflict. The term paints the picture of a wolf viciously *choosing* to cause harm, a bark beetle *deciding* to dramatically influence the visual appeal of the landscape; etc. 2) While most of the so-called “human-wildlife” conflict realistically happens between humans with different conservation objectives, the term highlights the direct interactions between humans and the wild species which comprises only part of the conflict situations. These critiques are not merely a matter of linguistics and terminology as the strategies of conflict management and policies on regional, national, and global levels are being influenced by the implications outlined. Therefore, for the purposes of the current work, I will use the umbrella term conservation conflicts to refer to the conflicts described above, which are the primary focus of the current study.

According to Redpath et al. (2013, p. 100), conservation conflicts can be defined as “situations that occur when two or more parties with strongly held opinions clash over conservation objectives and when one party is perceived to assert its interests at the expense of another.” From the definition, it is apparent that conservation conflict happens primarily among humans. The predominant role of humans in conservation conflicts highlights the need to acknowledge the economic, political, social, and cultural roots of conflicts rather than concentrating just on the ecological conditions (Redpath et al., 2013). While the ecological drivers and underlying ecology of the biodiversity impacts (such as changes in precipitation or introduction of invasive species) may

resemble each other among cases, the overall context of the situation and therefore adequate management strategy of conflicts will be uniquely influenced by their unique socio-economic context (Young et al., 2010).

On the surface, biodiversity impacts may be falsely as identified with the causes of the conflict (Redpath et al., 2015; Young et al., 2010): the impact of large carnivores on the sheep population causing the dispute; the impact of a wildfire on local ecosystems driving the social unrest. From this perspective, an understandable approach to resolving these issues is to develop sound scientific data and an evidence base to comprehend these impacts and discover methods of reducing them, often through technical solutions. In other words, eradicate the wolves or get rid of all the wood that could possibly serve as fuel for the wildfires. This strategy, however, rarely meets with success since it only solves part of the issue. While solely focusing on the impacts, this approach neglects the intertwined socio-ecological constellations of PAs. Applying solely technical solutions resembles the approach of a neurologist who would only examine the severity of the symptoms of his patient, neglecting the root causes and consequently prescribing quick relief painkillers.

Various disturbances have an impact on the dynamics and may function as triggers of conflict within the context of the socio-ecological system of PA. Anthropogenic disturbances such as, e.g., grazing, mining, or forest thinning are common drivers of conservation conflicts. More importantly, in the context of the current paper, conflict within PA may also be triggered by natural disturbances such as windstorms, wildfires, or insect outbreaks.

Because of several global change factors (e.g., higher temperatures and more extreme weather events, past human disturbances, the suppression of natural fires, and the planting of fast-growing conifers), forest landscapes worldwide are increasingly challenged by a combination of major natural disturbances. To give an example and present the massive stress European forests are undergoing, Figure 2 illustrates the

growth of overall volume of Norway spruce killed by bark beetles in selected countries in Europe since 1945.

Wildfires, windstorms, and insect outbreaks often result in large-scale transformations of ecosystems of the PA as well as profound consequences for local communities. Fire hazards, risk of falling trees, aesthetic loss, restricted access to some parts of the PA, land use conflicts, loss of community identity, or altered park visitor experiences are some of the most discussed social impacts noted in the literature (e.g., Carroll et al., 2000; Flint, 2006; Flint et al., 2009; McFarlane et al., 2006; Müller et al., 2019). After bark beetle outbreaks in European countries including the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, and Slovakia the public's perception of the high social aftermath manifested itself in social unrest and political conflict (e.g., Blicharska et al., 2020; Hlásny et al., 2021; Mezei et al., 2017; Müller, 2011).

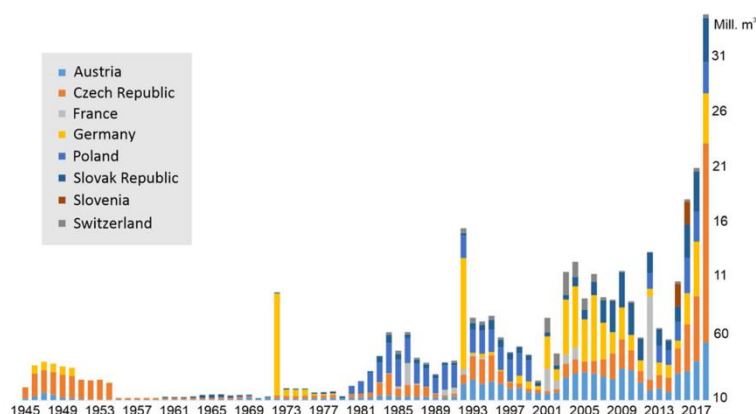


Figure 2 Volume of Norway spruce killed by *Ips typographus* (and other bark beetles) in selected countries in Europe since 1945

Source: Hlásny et al., 2021.

The research on social dimensions of natural disturbances has examined cohesion and conflict (Carroll et al., 2005, 2006; Flint & Luloff, 2007), people's attitudes and support for natural disturbance management strategies (Burns & Cheng, 2007; Flint et al., 2009; McFarlane et al., 2006), perception and social construction of natural disturbance (Flint, 2006, 2007; Whittaker & Mercer, 2004), risk perception (Flint, 2007; McFarlane et al., 2006; McFarlane & Witson, 2008), or symbolism of post-

disturbance landscape (Müller, 2011). Importantly, Müller (2011) has summarised the current knowledge on the social aspects of natural disturbances and analysed how natural disturbances may function as triggers of environmental conflict. Although these do not provide the full explanation of conservation conflict in PA, they partially “set the scene” for them to happen.

While the first part of the current chapter explored **when** conflicts may emerge in PA, the rest of the chapter will illuminate some of the most discussed reasons **why**. The following paragraphs will further explore the aisles of conservation conflict in PA with a particular focus on contexts of natural disturbances.

1.2.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

At the beginning of this chapter, the most commonly used definition of conservation conflict has been cited: “situations that occur when two or more parties with strongly held opinions clash over conservation objectives and when one party is perceived to assert its interests at the expense of another” (Redpath et al., 2013).

However, a growing body of research on conservation conflicts has shown that seeing conflicts solely as clashes of competing interests, or values over an aspect of nature or its management is an oversimplification (Hodgson et al., 2022; Niemelä et al., 2005; von Essen & Allen, 2020). The definition fails to meet the challenges of identifying and managing deeper-rooted issues such as power imbalances (González-Hidalgo & Zografos, 2020; Nastran, 2015), damaged relationships and a lack of trust (Emborg et al., 2020; Hodgson et al., 2022; Young et al., 2016), or emotions that participate in the conflict (Buijs & Lawrence, 2013; Halla & Laine, 2022; Kennedy & Vining, 2007). Ignoring or neglecting these influences runs the danger of polarization and ultimately conflict escalation (Cusack et al., 2021; Glasl et al., 1999; von Essen & Allen, 2020).

Various conceptual frameworks utilized in contemporary conservation conflict literature aim to address the issues raised above (for a comprehensive review of analytical frameworks present in current research see Rechciński et al. (2019)). For

instance, the Levels of Conflict model, implemented by Madden & McQuinn (2014), analyses a conservation conflict on the assumption that every conflict situation comprises of three levels: disputes, underlying conflicts, and identity-based conflicts. Alternatively, in their framework of the Progress Triangle, Walker and Daniels (1997, p. 22) state that each conflict has three interconnected aspects: substance, process, and relations and that a conflict may be managed through any of the three dimensions. The latter has proven both to analyse the conflict and provide useful insights for its potential management. While current conservation conflict literature emphasizes the need to understand conflict as interpreted by the affected stakeholders (Baynham-Herd et al., 2018; Redpath, Gutiérrez, Wood, Sidaway, et al., 2015), Frame Analysis has been shown to provide valuable insights in this context (Buijs et al., 2011; Lewicki & Gray, 2003; Wondolleck et al., 2003). Thus, adopting a similar approach to Buijs et al. (2011), I combine the insights of Frame Theory and Progress Triangle which will be characterised in the following paragraphs.

Frame Analysis

In an attempt to find answers to why a conflict emerges, the Frame Analysis appears to provide valuable insights and has been used widely (Asah et al., 2012; Buijs et al., 2011; Campbell & Docherty, 2004; Dewulf et al., 2004; Hovardas, 2008; Johansson, 2023; Kaufman & Smith, 1999; Lewicki et al., 2003; Schön & Rein, 1995; Shmueli, 2008; Wynne-Jones et al., 2018). Frames can be understood as interpretative lenses through which people approach and understand the surrounding world. To understand and orientate within a situation, people use frames to “locate, perceive, identify and label” (Goffman, 2010, p. 21). They are the individual definitions of the world, ‘*sense-making devices*’; consisting of past experiences, sets of associations, labels and attitudes, that help us to understand everyday realities (Clarke & Peterson, 2016; Gray, 2004; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2000).

Frames play a significant role in the creation, evolution, and perpetuation of environmental conflicts. As Gray (2003a, p. 12) argues: „When we frame a conflict, we

develop interpretations about what the conflict is about, why is it occurring, the motivations of the parties involved, and how the conflict should be settled.” A frame indicates not only the preferred course of conflict progression but also what is accepted as fact and which arguments, experiences, and events are thought to be important for comprehending the matter. According to Davis & Lewicki (2003, p. 201), a frame functions on multiple levels: (i) it defines the issues; (ii) it shapes actions and influences preferences for how a dispute should be resolved; (iii) it serves as a justification for our actions; and (iv) it can be used to inspire others to act as well.

All aspects of our lives are governed by the frames we induce on them, environmental issues included. Fast fashion may by some be viewed as a source of environmental degradation and social injustice, others may perceive it as an accessible tool of infinite creative ways to express yourselves through fashion. Similarly, some may perceive shared mobility as a way to decrease the amount of carbon emissions and reduce local air pollution, others interpret it to be an attack on private property and associate it with a decline in car production, and consequential job losses. Undoubtedly, if the various microcosmoses of opinions and attitudes meet in the same negotiation room, it is often difficult to find common ground.

The context of conflicts involving natural disturbances can be also partially explained by framing. As Palm (1990, p. 16) has argued: “There are no truly natural disasters and that all disasters are at least partly the product of the way society treats the physical event.” A wildfire may be seen as either a risk to human life and property or as a positive natural activity because of its regenerative ecological effects (e.g., Burns & Cheng, 2007; Carroll et al., 2005, 2006; Whittaker & Mercer, 2004). In the same way, insect outbreaks can be viewed as highly advantageous—for example, by promoting biodiversity—or highly detrimental—for example, by lowering economic returns and ecosystem services (such as carbon storage and water purification), interfering with a steady supply of wood for the forest food chain, or by degrading a landscape's aesthetic appeal (e.g., Flint et al., 2009; McFarlane & Witson, 2008; Müller & Job, 2009).

Systems of values play an important role in the process of framing many environmental conflicts (Davis & Lewicki, 2003). Stakeholders who relate to the "dominant social paradigm" may, for example, view nonhuman life forms as having primarily instrumental value and seeing humans as different from nature. In contrast, a stakeholder who has a "deep ecology" perspective would think that "all natural organisms have inherent value" and that "people are an integral component of nature". The value orientation then navigates the overall framing and consequential behaviour. Both research and practice show that it is these conflicts where values are the principal source of incompatibility that tend to be the most intractable (Caplan, 2012; Fisher, 2022, p. 27).

According to Peterson and Franks (2006), it is essential to gain a deep understanding of the frames of the conflict participants before creating potential conflict management strategies. Through the identification of the operating frames of the involved parties, more fruitful interactions among all stakeholders can be promoted by leveraging their mutual understanding of the operative frames.

Frame analysis has been employed by several researchers to understand the root causes of conservation conflicts with the substance of the conflict being the most frequently researched category in the framing of environmental issues (Shmueli, 2008). A conservation conflict is commonly reduced to conflicting views on the content of the issue. However, increasingly more research on has been focusing on the various frames that play a role in conflict dynamics. Examples include the impacts of characterization of opponents, power dynamics, information processing, conflict management strategies or acceptance of risk (e.g., Brummans et al., 2008; Gray, 2004; Kaufman et al., 2003; Lewicki & Gray, 2003; Shmueli, 2008; Wondolleck et al., 2003). There is a vast variety of the frames environmental conflict researchers have focused on when analysing the conflict and the explanation of the sheer amount of frames as well as their effects discussed in the conflict resolution research is beyond the scope of the current study (for extensive exploration of the subject see Lewicki and & Gray

(2003), ~~Campbell & Docherty~~ (2004) and the frames employed within the current study are elaborated on in Appendix A). In the following, I explore the differing ways conflicts have been found to be framed on the basis of three conflict dimensions, described by the Progress Triangle.

Progress Triangle of Conflict

The causes of conflicts and how to manage them are portrayed by Walkers and Daniels (1997, p. 22) as a triangle of three interconnected dimensions: substance, procedure, and relationship. The Progress Triangle highlights the areas where advancements can be achieved, and improvements can be made. The authors argue that each of the three dimensions is present in every conflict situation and that each of the three dimensions can be used to approach a conflict situation at first. Therefore, when asking why a certain event or constellation of conditions in the PA grew into destructive conflict, any of these dimensions could provide a part of the answer.

Building upon this analytical approach, I will explore what these dimensions represent in the context of conservation conflict, using the examples of case studies with specific attention to conflicts related to forest and natural disturbances.

Substance

The substance dimension can be understood as both the tangible and symbolic problems at the centre of the conflict. It is the source of tension among stakeholders, and the issues negotiated or disputed by the parties (Daniels & Walker, 2001). According to Rechciński et al. (2019), these may include anything from changed economic conditions, diverging systems of knowledge, various attitudes to policies and legislations or environmental conditions.

As mentioned earlier, most of the current social research on conservation conflict focuses on the substance of the conflict. This includes the research of diverging interests, values, goals, or attitudes related to the issue. In the context of PAs, conflicts

over substance emerge e.g., when stakeholders do not share the views on optimal land-use and PA zoning plans, adequate treatment of wild species, tourism-related issues or management strategies related to natural disturbances. Related to the latter for example, the study by McFarlane (2006) examined the publics' perceptions of the mountain pine beetle and its management among local residents of Banff and Kootenay National Parks in western Canada. The study showed that local residents generally had negative attitudes towards it. All groups agreed that the beetle is a threat to biodiversity, is an ecological disaster for national parks, and results in economic losses in tourism. They also disagreed that the beetle should have a right to exist in the parks, that the beetle should be protected in national parks, that the beetle helps ensure a healthy forest, that the beetle is important in rejuvenating the forest, and that the beetle is more beneficial than harmful. Education, knowledge and ecological worldview were significant precursors of positive attitude towards the beetle while perceived issue salience is a significant precursor of negative attitude. These attitudes of locals were in contrast with the current management policies of the park therefore the emergence of a conflict is understandable.

On a less tangible note, the study by Buijs et al. (2011) revealed that conservation conflict may have roots in diverging understandings and perceptions of what nature is as such. Prior research by Buijs (2009) supports such findings as it shows that arguments of lay people and experts regarding the protection of wild nature are based on different values and therefore lead to different constructions of this concept. Understanding the terms of natural diversity, balance, naturalness or wilderness can be challenging, and often unclear (Aastrup, 2020; Buijs et al., 2008; Fischer & Young, 2007; Schnitzler, 2014; Whittaker & Mercer, 2004); in result, the different conceptions of these terms then translates into divergent perceptions of "healthy forest", "beautiful landscape" or "wild beauty" and leads to a variety of conclusions and consequential impairment. To paraphrase the lyrics of the famous song by Steppenwolf, there may simply not be a consensus among stakeholders on whether certain landscapes were truly *born to be wild* and what *wild* may even mean.

Furthermore, conservation conflicts are often filled with emotional content. Emotions are important in determining how people relate to their environments as places that offer various resources and meanings. People react emotionally when the resources or meanings are threatened (Buijs & Lawrence, 2013), and this can eventually result in conflict. However, socio-environmental conflict literature largely disregards the emotional factors, such as cultural, historical, and personal backgrounds and narratives (Buijs & Lawrence, 2013; González-Hidalgo & Zografos, 2020; Ide, 2016).

By exception, the study by Müller (2011) examines these aspects and how they might trigger conservation conflict in the context of the bark beetle epidemic in the Bavarian Forest National Park. The study examines how the meaning of the landscape is renegotiated in the wake of natural disturbance and how it ties to conflicts over effective disturbance management. Forest landscapes are integral to communities' identities and have a great deal of cultural significance. In Bavaria, the locals even called the area *Waldheimat*, which can be translated as "*Forest home*". Unsurprisingly, when the landscape underwent such a dramatic change due to the natural disturbance, some perceived it to be an attack on their homeland.

Just as the locals of nearby towns of national parks in the Canadian Rocky Mountains in the study by McFarlane et al. (2006), many locals in Bavaria saw the bark beetle as a villain, a danger that should be managed because it endangers the familiar green forest that they feel attached to. Contrastingly, the opposing group saw the new environment as a representation of the wild, of nature that is freed from human control. Once again, different understandings of the meaning - the *substance of the conflict* and related emotions - drove the opposing parties against each other.

Relations

The relational dimension of conflict refers to the various stakeholders, the history of relations among them, or the levels of trust among them. In this light, conflict roots can

be found within the history of mutual interactions and (lack of) communication, perception of the other stakeholders etc.

A central theoretical approach that may explain a lot of the relational dimension of conflicts is the social identity theory. Generally, people perceive themselves as belonging to specific social categories that have specific characteristics (e.g., a “forester” or “Czech” or “outdoor- fan” or “inhabitant of Děčín”). When a person's identity is in danger, conflict almost always occurs because it questions the ideas that are shared by the members of the group that helped to form that group identity (Lewicki et al., 2003; Wondolleck et al., 2003). The conflicts threatening identity (personal or group one) usually evolve around deep-seated needs of respect, dignity, or survival (Rothman, 1997, 2014). Whether intentionally or unintentionally, if the opposing parties fail to acknowledge each other's fundamental identity issues, it breeds steady resistance and disrupts relationships (Wondolleck et al., 2003).

Identities can serve several purposes: i) they clarify one's role and purpose ii) provide a sense of community, can act as a social organizing tool, uniting people with similar goals or ideologies (iii) they offer a way to compare and distinguish oneself or one's group to others socially (Campbell & Docherty, 2004; Lewicki et al., 2003; Tajfel, 1974).

The development of negative stereotypes of others can result from the fact that identities frequently emerge in order to set oneself apart from others. Just as we create interpretations of ourselves and the groups we include ourselves in (identity), we make assumptions and attributions of others (characterization) (Shmueli, 2008; Wondolleck et al., 2003).

In a study by Whittaker & Mercer (2004), three competing discourses on wildfire—conservationist, ruralist, and wise use—that support various political positions regarding the management of fuel wood and national parks are revealed through discourse analysis. These three distinctive groups commonly used stereotypes to negatively characterize each other, creating a chasm that is hard to move on from to

efficiently manage the conflict. The rhetoric used to demonise environmentalists during the debate for instance, included labels such as “green Nazis”, “earth worshippers” or “green cult” and stereotypes used to ridicule them were “dreadlocked and body-pierced greenies”.

Additionally to the use of distinguishing yourself from the others, in conflict situations, negative characterizations and stereotypes are frequently employed to delegitimize the opposing claims and position. An example can be found in the study by Buijs (2008, p. 336), where a member of a local protest group which emerged due to the disagreement of locals with the current park management, characterized his perception of the National Forest Service conservation agency in the following way:

“A national park should not be managed as an experimental playground for a small group of hobbyists. Furthermore, this group of ecologists works with theories that are contested by their own colleagues.”

Negative characterizations are employed to shift attention or assign blame as well (Wondolleck et al., 2003). In the above mentioned study by Whittaker & Mercer (2004), the assigning of blame has consistently been a characteristic of all bushfire events in Australia. Many people blamed the Victorian State government and city-based “greenies” for the lack of fuel reduction burning, which is typically perceived as the cause of the fires, in the discussion that followed the 2002–2003 Victorian fires. “THE NEIGHBOURS FROM HELL” and “WELL MANAGED FOREST SAVE LIVE” read the signs on the poster made by the members of an opinion group that opposed the current management strategies. In effect, these imply that the massive bushfire has evolved due to the mismanagement of the park by the others.

Furthermore, the underlying narrative is, that if “the advice of those who live, work and know the Otway Forest” would be listened to, the event would turn out differently.

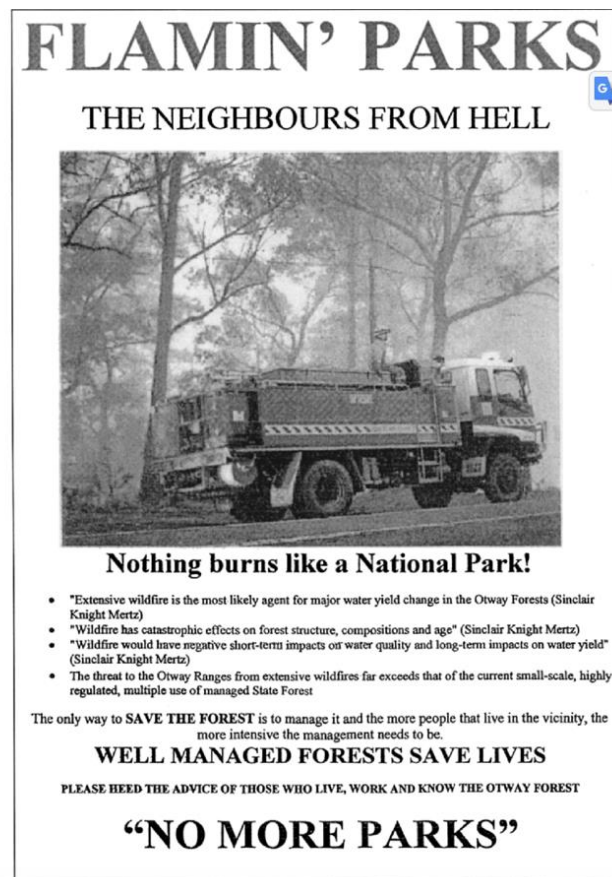


Figure 3 Flaming Parks poster made by stakeholders of Otway National Park conflict

Use of negative characterizations that insult, imply disrespect, discredit, and otherwise attack another participant in the conflict, prompts additional defensiveness, further polarizing the conflict. Resolution is unlikely if parties continue to distinguish among and verbally attack each other (Davis & Lewicki, 2003; Lewicki et al., 2003; Wondolleck et al., 2003).

Additionally, according to d'Estree et al. (2002, p. 595), negative group identification biases can lead to two self-enforcing cognitive tendencies that are commonly present in conflict situations: worst-case thinking and self-fulfilling prophecies. In worst-case thinking, every action or word made by the opposing actor is judged in the most

negative way. In this light, actors interpret even neutral actions such as asking questions as possible attempts to trap or deceive. In self-fulfilling prophecies, one of the actor's expectations of negative actions by the other party actually elicit the very negative behaviours or characteristics expected by the perceiver. Although none of these have been explicitly studied in environmental conflicts as they have in other conflict realms, environmental conflict resolution practitioners have provided numerous examples of their occurrence and of the relevance of this psychological research.

Considering the above-mentioned, the relational dimension can thus be addressed through the lens of polarization and the diverging perceptions of the roles of the parties involved. However, the roles of the various stakeholders are only partly defined through their social interactions. The procedural aspects play a significant role in addressing a conservation conflict and will be further examined.

Procedure

The procedural dimension of conflict addresses environmental legislation policy, implementation, enforcement, strategy, and planning. Furthermore, it also includes the type and nature of stakeholder engagement. Different goals, such as levels of protection, restrictions of access and use, and who has decision-making authority, form the PA foundation. These factors can affect how managers of PAs interact with other stakeholders, and consequentially lead to tensions and conflicts over PA. Since Yellowstone National Park, the world's first national park, was established in 1872, PAs have followed the traditional process, whereby many PAs are created and run using an exclusive top-down approach, with local communities having little to no influence over the park's creation and administration (Pretty & Smith, 2004). The practice of such an approach has led to adversarial perspectives towards conservation measures compromising conservation goals by escalating conflicts between park management and local residents (Hirschnitz-Garbers & Stoll-Kleemann, 2011). While laws can play a significant role in encouraging conservation and the protection of

biodiversity (Redpath, Gutiérrez, Wood, & Young, 2015, pp. 269–270), a major drawback of using laws is that they are frequently implemented on broad scales with little or no prior consultation with stakeholders. Due to this, laws may be disregarded or resisted, and stakeholders may grow hostile toward one another.

Current management approaches frequently fail to consider specific local circumstances, and the significance of natural disturbances for ecosystem dynamics, and they frequently lack sufficient empirical support, which can lead to what has been referred to as the "command-and-control" management (Holling & Meffe, 1996). To illustrate, from a case study from Buijs et al. (2011), the Dutch National Forest Service only framed the need to engage with the local community as the need to inform the residents about the plans and outcomes of its management strategies. To achieve this, they planned excursions during which foresters highlighted the park's beauty and the effectiveness of the conservation efforts. This approach, however, did not consider the local community's desire for a more democratic process that would also consider the opinions of neighbourhood people over the park. As a result, frustration grew and ultimately escalated into conflict.

Further, the complex, multidimensional, and rapidly changing social-ecological challenges that are typical for disturbance management (windstorm, wildfire or insect outbreaks management) are unlikely to be adequately addressed by such a centralized, unidimensional, and discipline-isolated approach (Niemelä et al., 2005; Young et al., 2005). This calls for cooperation among the citizenry, municipalities as well as academia. In the case of Bavarian Forest however, the conflict has been worsened by park management, which for a long time had been neglecting the worries of the local community in its choice of disturbance management (Müller, 2011). Lack of opportunities for local involvement resulted in dissatisfaction and alienation from the local environment, increased anger against park administrators, and steadfast political resistance, which constrained the alternatives for land management.

The opposing parties of conflict have frequently strong preferences for how it should be resolved. In protected areas all across the world, more inclusive and participatory methods are being used to manage both the conflict and the area itself. To consider some of the potential risks of park management governance described above the national parks of the Canadian Rocky Mountains, for example, have taken an approach to managing mountain pine beetle infestations that integrates the interests of a range of stakeholders, including the local population (McFarlane et al., 2006).

If asked about the reasons why a conservation conflict emerges in PA, the procedural dimension thus provides answers related to power and rights disbalances, bureaucratic apparatus and the lack of say of various stakeholders in the process of decision-making. If we want to improve the conflict situation among stakeholders, the aspects related to procedural or any other dimensions of the conflict that have been described in this chapter shall not be neglected. Together, they embody the variety of unique characteristics that make up a single conservation conflict. While the dominance and importance of various elements of the conflict vary, the strategies to successfully manage them cannot be applied generically. The various methods of conservation conflict management will be explored in the following chapter.

1.3 We can work it out: Environmental conflict management.

According to the theories of conflict regulation, disagreements or conflicts should not be considered as problems per se (Walker & Daniels, 1997). Whilst conservation conflicts can negatively impinge upon biodiversity, livelihoods, and hinder necessary conservation policy reforms (Hellström, 2001; Redpath, Gutiérrez, Wood, & Young, 2015), conflict may be also understood as a manifestation of a healthy pluralistic democracy and it may function as an important positive catalyst for social change. Thus, it can also be positive in terms of increasing democratic legitimacy and public trust in politics and decision-making (Young et al., 2012). According to Walker & Daniels (1997), conflicts are neither bad nor good; they have the potential to be both.

This is echoed by Cusack et al. (2021) whose findings described the escalation of conservation conflicts and showed that when managed, lower levels of conflict are achieved.

In the previous chapters, I examined the characteristics and the causes of conflicts, particularly those involving conservation and biodiversity. I have also illustrated why conflict may be an inevitable part of the social-ecological system. The next stage is to consider what can be done to manage conflicts of this sort and offer some conflict management strategies common in the literature and practice. One of the ways to prevent or mitigate conflict over conservation issues is to provide meaningful opportunities for the actors to be involved. Also, all of the approaches of conflict management explained later employ principles of public participation to a certain level. For these two reasons, the first part of this chapter explores the role of public participation and its various facets within conservation conflict management.

1.3.1 Public Participation and Conservation Conflict

Public participation is defined as “a process where individuals, groups and organisations choose to take an active role in making decisions that affect them” (Reed, 2008, p. 2418). This definition focuses on stakeholder engagement rather than the involvement of the broader public. Proponents of participatory approaches argue that the processes that involve public opinion in management offer substantial promise for conflict management since they ensure inclusive decision-making (Armitage et al., 2009; Berkes, 2009) and foster a sense of empowerment (Fraser et al., 2006). Additionally, Fiorino (1990) outlined three main types of arguments in favour of participatory processes that are also relevant and supported by research in the context of conservation conflict. These include 1) normative, i.e. to strengthen democratic cultures and processes 2) substantive, i.e. facilitate the integration of tangible local knowledge and finally 3) instrumental, i.e. to provide greater legitimacy, improve trust, and reduce the intensity of conflicts (also in e.g., Buono et al., 2012; Fienitz et al., 2022; Reed, 2008; Young et al., 2010, 2016).

Approaches to public participation have been described in terms of a continuum that reflects the degree of citizen engagement and power in the decision-making process, ranging from tokenism or non-participation, where the decision is made by the vested powers alone, to co-management, where citizens are embraced as partners in the final decision and management implementation (Arnstein, 1969; Reed, 2008). Categorization by Rowe and Frewer (2000) distinguishes the various types of participation based on the ways information is being shared rather than on the level of engagement. According to their conceptualization, the nature of public engagement can be characterized as either communication (sharing of information with the public being passive recipients), consultation (collecting information from the public) or participation (mutual communication, both of the participant sides are involved in negotiations or discussions).

Excerpts from a study on approaches to public participation by its practitioners by Leong and Forester illustrate the diverse nature of participative processes. The stark difference between a conventional public hearing (which is commonly associated with the “invite-inform-ignore” approach) and a more collaborative one is apparent from the following when one participant describes the following situation (2009, p. 28):

“At a typical public forum, there are about 30 people, and maybe 3 or 4 who will speak out. Most are sitting silently, thinking. They are there because they feel something about the place, but the majority are not comfortable speaking in a public forum”.

Contrastingly, another manager characterised a significantly different method which focuses on the interests of local communities by engaging in informal communication networks. The participative process took place “on their turf, at their convenience,” (2009, p. 26) in places familiar to the communities (e.g., churches, coffee places, pubs) to discover the common issues, as well as ways that park management might affect those concerns. Additionally, this method assists in the identification of members of the community who would not normally come to formal meetings as well as finding

the prominent members of a community, i.e. not necessarily mayors or other elected representatives but the ones influential within a community.

Different levels of engagement are likely to be appropriate in different contexts, depending on the objectives of the work and the capacity of stakeholders to influence outcomes (Tippett et al., 2007). This is especially true when considering cultural and historical context across various countries in the EU. New laws, and changes in conservation philosophy, provide openings but also challenges for the Central and Eastern countries of Europe. Over the last two decades, the traditionally centralised conservation decision-making has been influenced by global changes in conservation, which have moved from a focus on species to a focus on ecosystems and processes; from blueprint management to adaptive management; and from centralised, hierarchical planning to participatory. While these countries may often have a strong environmental policy, that supports participatory processes, these efforts may be let down by a lack of implementation or enforcement (e.g., Anthony & Moldovan, 2008; Hossu et al., 2018; Rodela & Udovč, 2008).

To illustrate, a study by Anthony and Moldovan (2008) situated in Macin Mountains National Park, Romania found that only 5% of the local residents were aware of the consultative council set up to represent them. Additionally, only 20.1% of respondents stated that they had some knowledge about the park's activities and when asked what they considered to be the main purpose of the park's establishment, a majority (58.3%) responded they 'Do not know'. While this is only an anecdotal example from one case study, this might apply to multiple other contexts and requires a further investigation. Still, studies from post-socialist environments acknowledged participation can help in an instrumental way by engaging with a broader public in practical activities (e.g., Szabo et al., 2010) or by helping foster an understanding among stakeholders (e.g., Grujčič et al., 2008).

Participation and the establishment of meaningful dialogue among the key stakeholders is critical to progress but is not immune to criticism (Rodela & Udovč,

2008; Young et al., 2010). The challenges of participatory processes include a selection of those who should participate (risk of exclusion of possible stakeholders due to the “usual suspects”² phenomenon), who should pay for the process, who is going facilitate the participation (assistance of a mediator or not) as well as an understanding of who represents who (Niemelä et al., 2005). In addition to these practical and power-related challenges, a variety of potential issues such as 'consultation fatigue' (Richards et al., 2007) and disenchantment might arise, leading to increasing mistrust and suspicion among stakeholders, for instance. These critics of public participation only highlight the need for a thorough conflict assessment, as understanding the current level of escalation as well as the status of the conflict (i.e., deconstructive x constructive dynamics (Deutsch, 1973)) provides insightful guidance on the method of participation.

1.3.2 Approaches to Environmental Conflict Management

A comprehensive overview of the vast variety and depth of strategies to conflict management is beyond the scope of this thesis and it has been described in detail elsewhere (Bob & Bronkhorst, 2011; Borrini, 1996; Clarke & Peterson, 2016; Fisher, 2022; Sidaway, 2005). This thesis is not intended to be a systematic review of conservation conflict management literature, nor an attempt to develop a grand unifying theory of conservation conflicts. Rather, its intention is to highlight important lessons and concepts already existing in diverse case study examples relevant in the context of conservation conflict. Therefore, the following paragraphs will introduce the most commonly debated approaches in current literature on conservation conflict management. Next, I will provide a set of suggestions, commonly recommended when considering conservation conflict intervention strategy.

Niemelä et al. (2005) divide commonly used interventions of conflict management into three categories that correspond with the Progress Triangle by Walker & Daniels

² See Applegate (1997) ; Reed et al., (2009)

(1997): technical (i.e., substance), political (i.e., process), or cultural (i.e., relationship). Further, in their study that reviewed 100 studies on conservation conflict, Baynham-Herd et al. (2018) expanded this typology to include cognitive, economic, enforcement, and stakeholder categories (Table 2). The review echoes what has been already mentioned in the previous chapter, and that is that while technological measures deal with the impacts (e.g., dam dealing with flooding), stakeholder-based interventions are advised considering the underlying social conflicts (e.g., disrupted trust among stakeholders, non-transparent decision-making etc.)

Since the primary focus of this thesis is social dimension of conflict, I will explore the stakeholder-based interventions more thoroughly. More specifically, three families of conflict management approaches address the challenging characteristics of environmental conflict (“Tangle Triad” outlined by Daniels & Walker (2001)) that have been introduced in first chapter of the thesis, 1.1.3 Characteristics.

Adaptive Management (AM) deals with uncertainty (e.g., Armitage et al., (2009); Ehrhart & Schraml, (2018)). Methods stemming from Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) address controversy (Clarke & Peterson, 2016; Moore, 2003) Finally, the Collaborative approaches (e.g., Collaborative Learning by Daniels & Walker (2001), Conflict Transformation by Madden & McQuinn (2014), or Collaborative Environmental Conflict Management by Fisher (2022)) address all of the challenging characteristics through incorporating both elements of AM, as well as methods stemming from ADR and addressing complexity via insights from System Thinking and Game Theory.

Table 2 Conservation conflict intervention types as adapted from Baynham-Herd et al. (2018) and Niemelä et al. (2005)

Intervention type	Practices	References
Technical	Silvicultural guidelines, Fences, Context-dependent management	(Blicharska et al., 2020; Hellström, 2001; Hlásny et al., 2021)
Cognitive	Biodiversity communication Reframing Education and training (external and internal)	(Baruch-Mordo et al., 2011; Keane et al., 2011; Müller, 2011; Wynne-Jones et al., 2018)
Economic	Compensation, Incentives, Alternative livelihoods, Support of local infrastructure	(Ravenelle & Nyhus, 2017; Wünscher & Engel, 2012)
Enforcement	Regulation creation (Protective status, land-use zoning, quotas) Regulation enforcement (increased patrols, trials, punishments, reduced corruption, legal processes)	(Arias, 2015; Donald et al., 2007; Keskitalo et al., 2016; Mehtälä & Vuorisalo, 2007)
Stakeholder	Conflict resolution (mediation, facilitation, trust-building) Stakeholder engagement (collaborative learning, collaborative conflict transformation, multi-stakeholder dialogue) Devolution (Community-based natural resource management, adaptive, co- management)	(Ehrhart & Schraml, 2018; Emborg et al., 2020; Fedreheim & Blanco, 2017; Madden & McQuinn, 2014; Young et al., 2016)

Adaptive Management (AM)

Folke et al. (2002, p. 8) define adaptive management as “a process by which institutional arrangements and ecological knowledge are tested and revised in a dynamic, ongoing, self-organised process of trial-and-error.” Consequently, recognizing unpredictable outcomes and learning via experience are at the heart of AM (Ehrhart & Schraml, 2018). It promotes cross-scale social networks, combining different knowledge types (i.e., traditional, local, scientific) to address complex and novel issues, and reflexivity through ongoing assessment and learning, all of which

improve decision-makers' capacity to foresee uncertainty and react to shocks (Armitage et al., 2009). For instance, Blicharska et. al. (2020) have suggested an approach of adaptive co-management that would involve representatives of both the forestry and environmental coalitions in the interpretation of data and decision-making over the management of the protected area of Białowieża Forest Massif. Since high levels of uncertainty and controversiality surrounded the issue of naturalness in the area, the suggestion of an adaptive co-management approach is a textbook example.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

ADR emerged in the late 1970s in response to the limitations of the conventional approaches to environmental conflict — litigation (Bingham, 1986; Crowfoot & Wondolleck, 1990; O'Leary & Bingham, 2003). They have been used in an extensively wide range of situations, from rulings on specific concerns like logging vs community rights in one town (Yasmi & Schanz, 2010) to managing global commons (Ostrom, 1990). Unlike traditional dispute resolution procedures, which are either adversarial (e.g., litigation and arbitration) or exclusive (e.g., legislation or top-down administrative decision-making), ADR techniques rely on negotiations to obtain mutually satisfying settlements on conflict or controversial problems. ADR refers to a variety of non-adversarial approaches including conciliation, negotiation, and mediation that are described in the

Table 3. ADR processes address the controversy of environmental conflict by recognizing the needs and interests of all involved stakeholders.

Table 3 Alternative Dispute resolution methods as adapted from Moore (2003) and Clarke & Peterson (2016)

<i>Conciliation</i>	consists of an attempt by a neutral third party to communicate separately with disputing parties to reduce tensions and reach an agreement on a process for addressing a dispute
<i>Negotiation</i>	voluntary process in which parties meet "face to face" to reach a mutually acceptable resolution of the issues in a conflict
<i>Mediation</i>	involves the assistance of a neutral third party, a mediator, who helps the parties in conflict jointly reach an agreement in a negotiation process but has no power to direct the parties or enforce a solution to the dispute

All the various types of ADR have one thing in common: they are intended to settle disputes and not necessarily resolve the underlying conflicts through negotiation. The objective is to find a solution based on consensus or compromise. Very broadly and simplified, the typical ADR involves the phases of identifying shared and exclusive interests, followed by negotiations to reach a compromise, and finally, monitoring the outcomes.

Some have critiqued this approach for failing to see, participate in, and respond to the underlying social and psychological dynamics between individuals and communities, of which the current dispute is simply a superficial representation (Dickman, 2010). According (Madden & McQuinn, 2014), despite the intrinsic complexity and depth of most biodiversity conservation and management situations, conflicts are commonly regarded as transactional issues that can be negotiated or resolved if common interests are established. As reaction to these limits, collaborative approaches of managing conflict emerged.

Collaborative Environmental Conflict Management (CECM)

As documented elsewhere (Reed, 2008), collaborative interventions vary considerably in style and underlying philosophy. The broad family of collaborative management strategies encapsulates Collaborative conflict transformation (Madden & McQuinn, 2014), Collaborative learning (Daniels & Walker, 2001), Collaborative Environmental

Conflict Management (Fisher, 2022) or with a focus on the adaptive part of collaboration — Adaptive Co-management (Ehrhart & Schraml, 2018). These commonly share the idea that conflict is more realistically to be managed rather than resolved since conflict is an inherent component of any dynamic system. Furthermore, while varying substantially, they usually follow some adapted version of a framework that could be described in the following steps (Fisher, 2022, p. 76): (1) collaborative discovery and definition; (2) collaborative planning, design, and process management; and (3) collaborative learning and adaptive action.

As with both of the approaches above The CECM is not a fix-all, universally applicable model. It appears to work well when the affected parties perceive that it is in their best interest to be at the table, and they don't have a better solution (in negotiations known as BATNAs). Using collaboration to resolve intractable problems is fairly experimental. Despite many of the purported benefits, it remains an uncertain process. This uncertainty, coupled with the high transaction costs, clearly is a limiting factor in its broader application.

Table 4 Reflection on stakeholder-based conflict management methods

<i>Conflict Intervention</i>	<i>Pros and Cons</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Adaptive management	Pros: flexible and intended to adapt to change and uncertainty over time; includes monitoring of outcomes; iterative Cons: “non-stationarity”, or the challenge of learning about ecological processes as they change	(Armitage et al., 2009; Ehrhart & Schraml, 2018)
Alternative Dispute Resolution	Pros: comparatively fast moving clear process ending, reflect the needs and interests of stakeholders Cons: can relatively formal, the risk of “us-vs-them” dynamics, not addressing underlying conflicts	(Amy, 1987; Fisher et al., 2011; Jensen et al., 2015; Moore, 2003)

Collaborative environmental conflict management	Pros: treats conflict as a natural and potentially healthy occurrence; addresses relationships; focuses on dynamic aspects of conflict Cons: slow moving; requires in-depth prior analysis of conflict before action can be taken, usually costly	(Berkes, 2009; Daniels & Walker, 2001; Fisher, 2022; Madden & McQuinn, 2014; Pourcq et al., 2015)
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1.3.3 Good Practices in Environmental Conflict Management

A rich academic literature has developed important guidance on good practices in conservation conflict management (Baynham-Herd et al., 2018; Fisher, 2022; Redpath et al., 2013, 2015; Young et al., 2010). The reoccurring suggested practices related to conservation conflict and the studies referenced throughout this thesis are described below.

Conflict analysis

As described earlier in the thesis, conflict management can prove counterproductive if attention is overly focused on resolution and important relationships, political dynamics and social and cultural barriers are overlooked. Identifying the nature of the conflict and why it has evolved into a conflict as well as assessing the stakeholder positions, and what stakeholders expect from the conflict resolution process are key assessments needed for a successful conflict management process (Fisher, 2022, pp. 92–95; Young et al., 2016).

There are numerous tools and methods available for conducting assessments. Background investigation, participant observation, individual interviews, focus group interviews, surveys, and questionnaires (written or electronic), web-based meetings, workshops, and training sessions on collaborations and negotiation are some of these methods. Lists of issues, maps of relationships or spheres of influence, diagrams of overlapping and diverging interests, alternatives for process design, explanations of initial or possible areas of agreement, explanations of negotiation restrictions, and

suggested ground rules are some examples of analysis tools. To find more on the requirements and suggestions regarding conflict analysis consult, e.g., Bean et al. (2007), Reed et al. (2009), a guidebook by Rüttinger et al. (2014) or a Resource pack prepared by International Alert & Saferworld (2004).

Joint conflict definition

While multivocality or multiple interpretations help in tackling grand challenges, there still needs to be some common ground if collaboration is to work. Various authors highlighted the need for a common definition of the issue (Fisher, 2022, pp. 92–95; Young et al., 2016). Joint conflict definition attempts to tackle the societal complexity that has been described at the beginning of this thesis. Simply put, while all stakeholders are aware of the general environmental issue at stake everyone experiences different problems stemming from it acknowledging the others' individual problems. This underlines the need to acknowledge, define, and address conflicts with all key stakeholders in protected area management as well as clarify stakeholders' roles in the conflict management process (Young et al., 2010).

An interesting, novel and fast-growing approach to analyse environmental conflicts are serious games (Barreteau et al., 2021; Redpath et al., 2018). These techniques can aid in the development of theory, the understanding of conflict patterns, the identification of potentially successful management solutions as well as in the search for common conflict definition (Barreteau et al., 2021; Garcia et al., 2020, 2022; Rakotonarivo et al., 2021; Redpath et al., 2018; Solińska-Nowak et al., 2018).

Considering the impact of temporal scale on conflict management

Making significant progress in conflict resolution requires time: time for scientists to offer informative data, time for facilitators to gain knowledge of the ecological and social systems, and time for parties and people to create trust. Many of the questions related to the wildfire conflicts, for example, are likely to be long-term, but this ignores the genuine, pressing issues that many people believe they confront. It is

therefore necessary to manage stakeholder expectations throughout the conflict resolution process and to make progress, however modest, so that people continue to feel compelled to participate. In that sense, it is useful to set sub-goals, short-term targets that keep the acceptance of the stakeholders on a certain level.

An important aspect to consider is that conflict management needs to be accepted as an ongoing process. As such, the evaluation or monitoring of conflict management strategies is an important aspect of the conflict management cycle (Niemelä et al. 2005; Young et al. 2005), and one which should be better understood and integrated into conflict management strategies. Some conservation conflicts may in fact never be resolved fully and always require negotiation and dialogue amongst stakeholders. In other words, Accepting conflict management as an ongoing process is a crucial factor to take into account (Niemelä et al., 2005). Questions at the core of some of the conflicts are so complex and messy, the conflict may never be resolved. Therefore, considering conflict management to be an on-going process might prove to be useful.

Furthermore, many biodiversity disputes include issues of spatial scale as well (Rechciński et al., 2019; Young et al., 2010). Numerous species as well as other elements of biodiversity (fire, insect outbreaks) spread across wide transboundary geographical areas, causing challenges at the local level. Additionally, the environmental size most suited to a specific species may not be the most appropriate scale for implementing management interventions. This needs to be considered when planning a management strategy.

Framing & Reframing

Understanding the frames that are being used and how they were created enables one to understand better and manage conflict dynamics in a more sensitive way (Kaufman & Smith, 1999). Understanding the frames further enhances the conflict dynamics through acknowledging differences, understanding each other better or even engage

through frame shifts or reframing (Buijs et al., 2011; Kaufman & Smith, 1999; Lewicki et al., 2003; Putnam et al., 2003).

With framing insight and reframing, stakeholders may find new ways out of the impasse. However, reframing has limitations. Core values and beliefs, like the view of nature, are significantly more challenging to reframe than less central ones, such as those about the trustworthiness of opponents (Buijs et al., 2011; Gray, 2004). Furthermore, interveners can use expressed frames to understand the situation and design interventions (Redpath et al., 2013). Some strategies and techniques suggested by Lewicki et al. (2003), that use dialogue to foster reframing in intractable conflicts are presented in the Appendix B.

2 Empirical part

2.1 Study Area and Local Context

The area of research is the Bohemian Switzerland National Park (BSNP, Národní Park České Švýcarsko). Established in 2000, the BSNP is the newest national park in the Czech Republic. It spans an area of nearly 80 km² and is situated at the northern border of the Czech Republic which is being shared with the Saxon Switzerland National Park in Germany. According to the Park Management's website "the mission of the National Park is to preserve the local territory in its full beauty and to enable natural processes to prevail in this area. Human interventions are only limited to activities which help restore the natural balance to the greatest extent" (Správa národního parku České Švýcarsko, 2022).

BSNP is characteristic for its deep forests and the scenic beauty of the rock towns landscape constituting sandstone complexes. The Park was established in the area of the Elbe Sandstone Mountains Protected Landscape Area (CHKO Labské Pískovce) and before its establishment, the forests in the area were primarily managed by the state institution Forest of the Czech Republic (Lesy ČR) some of which were municipal, church or private forests. Currently, 99% of the forests in the BSNP territory are owned and managed by the BSNP Management. According to Vébrová et al. (2019), more than half of the forest communities have undergone significant changes in the past. Similarly to other parts of the Czech Republic, the forest transformation was partially induced by intensive forestry which has been practised in the area for the past two centuries, partly by the ongoing soil degradation and lastly by the changing of global climate (Hlásny et al., 2021; Vébrová et al., 2019).

The forests planted for wood-production purposes, mainly cultural monocultures of Norway spruces, were initially the predominant types in the territory (Vébrová et al., 2019). This constitutes a precondition for the area's vulnerability towards external stressors and natural disturbances. The cultural spruce forests commonly consist of

trees of the same age and lack species diversity which makes them more vulnerable to external pressures such as insect outbreaks or droughts compared to natural forests with more diversified forest structures. The heterogeneity of the trees in natural forests ensures that natural stressors never affect the entire forest community, but rather only the already vulnerable trees, which die and are eventually replaced by younger individuals growing in the understory. In contrast, the unified character of cultural forests allows for widespread forest dieback because the trees that comprise the forest are all equally vulnerable to external pressures and thus are commonly affected as a whole community. This also implies that forests allowed to regenerate naturally are more resilient to potential stressors due to their heterogenic structure. (Hlásny et al., 2021; Rotter et al., 2021). These factors have led the BSNP to primarily focus on forest structure diversification and natural process support since the park's establishment. Another management intervention focusing on forest ecosystems is the eradication of invasive and geographically non-native species such as the Eastern White Pine (*Pinus strobus*) (Správa národního parku České Švýcarsko, 2022; Vébrová et al., 2019).

BSNP, like many other protected areas in Central Europe, has faced the challenge of the bark beetle (*Ips typographus*) epidemic for over 20 years now. The strategy by BSNP has up until 2017 been to gradually transform spruce monocultures into forests closer to natural ones through the combination of harvesting the affected trees and planting new ones. However, the droughts lasting since 2015, which reached an extreme in 2018 (when the bark beetle outbreak affected approximately a third of the area), have completely changed the situation and the bark beetle has started to spread massively in the weakened spruce stands. The harvesting methods have not been found effective regarding bark beetle control. Further, if nothing changed in the harvesting approach and the droughts continued, more and more bare areas would be created where forest regeneration would be hampered by extreme habitat conditions (hot and dry in summer, freezing in winter). Thus, BSNP has decided to divide the national park into sectors and a so-called buffer zone, depending on the intensity of the intervention. In

the so-called buffer zone, i.e., a belt around the national park, BSNP intervenes fully against the bark beetle to protect the forests of neighbouring owners. In the inner parts of the national park, non-intervention management areas, forestry interventions are carried out only for safety reasons, especially in the vicinity of tourist paths and other roads where crumbling trees could endanger traffic or visitors (Naše voda, 2019; NP ČS, n.d.).

As outlined in the theoretical part of the thesis, insect outbreaks, windstorms, and wildfires frequently cause significant changes to the PA's ecosystems in addition to having a significant impact on nearby towns. The public's view of the severe societal consequences after the bark beetle resulted in social unrest. More recently, on 24th July 2022, a forest fire broke out in the Bohemian Switzerland National Park, unprecedented in Czech history. The fire burned an area of more than 1000 hectares, mostly consisting of dry spruce monocultures hit by the bark beetle calamity, but valuable ecosystems and part of the village of Mezná and its inhabitants were severely affected as well. The massive fire has caused a shock among the public and illuminated an ongoing conflict and unanswered questions present in the local community both of which are the focus of the current study.

2.2 Aim of the Research and Research Questions

The focus of the current research is the understanding of the conflict by local inhabitants. Several reasons have led me to this decision: Firstly, as earlier described, various practitioners highlighted the importance of engaging with people and groups not commonly labelled as key players or the ones having executive power (Applegate, 1997). Secondly, one of the most debated criticisms towards the approach of BSNP was the lack of communication with the public and local inhabitants. Further, participation and stakeholder collaboration in environmental decision-making are increasingly being viewed as democratic rights. Growing public scepticism about science, more understanding and involvement in environmental decisions, and ongoing policy trends

that emphasize sustainable development and partnership working have all contributed to the general acceptance and support of public participation and engagement within environmental issues (Richards et al., 2007). In addition to normative argumentation in favour of public engagement, pragmatic supporting arguments have been raised as well; many claim that involving stakeholders increases the quality and durability of decisions (Fisher, 2022; Redpath et al., 2015; Reed, 2008). For the arguments listed above, I decided to delve deeper into the local community's perspective on the conflict-relevant issues.

The aim of the research is thus to understand the perspectives of local inhabitants of the municipalities within and surrounding the Bohemian Switzerland National Park (BSNP) on the ongoing conflict within the area. Consequently, the formulation of the main research question is as follows:

How do local residents interpret the ongoing conflict in Bohemian Switzerland National Park and its surroundings?

2.3 Methodology

To achieve the objectives of the research qualitative methods were chosen to be applied. In contrast to quantitative approaches, which often focus on counting occurrences, quantities, or the magnitude of links between entities of the research, qualitative research provides a deep and extensive understanding of reality from the perspective of an individual or a small number of relevant individuals (Gelo et al., 2008). Methods of qualitative research enable detailed insight into local stakeholders' perceptions, interests and lived experiences in the ongoing conflict and therefore were found to be suitable to answer the research question.

More specifically, this thesis employs the case study methodology. Yin (2009, p. 18) defines a case study as an empirical research method that examines a phenomenon in the context of its real-life context. The case study design consists of an in-depth analysis from multiple perspectives and is useful for exploring a situation which is not

yet well-researched (Priya, 2021). Yin (2003, p. 7) further claims that in a case study a “how” or “why” questions are typically being asked regarding a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control at all. According to Burns (2019), the case study research methodology is particularly suitable for examining environmental issues such as events of decision-making, conflicts, and other challenges faced on a societal level while it allows for multiple perspectives and a holistic approach attained through multiple sources of data. Due to these characteristics, case studies are common in environmental science and policy sectors, while they are particularly salutary in providing practitioners with examples of best practices and assisting them in developing effective recommendations and policy prescriptions. This is apparent from the number of case study-inspired Best Practices lists and Guidebooks on Environmental Conflict Management (e.g., Ainsworth et al., 2020; Fisher et al., 2020).

The analytical framework employed within this study consists of the two theoretical pillars of this thesis that have been described in more detail in the Theory: Frame Theory and Progress Triangle. They have been widely employed to study conflicts both retrospectively (to gain an understanding of the past and learn from it, e.g. Buijs et al., 2011; Burns & Cheng, 2007; Müller, 2011; Niemelä et al., 2005; Whittaker & Mercer, 2004) and prospectively (to orientate through current events and inform future steps, e.g, Mack et al., 2023; Vuuren-Verkerk et al., 2021; Wynne-Jones et al., 2018). Both of these theories have also inspired a magnitude of literature on conflict management which is relevant in light of the planning of a potential conflict management process which the current study hopes to partially inform.

For the reasons stated above, I found a case study research design with a particular use of Frame Analysis and Progress Triangle to be a suitable tool to explore the answers to the research question and attempt to meet both of the goals of the current study. There are limits to the application of the above and further below described methodology as

well and those are further discussed in the subchapter 2.3.4, focusing on the limits of the chosen methodology.

2.3.1 Sampling

The research sample consists of 9 respondents, of which five were men and four were women. The average age of the participants is 59 (median being 67), ranging from 26 to 81. The residents were approached in Mezná and Mezní louka which are part of the National Parks and three municipalities (Jetřichovice, Vysoká Lípa and Doubice) around the National Park. All participants knew the area very well and visited it frequently. At first, participants were chosen based on purposive sampling (selection was based on the condition that the respondents had to work or live – either recreationally or a whole year along- in the area). Later in the research, when I had finished the first few interviews, a combination of selective and snowball sampling was employed. At the end of the interview, I asked the participants whether they know someone who could be the next interviewee (who would according to them be an eligible participant and may be willing to provide me with an interview) and occasionally they provided me with contacts of potential next interviewees.

Firstly, prospective interviewees were searched for in the settlements most affected by the fire and also the only ones which are officially part of the BSNP- Mezní louka and Mezná. Then, I considered and visited other municipalities in the surroundings of BSNP (Jetřichovice, Hřensko, Vysoká Lípa, Arnoltice and Doubice). Since the current study is not intended to portray the conflict situation primarily from the tourism sector view but rather an in-depth focus on the local inhabitants' perspective, and a part of the already interviewed participants were employed in the services, another condition in the process of selection was that following respondents shall not work in hotels or restaurants. Thus, the rest of the participants were found either through snowball sampling or selective purposeful sampling in the municipalities of Jetřichovice, Vysoká Lípa and Doubice. The majority of the participants are recently retired local residents

with various backgrounds (e.g., architecture, transport, education), others work in the sector of IT services and the previously mentioned tourism sector.

In several cases, snowball sampling has not proved functional since the interview has been refused by many of those suggested. Generally, most of the people that were asked to be interviewed, refused. When further asked why, the most common response was because, despite having some thoughts, they did not want to interfere in the conflict dynamics and “*steer things*”. This constitutes a limit to the design of the research which will be further reflected on in subchapter 2.3.4, focusing on the limits of the chosen methods.

2.3.2 Data Collection

As is common when using a case study research design, a mixed-method approach was adopted in collecting data from both primary and secondary sources. This involved a literature study, semi-structured interviews, and participative observation. At the beginning of the research, I familiarised myself with the current situation in BSNP and its surroundings through a reading of media coverage on the issue and other relevant literature concerning the National Park. In total, more than 30 reports, various documents about the history and natural conditions of the area, articles and interviews have been read and various related online discussions were scanned to get a richer understanding of the conflict context.

Semi-structured interviews have been chosen as the central method of data collection. The method has been chosen in order to maintain a degree of consistency between interviews and simultaneously to allow for flexibility of the questions and adaptation of the pre-set questions to accommodate for specific situations and participants during the interviews (Bryman, 2012). These methodological choices represent the interpretative paradigm used to conduct the research; a perspective that aims to understand the research focus by paying attention to the context of the research and

participants' unique experiences and includes close contact with a small number of participants (Moon & Blackman, 2014).

The interviews were conducted in an environment chosen by the respondents themselves. 6 of the interviews happened eye-to-eye, all of them at the participants' homes (either a home or a cottage) and three of them were set in a virtual environment of Zoom. These were arranged so as to fit the participant's busy working schedules and allowed the interviews to be set in unhurried conditions. Interviews were digitally recorded and manually transcribed. The average interview lasted approximately 75 minutes, with the shortest one being 42 minutes long (due to the previously mentioned work-related business of the participant) and the longest being 115 minutes long.

One of the most prominent risks of qualitative interviews is the results being influenced by the researcher's biases, resulting in and from poorly formulated questions. Therefore, before formulating questions, I gathered knowledge on question design from methods textbooks and publications focusing on the subject of environmental conflict analysis. The themes and formulations of the interview questions were inspired by the analytical and practise-oriented works by Daniels and Walker (1997) and Clarke and Peterson (2016) which focus on the substance of the conflict, conflict stakeholders and their relationships and finally, the procedural dimension of the conflict. To ensure that some of the selected themes would not be forgotten, I have articulated a script for the interview in advance (the script in the original version in Czech as well translated version is to be found in Appendix D). When an initial script had been designed, I tested the interview on friends to check for length, language suitability and potential sources of bias (e.g., leading questions). Then I piloted the interview guide with the first two participants. The pilot interview was transcribed to check whether it produced relevant data to answer the research questions. Since the questions outlined were found to be adequate, the script was only adapted to suit various situational settings of interviews as is common with semi-structured interviews. As has been mentioned, the formulations of the questions were

articulated in advance, however, the exact wording as well as the number of questions differed significantly from the version in the script. In some cases, the number of questions almost doubled, which allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' realities.

In addition to reading materials related to the subject of the thesis and the interviews just described, I have also employed the method of participative observation and to gather data. I have visited the area several times (staying in the area for a total of 28 days) to observe it and talk about related issues with various people I would meet. Inspired by the ethnographic approach, I have stayed in various places during the research, mainly camps and guesthouses, and the unofficial conversations I had there also added nuances to the research. One of the places I have stayed in was also the BSNP headquarters, thus the management was informed with the aim of the research and its existence. The manager I communicated with shared his views of the conflict and welcomed the study since the institution itself seems to be open to learn about views of the public and thus be better informed on how to manage the conflict. The BSNP was not involved in any way for the rest of the research process but to sustain transparency I hereby mention the whole context of the research.

I have also been invited to and participated in the meeting of the local community in Mezná, which happens every Friday in a former bus stop which they have transformed into a local gathering spot. Data from these experiences and observations were processed in the form of memos and notes which I gathered in the field diary as well as photo and video material.

2.3.3 Data Analysis

In the following, I describe the data analysis in detail and clarify my reasoning behind it. Firstly, I used the open coding technique and started by coding each line of the interview text by commenting in Microsoft Word. In the initial phase, all of the interviews were analysed and coded separately. I commented on each code in a

separate Excel sheet, where I elaborated on the explanation of the code. At the start, all codes were considered plausible. Then I moved on to the comparison of the codes within an interview with the research question, considering their relevance. This narrowed down the number of codes. Next, I clustered several codes into one category within each interview. These categories were adopted from the theoretical underpinnings of Frame Theory described in the Theoretical part described by, e.g. Brummans et al (2008), Lewicki & Gray (2003), or Shmueli (2008). A list of categories and an example of coding within a category is to be found in Appendix E. Several codes did not fit in any of the frame categories but provided valuable info regarding the conflict context, therefore additional categories were established. Throughout the coding and categorising process, I was simultaneously writing memos through which I kept the thinking process tracked and the associated concepts mentioned in the theoretical part connected.

Building on the knowledge gathered in the theoretical part, I further divided the data into three topics based on the environmental conflict dimensions: substance, relational and logistic-procedural as suggested by Clarke & Peterson (2016) and guided by the Progress triangle by Walker & Daniels (1997). Two reasons have led me to choose the lens of the Progress triangle during analysis: As shown in the theoretical part, a useful way of understanding conflicts is to examine their components and thus structure the web of interconnected issues. Another advantage of the Progress Triangle is that Baynham-Herd et al. (2018) and Niemelä et al. (2005) listed commonly used interventions of conflict management into categories that correspond with the Progress Triangle by Walker & Daniels (1997) and therefore its use within the study can benefit those responsible for potential conflict management.

After dividing the themes and categories as relevant to specific dimensions of conflict, I compared the categories from interviews and tried to find similarities as well as differences, based upon which memos have been simultaneously noted. Finally, I returned to the beginning of the process to check whether my memos, the original

interview transcripts and categories were in line and had not lost their validity and relevance. To navigate through various categories, concepts, and relationships among them, I visualized the connections and associations through a “theme map”.

2.3.4 Limits of the Chosen Methods

A disadvantage of qualitative research as one that examines phenomena in-depth, particularly the method of a case study which focuses on one situation (N=1) is that generalisation of the outcomes of the study is not plausible. However, rather than being a tool for generating wider theoretical generalisations based on the counted occurrences etc., the current study seeks to explore, describe, and interpret the numerous shades, patterns, and nuances of residents' views on the conflict and to understand the issue holistically. As case study research design employs this specific ideographical approach that has been described above (See 2.3), I find it to be an appropriate way to search for answers to the research question.

Further, in the context of epistemological reflexivity, several aspects of the chosen methods need to be addressed. A limitation relevant in the context of the sampling is that the description of the current study as focusing on the perceptions of the ongoing conflict in the area by local inhabitants may have drawn a specific group of respondents to participate in it. As mentioned, many of the residents refused to participate in the study since they either did not perceive themselves as actors of the conflict, therefore did not see a point in participating in the study, did not perceive the current atmosphere in the area to be “conflict-like” or did not want to interfere in the conflict dynamics. Some have also mentioned that they do not have an issue with BSNP and therefore they do not find a reason to have an interview about the conflict since it would be only an interpretation of other people’s attitudes. Even though I emphasised that their viewpoint is equally crucial for the study to accurately represent the residents' perspective, a few of them declined to participate. This is interesting when considering the stages/phases of conflict described by e.g., Yasmi & Schanz (2010) and shall be considered when planning potential conflict management strategy.

Additionally, generally speaking, since the present thesis had been labelled as “about conflict” and has been communicated that way with the interview participants before the interview, this may influence their response in a way to describe things in a more polarized way.

2.4 Research Ethics

Participants in qualitative conflict research may be at risk for social, economic, and psychological harm (Bean et al., 2007). A well-designed consent process can be an easy way to reduce risk in a study. When approaching the respondents, I informed them about the topic of my diploma thesis and clarified the main points that be mentioned during the interview. Often a participant’s potential for harm doesn’t end when the research is over. Loss of confidentiality is a risk that participants may face when participating in an environmental conflict study thus before starting the interviews, informed consent was presented to and signed by the respondents. I had two copies of the informed consent, one for the respondent and the other for me. The informed consent is enclosed in Appendix E. Environmental conflict researchers need to pay attention to various factors that may hinge on the research participants’ will to describe and characterise their experiences and perceptions freely and authentically (Bean et al., 2007). In this light, greater attention to confidentiality may support the legitimacy and trustworthiness of the research process and potentially result in higher accuracy of the interview contents (particularly when considering research focusing on controversial and sensitive topics) (Lee, 1999, p. 164). Further, respondents were informed that the interview was being recorded and subsequently processed anonymously. To protect their privacy, the complete transcripts of the interviews are not included in the thesis, and I intentionally changed places and names in the quoted passages and names so as not to risk revealing their identity. The respondents were further informed about their right to withdraw from the participation if they later decided to reconsider some of the answers or the overall participation in the research.

The last question of the interview guide is whether the interviewees themselves have any questions. This is to partially ensure the overall transparency of the research. The question was commonly related to the programme of my studies. Since I did not want the fact that I study Environmental studies to impact the nature of the participants' responses, I introduced myself as a Masaryk University student writing a Master's thesis on the conflict in Bohemian Switzerland at the beginning of the interview. Two of the respondents (Robert and Ludvík) asked me before the start of the interview about the exact major of my studies which may have influenced the way they responded.

Finally, but yet very importantly, another set of ethical responsibility questions is related not only to the participants of the study but also to the themes present throughout the thesis as well as the implications for the local community and environment they live in. Throughout the whole process of writing this thesis, I was constantly confronting myself with the question of how to ensure that the study benefits the local context in the best way possible and informs for potential future steps to enhance the current state of the conflict dynamics. Correspondingly, I am aware that a non-accurate or biased report could harm the local dynamics and consequently possibly lead to the worsening of both social and environmental conditions in the area (Bean et al., 2007). As previously stated, because case study research entails investigating a social phenomenon in its natural context, and because environmental conflict frequently focuses on controversial topics, a researcher must avert any preconceptions and presumptions that may corrupt the quality of the knowledge obtained by research. This applies to both the data collection and analysis phases and is attained through reflexivity. Reflexivity can be understood as a continuous process through which a researcher reflects and "brackets out" one's subjectivity, beliefs, social status, life experiences and other aspects of oneself while one does research and analyses data (Giddens & Sutton, 2014, pp. 77–79; Olmos-Vega et al., 2023). On that note, I will reflect on my positionality within the research topics and the context of the thesis in the following.

2.5 Reflexivity and positionality

Here, my positionality within the research topics needs to be addressed. I decided to study the topic of the current research since I believe that conflict – if understood and managed – may function as a catalyst to search collectively for solutions that enhance the conditions of both the “natural environment” as well as the communities relying on it and therefore is worth thorough examination. My motivation for researching the issue is also a general curiosity and interest in learning the perspectives on nature protection and related themes held by people from various backgrounds and life experiences. To put it in Hurston’s (1996, p. 143) words: “Research is formalised curiosity.” As a student of Environmental Studies, unsurprisingly, I share many of the beliefs and concerns held by those who would be labelled “green environmentalists” (to put it in one of the participant's words). Further, while my grandfather was a pro-environmentally thinking forest owner, and time spent with him was filled with stories from the woods and work in the forest itself, a lot of my views were undoubtedly shaped by that as well. However, my affection for the “natural” is intrinsically bound to a strong concern for issues of social justice as well as empathy towards others. Thus, it was the dualistic nature of environmental conflicts (which combine both social and environmental dimensions) that attracted me and motivated me to delve deeper into related issues. In my view, biodiversity management must promote the best social and environmental management; in reality, both aims must be seen as inseparably intertwined if either is to be fulfilled in the long run. To put it briefly, I believe that without empathy, willingness to understand other perspectives and curious examination of our own assumptions about the world, there can be no truly “sustainable” nature protection and measures that promote it.

2.6 Results and Interpretation

In the following paragraphs, I will present the dimensions of the ongoing conflict as framed by the participants and thus answer the research question as well as the aim of

the research. The results of the current study are anything but monolithic. The inhabitants used a broad variety of frames to define the conflict and had very different understandings of the current situation. The analysis of the conflict in the Bohemian Switzerland Area identified three main framings of the conflict: A framing by the group of participants opposing the non-intervention management strategy (further just Opponents; Petr, Robert, Ludvík, Štěpán, Beata, Milena), a group that is neutral towards it (further just Neutrals; Karla, Renata) and that is supporting it (further just Supporter; Stanislav).

The framings of the conflict are defined through the prism of the three conflict dimensions: substance, relations, and procedure. While the conflict dimensions as interpreted by participants will be described separately to sustain a certain level of structure and cohesion it is important to mind that all of the dimensions are inseparably connected, one influences the other and none of them can be understood as the ultimate answer to the research the question. With that, I will continue to describe the dimension that is most commonly mistaken to be the ultimate and only cause of a conflict– substance.

2.6.1 Substance

Environmental issues have distinct effects on various stakeholders. The same conflict may be viewed as a conflict about divergent interests by some, as a debate over legitimate knowledge by others, or as an issue of justice or physical health by others (Fisher, 2022, p. 37). Divergent definitions of the conflict give rise to divergent opinions about how to handle the circumstance and how to interact with others involved in the conflict who ought to be part of finding solutions. In the following, I will characterise the participants' views and definitions of the substance as well as similarities and differences among them.

Within the Opponents group, the prevailing framing of the conflict substance, the source of the conflict, are the diverging positions in the debate about the optimal

management strategy of the deadwood and trees affected by the bark beetle outbreak as well as the forest area affected by the recent fire. The common attitude among Opponents to the current management strategy of the BSNP is that affected trees and deadwood shall be felled, and harvested and new trees should be planted. Similar to the study by McFarlane et al. (2006) which studied the perceptions of Mountain Pine Beetle in Canadian British Columbia, the Opponents view bark beetles as a threat to nature, to the aesthetic and scenic values of the area, and are perceived as an ecological disaster that results in economic loss to tourism as well as forestry. Allowing the outbreak to run its course without intervention is thus not an acceptable management option for those opposing BSNP.

Petr: "Well, from my perspective, just get rid of those attacked by the bark beetle, cut them down and plant a new, healthy forest ... But they don't do anything about it. They don't do anything at all."

As apparent from Petr's quote, a lot of Opponents frame the BSNP's paradigm – non-intervention management which focuses on natural regeneration without humans interfering– as “doing nothing”, “simply letting it rot” (“chtěj to prostě všechno nechat shnít”) or that the BSNP “is not willing to do anything about it” and “doesn't know what to do with it so they don't do anything”. From their perspective, the main issue of the conflict is thus the non-intervention management that is being employed by BSNP. The strategy is commonly associated with neglect and sloppiness, and the absence of active management goes against what the participants associate with “proper care of the land” (“prostě to za mě nejsou dobří hospodáři”). Further, the history of changes in the approaches to management is viewed as a manifestation of a lack of clear vision and conception over the course of „running the forests “.

Ludvík: "It seems to me that the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing."

Štěpán: "I am unhappy and disappointed with what I see in the forest. It is sad. It's disorganized, it's thoughtless, and they always find a reason why not to do it the way it was done before."

As shown, participants within the group of Opponents commonly express a level of certainty about the "right" way of managing the forests. This belief of controllable and predictable nature conditions may be based on the concept that ecosystems exist in continual state of stable equilibrium that was prevalent in the previous conservation practice until the 1980s (DeFries & Nagendra, 2017, p. 266) and is well rooted in the nature representations of public (Buijs, 2009; Buijs et al., 2011).

Contrastingly, Neutrals and Supporter severally mentioned that ecosystem management is complex, and any decisions are being made under conditions of high uncertainty. They are in various measures aware of the complexity and uncertainty that is associated with ecosystem management (Walker et al., 2008) which Balint (2011) described as a wicked problem. As a result, the strategy of adaptive management, including the first phase when BSNP harvested the infested deadwood in the area is interpreted differently than the Opponents view it. While in the eyes of the Opponents, the strategy lacks any conception and clear vision, the other two groups view it to a certain level as a result of the complexity and unpredictability that come with the everchanging character of the natural systems (DeFries & Nagendra, 2017). In this regard, Renata and Karla highlight the effect of the changing climate on the future state of the forests:

Karla: "Consider the changing climate, we are causing and that will surely affect the forest ... but what is a right way to make it (the forests) more resilient? ... I haven't studied that, so I have to trust the experts that they know ... "

Renata: „I think a lot of people who are against the Park, understand things around the nature of things in a more simplified way. I think they may not know or connect some things. Like concerning what's going on with the climate. Like you know, they are convinced that this is how it always has been, this is

how it worked, this is how it will be. And they don't wanna be told any different. "

Renata's statement summarizes the substance of the conflict as perceived by the two neutral participants in the research- that conflict lies within divergent knowledge and information.

The majority of the Opponents did not acknowledge or were not aware of the role of global processes of changing climate in the increasing frequency and extent of natural disturbances (such as bark beetle epidemics) to global climate processes. The participants were commonly very hesitant when asked about their view on the park's future in the context of the growing urgency of the climate crisis. The following statement embodies this uncertainty:

Milena: "I hope that we have already learned our lesson, probably...how to do it (forest management) ... I hope that probably the climate ... that it will completely avoid us and that we will get the chance to grow new forest here."

The tendency to neglect or deny the impacts of the changing climate in the local context is evident from the research by STEM (2021) that found that only 16% of the Czech public admits that global climate change has a significant impact on their region. I argue that the absence of conscious acceptance of the reality of changing climate affecting the local ecosystem allows the participants to interpret the increased occurrence of natural disturbances as an inappropriate forest management approach (which can be changed) rather than the changing natural conditions humans have only limited power to control or anticipate.

One of the most commonly spoken about themes among the Opponents and the Neutrals was the aesthetic and scenic beauty of the landscape. The picture of a post-disturbance forest seems too untidy, and unhealthy and shall be "managed", "cared about" "helped" or "cleaned up" by humans. Similarly to other studies examining social representations of nature and their role in conflict (Buijs et al., 2011; Müller, 2011),

wilderness and its attributes are not understood by the Opponents as a natural state but rather a management failure.

Milena: "It really doesn't look right in here ... It doesn't look like the National Park here... The trees are simply in a desolate state and it's all a big mess. Something should really be done quickly. We cannot call ourselves National Park like this."

Ludvík: "I just want it to be a beautiful forest. But like, I get it, you cannot make such forest beautiful, but at least take care of it, to tidy it up a bit, so that there aren't those sticks when you walk along the path, so that the sticks of the branches don't hit you in the face and that the firemen can at least get through when needed."

Štěpán: „Well, that's how the matches (zápalky) lied, one on the other, broken. Boubín, thrown around everything. Boubín is tidy compared to it! And nobody cares, they don't care. Leave it there, right?"

An underlying assumption is evident that nature protection and biodiversity management is understood in terms of humans cultivating and conserving a particular state or image of a forest landscape (Fischer & Young, 2007). Adopting this point of view, the presence of decaying wood is seen as a sign of an unhealthy forest and shall not be present in ideal landscapes of natural parks. In all of the Opponents and Neutrals interviews, pejorative terms such as mess (bordel, svinčík, nepořádek), havock (paseka, spoušť) or apocalypse were used to describe the state of the area. As underlined by studies by Müller (2011) and O'Brien (2006), people attach great symbolic and identifying value to thick, green forests and therefore their transformation commonly leads to tensions. The affective responses to the massive change in the scenic landscape of BSNP are filled with negative emotions: the landscape is associated with notions of decay and neglect among the Opponents who commonly share feelings of anger, frustration, sadness, and unjust loss of "their forest". This will be further reflected in the chapter on Relations as well while it also has implications

for the way Opponents see the BSNP as an institution and affects relations within the community.

Correspondingly, considering the future character of the landscape, while not the majority, some of the Opponents of non-intervention management were strongly against the image of deciduous or mixed forests as well. The idea of green, deep, and coniferous forests is well-rooted in our cultural systems (through fairy tales, songs, poems etc.) despite the fact this state of a forest landscape is not natural for our climatic conditions thus the existence of the forests is highly dependent on human interventions. Interestingly, for two of the participants, the deep affinity to the image of the dark coniferous forests affects their views so much that they suppress the idea of the vulnerability of these ecosystems against natural disturbances in our climatic conditions and the potential risks of fires and insect outbreaks resulting in the current state of the forests. This paradox is presented in the participants' answers when asked about the preferred future form of the forest in the Park:

Beata: "Coniferous ... fir should be here, pine, I don't know, lodgepole pine, spruce... I know it's not native and stable ... but I think it would be fine."

Robert: "You know when you read something, for example, about the area in here, you learn that the spruce forests were here traditionally for 300-400 years, and nobody minded! This is also a matter of industrial production and woodwork. First, some kind of employment in the area, wood management, a better economy and so on. What was harmful about it? I don't know... I understand that there are diseases such as bark beetle, yes... But I just can't get it into my head why one totality - the totality of spruce - should be replaced by the totality of deciduous trees."

Other than what has been already described, Robert's quote entails several things worth noticing in the context of the current conflict that has been shared among Opponents. Firstly, a comparison with the past was commonly highlighted to prove the legitimacy of one's attitude towards nature disturbance management and it will be

further elaborated on in the next chapter. Secondly, Robert has stressed multiple times the economic value of the forest and the aspect of employment related to forestry which is in his perspective being wrongly compromised for “pseudo-green purposes” (Robert). This view was shared by Štěpán who also does not see a point of leaving dead trees in the woods and reflects the conflict in light of job losses of those employed in the forestry sector (involving himself). Both of these participants perceived the dead or dying trees as an economic resource value of which quickly decreases due to the trees' decay.

Štěpán: *„Well, they say that it fertilizes the forest. See, as long as this wood can be used and made value from, why shouldn't it be used? It's a valuable source, valuable commodity. Why should anything rot there? It's nonsense, some sticks will remain there anyway. But why leave everything there, it's complete bollocks (kravina)... People have lost their jobs here, while there is plenty of work to be done in that forest. We even got into debt because of it. And only someone will get the job, only few get the contracts- but what about the others? What are they supposed to do?”*

Many of the claims by Štěpán and Robert echo this notion of the importance of economic outcomes of a wood industry that is associated with progress and higher employment by, not indifferently to some of the statements by “wise users” within the studies by Carroll et al. (2000) or Whittaker & Mercer (2004). From them, many reveal feelings of deep disappointment over the “inefficiency” of the current management strategy. This perspective was not however strongly accented by more participants, majority of which tends to highlight the aesthetic and recreational values of nature over economic ones.

Another theme that is shared among Opponents and Neutrals is the restricted access to some areas of the park. Before the park's establishment, the majority of the participants used to walk around these lands freely and were also free to use all of the environmental services this area provides. In the interviews, when asked about what the area of Bohemian Switzerland means to them, many refer to deeply joyous and

nostalgic memories, connected both to the area itself and the people they used to spend time in here. Feelings such as these are commonly associated with the concept of place attachment and have been discussed as one of the important factors in environmental conflict literature (Buijs & Lawrence, 2013; Creighton et al., 2008). From this perspective, what the non-intervention management means to the participants is restricting or completely banning access to what they commonly refer to as “home”.

Robert: “And then only us – the inhabitants of Mezná and Mezní louka – we are the vermin here, we only cause problems as they see it. Because if we weren't here, they could grow Boubín in here, couldn't they?”

Renata: “...it seems that the Park is paving the path of the Boubín Forest. We will leave everything here, everything will develop here by itself, but the human foot will never enter the place anymore, only along the marked path.”

Štěpán: “Because according to them we do not belong here. We are not welcome anymore.”

The interviewees are worried, that after the wildfire that happened in September last year, the affected areas are no longer going to be accessible to people and therefore feel unwelcome in what used to be the area where they have spent their life. While this may not reflect the reality of the current zonation of the area “Natural Zone” (i.e. the area of the park with non-intervention management) or the “Quiet Zone” (i.e. the area in which the movement of visitors is only permitted with the consent of the nature protection authority)³, it continues to be a critical aspect that causes tensions among both Opponents and the Neutrals.

Another theme that was shared and stressed by both the Opponents and Neutrals was the danger they associated with non-intervention management and wilderness.

Milena: “...There was like an extreme danger of trees just falling on you, it was crazy I was terrified... a couple of times when the

³ Park Zoning Maps available at: www.npcs.cz/dulezite-dokumenty

wind picked up here...you just heard trees falling just behind the hotel..."

Beata: "...Because if it (the dry and dead wood) catches, it will destroy us, ...it is crazy dangerous... and the Park still does not know what to do about it."

Renata: "... I understand the thought, nature can do wonders and it will eventually get better by itself, but if you leave dead trees everywhere like this, of course, you can't let people in there, because that's dangerous."

Ludvík: "If they want to leave it there like in Boubín, let all the trees lie there, then they will simply give up on the care of the forest... And a lightning happens to strike one of the dry trees and a fire will be here again."

As apparent, both natural disturbances, fire and bark beetle resulting in the trees vulnerability, cause strong affective reactions and high perceptions of risk. Risk perception has been found to be a significant factor impacting park affinity, and attitudes towards the management strategies (Flint, 2007; McFarlane & Witson, 2008). Also, a notion of stress, anxiety or righteous anger is noticeable among both Neutrals and Opponents. These emotions are not to be dismissed when trying to understand the causes of the conflict since as stressed by multiple environmental conflict researchers such effects may play a catalysing role in the conflict escalation if dismissed or not acknowledged with respect (Buijs & Lawrence, 2013; Halla & Laine, 2022).

While the Opponents define the substance of the conflict as one of diverging values and positions related to the various management strategies, and Neutrals perceive it to be a conflict over diverging ways of knowing, the Supporter framed it as a conflict over diverging interests of the stakeholders involved. From his perspective, the conflict primarily lies within the divergent interests (particularly among the managements of the municipalities and BSNP) in what the aim and role of the BSNP is and how these interests are being met.

Stanislav: "In my opinion, the primary aim of the Park should be nature protection. And it seems to me that some of the municipalities still have some kind of idea that the National Park Administration should primarily ensure that crowds of tourists flow here and so that local entrepreneurs got something out of it and so on. In my opinion, people there do not understand or perhaps do not want to identify with the mission of the National Park and what is its function. And that's the core of the issue."

While he understands and reflects on some of the Opponents' and Neutrals' objections, such as restricted access or the aesthetic aspects of natural disturbance, he states the difficulty of promoting nature conservation for non-anthropogenic goals or goals so abstract as healthy biodiversity.

Stanislav: "Of course, if I look at it as a person who lives here, there are not some specific benefits that would improve my life... Apart from nature, which of course is here and if it weren't for the Park, there might be a satellite town or hotel resort instead of it or it might be in a worse state, maybe... Apart from that, as a local inhabitant, the existence of the Park does not bring much benefit to me. But you can't always look at it from the point of what it brings to humans."

Expressing ecocentric values and being convinced of the ability of natural processes to regenerate the current landscape into a more resilient forest, he favours little or no human interference in its course where possible. At the same time, he highlights the need to continue managing areas close to human settlements to ensure the inhabitants' safety, leave an area of the Park to be the "Park for the People" and make it "pretty to look at and easy to go mushroom and berry picking". This corresponds with his understanding of the conflict as a conflict of various parties having different interests, while as has been discussed before by conflict management practitioners (Caplan, 2012; Fisher, 2022, p. 27), once a party frames a conflict to be caused by divergent interests rather than deeply rooted values or positions, it is more likely to attempt to find ways of negotiations and searching for middle grounds.

In the past paragraphs, the examination of the local views on the issues revealed multiple divergencies of understandings of the conflict substance as well as the views on optimal nature-disturbance management. The perceived roots of the conflict varied from the more tangible ones such as changed economic conditions to more abstract ones such as diverging perception of concepts of balance or nature itself. A short overview below (Table 5) summarizes the substance conflict dimension as perceived by the participant groups.

Table 5 Substance Framing Overview

SUBSTANCE	
<i>Views on Forest Management and Substance of the Conflict</i>	
<i>OPPONENTS</i>	Conflict over values and correlating positions on disturbance management Both the fire and the bark beetle epidemic are results of non-intervention management that harms nature and has bad implications for nature and the people
<i>NEUTRALS</i>	Conflict over diverging information and knowledge Ecosystem management is very complex and is becoming to be even more so with the changing climate conditions
<i>SUPPORTER</i>	Conflict over interests: nature protection x tourism The bark beetle epidemic has been caused by planting tree species not suitable for this area and non-intervention is the most suitable way to ensure resilient forests for the future

To put the above-mentioned into another perspective, since the BSNP Management is the one deciding over the management strategy, the substantive dimension of the conflict often manifests and mirrors the relational dimension as well. While the content or substance itself – in this case, the matter of how a whole area of land is going to be treated – is controversial enough, it does not constitute the whole story of the conflict. All mentioned above conveys itself into relationships, perceptions of one another and levels of trust among the various actors of conflict. The following chapter explores the stakeholders' relations and their role in the conflict.

2.6.2 Relations

The relational dimension of conflict refers to the various stakeholders, the history of relations among them, or the levels of trust among them. Just as with the views on the substance of the conflict, the various groups of local inhabitants unsurprisingly differed significantly in their understanding of the relations among conflict stakeholders. Many of the perspectives on relationships and views on the other parties of the conflict stem directly from how the participants describe and understand the conflict substance. This corresponds with the Theory of the Progress Triangle which claims that the conflict dimensions are inseparably linked and the whole story of the conflict should only be understood as the complete triad (Walker and Daniels, 1997).

While the Opponents commonly framed the core of the conflict to be about the bark beetle epidemic management, the most widely and frequently used frames by them were the negative characterizations of the institution itself. This suggests the relational dimension is not to be ignored by the potential future conflict management strategies since it may significantly influence the conflict dynamics. Above all, the claims of the Opponents shed light on the feelings of disappointment, mistrust, and anger that a large number of them have for the government and BSNP (since many of the opposing participants talked about these two institutions in interconnectivity). In general, the Opponents believed that they had done little to fulfil their responsibility to take care of the land as well as to consider the lives and opinions of the people living in the area.

Ludvík: "They are all promises, promises (slibotechny). It saddens me because you cannot trust them with that approach."

Robert: "It seems to me that they all are kind of degenerate (zdegerenovaný). And again, it's the influence of the Greens. What kind of return to nature is this?!... I was angry, I was angry because it didn't have to be like this. To whom to sell wood, and where to buy land, that is what interests them, nothing else. And certainly not us."

The situation is commonly framed in an “Us vs Them” way by the Opponents. Further, negative characterizations are used by the Opponents to assign blame (Wondolleck et al., 2003). While the Opponents do not perceive the bark beetle as part of natural processes but rather as a threat to nature, and a management failure (as described in the substance chapter) that could have been avoided, they commonly assign blame to BSNP for the course of the bark beetle epidemic. Correspondingly, the Opponents also interpret the massive fire from September 2022 as something to be an event that could be expected to some measure due to the BSNP managing the bark-beetle-affected trees applying the non-intervention management.

Ludvík: “And the National Park is to blame. I see it as Park's fault, and everyone sees it that way, everyone here in Mezná knows. And everyone told them that something like this could happen.”

Štěpán: “One match (sirka) next to another. It's all their fault, naturally. They leave the dry wood (sušinky) standing there.”

Beata: “Someone should be found guilty for this, there needs to be responsibility ... Find what was done wrong, what to do differently... So that it doesn't happen again in the future. There should definitely be an output like this.”

Beata’s statement summarizes the view shared among some of the Opponents, i.e. that someone needed to be assigned the responsibility for such a catastrophe. The opposing participants would highlight the need to find a culprit, someone, to be held accountable for the massive change in the landscape that they love and are deeply attached to (Buijs & Lawrence, 2013; Creighton et al., 2008). The underlying narrative of the Opponents is, that if the voices of the local community and those representing them were listened to more, the fire and the bark beetle epidemic would not have escalated in such a manner as it did. The course of the events is also explained through the lenses of common-sense science – simply, had the bark beetle affected wood not been there, the fire would have not had any wood to burn.

Beata: "I think that the whole bark beetle and the fire now that it could have been prevented. Human stupidity was to blame."

Ludvík: "I am an ordinary person and I think this is true. And a lot of people out there think that way."

Štěpán: "...Where their approach got us- their famous expertise! I can laugh at their expertise. See how the forests end up – either nowhere or burnt down!"

Robert: "...They are all a lot of titles in front of name after name, and „normal lay people just don't understand it“, and „I was on an internship in Canada“, and I don't know what else. And then an internship in Canada, where it's something completely different ... What will we do to talk, Canada is the second largest country or state on the globe, that is impossible ... we are here."

All of the statements above embody an issue that often occurs in the context of conservation conflicts: the level to which local inhabitants ("ordinary people") perceive their local knowledge is (not) being respected and in reaction how much are they willing to trust scientific technical one. Many have lived in the area for the majority of their lives, and some have also worked in the forests. They refer to themselves with pride as patriots of the area, true locals who know every corner and every hill and so by only acknowledging the technical knowledge they feel their identity as "a local expert" or a right to have anything to say about the future of the land is being disrespected. This as a result creates tensions and contributes to the conflict dynamics.

The theme of engagement of local populations will be further examined in the next chapter, it is important to mention it in the current one as well since due to the above-mentioned process, Opponents refer to BSNP as arrogant and always "doing everything their way without considering others" (Beata). This is of importance regarding potential conflict management as well since emotions which have been described so far affect the way local populations process any new information. Negative emotions increase people's reliance on stereotypes, leading them to seek

information that reinforces this bias while challenging the credibility of any contradictory information (Buijs & Lawrence, 2013). This is already relevant in the context of the current conflict while the various participants directly or indirectly referred to the various sources of knowledge that reflected their values, and their perceptions of risks and led to fulfilling their needs and disregarded the contrary ones that did not – thus engaging in what d’Estree et al. (2002, p. 593) called “battle of experts”. This is exemplified in the following statement by Ludvík when he refers to two separate analyses of the fire event, one published by the Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic and the second one by scientists predominantly with background from the Czech Academy of Sciences (Hruška et al., 2022; Sdružení pro rozvoj Šluknovska, 2023).

Ludvík: “This is the biggest nonsense, it’s complete boloney. They said that the bark beetle wood wasn’t why it burned. That bark beetle wood doesn’t burn they said. National Park – they had an expert who told them that they did the right thing, but the others, they found another specialist and he said that what Mr. – I don’t know his name – claims, so that’s first-class bollocks. In short, if the wood is already dried up, dead, and has no sap, then it’s good to go. And below that is the rake, it goes maybe a meter deep. So it burns easy as nothing.”

Due to the complexity of the central issue Opponents and Neutrals adopted credibility frames to assess and accept information that they considered they could not simply understand or did not have the time to gain expertise in (Kaufman et al., 2003). Based on these they either decided to trust or not the information provided by BSNP. This is apparent from the following statements:

Robert: “Related to these things, I’m simply not an expert in this, I am specialised elsewhere professionally, and I wouldn’t allow myself to say something about that. But it just seems to me that it is not organized in any way. It does not have any conception or logic what they are doing.”

Renata: "Anyway, I'm happy with the way it is now, I trust them (BSNP) that they mean well with the trees. I don't know anything about it myself, so I leave it to the experts I trust."

The last sentence by Renata sums up the view of both Neutrals and Opponents. However, they differ in whom they perceive to be the experts and who they view as a credible source of information.

Štěpán: "Look, I'll tell you, I'll direct you to a very qualified person who you should ask about all this. He is the deputy mayor of Krásná Lípa- Mr. Linhart. Linhart told them so - that tens of thousands of trees are standing here – he had it calculated by research mathematically and all – of which are still a potential danger for the entire region. He is a person who is clear about this whole issue and the "nothingdoing" (nicnedělání) of the Park."

Karla: "I think that the people who run the Park, that they are erudite people, really. People at the right place."

Beata: "I think every forester has something to say about it."

Mistrust of the Opposing was also embedded in the perceived absence or inaction of the institution in the area. While the headquarters of the BSNP Management are located further from the area of the Park itself in Krásná Lípa, the Opponents typically frame the BSNP to be outsiders, Greenies and bureaucrats that decide about the future of the area without actually engaging with the local environment. This is used to characterize the BSNP, distinguish them from the locals and to further strengthen their argumentation against non-intervention management (Davis & Lewicki, 2003, pp. 200–206).

Petr: "I don't know what they are doing at the headquarters. Normally, you never meet them here. We only saw them after the fire when they came here with their fancy new cars looking at it all and taking photos with their cameras and that is it."

Robert: "Disputes, conflict or similar ... There must be at least two for that. But you won't meet them here ... I think these people might have been here to look at the place twice or so,

otherwise they are managing it from the green table (řídí to od zeleného stolu)."

Some of the Opponents even framed the whole institution of the national park as an overall scam which has according to them been established only to provide jobs for a "group of friends from school" (Robert) or respectively employ the people so that the institution seems more important. Interestingly, many of the statements seem similar to ideas on meaningless pointless jobs, i.e. bullshit jobs by the anthropologist David Graeber (2019) commonly associated with bureaucracy and administration.

Robert: "Come up with an official stamp, give it to a dummy and you have a bureau (prostě dej blbcovi razítko a máš úřad!)"

Štěpán: "Now? Never! They never did anything for nature or the people living here. ... There is an awful lot of administration involved to have someone to pay. So that someone has something to do with important dashes and tables, and more dots to be made in these tables. But the effect is zero or it goes into the red."

Beata: "Modern times require some kind of institution, bureaucratization of everything."

This framing serves a purpose to further portray the BSNP management as bureaucrats working behind the desk and is closely linked to the last characterization expressed either explicitly or implicitly nearly by all of the Opponents – "nothing doers" (nicnedělači, lajdáci). While non-intervention management is widely interpreted as "doing nothing" or "not caring" about the state of the land among the Opponents, the institution is also negatively characterised to be composed of "over 50 people just walking around their headquarters, sitting at the desk and not doing anything useful" (Ludvík).

This framing is particularly effective since many activities such as monitoring, and other nature protection activities do not ultimately aim to or even directly avoid altering the environment and therefore are easy to be overseen. On top of this practical reason, there are two aspects for why the framing also functions on a level of cultural

resonance. Firstly, the manual active work in the forest is commonly seen as “honest work”, as a manifestation of care and relationship to the land. Being diligent or hardworking is generally highly praised both among the participants and in the Czech culture in general. Therefore “not doing anything” with the bark-beetle-affected trees is typically interpreted as “giving up on caring” (Petr, Ludvík) or laziness (Štěpán) in the context of the relations dimension. Secondly, many participants have lived in the area for the majority of their lives without the existence of a national park, and related management practices and associated regulations. The Opponents often use the comparison of the state of the forest today with their memories of forests in the past as an argumentation for the previous (primarily industrial-forestry-based) management strategy. The interviewees also often recall times when they used to participate in collaborative activities such as Action Z (Akce Z) or summer jobs in the forest organized by the state to “cultivate the surroundings.” These are often remembered with feelings of pride, solidarity, and togetherness. Thus, criticizing the approach of the past is by some taken very personally and by some it is framed as an act of cultural war between the past and present. Correspondingly, the frustration felt by the local opposition may also be partly linked to the effect of rosy retrospection which is the tendency to perceive the past more favourably than the present (Zhou, 2020).

Ludvík: “It's disorganized, it's thoughtless, and it never can be done the way as it was in past.”

Robert: “Togetherness, the effort to cultivate it here is not here anymore. How can I trust in someone when everyone plays by himself for himself.... I was brought up differently ... you know what, people used to help each other, for example a cowshed was built, and everyone took part in it, half the village got together, and everyone helped.”

Štěpán: “Before, it was done simply. Someone announced on the radio, hey, everyone, we are going to meet in front of the school in the morning! Everyone took a hoe, a wheelbarrow or something in their hands and dug up the grass. It was normal

back then that we collectively took care of the land and wanted nothing for it. Maybe a lemonade. The one above (the hotel), we built that in the Action Z."

Štěpán's quote embodies certain feeling of loss of togetherness and solidarity which has been articulated by both Neutral and Opposing participants. According to Renata, the conflict may be an outcome of a long-term atmosphere of mistrust, animosity, and lack of togetherness within the current local population. In her view, much of the conflict dynamics could be prevented, if people would spend more time together.

Renata: "There is no togetherness among the people here anymore. Then misunderstandings, any conflicts arise easily."

She and other participants often note that the demographic in the area has changed significantly after the revolution in Czechia and that the "feeling of connectivity" (soudržnost – Renata, Robert, Ludvík) among the local community is not present anymore. This may easily be overlooked by the conflict analysis since it directly does not affect the conflict dynamics however referring to the ideas of Scannell & Gifford (2010a, 2010b) who claim that place attachment has a civic and community dimension as well, I argue that feelings of community disappearance may function as backcloth in front of which more concrete conflict dynamics evolve.

As apparent from the statement by Karla and Renata above, they generally characterize the BSNP positively, often underlying their expertise and knowledge of the forest. Further, they believe the authority will be able to solve the problems related to forest management and also the conflict itself. Stanislav, who supports the non-intervention management characterizes the BSNP as experts as well; additionally, for him, the institution is one with which he can cooperate on nature conservation as he volunteers in their activities. While both the Neutrals and the Supporter highlight the unpredictable and complex nature of managing the socio-ecological system they are cautious in searching for a culprit.

Stanislav: "I don't think it could have been completely prevented. I think we can thank our ancestors, who simply decided at that time to plant spruce trees here at an altitude of three hundred meters above sea level."

Renata: "The various representatives of municipalities blamed the Park for the fact that it might not have burned like that if the trees had been harvested after the bark beetle attacks ... Like honestly, how could they know that no one expected that. The trees that the bark beetle didn't affect were also burning. Any decision would not be ideal (Pěšky jako vozem) I would really not like to blame them for this... No one can tell for sure what was the right thing."

They interpret the situation among municipalities, the opposing local population and the BSNP as scapegoating, i.e. attempts to blame the BSNP to gain control over the narrative of the conflict to enhance the various parties' interests (Rothschild et al., 2012; Rothschild & Keefer, 2023). According to the Neutrals and the Supporter, the dynamics of the relations are defined by the political tensions and ambitions of various mayors to get possible voters, to enhance the tourism sector. Just as in the literature discussed in the theory, rather than seeing the fire and its aftermath as the ultimate problem of the conflict they interpret it to be the final trigger that revealed much more deeply rooted incompatibilities and conflict that has been latent until then (Cusack et al., 2021; Fisher, 2022, p. 127; Madden & McQuinn, 2014).

Stanislav: "It seems to me that people sometimes need to complain about something or blame someone for the bad things and the National Park is such an ideal scapegoat. And it is hard for the BSNP to defend itself."

Karla: "It's a proxy problem, it's useful when you want to blame someone for something when something happens."

In the past paragraphs, the relational dimension of the conflict has been described as perceived by the various groups within the local population (Table 6). In the following chapter, I will explore the procedural dimension of the conflict and the various interplays with substance and relational dimension within it.

Table 6 Relations Framing Overview

RELATIONS	
<i>Characterisation of BSNP and Blame Assignment</i>	
<i>OPPONENTS</i>	BSNP= Outsiders and bureaucrats, Greenies, that do not consider people important, lie, and are arrogant. BSNP is to blame for the fire and the bark beetle epidemic
<i>NEUTRALS</i>	BSNP= experts with valuable knowledge and experience that should be trusted. There is no one to blame for the fire or the bark beetle epidemic; it is a result of a set of unfortunate unpredictable coincidences
<i>SUPPORTER</i>	BSNP= Partners with whom to cooperate on nature protection There is no one to blame; bark beetle outbreak is the outcome of historical silvicultural activities

2.6.3 Procedure

Decision-making and planning processes, issues of governance, power and stakeholder engagement as well as how (and by whom) these are exercised, are all constituents of the procedural dimension (Madden & McQuinn, 2014). Many of the findings of the following chapter will not come as surprising while much of what follows has been foreshadowed by the previous results. In the following, I will describe how relevant processes are understood by the respondents and connect the findings with findings related to the other conflict dimensions.

As described in Relations, many Opponents object to the lack of engagement and communication with Park. Various respondents differed in their expectations of the possible participation, but they generally agreed that the current absence of any kind of mutual communication is one of the crucial issues within the conflict and the reasons they felt disrespected by the BSNP. Opponents commonly framed the processes of decision-making and planning as “about us without us”.

Petr: “Of course, it's all about communication, but if you don't have anyone to communicate with... in those 23 years of Park's

existence there were only two meetings here. Well, we've gotten used to it (laughter). They simply don't communicate anything with us, we don't say anything to them, because there is no one to talk to, and this is how life goes on, year after year."

In this regard, some of the respondents comment on the lack of communication with BSNP with the type of communication they have with the mayor of their municipality, which commonly takes place in their local pub or a familiar place where the local community meets. While not likely in light of the current state of (mis)trust among the stakeholders, the potential of a future conflict management process or even an informal gathering taking place on "their turf, at their convenience" has been recommended by conflict management practitioners as a way of enhancing the conflict dynamics as opposed to more formal traditional ways of public forums (Caplan, 2012; Leong & Forester, 2009, p. 26).

As noted before, Opponents commonly lack trust towards the institution which makes some of them interpret the lack of mutual communication as a strategic move by BSNP⁴. Generally, it can be concluded, that the framing of any decision-making or planning process is guided by the specific characterization frames various respondents hold towards the BSNP. Some see BSNP as a group of outsider bureaucrats (as encapsulated in Petr's quote) and some portray them as a corrupted institution (Štěpán) which ultimately informs their process frames.

Petr: "I think it probably suits them this way, or I don't know. They don't go outside of their place, so they don't have any incentives, and they can live their lives there at the headquarters."

Štěpán: "Krásná Lípa, I can't see as far, but I see how things are run here. No one is interested in communicating with local people here. Why would they do that, right? Asking someone for

⁴ see worst-case thinking in Theoretical part or consult d'Estree et al. (2002, p. 595)

*something, for an opinion, that would not play into their cards
... They would not make the business run so smooth."*

Unsurprisingly, the majority of the respondents who oppose the current management strategy and BSNP object to decisions and planning being made solely by the institution itself. Promoting egalitarian framing of social control (see Brummans et al. (2008), or Appendix A), they claim the processes should be based on democratic discussion in which the locals' needs and interests would be considered. However, respondents often do not know or cannot imagine how cooperation on such a basis works and are commonly sceptical about any form of cooperation or stakeholder participation. In this regard, they commonly switch between egalitarian and hierarchical frames while like Neutrals, Opponents tend to highlight the lack of technical knowledge on their side. Similar to other post-socialist countries, little knowledge and even fewer examples of participation-based two-way communication exist in the country (Szabo et al., 2010) ultimately leading to the participants often stating that one-way communication about Park's plans for the future would be an improvement enough.

Ludvík: „If they would write something or do a public meeting, people would come for sure, because we are tired of not knowing what they have in mind for the future, we want to know what is planned. We will only be here for a few more years, but our children, grandchildren, and everything are here."

Further, Beata's quote below shows doubts shared among Opponents towards the outcomes of the possible participation and the form of the potential consultative organ.

Beata: "... It's a matter of what rights and executive power the hypothetical forums and assemblies would have... If it would have any effect. Since the NP... It's a state organization, so the problem is whether we would have any say in the decision-making anyway, you know..."

Beata's claim also foreshadows a common portrayal of power dynamics present in the conflict as interpreted by Opponents, not dissimilar to David and Goliath or a Feudal

and subjects of his lands. To support this power framing, Opponents recall instances of the BSNP enforcing regulations and bans which are generally accepted as a necessary evil but labelled as “unnecessary bullying” (Štěpán) or “tools to whip people” (“bič na lidi”, Robert) by those expressing most anger towards the BSNP.

Robert: “No, nobody asks us anything, nobody explains anything... they just command us, what to do or not... We are just the little men, why would anyone ask us, right?”

Ludvík: “They don’t do anything and just command around! You must do that. Dot. You cannot go there. Dot.”

Petr: “Well, under the penalty of the National Park, they need to approve everything and it's absurd because if I only want to paint the roof, they also have to approve the colour of the roof. They talk into everything.”

The BSNP regulation enforcement approach as perceived by the respondents can be characterised as the “command and control approach” (Holling & Meffe, 1996). This has been portrayed to be an issue in multiple protected-areas-related conflicts and continues to be one of the main drivers of intensified pressure on public engagement within environmental conflict management (Berkes, 2009; Madden & McQuinn, 2014; Pourcq et al., 2015). According to the Supporter, mutual dialogue needs to be established; if regulations, bans and “orders” were explained in a “human way”, much of the conflict dynamics could be prevented.

Stanislav: “It's often communicated like this is not allowed here now, because the birds are nesting there. You can't ride on bike paths here, because you can't ride on lanes that aren't bike paths. Commonly all is being said is part A but fact B is often missing.”

In his view, these explanations could take up the form of social media posts, posts on the park's website, educational outdoor panels across the park or directly on the signs. While he suspects that this way, the regulations, and bans will not suddenly be

accepted, in his perspective, an understanding of the reasoning behind the processes is essential to enhancing the conflict dynamics among local residents.

This leads back to considering the ways technical and nature protection-related information is being communicated with the public. Despite the Park's attempts to communicate the rationale behind the non-intervention management decision (through its website, magazine, and informational panels across the park), the reasoning behind the management strategy is commonly unknown, misunderstood, or disregarded among Opponents. The common interpretation is that it is a strategy of necessity out of the lack of staff needed to harvest the trees or the lack of finance to do it. Several Opponents have claimed they have not noticed any explanation and thus interpret it this way. Interestingly, those who acknowledged noticing the communication by BSNP about the non-intervention management either disregarded it as false due to its contradictory nature to economic goals they favoured (Štěpán, p. 78-79) or due to high-risk perception as in the case of Beata quote:

Beata: All their information tables say that the forests may have died, but that nature will help itself. Why I don't think that's true... Of course, some places are inaccessible and can't be harvested, but I think there are places in the park where the wood can be harvested so that the houses don't burn down again. Well... like on Mezná. Even Vysoká Lípa had to be evacuated. I think it is not right because we could burn to the ground in here.

This suggests that sharing more extensive technical and scientific information, explanation and knowledge on nature-disturbance management will not be sufficient as a conflict management strategy. Rather, the other underlying causes of conflict that have been already described (such as risk perception and the lack of trust) need to be addressed and acknowledged simultaneously in order for these information to be considered by the Opponents. Information is likely to be disregarded if it comes from the “other” side or if the one sharing the information is viewed as neglecting the possible dangers (as informed by the relational and substance dimensions).

Contrastingly to the Opponents, the Neutrals employ a hierarchical framing of social control (Brummans et al. (2008), Appendix A), i.e., according to Karla and Renata, technically validated experts should be the ones to decide and have control over the decision-making processes. Processes are viewed in light of humans' incapability of making or participating in appropriate ecosystem management decisions unless they have obtained specific or technical training.

Karla: "I don't know, it never occurred to me that I should have had any say in any bark beetles or how the Park is run No one has given us the opportunity to decide on anything. I don't have an opinion on that at all, you know, and I wouldn't even want to get involved in it. I'm not an expert, I don't specialise in it, and I trust them that they know what to do."

Renata: "Honestly, it's none of my business or responsibility, there are experts for that."

The Neutrals also hold authorities and regulations in high respect and expect others to do so as well. Correspondingly, Karla stresses the need to strengthen the capacities of the park rangers as she believes that one of the major threats to the forest is the "ill-behaved tourists".

Karla: "I think that things mostly happen due to the irresponsibility of some people – a cigarette here, a campfire there – What I want to emphasize is that there is a real need for park rangers to watch over it. Either there should be more of them or there should be camera traps like when they monitor animals or something that would be able to monitor these inconsiderate tourists."

The attitudes towards the matter of tourists and the need to enlarge the number of park rangers are shared among almost all of the participants. These findings correspond with the research by Skalík et al. (2018) showing that the Czech population is relatively strict considering compliance with the regulations of park visits.

Apart from the framing of the current decision-making processes and governance, this chapter aims to describe how respondents frame the potential conflict management as well. Wide variance of conflict management frames was present among the group of Opponents (fact finding, avoidance, adjunction (Brummans et al., 2008)). While some of the respondents who showed a general distrust expressed apathy in regard to the enhancement of conflict dynamics, most of the Opponents claim they are open to potential collaborative process to improve the current conflict situation (see also Ludvík on p. 96). This is logical since those who lack trust have higher incentives to participate than the ones that are convinced that decision are fair to them. Multiple studies have claimed that distrust can motivate engagement in public policy processes (Emborg et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2013).

Petr: "I think it would be great we would meet with them once in a while... Well, at least once every six months, if that were possible! And they would tell us, what is planned."

Milena: "But on the other hand, I don't wanna draw conclusions. Maybe if the National Park came and maybe explained it somehow... but now I'm only seeing it from my point of view."

However, what needs to be noted is that once concrete forms of collaborative forms of conflict management are discussed, many hold strong notion of scepticism not only to the outcomes but also about the means of such processes. This is evident from their attitudes towards the council of BSNP, that serves as a consultative organ when important decisions regarding zoning and management strategies are being made (Správa národního parku České Švýcarsko, 2017). The council consists of municipality representatives, typically mayors, and deputies of various groups active in the area (e.g. climbers, scientists, and entrepreneurs). This way, the needs and interests of residents in municipalities within and neighbouring the Park are to be represented and considered within the context of nature protection goals. However, majority of the Opponents did not know about the specific role of the council or did not trust it at all.

Describing it as a gang (tlupa, Ludvík), the discovery that the mayor of his municipality is also a member of the council left Ludvík baffled outraged and betrayed.

Ludvík : He's not there anymore, is he? Who is there from Mezná? Really? Wait, I'll show you the local magazine Hřensko, as he criticizes them (jak tam do nich šije!) That they don't do anything and he's in that Council... But then he should fight for us in the Council, right?! Not just tell us that they are wrong.

The claim shows how Opponents often perceive the outcomes of participation in a “win-lose” scenario, fight over Them and Us. The strong doubts regarding potential participation also often refer to issues such as tokenism, the invite-inform-ignore approach (Reed, 2008). All that has been mentioned needs to be considered when planning potential future steps of conflict management as it shows how deep the distrust towards BSNP and processes initiated by them among Opponents is.

Contrastingly, the Neutrals expressed the belief that both the conflict and the problem should be decided upon and resolved by the authority. The framings of the other two conflict dimensions evidently affect how Neutrals view relevant conflict strategies.

Karla: “Anyway, I'm satisfied with the state as it is, I trust them that they mean well with the trees and I don't know anything about it myself, so I leave it to the experts. I don't know what or why would I criticize anyone here, or interfere in things I don't understand.”

Because the problem of ecosystem management is framed by both of them as being extremely complex and the institution is seen as being made up of reliable experts, the Neutrals do not see a reason to participate in the processes because they trust the outcomes will be fair to them (Emborg et al., 2020). Therefore, it can be expected that the participants neutral towards the conflict who do not perceive themselves as actors of it will not engage in its potential management.

Lastly, the Supporter also employed collaborative conflict management framing. More specifically he sees potential in increased mutual dialogue and collaborative learning

of the system's complexity, i.e., in his view, understanding and knowledge are crucial for resolving the conflict. He expresses a desire to end the conflict since he beliefs both the environment and the municipalities would benefit from it.

Stanislav: "It seems to me that it is really important to communicate sensibly from one side to another. Simply help the communication a little. This means creating some opportunities where people can actually ask something and get some kind of answer, create space for a conversation."

The process dimension described above revealed crucial aspects of how respondents shape their understandings of the conflict, potential strategies to manage it and explored the reasons of their dissimilarities. The overview of procedural frames of various respondent groups is to be found in Table 7.

Table 7 Procedure Framing Overview

PROCEDURE	
Views on decision-making processes	
<i>OPPONENTS</i>	Lack of communication and participation by BSNP, at least communication required; simultaneously highly sceptical towards the means and actual outcomes of participation.
	Egalitarian and Hierarchical Views on Nature Protection Planning
<i>NEUTRALS</i>	Lack of communication and participation acknowledge, however none of those required. Decisions upon to be made by people with expertise and the technical.
	Hierarchical View on Nature Protection Planning
<i>SUPPORTER</i>	Both Environmental and Community-Oriented goals need to be acknowledged; Regulations and decisions should be communicated in a two-way conversation.
	Egalitarian Views on Nature Protection with Expert Consultancy

2.7 Discussion

The findings of the present thesis reflect the messy and complex nature of environmental and conservation conflicts. Through the use of analytical lenses of Frame Theory and Progress Triangle, I was able to identify three dimensions of the root causes behind the conflict in the BSNP area as interpreted by the local residents: *substance*, *relations*, and *procedure*. Previous studies on environmental framing and framing of environmental conflicts have also identified these categories of framing. For instance, Lewicki et al. (2003) discovered numerous examples of the framing of relationships (differentiating between self-identity and the categorization of opponents). Shmueli (2008), Brummans et al. (2008), and Buijs et al. (2011) then reported in detail on the framing of substance and the framing of the decision-making procedure. More specifically to the contents of the current case study, these frames have been widely employed in studies focusing on conflicts triggered by natural disturbances as well (Carroll et al., 2000; McFarlane & Witson, 2008; Müller, 2011; Whittaker & Mercer, 2004).

While some studies of social dimensions of natural disturbance and conservation conflict portray the views of the separate stakeholder groups to be univocal, the current study is consistent with studies by Aastrup (2020), Whittaker & Mercer (2004) and Brummans et al. (2008) who highlight that members of a stakeholder group (e.g., firefighters, BSNP Management, local population) are not a monolithic group with a singular conservation narrative and amplify the need to acknowledge these diversities in conflict management strategies. The local community's views are often conflicting, interconnected and reveal the diversity in opinions and values which consequentially leads to diverging ways of perceived optimal management strategy. The current research divides the study's participants into three separate groups based on their attitudes towards the central environmental problem of the conflict- nature disturbance management: the Opponents, the Neutrals and the Supporter. This has its limitations and constraints. Relying on a method of organizing stakeholders into

generically labelled groups is problematic, as it inevitably leads to some degree of generalization. However, as the framings were generally shared among the participants divided this way and since the present study has the ambition to provide some understanding of the conflict over these simplistically divided groups, the division has been found to be functional. Relevant potential future research may focus on tracking diverse discourses employed in the conflict as has been done by Whittaker & Mercer (2004) or gaining more diverse insight on the grouping in which various frames occur through cluster analysis as Brummans et al. (2008).

Some of the central themes frequently mentioned by the participants regarding the conflict were the perceptions of risk and the scenic and aesthetic attributes of the post-disturbance landscape. These findings are consistent with other studies on social dimensions of natural disturbance. Dissimilarly to studies by Whittaker and Mercer (2004) or Carroll et al. (2000), the economic use stemming from wood production is not a crucial aspect of the present conflict according to the interviewees, rather the case study is closer to ones by Müller (2011) or Buijs et al. (2011) who highlight the role ones attachment to the place and the importance of relationships among the parties involved. The aesthetic values and recreational values of nature are commonly mentioned by the Opponents which contrasts with the studies from the Northern American context. This makes sense, while the local populations are not as dependent on the industry and the area is rather known for its touristic attractivity. Consistent with other environmental conflict studies (Buijs & Lawrence, 2013; González-Hidalgo & Zografos, 2020; Halla & Laine, 2022; Madden & McQuinn, 2014), the present thesis underlines the importance of considering the emotions involved in the conflict. Most importantly, the present thesis revealed a major sense of distrust by those opposing BSNP who commonly portray themselves and their views on the area's future as disrespected. I argue this resonates with the specific historical background of conservation in post-socialist countries, as described by Lawrence (2008), where the conservation activities were initiated by feudals to protect the game for hunting (as in rest of Europe) and later the conservation policies were significantly altered by the

communist regimes. Following the introduction of laws to nationalize land ownership and modernize agriculture, natural history and productive processes were strictly separated. This has implications for the present study while, as commented on by Lawrence (2008, p. 182) many of those opposing portray conservation to be “scientifically elitist and hierarchical”. Consequentially, the parties characterization occurs, while the Opponents commonly frame the situation as Us, the “ordinary people” opposed to Them, the “elitist scientists”.

While the categories (dimensions of conflict) are relatively broad and many themes and underlying causes have been found when analysing the data, I am aware that there are countless other factors at play in the context of the current conflict that affect its future trajectory. However, given the limited scope of the current study, the thesis can reflect only a few. Factors that have been found to be significant in conflict dynamics and have not been directly addressed in the present study include, e.g. social representations of nature and biodiversity (Buijs et al., 2008; Buijs et al., 2011; Fischer & Young, 2007), values of nature (Buijs, 2009; O’Brien, 2006; Whittaker & Mercer, 2004) or in-depth analysis of the history of the conflict’s escalation (Yasmi et al., 2006). Analysing frame changes as a conflict develops over time is another framing analysis approach that has not been covered in the present study (Asah et al., 2012; Johansson, 2023; Kaufman & Smith, 1999; Putnam et al., 2003). This strategy emphasizes the stakeholders' past interactions and the usual issues that are brought up between them; issue shaping and conceptualization, or how the parties' interactions influence the topics being discussed and the frames being used; and reframing, which is the process by which parties' conceptions of the conflict significantly change as a result of their interactions. In the current study, each participant's interview was conducted only once. Potential future research could provide an interesting insight on how framings of the conflict by local population change throughout time.

The limits of the current study need to be addressed on top of the potential pathways future research could lead. In addition to those already mentioned, the critical aspect

stems from the methodological basis of the study. While qualitative study allows one to understand the current context in-depth not much can be said about the general understanding of the conflict in the area. Quantitative data on the matter would be highly beneficial to a complete understanding of the current context of the ongoing conflict. However, I argue that since the present study aims to comprehend the problem holistically by examining, characterizing, and interpreting the many nuances, patterns, and shades of locals' perspectives on the conflict, employing the approach of an in-depth case study provided the necessary tools.

One limitation pertinent to the sampling process is that the present study's description, which centres on the local residents' perceptions of the ongoing conflict in the area, might have attracted a specific subset of already upset respondents to take part in it. This is also reflected in the results section, in which the majority of the analysis consists of the Opponents' understanding of the conflict. While this certainly consists a limitation, the ambition of the present study is also to inform potential future steps to manage the conflict, therefore it is particularly important to gain an understanding of those feeling most upset, or anxious by the current situation as those are the ones most likely to be pertinent in the conflict (Buijs & Lawrence, 2013; Halla & Laine, 2022; Madden & McQuinn, 2014). Further analysis of the similarities and divergencies they share with those supporting or being neutral towards non-intervention management may be beneficial when planning a future conflict management strategy since as has been shown, these groups vary significantly when it comes to the preferred measures to solve it (Bean et al., 2007; Gray, 1989). Lastly, I consider my inexperience in conducting qualitative research and more specifically the lack of training in conducting the interviews of semi-structural character to be a possible shortcoming of the current research. While I attempted to prevent the possible limitations rooted in my inexperience, it is plausible it may have influenced the results.

As mentioned, the thesis hopes to partially inform those wishing to plan a potential conflict management strategy to improve current conflict dynamics. Confirming the

knowledge gathered in the theoretical part, the case study highlights the need to acknowledge the affective, social, and cultural dimensions of the conflict. Only through a thorough consideration of the particular ways inhabitants rely on and attach themselves to not only the physical but also the cultural environment of the area (Müller, 2011), understanding of the ways they perceive power disbalances within the conflict (González-Hidalgo & Zografos, 2020) or the way other stakeholders are being characterized (Wondolleck et al., 2003) within the conflict a sound and successful management strategy can be planned. The potential conflict management shall therefore focus on ways of increasing trust, emphasizing shared identities as well as shared goals and create ways of mutual sharing of information and experiences that involve not only the municipalities' representatives but the local communities themselves.

3 Summary

The general aim of the current study was to explore how conservation conflicts emerge and evolve in protected areas and how their understanding by various stakeholders can influence their trajectory.

The theoretical part explored the current findings stemming from conflict studies as well environmental conflict research. The first chapter characterised the concept of environmental conflict, its wicked and messy nature that drives the complexity of its resolution, various trajectories of conflict dynamics and introduced common types of an environmental conflict present in current literature. The chapter answered the question of what the environmental conflict is. The second chapter followed to answer why such conflicts occur. More specifically, it focused specifically on conflicts related to nature conservation and protected areas. Particular attention was then also placed on research of human dimensions of natural disturbances. The cited studies revealed that one way to understand the conflicts is through its components: *substance*, *relations*, and *procedure*. Employing constructivist paradigm, the conflicts are being understood on the basis of how they are being interpreted, i.e. *framed* by the actors involved within the conflict. The chapter revealed a tapestry of social processes, cognitive biases, and structural conditions that commonly affect conflicts' course. As a result, it provided information on the underlying causes of environmental conflicts that are rarely explored in relation to conflict management, the subject of the final chapter of the theoretical section. The third chapter focuses on issues of conflict management and stakeholder engagement thus explores ways to improve the conflict dynamics.

The empirical part illuminates the topic of conservation conflict triggered by natural disturbances through a case study of an ongoing conflict over nature-disturbance management strategy in BSNP. Specifically, the main research question of the current thesis is how the conflict is interpreted and framed by the local residents. Employing

the theoretical lenses of Frame Theory and Progress Triangle to analyse semi-structural interviews with the local inhabitants, I was able to answer the main research question of the current study. The substance, relations and process aspects that affect how the local inhabitants explain the conflict were identified and described, thus fulfilling the main aim of the thesis. Much of the results correspond with findings of conservation conflict referenced to in theory; however, while every environmental conflict occurs in a unique setting these findings cannot be ultimately generalized. Importantly, the research brought light on the role cultural, affective, and social factors that drive the conflict dynamics.

The most important finding of the current thesis is that while commonly portrayed as a conflict over optimal ecosystem management strategy, much of the tension among parties stems from the procedural and most of all relational dimension of conflict triangle, i.e. lack of local of engagement with the local population and the lack of trust that undermines the affinity of those living and working in the area towards BSNP. This suggests that if the potential conflict management strategy is to be successful, it has to incorporate their views and emotions, and interaction with the local population should also be based on direct contact not only via municipality representatives to increase trust and perceived legitimacy. The study has also reflected on the interconnectedness of frames employed by the conflict stakeholders to comprehend the conflict meaning. Lastly, while traditionally labelled as one united group in many environmental conflict studies, the present study highlights the need to understand the diversity of definitions of the conflict among the local population in order to plan a more successful management strategy.

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Appendix A Categories and coding

Categories are based on various frames identified and commonly debated in the Environmental Conflict Research and are adopted from Lewicki et. al. (2003), Brummans et al. (2008), and Shmueli (2008). Additional categories were established to reflect both on the emotional dimension frequently neglected within environmental management and categories that inform better conflict management strategies, History of the Conflict and Conflict Stage. The latter is based on the research by Yasmi et al. (2006) and Gritten et al. (2012). First, I list all of the categories used and I follow with an example of coding.

SUBSTANCE	
FRAME	DEFINITION
<i>ASPIRATIONS (ASP)</i>	Statements consisting of general hopes, core interests
<i>OUTCOMES (OUT)</i>	Statements consisting of specific positions or desired solutions
<i>ISSUES (IS)</i>	Statements about the perceived substance of the conflict
<i>Certainty subframe (CER)</i>	Statements suggesting participant is certain about one right way of biodiversity management
<i>Complexity subframe (COM)</i>	Statements considering that the "right" decisions related to the biodiversity managements are uncertain, possibly irreversible, and with unknown outcomes
<i>Risk subframe (RISK)</i>	Statements capturing perceptions of the level of risk involved in an environmental context and how safe or unsafe they perceive that risk to be

RELATIONS	
FRAME	DEFINITION
<i>RELATIONS CHARACTERISATION (CHR)</i>	Statements describing perceptions of the relational atmosphere, setting among the local community
<i>POSITIVE CHARACTERISATION (CHP)</i>	Statements about another person or group in a praiseworthy or optimistic way
<i>NEGATIVE CHARACTERISATION (CHN)</i>	Statements about another person or group in a derogatory, pessimistic, or diminishing way
<i>IDENTITY (ID)</i>	Statements about oneself

CATEGORIES AND CODING

PROCEDURE	
FRAME	DEFINITION
<i>SOCIAL CONTROL (SC)</i>	Statements related to participants' views on how decisions regarding social issues should be made and who should be able to make them
<i>Hierarchist subframe (SCH)</i>	Statements with preference to societal decision making through experts
<i>Egalitarian subframe (SCE)</i>	Statements with preference to societal decision making in a democratic way that involves entire communities or groups.
<i>Individualist subframe (SCI)</i>	Statements with preference to societal decision making on an individual basis (or market forces)
<i>CONFLICT MANAGEMENT (CM)</i>	Statements about participants' preferences for particular ways of dealing with the conflict
<i>Collaborative management strategy subframe (CMC)</i>	Preference of Collaborative Conflict Management strategy (e.g., Joint Problem Solving, Fact Finding)
<i>Non-collaborative management strategy subframe (CMN)</i>	Preference of Non-collaborative Conflict Management (e.g., Avoidance, Adjudication, Expertise Decides)
<i>FACT FINDING FRAMES (FFF)</i>	Statements related to the participant's views on technical information, what information they will seek and accept, and the perceived relevant sources
<i>PROCESS FRAMES (PF)</i>	Statements refer to how participants' view the current decision-making processes
<i>POWER (P)</i>	Statements describing the power dynamics and ability influence the current state

OTHER RELEVANT CATEGORIES	
CATEGORY	DEFINITION
<i>EMOTIONS (EM)</i>	Participants' feelings, emotions related to aspects of the conflict or the conflict as a whole
<i>HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT (HC)</i>	Narratives of conflict development, important events of the conflict
<i>CONFLICT STAGE (CS)</i>	Manifestation of a certain conflict stage

FRAME	CODE	QUOTE
<i>Issue</i>	Restricted access	<i>We will leave everything here, everything will develop here by itself, it will regenerate, but the human foot will not enter there anymore, only along the marked path. (Karla)</i>

Appendix B Reframing Activities for Intractable Conflicts

Adopted from Lewicki et al. (2003) in Shmueli et al. (2006, pp. 7–8),

<i>Identification of commonalities</i>
By focusing on potential overlap rather than areas of hardened differences, these processes aim to dismantle rigid characterization frames and encourage actions that foster relationships and open dialogue across long-standing divides
Common ground processes are used in highly divisive issues and explore areas of agreement and possible joint action between parties who normally focus on their differences
Search processes seek to identify desired futures to shift the focus from a short- to a long-term perspective
<i>De-escalatory processes</i>
- seek to decrease tension through platforms encouraging effective dialogue around a set of specific objectives - prioritise de-escalation of conflict above reaching consensus by enabling disputants to speak openly without having to explain their positions
Study circles consist of conversations in small groups with materials that the disputants design themselves
Listening projects encourage disputants to speak with other stakeholders about their points of view and themes they perceive relevant within the conflict. These procedures are based on the idea that discussing particular issues through active listening helps opposing parties delve deeper into the understanding the actual roots of the conflicts, and builds pathways for understanding, mutual respect and trust
<i>Perspective-taking processes</i>
- able to provide disputants with understanding of the conflict and its dynamics from the perspectives of others involved - by explicitly identifying critical identities, role-playing, telling and hearing others' stories, and acknowledging past injustices, these techniques help disputants examine how their own frames interact with those of other disputants and recognize the legitimacy and validity of opposing views imaging of identities and role-playing, narrative forums, and story projects

Appendix C Interview script

Dobrý den, děkuji mnohokrát, že jste souhlasil*a s rozhovorem, který se zaměří na Vaše vnímání současné konfliktní situace na území Národního parku a souvisejících témat. Po celou dobu výzkumu bude zajištěna Vaše anonymita a Vaše účast na výzkumu je dobrovolná, a tak se podle podmínek uvedených v Informovaném souhlasu můžete rozhodnout v průběhu z výzkumu odstoupit či mne kontaktovat s požadavkem o nepublikování některé z jeho částí. Také bych ráda zdůraznila, že na otázky v rámci rozhovoru neexistují správné nebo špatné odpovědi, proto se nezdávejte odpovědět podle toho, co Vás k otázce napadne.

1. Co pro Vás znamená České Švýcarsko?
 2. Pozorujete na území nějaké konflikty?
 3. V čem podle Vás spor spočívá?
 4. Co podle Vás přispívá k dalšímu pokračování konfliktu?
 5. Jak konflikt nebo jeho příčiny ovlivňují Váš život?
 6. Jak by měla podle Vás ochrana přírody v Národním parku vypadat?
 7. Když si představíte České Švýcarsko v roce 2050, jak podle Vás vypadá?
 8. Kdybyste měl měl*a magickou hůlku a mohla podmínky v Národním parku ze dne na den změnit, co byste změnil*a?
 9. Kdo jsou podle Vás hlavní účastníci konfliktu?
 10. Co si o nich myslíte? Jak byste je popsal*a?
 11. O co podle Vás jednotlivé strany usilují? Co jsou jejich zájmy?
 12. Jaké jsou vztahy mezi zúčastněnými stranami?
 13. Koho považujete za osobu/instituci/orgán, kdo reprezentuje Vaše postoje a názory?
 14. Jak byste popsal*a komunikaci NP s veřejností?
 15. Odkud čerpáte informace ohledně Národního Parku?
 16. Jak byste popsal*a zapojení veřejnosti do rozhodování o správě NP? (uveď příklady o čem se rozhodovalo)
 17. Jak by měla spolupráce s Parkem podle Vás fungovat?
 18. Co je pro Vás v rámci této spolupráce důležité?
- Chtěl*a byste k čemukoli z toho, co jsme probírali*y, něco dodat?
 - Máte nějaké otázky na mě či na samotný výzkum?
 - Věk:
 - Pohlaví
 - Zaměstnání:

Hello, thank you very much for agreeing to an interview that will focus on your views of the current conflict situation on the territory of the National Park and related topics. Your anonymity will be ensured throughout the research and your participation in the research is voluntary, so according to the conditions stated in the Informed Consent, you can decide to withdraw from the research during the course of the research or contact me with a request not to publish any of its parts. I would also like to emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions in the interview, so don't hesitate to answer in any way you find truthful.

1. What does Czech Switzerland mean to you?
2. Do you observe any conflicts in the territory?
3. What do you think the dispute is about?
4. What do you think contributes to the continuation of the conflict?
5. How does the conflict or its causes affect your life?
6. How do you think nature conservation in the National Park should look like?
7. When you imagine Czech Switzerland in 2050, what do you think it looks like?
8. If you had a magic wand and could change the conditions in the National Park from day to day, what would you change?
9. Who do you think are the main participants in the conflict?
10. What do you think of them? How would you describe them?
11. What do you think each party is striving for?
12. What are the relationships between the parties involved like?
13. Whose attitudes and opinions do you consider to be representative of yours?
14. How would you describe NP's communication with the public?
15. Where do you get information about the National Park?
16. How would you describe public involvement in decision-making about NP management? (give examples of what was decided)
17. How should cooperation with the Park work in your opinion?
18. What is important to you in this cooperation?
 - Would you like to add anything to anything we've discussed?
 - Do you have any questions?

Age:

Gender:

Occupation:

Appendix D Souhlas s účastí ve výzkumu a zpracováním osobních údajů

Informace o výzkumu

Název projektu: Finding the common ground: Environmental conflict (Diplomová práce)

Hlavní řešitel: Anna Tabášková

Vedoucí práce: PhDr. Jan Krajhanzl, Ph.D.

Studentka na: Katedra environmentálních studií, Fakulta sociálních studií Masarykovy univerzity, Joštova 10, Brno

Období řešení projektu: 24.10. 2022 – 31.1. 2024

O čem je tento výzkumný projekt?

Předmětem výzkumu je současný konflikt na území Národního parku České Švýcarsko a jak jej vnímají obyvatelé sousedících obcí. Zaměřuje se na pochopení příčin tohoto konfliktu, vzájemných vztahů mezi jeho jednotlivými aktéry, a možnostmi zapojení místních obyvatel do jeho řešení.

Jak bude účast probíhat?

Výzkum má formu rozhovorů, které trvají obvykle hodinu a půl až dvě hodiny. Jedná se o jednorázový rozhovor, který budu nahrávat na diktafon a po dobu rozhovoru budu také pořizovat písemné poznámky. Podstatou rozhovoru jsou Vaše úsudky, vnímání, pocity a názory spojené s konfliktem na území Českého Švýcarska a přilehlých obcí.

Jaké osobní údaje jsou v tomto výzkumném projektu sbírány?

- *základní demografické údaje (pohlaví, věk)*
- *audio/video nahrávky*
- *kontaktní údaje (např. e-mail/ telefon)*

Jak budou osobní údaje zpracovávány?

Na počátku realizace výzkumu Vám bude přidělena unikátní přezdívka, pod kterou budou ukládána veškerá data z rozhovorů. Soubor obsahující převod jména na přezdívku (kódovací klíč) umožňující propojení údajů bude mít k dispozici pouze výzkumnice (Anna Tabášková) a bude uložen odděleně od ostatních dat. V případě, že si přejete, aby ve výstupech výzkumu bylo uvedeno Vaše celé jméno nebo opravdové křestní jméno, neváhejte to výzkumnici oznámit. Za účelem předcházení ztráty dat v průběhu výzkumu budou rozhovory nahrávány. Nahrávky budou po pořízení přepsány do textové podoby a následně smazány, a to nejpozději do měsíce od jejich pořízení. Výzkumnice je správcem a zpracovatelem poskytnutých informací. Výsledky výzkumu budou zveřejněny v závěrečné diplomové práci výzkumnice. Zvukový záznam bude přístupný jen výzkumnici. Výzkumnice se zavazuje chránit a s nikým nesdílet údaje, které by mohly vést k identifikaci účastníka.

Jak dlouho budou osobní údaje uloženy?

Vaše osobní údaje bude výzkumnice uchovávat pouze po dobu řešení projektu, poté bude kódovací klíč nenávratně smazán a tím budou získané údaje anonymizovány, tj. převedeny do podoby, která neumožňuje Vaši identifikaci. Vaše kontaktní údaje (e-mail/telefon) budou použity pouze pro účely tohoto projektu a po ukončení projektu budou smazány. Získaná data v anonymní podobě mohou být použita v dalších výzkumných projektech v této oblasti.

Povinně poskytované informace dle Obecného nařízení o ochraně osobních údajů (EU 2016/679, GDPR)

Vaše osobní údaje budeme zpracovávat na základě Vámi uděleného souhlasu pro účely výzkumu v oblasti Environmentální psychologie.

Správce osobních údajů: Anna Tabášková, 509597@mail.muni.cz, 725028564, Fakulta sociálních studií Masarykovy univerzity, Joštova 10, Brno.

Vaše práva v souvislosti se zpracováním osobních údajů:

- požadovat přístup k osobním údajům týkajícím se Vaší osoby, jejich opravu nebo výmaz, popřípadě omezení zpracování,
- podat stížnost dozorovému orgánu (Úřad pro ochranu osobních údajů, www.uoou.cz) v případě, že se domníváte, že zpracování osobních údajů probíhá v rozporu s právními předpisy;
- souhlas se zpracováním osobních údajů udělený níže kdykoliv odvolat, aniž by za to hrozila jakákoliv sankce či znevýhodnění, a to oznámením na kontaktní údaje správce osobních údajů. Zákonnost zpracování údajů před odvoláním souhlasu tím není dotčena.

Je účast v tomto výzkumu povinná?

Vaše účast ve studii je **dobrovolná**. V průběhu rozhovoru můžete kdykoliv odmítnout odpovědět na položenou otázku či téma, ukončit prováděný rozhovor a můžete také v průběhu projektu ukončit celou spolupráci, a to bez udání důvodu. V takovém případě bude písemně dohodnuto, zda a jak mohou být získané informace dále využity. Budete-li si to přát, budou veškerá data, která zatím nebyla využita k vědecké práci, smazána.

Pokud se rozhodnete účastnit se studie, můžete svou účast ukončit bez jakýchkoli sankcí. Podpisem tohoto formuláře se nevzdáváte žádných zákonných práv, která máte jako účastník této studie.

Kde se dozvědět více?

Pokud máte jakékoliv doplňující dotazy, připomínky, problémy nebo stížnosti ohledně tohoto výzkumu, můžete se obrátit na vedoucího diplomové práce PhDr. Jana Krajhanzla, Ph.D. V zmiňovaných případech jej můžete kontaktovat e-mailem 116362@mail.muni.cz nebo poštou na adrese Joštova 10, Brno, 602 00.

Souhlas s účastí ve výzkumu a zpracováním osobních údajů

Na základě výše uvedených informací:

1. **Prohlašuji**, že jsem četl/a celý výše uvedený text Informace o výzkumu a porozuměl/a jsem jeho smyslu.
2. **Souhlasím** s výše uvedeným zpracováním osobních údajů pro výzkumné účely současného projektu.
3. **Souhlasím** s účastí v uvedeném výzkumném projektu Finding Common Ground: Environmental Conflict.
4. **Souhlasím** se zveřejněním výsledků výzkumu v diplomové práci Anny Tabáškové, případně v dalších odborných publikacích.

Jméno a příjmení:

V dne:

Podpis:

Za výzkumný tým:

Jméno a příjmení: Anna Tabášková

V dne:

Podpis:

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Kopie zadání diplomové práce

MASARYKOVA UNIVERZITA
sociálních studií
Katedra environmentálních studií

ZADÁNÍ MAGISTERSKÉ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

Pro: Anna Tabášková

UČO: 509597

Imatrik. ročník: 2020

Vedoucí katedry Vám ve smyslu studijních předpisů o státních závěrečných zkouškách určuje

Téma magisterské diplomové práce: Finding common ground: Environmental Conflict

Téma magisterské diplomové práce v angličtině: Finding common ground: Environmental Conflict

Zásady pro vypracování:

Posluchač(ka) zpracuje magisterskou diplomovou práci při využití všech svých věcných i metodologických znalostí a dostupné literatury. Nedílnou součástí práce jsou i její stručná anotace, index a seznam použité literatury (blíže viz "Pravidla k vypracování diplomové práce").

Rozsah diplomové práce: 18 000 – 29 000 slov.

Pokyny pro vypracování:

Cíle práce:

Hlavním cílem práce je prozkoumat, jaké jsou příčiny environmentálních konfliktů a jak konflikty vnímají lidé, kteří bydlí či pracují v blízkosti chráněných území. Teoretická část téma představí v kontextu environmentálních konfliktů s důrazem na ty, jež jsou vázány na prostředí národních parků nebo souvisejí s problematikou managementu přírodních disturbancí. V empirické části pak bude diplomantka metodou polostrukturovaných rozhovorů a následnou analýzou rámování zkoumat případovou studii konfliktu v Národním parku České Švýcarsko a jak jej vnímají místní obyvatelé.

Osnova:

- Introduction
- 1. Theoretical Part
 - 1.1. Take a Walk on the Wild Side: Labyrinth of Environmental Conflict
 - 1.1.1. Conflict Dynamics
 - 1.1.2. Types of environmental conflict
 - 1.1.3. Characteristics
 - 1.2. Born to be wild? Conservation Conflicts in Protected Areas
 - 1.2.1. Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks
 - 1.3. We can work it out: Environmental conflict management
 - 1.3.1. Public Participation and Conservation Conflict
 - 1.3.2. Approaches to Environmental Conflict Management
 - 1.3.3. Good Practices in Environmental Conflict Management
- 2. Empirical Part
 - 2.1. Study Area and Local Context
 - 2.2. Aim of the Research and Research Questions
 - 2.3. Methodology
 - 2.4. Research Ethics
 - 2.5. Reflexivity and Positionality
 - 2.6. Results
 - 2.7. Discussion
- 3. Summary

Ve své práci posluchač(ka) vyjde především z těchto zdrojů:

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