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LEIBNIZ CENTRE FOR AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE RESEARCH (ZALF)

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NETWORKING FOR THE LANDSCAPE: CIVIL-PUBLIC-PRIVATE-PARTNERSHIPS

CLAUDIA SATTLER, BARBARA SCHRÖTER



Water board »Oberspreewald«: The network of public, private and civil society actors on both sides of the »producing food vs. nature conservation boundary« creating a space for dialogue

Environmental problems often call for the collaboration of all concerned actors, since individual actors cannot address and solve these problems on their own. However, whenever multiple actors are involved, their interests can deviate substantially. Nevertheless, successful examples of collaborative governance show that boundaries between actors can be overcome and that collaboration can lead to an improved provisioning of ecosystem services at the landscape scale. The cp³ project analyzed several successful examples of collaborative governance for protected area management, based on networks between public, private and civil society actors.



We were particularly interested in how existing boundaries along the divide in viewpoints and opinions between public actors like the protection area administration and other environmental agencies, private actors like farmers and other land users, as well as

civil society actors like environmental NGOs could be overcome. It was assumed that farmers are primarily interested in provisioning ecosystem services, i.e. the production of »food«, while environmental public agencies and NGOs are mostly concerned with securing regulating, supporting and cultural ecosystem services (e.g. water regulation, biodiversity, landscape aesthetics) for producing »nature conservation«.

The project employed the concept of boundary organizations (BOs), understood as governance arrangements which create strategic bridges between actors positioned on different sides of a »boundary«, to analyze if the selected collaborative governance approaches displayed the typical structural and procedural features of BOs. Structural features relate to institutional aspects for allowing participation, adaptation, reconciliation of interests, or reaching accountability and durability. Procedural features relate to established routines for convening events, translating between different knowledge types, building trust, or mediating conflict.

The analysis was based on empirical research conducted in the biosphere reserve Spreewald for two collaborative governance approaches: a citizen foundation and a water management board. For data analysis, we used social network

analysis (Net-Map tool) based on personal interviews with governance actors.

Both governance arrangements displayed at least some of the structural and procedural features typical of BOs. The approaches allowed actors situated on different sides of the »producing food vs. nature conservation boundary« to negotiate common goals in favour of improved ecosystem service provisioning. This was possible because, in addition to self-serving interests, actors motives also included general public interests such as preserving the landscape as part of their mutual cultural heritage. Only by pooling the specific knowledge and resources of all actors they were able to address problematic issues at landscape scale, which they could not address individually. Both approaches helped to create a space for actors to engage in dialogue and to debate different viewpoints while at the same time ensuring that all actors could remain within their original professional boundaries.

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