MOVERS   FLOATERS   BLOCKERS

Influence without Power

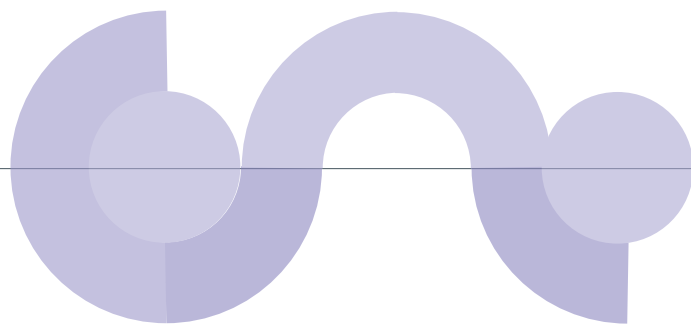## Stakeholder management in practice

Compiled by | Ellen Bulten, Jan Eelco Jansma & Jorieke Potters

WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Foreword

Imagine you are asked as a researcher or project manager to participate in a change process. Such processes can involve a variety of parties who would seem to have conflicting interests. As a project manager, however, you are not in a position to force the stakeholders to change. So what is the best way to approach the issue?

This was precisely the complex task Frank Wijnands was set two decades ago by the former Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries. At the time, Frank was employed as a senior researcher at the former Applied Plant Research Institute at Wageningen University & Research. He was asked to develop a sustainable approach to crop protection in the agriculture and horticulture sectors within the framework of the Crop Protection Covenant. As a result, the Farming with a Future (Telen met Toekomst) project was set up and ran between 2003 and 2010. With tremendous energy and charisma, Frank began by drawing up the parameters together with Harm Brinks of DLV Advies (currently Delphy). Emissions from chemical pesticides and herbicides into the surrounding environment needed to be reduced dramatically. Despite the fact that the stakeholders – growers, water boards, agricultural contractors and producers of and traders in pesticides and herbicides – had all signed up to the covenant, it did not mean that they all shared the same vision of how sustainability should be implemented. On the contrary. Moreover, there was also a striking lack of uniformity among the individual stakeholder groups. So Frank looked for an appropriate method to shape this collective process towards sustainable crop protection and found an answer with Joris de Bie, a consultant at Berenschot. The method was stakeholder management.

On completion of the Farming with a Future project, Frank was keen to share his experiences with stakeholder management with his colleagues. He worked on developing a course and writing a book titled 'Influence without Power'. Due to commitments of a busy job involving national and international projects, this required a little time. Unfortunately, however, fate would strike in the spring of 2019. Frank, our figurehead and inspiration, passed away in Africa where he was working on a project on sector development.

It therefore seemed like a fitting tribute to Frank that his colleagues should publish parts of his planned book 'Influence without Power'. This has been done in the form of a practical brochure.
The three authors Ellen Bulten, Jan Eelco Jansma and Jorieke Potters used Frank's methodology and texts on stakeholder management as the basis and supplemented these with their own diversity of experience. We hope that the result can inspire a great number of professionals, together with all sorts of stakeholders, to shape the changes necessary to ensure sustainable agriculture and horticulture.

Herman Schoorlemmer
Research Manager
Wageningen University & Research | Field Crops

Introduction

The purpose of this brochure: background, objective and target group

Background

This brochure provides a condensed, practical overview of stakeholder management, based on the findings documented in 'Influence without Power', which is available (in Dutch) in raw form as a reference for those seeking in-depth information about stakeholder management. After collaborating in the Influence without Power project, management consultancy firm Berenschot also published a work on stakeholder management and strategic influence in change processes. This publication (under the Dutch title 'Stakeholdermanagement – Strategisch beïnvloeden in veranderprocessen') is publicly available and can be found on the Berenschot website (www.berenschot.nl).

Target group

This brochure is aimed at researchers and project managers working on complex change processes that contribute to the sustainability of society at large. These change processes do not exist in isolation. They have an impact on and are influenced by individuals, groups, organisations, companies and society. They affect vested interests. Stakeholder management is relevant for everyone who deals with complex tasks or processes concerning change, in which a large number of different stakeholders are involved (and therefore a lot is at stake) and whose vested interests are affected.

Why this brochure?

Many researchers are involved in projects that concern working with a large number of different stakeholders on complex change issues. Examples of complex change include reducing nitrogen emissions, becoming less dependent on chemical pesticides and herbicides or enhancing the relationship between city and countryside. These issues are complex because the various parties all have their own vested interests, which might not be in line with the direction of change advocated in a project. How can you shape these complex change processes with different stakeholders and how can you play a successful role in this? This brochure provides practical tools to help you shape such change processes and enable you to exert influence on these processes without having a position of power!

Structure

This brochure is arranged as follows:

Section 1 provides an overview of what stakeholder management is. Section 2 discusses the various types of stakeholder that can be distinguished. Section 3 examines what a stakeholder analysis looks like, together with the way in which this analysis can help the stakeholder manager shape the change process. Sections 4, 5 and 6 take a deeper look at the various phases in the stakeholder-management process: the information phase, the consultation phase and the collaboration phase. Section 7 then turns to the concept of stakeholder enrolment: gaining and taking responsibility for change by the stakeholders involved. Sections 8 and 9 deal with stakeholder-management support through communication (Section 8) and through monitoring and evaluation (Section 9). Finally, Section 10 provides a few closing observations on the subject of stakeholder management.
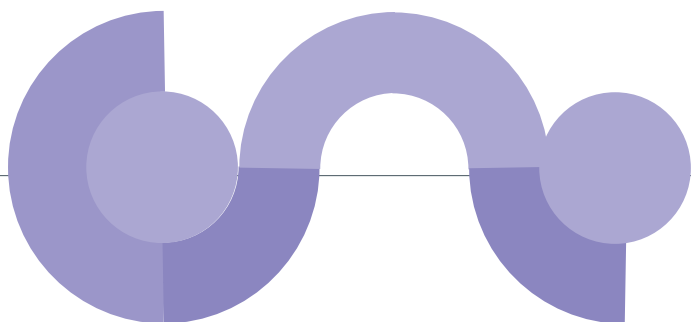
Stakeholder management

What is stakeholder management?
What are the phases in which the stakeholder manager is active?

Stakeholdermanagement

Stakeholder management is a method for realising sustainable change by influencing the stakeholders involved. This change is aimed at objectives that are challenging but also achievable for the stakeholders. The person whose task it is to implement this change is called the stakeholder manager. The stakeholder manager can be a project manager, but may also be designated by a financier or government body.

Stakeholder management is a means to achieve a change, but is not an end in itself. The stakeholder manager strives for sustainable change and is committed to making this change possible. Stakeholder management is a method to bring about change efficiently and in a focused way in complex situations that involve multiple vested interests. It concerns changes, such as reducing pesticides and herbicides in agriculture and horticulture, which cannot be resolved unilaterally by one of the stakeholders. After all, each of the stakeholders has personal interests at heart, be it the sale of products, crop yields, familiar working methods or the quality of surface water, which will be affected by this change. This is the field of influence in which the stakeholder manager works. The change must have a higher goal than serving the interests of one or more of the individual stakeholders or those of the stakeholder manager.

Stakeholder management can roughly be divided into three phases: the information phase, the consultation phase and the collaboration phase. These phases are presented schematically in Figure 1. Each phase has its own objectives, focus, activities and working methods. In practice, a clear transition between phases will not always exist, the individual phases might not be equally weighted and progression through the phases often requires deviations. However, we will maintain this distinction for the benefit of clarity. The three phases are discussed briefly below and will be explained in more detail in Sections 4, 5 and 6.

Information phase

During the information phase, the stakeholder manager is focused on gaining influence among the relevant stakeholders. The stakeholder manager informs the stakeholders about the proposed change and endeavours to understand their position with respect to this change. The stakeholder manager also seeks to get a mandate from the stakeholders to initiate the stakeholder process. This mandate is necessary if the stakeholder manager is to intervene in the field of influence at later stage. The main activities associated with this phase include:

• Clear formulation of the proposed change (what needs to change, such as a fifty per cent reduction in pesticide and herbicide emissions into surface water);
• Identifying all the stakeholders involved;
• Specifying and assessing vested interests;
• Holding talks (indicating problems, recognising standpoints);
• Establishing a steering coalition.

Consultation phase

The consultation phase is the core of the stakeholder management process. The aim of the consultation phase is to influence the attitudes and behaviour of the relevant stakeholders.

Figure 1: Schematic representation of the goals in the three phases of the stakeholder management process

	Information	Consultation	Collaboration	
Begin situation	Gain influence among relevant stakeholders	Influence relevant stakeholders	Relinquish influence to relevant stakeholders	Proposed sustainable end situation

The main activities in this phase are:

• Develop an intervention strategy (using pressure, persuasion and insight);
• Carry out interventions, aimed at previous objectives;
• Focus on collective initiatives and decisions.

Collaboration phase

In this phase, the stakeholder manager transfers the acquired influence and responsibility to the relevant stakeholders, enabling them to continue to implement the change. The main activities here concern:

• Transferral of responsibilities to the stakeholders;
• Revising the stakeholder manager's own role;
• Coaching the stakeholders in their new role and approach;
• Contributing to integrating the change throughout the network.

Having set out the different phases, focus now turns to the stakeholders who will undertake the process of change.

2
Stakeholders

What is a stakeholder?
Introduction to movers, blockers and floaters.

Definition of a stakeholder

Various definitions exist of a stakeholder. We have adopted the interpretation provided by Donaldson (1995) and De Bie (2005), because they link the concept to a proposed change. A stakeholder is a person who has a perceived interest in the outcome of a change process. Stakeholders are therefore individuals, people of flesh and blood. But these people also often represent the interests of an organisation, such as a ministry, a pressure group or a water board. Sometimes there are different stakeholders involved in the change process from the same organisation, resulting in multiple interests from one organisation.

The central question is how does the stakeholder manager facilitate change in an environment in which a range of divergent interests exist without occupying a position of power.

A proposed change may affect the stakeholder's perceived interest in a positive or negative way. When confronted with a change, stakeholders will assess, either consciously or unconsciously, whether this change will affect their vested interests and what the consequences will be. The various interests will become evident when discussing specific possible outcomes of change with the stakeholders.

Attitudes of stakeholders

Stakeholder management distinguishes three different attitudes that a stakeholder can adopt in respect to the change: positive, wait and see or negative. Based on the attitude adopted, a stakeholder can be characterised as either a mover, a floater or a blocker, respectively. Such a characterisation is of course only a guideline. In practice, there may not always be clear dividing lines. A stakeholder may also change position under the influence of the change process itself, but also because of external factors such as changes in the law or new technological developments.
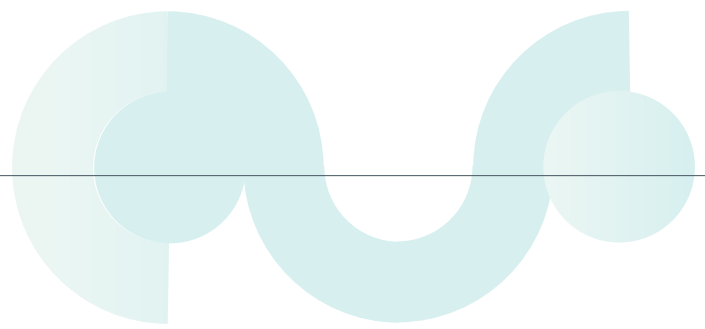
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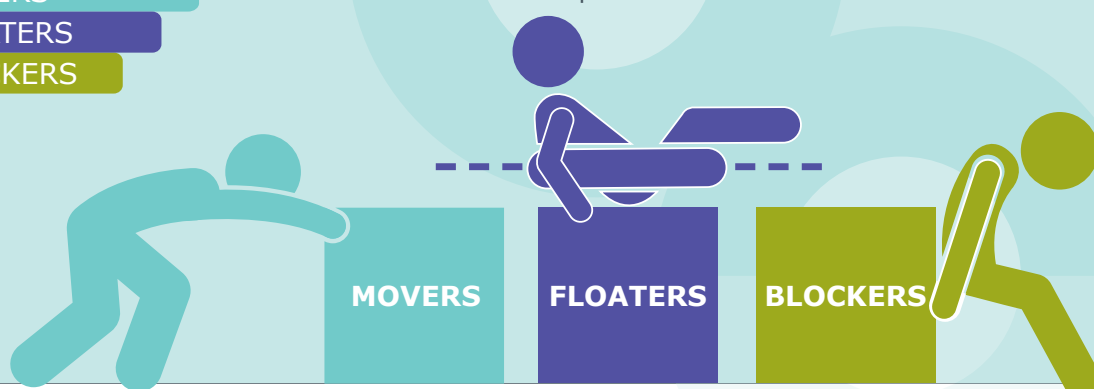
Movers

Movers are supporters of the proposed change. They expect that the change will serve their short- or long-term individual or collective interests. Movers are easy to identify because they demonstrate a real eagerness to embrace the proposed change in their own field of work. Movers show others that the proposed change is an important objective to which they are fully committed. It is of course not always possible to execute a change the way in which a mover would like. It is often difficult to organise support, translate ideas into plans and to initiate activities. Movers can differ in the reasons why and the way in which they want to bring about the change. But movers are uniform in their drive to get the change done.
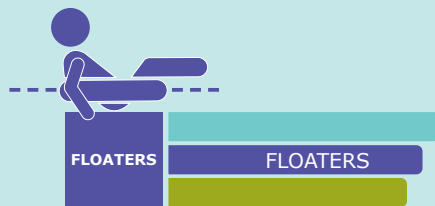
Floaters

Floaters understand the problem and the proposed change. But the result of the change has less of an impact on their vested interests. They often form the majority and only take action once it becomes clear how the proposed change will develop and how the other stakeholders decide to respond. Floaters may not always be indecisive types. Their wait-and-see attitude can be explained by the limited degree to which their interests are actually being impacted or perceived as such. Their interests are often linked to those of another stakeholder. Floaters therefore usually wait and see how the field of influence around the other stakeholders develops before making their own assessment.
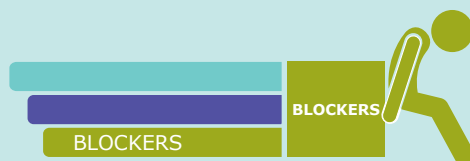
Blockers

Blockers are stakeholders who believe their interests are not being served by the proposed change. It is important to understand that, just like the other stakeholders, blockers usually have good reasons not to want the change, which for them might involve costing money or additional time or compromising important principles. Blockers can draw attention to current circumstances and to the past, and produce evidence as to why they think something will not work. They can openly resist change or make veiled attempts to oppose it.

Agents of change can experience the attitude of blockers as difficult. Blockers, on the hand, try to protect and defend their vested interests, just as other stakeholders do. It is important, therefore, to uncover the actual interests of blockers to get a better understanding of their issues.

In order to differentiate between these three types of stakeholder and assess their interests, the stakeholder manager begins the process with a stakeholder analysis. The following section takes a closer look at this analysis and shows how the stakeholder manager is able to establish the stakeholder's standpoint and interests as well as determine interventions to involve the various parties.

3 Stakeholder analysis

What does a stakeholder analysis look like? And how can it help the stakeholder manager shape the process of change?

Working with vested interests is the characteristic feature of stakeholder management. The stakeholder manager can mobilise the stakeholders by exploiting these interests. After all, the difference between stakeholders is based on how they perceive the proposed change: they can be positive, hesitant or negative towards it. This attitude has major consequences for the stakeholder manager's chosen working method. By understanding the stakeholder's interests and taking these seriously, the stakeholder manager will find it easier to seek ways of realising the proposed change together with the stakeholders. The stakeholder analysis helps to identify and understand the stakeholder's standpoint and interests. The stakeholder manager starts the stakeholder analysis during the information phase. The analysis is then regularly adapted as stakeholders shift attitudes towards the change.

The stakeholder analysis focuses on:

- identifying the key stakeholders;
- identifying interests, attitudes and behaviour of the stakeholders in relation to the proposed change;
- determining interventions to involve and challenge the stakeholders;
- determining changes in interests, attitudes and behaviour during the process.

The stakeholder analysis covers two main activities: carrying out an analysis of the field of influence and determining the interests of all stakeholders in the stakeholder portfolio.

Analysis of the field of influence

An analysis of the field of influence enables the stakeholder manager to identify all the stakeholders and to make an initial division on the basis of the influence and interest that stakeholders have. To initiate the change, it is important to identify those stakeholders with a medium to major interest in the change, but also those who, through their position in an organisation, for example, have a medium to major influence on the change. Figure 2 shows how the stakeholder manager can position the stakeholders and determine which stakeholders have the greatest potential impact on the result. Bear in mind that stakeholders or their organisations can change position during the process. As stakeholder manager, you decide which stakeholders you work with. Sometimes it can be beneficial to choose a different stakeholder from an organisation during the information phase than in the consultation phase. To realise your objective of realising change, you always need to ask yourself: who do I need, when do I need them and why?

The stakeholder manager will base the decision of who to speak to on the aforementioned analyses and the following three criteria:

- **Interest/influence:** the stakeholder manager is looking for key figures. These are people who:
  - have a major interest (equal or opposite) in the outcome of the process;
  - have a high degree of influence on their environment; display a keen willingness to change or, conversely, a high degree of resistance;
- **Accessibility:** a stakeholder with a strong mandate is helpful to gain access to organisations and influential members in organisations who might appear out of reach;
- **Sufficiently broad representation of the field of influence:** is there a balance between the various parties involved or is structural representation from certain quarters missing?
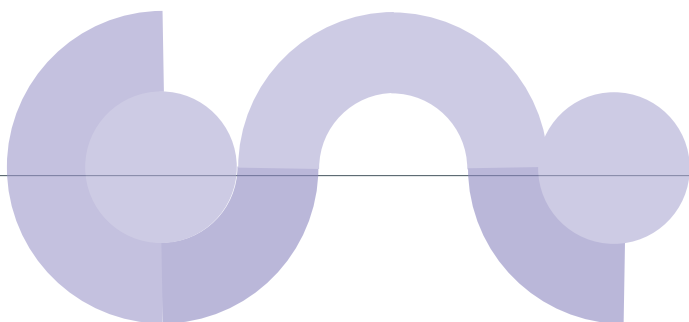
Stakeholder portfolio

The stakeholder manager then determines the underlying interests of the relevant stakeholders. The stakeholder manager does this by:

- determining the interests behind each stakeholder's position in order to respond to these in due course;
- assessing how and to what degree the different interests of stakeholders are interrelated, so that influence can be exerted in a thorough and structured way at a later date;
- determining where flexibility exists in the field of influence and where potential rigidity may occur;
- monitoring structurally the changes that take place in order to measure the progress being made and to exert the greatest possible degree of influence.

Figuur 2| Stakeholder analysis
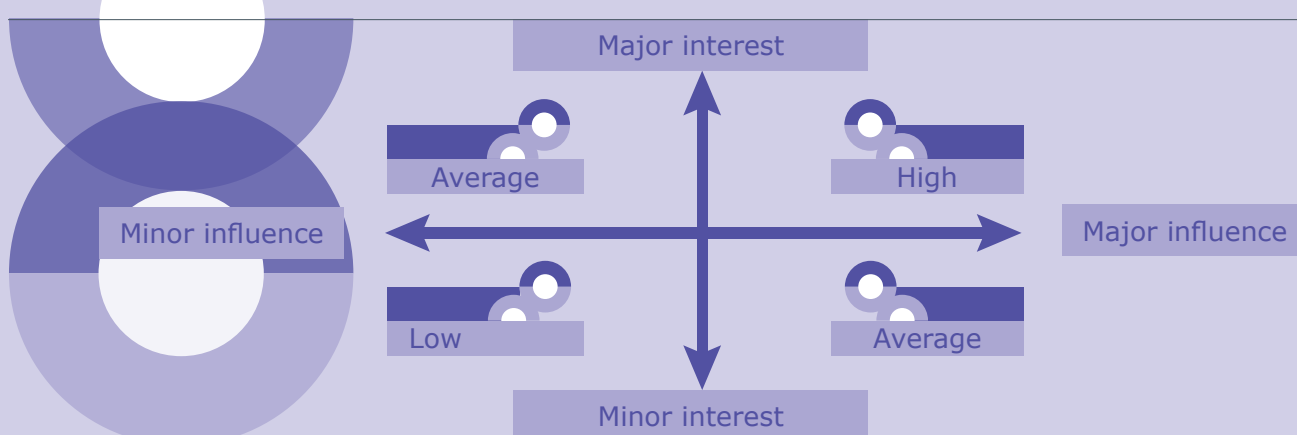
The stakeholder portfolio therefore provides the basis to determine the appropriate interventions and systematically maintain an overview of the network that is developed.

An example of a concise stakeholder portfolio of interests relating to the effects of pesticides and herbicides on surface water is provided below.

After the information phase, the stakeholder manager continues to develop the stakeholder portfolio with additional information needed to ensure the field of influence remains effective. The chronology of activities can be maintained in a logbook, in addition to such documentation as reports, communication with stakeholders and press releases.

This would result in a convenient overview containing information to help the stakeholder manager make strategic decisions on who to hold talks with or on whether to develop other interventions.

Stakeholder portfolio:

Concise stakeholder portfolio: a stakeholder's attitude with respect to the proposed change						
Group	Individual	Impact	Attitude			Interest/comment
			B	F	M	
Interest group for livestock farmers	Mr AAA	H	V			'Livestock farmers work with livestock. We have nothing to do with pesticides and herbicides.'
Trade association for agricultural contractors	Ms BBB	H			V	'This is good for our image: we want to be known as clean workers.'
Trade association for merchants	Mr CCC	M		V		'We still want to be selling products in ten years. Banning products needs to be avoided. Fewer products is not the solution, but a package of responsible and sustainable products is.'
Producer of pesticides and herbicides	Ms DDD	M		V		'We benefit from the responsible use of pesticides and herbicides. Product development costs are very high. Sustainable use is therefore necessary. Banning products would lead to loss of investment.'
Water Board	Mr EEE	H			V	'We want to avoid non-compliance of standards and want to comply with the future Water Framework Directive (WFD).'
Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality	Ms FFF	M		V		'We want to comply with agreed policy and EU standards.'

The example above would enable the stakeholder manager to develop an intervention in the consultation phase together with the trade association for agricultural contractors and the water board. The intervention could be aimed at an important customer of this trade association. The parties could organise demonstrations, for example, which clearly show the effects of pesticides and herbicides on surface water as well as innovative solutions to mitigate the problem. Additional suggestions for various types of intervention are provided in Section 5.

Charting the interests of all stakeholders systematically begins in the information phase and is then maintained throughout the entire process.

The stakeholder manager will then determine when and which stakeholders need to be involved in a particular stage of development or intervention and with whom, how and at what time issues need to be communicated. This will enable the stakeholder manager to react quickly with the right stakeholders, for example, and to create a sense of urgency in response to media coverage. It is important that the stakeholder manager keeps the portfolio and logbook accurately up to date. They will prove to be valuable resources for providing insight into where individual stakeholders are in the influencing process and how stakeholders change their positions throughout the process. The next three sections take a closer look at how the stakeholder manager can set to work in the three phases of the stakeholder process.

4 Information phase

What does the information phase look like? How to deal with movers, floaters and blockers in the information phase?

Information	Consultation	Collaboration
Gain influence among relevant stakeholders	Influence relevant stakeholders	Relinquish influence to relevant stakeholders

The stakeholder manager starts by identifying the key stakeholders and then informing them about the proposed change that needs to be implemented. All the information that the stakeholder manager collects is incorporated in the stakeholder analysis as set out in Section 3. A stakeholder analysis will make clear which individuals the stakeholder manager needs to talk to. Holding discussions to gather information has three objectives:

- To understand the stakeholder's attitude and interests;
- To inform stakeholders about the need for and nature of the change;
- To assess the assumptions made and information gathered (by making these explicit in the talk, for example);
- To build a relationship and obtain a mandate to initiate the change.

During the information discussions, the stakeholder manager outlines the need for change, the proposed objectives and expectations. The stakeholder manager also assesses the attitude and interests of the stakeholders and gets an impression of the underlying values. The intention is to build a relationship with the stakeholders and to obtain a mandate to work on the mission within the field of influence. Obtaining a mandate is not a matter of course. You can obtain a mandate on the basis of expertise and knowledge, the organisation you represent, your existing network, powers of persuasion or the assignment or project for which you are responsible. Obtaining a mandate is essential for the further course of the stakeholder process. The stakeholder manager might already be acquainted with a number of stakeholders and this relationship could facilitate obtaining a mandate.

Movers in the information phase

It is important in the information phase to identify the movers first and to mobilise them in a steering coalition. Initial discussions with movers may often already reveal good ideas, innovative plans, potential pitfalls and specific areas of application. Such discussions with movers are almost always characterised by thinking in terms of possibilities. You can also obtain a mandate from this group to continue to shape the mission. In this way, innovative ideas can be developed further together with the movers without any constraints imposed by floaters or blockers.
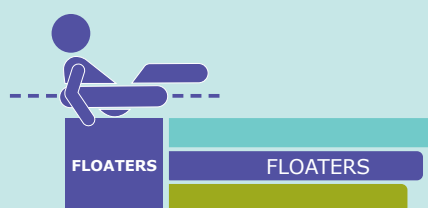
Floaters and Blockers in the information phase

The interests of the floaters and blockers are also identified in the information phase. This will enable the stakeholder manager to understand what effects these changes have on the position and behaviour of both groups in the event that circumstances change. The stakeholder manager will then leave the floaters and blockers in peace for the time being, before turning attention to them again in the collaboration phase to bring the change to completion. It is a risk to focus too much attention on the blockers during the information phase. Blockers often attract attention because they actively respond to what the stakeholder manager is intending to do. It might therefore seem effective at first to focus on the blockers and immediately remove obstructions. Experience shows, however, that it is wiser to initiate change with movers first before continuing the discussion with blockers at a follow-up stage after creating additional critical mass and evidence of new activities.

Farming with a Future: an example with the information phase

During the information phase, a stakeholder manager working on the Farming with a Future project in the south-east of the Netherlands learned that a group of agricultural contractors was favourable to changes in the use of weed control in maize production for fodder. They were supported in this by their pressure group. Many livestock farmers outsourced maize production to agricultural contractors. Given the size of the area involved and the critical resources being used, such a change would inevitably have a major impact on pesticide and herbicide emissions into the surface water. The agricultural contractors were keen to work on their image and saw opportunities for a different approach. The stakeholder manager organised demonstration trials together with the agricultural contractors to test various alternatives side by side. The initiative was also supported by the local Water Board. They then collectively entered into discussion with the other local stakeholders.

Information	Consultation	Collaboration
Gain influence among relevant stakeholders	**Influence relevant stakeholders**	Relinquish influence to relevant stakeholders

What does the consultation phase look like? How to deal with movers, floaters and blockers in the consultation phase?

The central focus of the stakeholder manager during the consultation phase is, together with the steering coalition of movers, to motivate the floaters and blockers towards initiating the desired change. A stakeholder manager can exert influence by providing access to information, drawing attention to the consequences of current behaviour, bringing parties together and inviting stakeholders to adopt a clear position towards specific problems. During the consultation phase, the stakeholder manager and the movers confront the other stakeholders on the effects their traditional working methods are having. The stakeholder manager also presents them with new perspectives. The contribution made by the stakeholders to the change remains the main objective.

The stakeholder manager's role and function changes significantly in the consultation phase in relation to the information phase. The stakeholder manager:

- initiates the initial changes together with the steering coalition;
- challenges stakeholders to participate and ensures the threshold for participation remains as low as possible;
- supports and advises stakeholders during their first steps in the change process;
- continually exploits space and opportunities to mediate and take action where possible;
- facilitates steps to ensure change takes root and is implemented;
- ensures that initiatives in the network are strengthened once results are achieved. In doing so, the stakeholder manager aims to realise permanent changes among individual stakeholders and a lasting impact on the entire network.

During the stakeholder analysis in Section 3, the stakeholder manager gathered information about the stakeholders. The stakeholder manager must now carefully consider how to intervene strategically with each individual stakeholder. To choose effective interventions, the stakeholder manager must first determine the scope of the intervention, establish prioritisation and decide on a strategic order, before going on to specify the intervention itself as well as its nature, working method and intended effect. The following four steps can help provide direction to the proposed interventions.

Step 1| Scoping

Scoping is a technique employed by the stakeholder manager to determine the extent (scope) of the impact needed. The stakeholder manager also decides how much to focus on a specific field of expertise, such as a type of crop or product. Determining the scope will enable the stakeholder manager to establish who to involve in the intervention and who not. It can sometimes be effective to work with a manageable group of stakeholders on a small, localised scale, but this may result in the wide-ranging change remaining subordinated.

Step 2| Prioritisation

Once the scope has been defined, the stakeholder manager uses the analysis to determine which individuals in the various groups of stakeholders are the most important to involve. This process of identification of key figures is called prioritisation. There are three criteria that are important in this: accessibility, type/incentive and impact at grassroots level. The stakeholder manager seeks precisely those stakeholders who take the lead in resolving dilemmas that arise in their own sector or organisation.

Step 3| Determining the order

Now the scope has been determined and the prioritisation has been completed, the stakeholder manager needs to decide who to talk to first and who can wait until later in the process. The order of talks could have a major impact. It is not necessarily the case that the stakeholder manager has to start with the most influential party. It may also be effective to exert pressure through a different stakeholder precisely because a certain stakeholder has a lot of influence. It is therefore important that the stakeholder manager remains well informed about the various parties involved.

Step 4| Determining the intervention

Once the stakeholder manager has determined the order of talks, the next step is to find the appropriate intervention. The stakeholder manager can exert influence on stakeholders through pressure, persuasion and insight (see Section 7 for further elaboration and examples). The core element of stakeholder management is determining which resources to use with which stakeholder and at what time. The following overview provides a number of possible interventions for influencing stakeholders:

| One on one (n = 1)	Large group (n > 50)	Smaller group (2 < n < 50)
Interview	Stakeholder day	Stakeholder steering committee
Information kit	Interactive forum	Session for validating and challenging
Tea or coffee	Website	Design sessions
Encounters at the vending machine (business setting)	Database	Demonstration
Questions as a sparring partner for associated subject (appeal to professionalism)	Conference	Implementation workshop
Collective preparatory work	Information meeting	Study groups
Consultation meeting	Stakeholder marketplace	Training courses
Company tour	Informal forum for entrepreneurs	Presentations
Coaching talk	Panel discussion	Workshops
	Benchmarks	Brainstorming masterclass
	Quiz	Invitational conferences
	Transition workshops	Focus groups
	Large-scale events	Experiments
	Item in the press or on social media	Item in the press or on social media
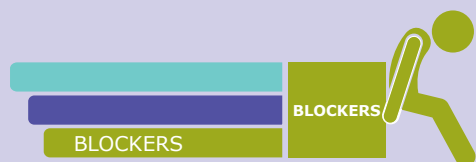
Movers and blockers in the consultation phase

Once a steering coalition of movers has been formed, this group will be able to exert influence on the blockers, whose position has now diminished. This is now more likely to succeed, because the movers in the steering coalition have become the ambassadors of the proposed change. A powerful voice will exist inside the field of influence instead of outside it. When key stakeholders change their standpoint, it is important that the stakeholder manager continues to monitor and determine the position of the other stakeholders.
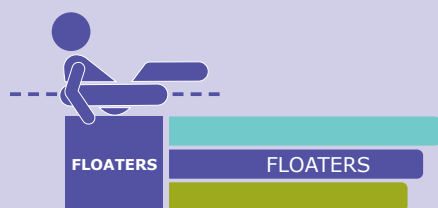
Floaters in the consultation phase

As previously noted, floaters often have different interests and priorities, but they do not stand in isolation from the other stakeholders. That is why a change in the standpoint or behaviour of movers or blockers can also affect the position of the floaters. Floaters may have an indirect interest, for example, and follow the stakeholders they are dependent on.
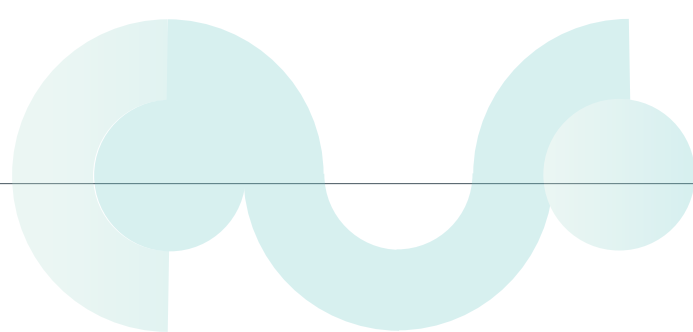
What does the collaboration phase look like? What role do movers, floaters and blockers play in it?

The aim of this final phase is to complete the change and to consolidate the new situation. The role of both the stakeholder manager and the stakeholders changes substantially in the collaboration phase. In this phase, the stakeholders take the lead.

Role of the stakeholder manager

The role of the stakeholder manager changes from one of leadership (in the form of a driving force) to one of support (in the form of a supervisor of change). It can be difficult for the stakeholder manager to relinquish influence, especially when the activities of the stakeholder manager have largely been adopted by the stakeholders. During this final phase, the stakeholder manager steers increasingly on issues of process and less on matters of content. The stakeholder manager's focus is on coaching and supervising stakeholders in their new role, while, at the same time, influencing and involving those stakeholders who are uncertain or who are still unwilling to cooperate.

Strategic partnership

The ideal scenario would be for the stakeholder manager to become more of a strategic partner, who contributes ideas and collaborates to shape and secure the change in the stakeholder's practice. There is no hierarchical partnership between the stakeholder manager and stakeholders, but rather a collaborative one. The objective of this partnership is to continue the change and roll-out process. By gradually taking a less significant role in the process, the stakeholder manager can assess the extent to which the stakeholders have actually assumed responsibility.

Collaboration phase
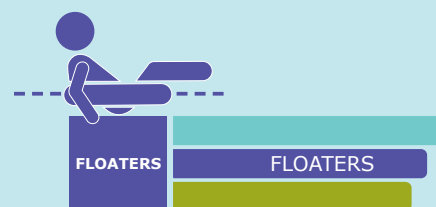
Floaters in the collaboration phase

Floaters are the main target group to involve in the change process during this phase. Floaters are necessary to ensure the change process is carried out to fruition. In this phase, the stakeholder manager will also focus more on floaters than in previous phases. The stakeholder
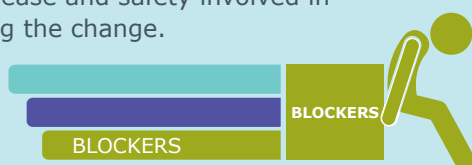
Information	Consultation	**Collaboration**
Gain influence among relevant stakeholders	Influence relevant stakeholders	**Relinquish influence to relevant stakeholders**

manager can ask floaters under which conditions they are willing to collaborate on the initiatives instigated by the movers (the steering coalition).

Whether the floaters decide to get on board depends on a number of factors:
- The degree to which the key stakeholders embrace the change;
- Clarity about the significance and advantages of the new working method;
- The relative ease and safety involved in implementing the change.

Blockers in the collaboration phase

The stakeholder manager invested a lot of time and energy during the consultation phase to involve the blockers in the change process. This is because they are needed if the change is to be implemented. Undoubtedly, a number of blockers will remain behind. This is logical when you consider the vested interests of these stakeholders. The stakeholder manager, however, must continue to focus on these blockers. This is because blockers could hold the key to gaining support for the change at grassroots level and from other stakeholders associated with the blockers. The stakeholder manager, together with the steering coalition, is also keen that the blockers will learn to accept the change as a reality or at least will tolerate it. This does not mean that they must agree completely with the change, but that they should no longer form an obstruction for others who do want to see it materialise. To ensure this takes place, the stakeholder manager can do the following:

- To continue to exert pressure and powers of persuasion, all parties, including blockers, should consistently be invited to collaborate in the change process. This will enable blockers to become accustomed to the change and feel as if they are being listen to and not being ignored, and therefore reduce the threat;
- The stakeholder manager and the blockers should regularly re-evaluate the interests still at play, look at what has changed in the meantime and assess what effect the changes have had on the blockers and their attitude;
- To add further weight to the irreversibility of the change, the stakeholder manager can produce a stream of evidence. The stakeholder manager or the enrolled stakeholder can then continuously demonstrate to other stakeholders that the change has really taken

place. Not only will substantive end products serve as evidence, they can also show demonstrable progress in the change process.


Movers in the collaboration phase

Movers are the ambassadors for change from inside out. The stakeholder manager coaches these movers on their own attitude, skills and behaviour and supervises them in dealing effectively with their own organisation and the stakeholder environment. As the movers grow more and more into their role, the stakeholder manager will find it easier to play a coaching role.

Agromere, an example in the collaboration phase

The stakeholder manager in the Agromere project was looking for momentum to motivate the stakeholders in the collaboration phase to move forward. The majority of stakeholders had expressed interest in the proposed change but further showed little initiative. The desired momentum was created as a result of the local municipal elections. An ambitious councillor was appointed to the city council. It soon became clear that this councillor was eager to steer a new course: one that was sustainable, personal and dynamic. Together with two movers, the stakeholder manager organised a meeting and sent invitations to all the stakeholders, who all came (as they were all keen to meet the new councillor). In his speech, the councillor embraced the proposed change, which involved integrating agriculture in new urban expansion, as a promising development for the city. During the informal lunch following the meeting, the stakeholder manager talked to the stakeholders who were present and invited them to take part in three follow-up workshops that formed the core of the collaboration phase. All the stakeholders agreed to participate.
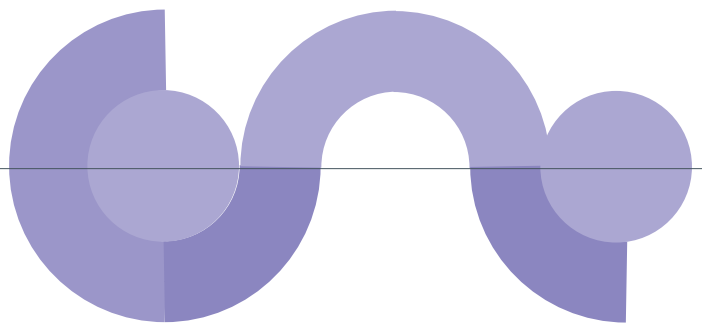
Stakeholder enrolment

What is stakeholder enrolment? What role does the stakeholder manager play?

The previous sections focused on the three distinct phases of the change process that a stakeholder will work through. Enrolment is the common thread in the change process. Enrolment is taking or assuming responsibility for sustainable change and the process of working towards realising such change by the stakeholders involved. wThe stakeholders, as it were, become the actual owners of the proposed change. Stakeholder enrolment means that the stakeholders are mobilised. They will feel increasingly responsible for the proposed change because they themselves believe it is important. Little by little, the stakeholders become more and more involved or 'enrolled'. Central to the stakeholder manager's approach is to supervise the stakeholders in the process of attaching **responsibility of choice** to the concept of **freedom of choice** (a stakeholder's free choice to do something about sustainability). Responsibility of choice in this case refers to the fact that every stakeholder feels responsible for taking action or not.

Enrolment process

Stakeholder enrolment takes place in all three phases of stakeholder management, but becomes increasingly important from the consultation phase.

Stakeholders themselves become aware of the fact that they have various choices during the **information phase**.

The following table provides an overview of the enrolment process.

The responsibility that goes with a conscious choice for change is further stimulated during the **consultation phase**. The stakeholders are now really confronted with the change: to what degree do they stand firm, also when put under pressure or at difficult times? Stakeholders will therefore be seriously challenged to take responsibility. Not only in words, but also in deeds.

What is important in the **collaboration phase** is that stakeholders actually embrace the new working method and that they shape and develop their own version of the change. This change can also differ significantly from how the stakeholder manager imagines and depicts the change. The stakeholder manager will drift more into the background as the responsibility for the change process becomes more dispersed. The stakeholder process has now become a collective responsibility. Stakeholders support each other and rectify behaviour that threatens to regress, until the new working methods become ingrained in new routines. Once enrolment has progressed further, the stakeholder will participate in a self-reinforcing process, ensuring activities lead to results, to belief in the change, to more activities, to more results and to more belief in the change. Once this enrolment has gained sufficient strength, it will lead to visible results that have a positive effect on the ultimate objective.

Overview of the enrolment process in stakeholder management			
	Information phase	**Consultation phase**	**Collaboration phase**
Steps in enrolment	The stakeholder recognises the problem and is prepared to look at the criteria	The stakeholder draws up criteria and is prepared to contribute solutions and develop initiatives	The stakeholder contributes solutions and develops initiatives and bears responsibility for them
From freedom of choice to taking responsibility	Awareness that there is freedom of choice	Confrontation to make conscious choices (again)	Consolidation to persevere with choices made

Role of the stakeholder manager

To elicit a successful enrolment process, the stakeholder manager employs the three principles for effective influencing: pressure, persuasion and insight. The trick is to use the right mechanisms at the right time with the right stakeholder. The stakeholder analysis discussed previously is an important tool in determining the appropriate intervention.

The following overview provides examples of activities associated with pressure, persuasion and insight.

The stakeholder manager can exert **pressure**, for example, by inviting a number of movers and a minority of blockers to the table. Badgering is a proven technique to exert pressure. The essence of badgering is that a stakeholder manager uses different ways to return to a stakeholder on a particular issue (but no more than five times). In doing so, the stakeholder manager triggers the conscience of the stakeholder in a different way every time. This results in a kind of containment, because the stakeholder manager literally cuts off ever more escape routes. Each time this happens the stakeholder will reassess and reconsider the choice that has been made. **Persuasion** works well to respond specifically to the stakeholder's unique interests or motivations. The stakeholder manager could, for example, exploit the stakeholder's ambitions to be a market leader and be classified as an innovator. Similarities can also be sought between the stakeholder manager and the stakeholder. This will help the stakeholder manager to promote relationships and build bridges where possible. This can create more confidence and a sense of partnership. It is very beneficial if the stakeholder manager can provide **insight** into how it can be done differently, specific to the stakeholder's needs. There is a good chance that a stakeholder will then apply this knowledge and get on board of the change process. The stakeholder manager can achieve this through such means as conducting trial demonstrations for the stakeholder according to the latest findings. If a stakeholder manager succeeds in developing solutions together with a relevant stakeholder, a sense of solidarity will be created. The stakeholder will then become co-owner of the resulting solution and will be motivated to carry it out.

Exerting influence through the use of:	Activities
Pressure	Critical questions, probing, badgering Pointing out jointly drafted directive Continuous calling to account Pointing out consequences of behaviour Appealing to stakeholder's conscience Mobilising the press
Persuasion	Encouraging personal contribution Encouraging stakeholder's aspirations Setting an example: stewardship Validating unique windows of opportunity per stakeholder Seeking alternative criteria together Creating appealing perspectives
Insight	Providing insight, adopting expert role Encouraging dialogue Relating stories and repeating them Making use of windows of opportunity Source of information: analysing real-life situation and application Building knowledge together

Example: the consultation phase in Agromere

Agromere serves as a good example of an enrolment process. It was initially difficult to mobilise stakeholders in Almere around the idea of connecting city and agriculture (see earlier example). A stakeholder posed the question of who would like to live in a potato field. Through the intervention of the councillor, a diverse group of stakeholders was challenged in three workshops to reflect on possible solutions for connecting agriculture and new urban expansion. The workshops led to a tipping point. A number of stakeholders conceived the possibility of integrating city and agriculture to form the concept of urban-agriculture. They set to work on the idea that urban-agriculture could play a role in the future city. Ultimately, the ideas of Agromere were used in the Almere Zoning Plan 2.0 in 2009. On page 90 of the zoning plan, it is stated that "Urban-agriculture breaks through the ostensible barriers between city and agriculture. City and agriculture form a contemporary combination. They enhance each other. Urban-agriculture makes the city greener and food production more sustainable". It demonstrates that stakeholders are the ones behind the initiative to translate urban-agriculture to serve the needs of their own interests: a greener and sustainable city. The ideas set out in Agromere were then translated by an 'enrolled' municipality into the plan for a new residential area: Oosterwold. Urban-agriculture forms the heart of the new neighbourhood of Oosterwold. And the stakeholder manager? The role of the stakeholder manager changed from driver, organiser and relationship builder into adviser.

8

Communication in stakeholder management

What does communication in stakeholder management look like? How can the stakeholder manager use communication to exert influence effectively? How does communication differ in objectives and approach for each phase?

Objectives of communication

Communication can be used for the following four functions:

- **Increasing reach**: to enable a much larger group of stakeholders to see and experience the process and content of activities. The reach of stakeholders increases exponentially through a well-considered approach to communication. Examples include newsletters, demonstrations, articles in journals and social media;
- **Diversification**: to deliver custom solutions in the process of influencing the various target groups. The stakeholder manager can adapt the information and the way of communication for each target group;
- **Involvement**: to invite stakeholders to participate in the change process by means of the various principles of exerting influence. Communication elicits involvement, whether positive or negative;
- **Generating feedback**: to provoke reactions. These provide insight into the views and opinions of the various parties. Feedback can be obtained through such methods as workshops, discussion panels or through monitoring and evaluation methods

Strategic communication: the Five Ws

The stakeholder manager has a multitude of communication possibilities and resources available. The challenge is to deploy the most appropriate resources at the right time. The stakeholder manager regularly asks the Five Ws: Who has to know What, Why and When, and With what resources will that best succeed? The Five Ws provide insight into the content and form of communication and help to anticipate the reactions of stakeholders.

- **Who**: who should receive specific information or be involved?
- **What**: which knowledge, experiences, results, insights and signals from the field will the stakeholder manager divulge?
- **Why**: what needs to be achieved and what is the objective of the communication?
- **When**: what is the most appropriate timing? What are the consequences of communicating earlier or later?

- **With what**: which means of communication and working methods have the best chance of success?

By systematically asking these Five Ws, the stakeholder manager can explore the opportunities available and then assess whether and how to use them. It is good to remember that communication can also do damage. That is why it is important to find a balance between challenges and ambitions on the one hand and insight into and understanding of the interests and sensitivities of the stakeholders on the other. The stakeholder manager consciously chooses a communication method in which everything communicated has a reason and which collectively form stepping stones for follow-up action. It is especially important to follow up communication with key figures with personal contact.

Means of communication

Means of communication are diverse.
Examples of suitable resources are:

- flyers
- social media
- blogs
- radio commercials
- newsletters
- websites
- press releases
- journal articles
- advertisements
- local and regional television

But also consider interactive forms of communication, such as:

- brainstorming sessions
- conferences by invitation (conferences which target specific stakeholders and experts) andstakeholder meetings
- seminars (such as trade fairs)

Strategic communication: exerting influence per phase

From the perspective of stakeholder management, each phase has its own specific objectives. The stakeholder manager uses the three principles of exerting influence (pressure, persuasion and insight) to achieve the objectives. The stakeholder manager can use the three principles per phase to formulate a guideline for the communication. This guideline will also help the stakeholder manager to answer the Five Ws better.

Although the three principles of exerting influence and the various layers of communication are used in each phase, a shift takes place in the content and purpose of the communication as the stakeholder-management process progresses.

The emphasis in communication in the **information phase** is on making known who the stakeholder manager is and what the change entails, the field of influence and the direction, but also on obtaining a mandate. Here, the focus lies on informing and providing insight. The objective is to build relationships, develop communal responsibility for the challenge and enhance the sense of urgency. The communication can also support or consolidate the formation of the steering coalition.

In the **consultation phase**, the communication shifts towards mobilisation, encouraging participation and organising the initial steps. The communication concentrates on setting out preconditions and objectives, identifying bottlenecks and looking for alternatives, individually and collectively. The focus is on the change process and the role of the individual stakeholders involved. The communication is aimed at mobilising the stakeholder through pressure and persuasion. Providing insight into the progress and sharing successes are important resources in this process.

The key objective in the **collaboration phase** is to consolidate, expand and embed the change. Appointing new roles and forming relationships, explaining the significance of new routines and celebrating achievements can all contribute to this. It is also important to reflect on the changes and the lessons learned.

How can the stakeholder manager document all the activities and developments during the process? And how does the stakeholder manager reflect on the progress of the proposed change process?

## Objective and focus of monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is an intrinsic part of the process in stakeholder management. M&E consists of observing, documenting, analysing and evaluating. The essence of M&E is to assess your own actions in the field of influence with an inquisitive, open attitude. Which things are going well and which things are not? Why is that? What is still missing? What is there to learn? These questions will enable a stakeholder manager to learn and increase effectiveness.

A stakeholder manager needs to monitor and evaluate their own actions from the beginning of the stakeholder-management process as well as changes in behaviour and attitudes of the stakeholders and the effect the changes have on the social and physical environment. The stakeholder manager looks at changes in the individual stakeholders and in the field of influence and studies the interventions, causes and conditions under which change occurs. When it comes to determining the appropriate area of focus for monitoring and evaluation, a stakeholder manager needs to have a good understanding of the effect of intervention logic: the course, steps and mechanisms that ultimately will be used to achieve the desired impact. It is important not only to focus on the effects of individual interventions when monitoring complex change processes, but also not to lose sight of the changes that occur from other causes.

Two instruments for monitoring

Monitoring forms the basis for learning and evaluation. Monitoring involves the stakeholder manager observing and documenting the developments and progress systematically. The stakeholder manager uses two instruments for monitoring:

- The stakeholder manager uses a logbook to record which actions and activities have been carried out with specific stakeholders and what, when and how something has been communicated to specific parties. The logbook is also used to record developments in the field of influence.
- The stakeholder manager uses the stakeholder portfolio (see Section 6) during the process to monitor the positions of the stakeholders with respect to the necessary changes.
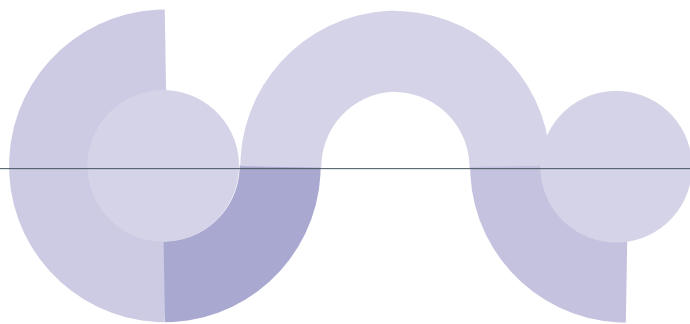
Keeping these instruments fully up to date will enable the stakeholder manager to target specific actions, consolidate the relationship with stakeholders and reduce the possibility of errors.

Monitoring and evaluation during the various phases

Each phase of stakeholder management includes specific focus areas and M&E questions. A number of possible M&E questions have been set out below. These are meant to serve as inspiration for drawing up appropriate questions for every specific change process.

In the **information phase**, M&E helps with acquiring insight into the initial situation. M&E focuses primarily on your own interventions, because as yet only limited effects can be expected.

M&E questions in the information phase:

- To what extent is the stakeholder's role and mandate clear and accepted?
- Is there sufficient insight into the standpoint of all stakeholders, as well as their position and the field of influence in relation to the proposed change?
- To what extent do all key stakeholders have the information to help them participate in the change process?
- To what extent do the various stakeholders perceive the need to change?
- To what extent does the steering coalition have the right composition and decisiveness?

In addition to interim monitoring, the stakeholder manager also evaluates the entire phase. This will help determine whether progress can be made to the next phase.

In the **consultation phase**, M&E is used as an instrument to gain control of the dynamics of the stakeholder process. From the consultation phase, M&E is focused on learning about both the process and the results. The emphasis is aimed at the effectiveness of the field of influence. The stakeholder manager observes who or what has had influence and at what time.

M&E questions in the consultation phase:

- Which interventions have been made and to what effect?
- Has it been possible to exert influence through pressure, persuasion and insight?
- Which changes have occurred in the attitude and behaviour of the stakeholders?
- How much backing, support and energy is there for the proposed change?
- To what extent do stakeholders develop new initiatives?
- To what extent is the steering coalition active and effective?
- To what extent is the stakeholder manager's own role effective? What is going well and what could be done better?

M&E in the **collaboration phase** continues to focus on learning about both the process and the results. The emphasis now is on consolidating the change. M&E looks at the emergence of new roles, relationships and new working methods. Together with the enrolled stakeholders, the stakeholder manager regularly evaluates their combined effectiveness.

M&E questions in the collaboration phase:

- To what extent is the proposed change complete: has the objective been achieved?
- To what extent are the enrolled stakeholders adopting the change and now giving sustainable shape to their own version of the change?
- Are they consolidating and securing the change in their own organisations?
- To what extent are initiatives distributed in the network institutionalised?
- What is an appropriate role for the stakeholder manager to adopt? Where is support still needed? Where is less support needed?

Periodic, systematic reflection on these questions and recording responses and insights in the logbook and stakeholder portfolio can help the stakeholder manager to gain a deeper understanding of the process and deploy interventions specifically aimed at realising the proposed change.
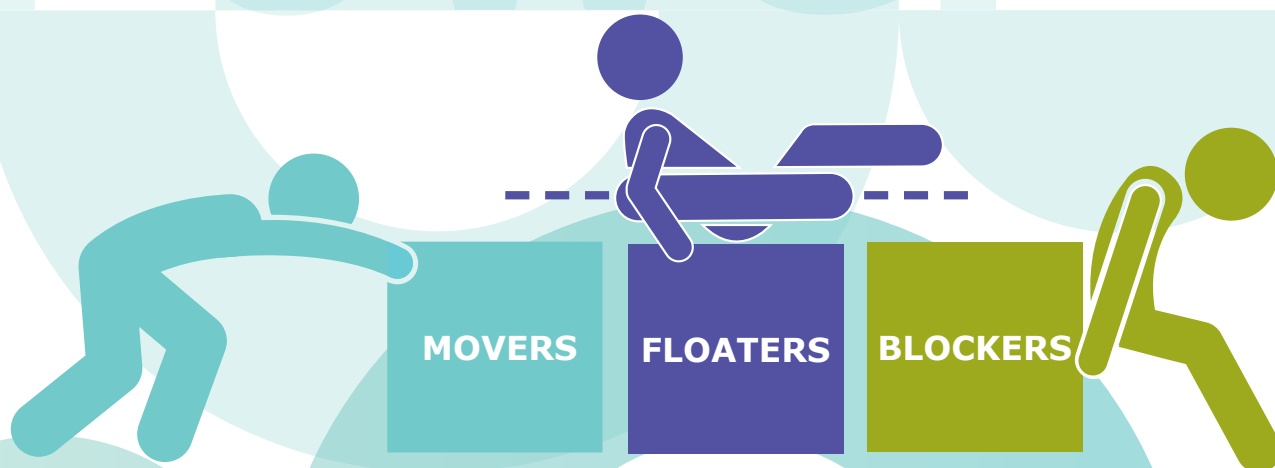
10 In conclusion

We would like to round off this brochure with a number of short reflections that are important if you are going to work with stakeholder management:

- Stakeholder management is not a recipe in which success is a foregone conclusion. See stakeholder management more as a method that can initiate sustainable change.

- Consider also the role of the stakeholder manager. It is essential that the stakeholder manager is given the mandate by the stakeholders. You can obtain a mandate on the basis of expertise, independence, skills and competences, but also because you have the necessary resources, such as funding for a project, or you have been specifically designated. Not everyone, however, is suitable to be a stakeholder manager. For this, you need to have a certain skill set that includes empathy, persuasiveness and decisiveness. Tasks can also be shared among various individuals with different qualities (especially those qualities that concern the ability to bring people together or indeed to analyse the achieved results).

- This brochure has said nothing about the time frame of the phases. This is because each situation can differ significantly. It took almost ten years, for example, between the initial ideas about Agromere and the development of Oosterwold. The stakeholder process depends on many things, such as the complexity of the change, the stakeholders, the perceived need for change, the available resources and the professionalism of the stakeholder manager. Moreover, the proposed change can be affected by a whole range of external factors at any time, over which neither the stakeholder manager nor the stakeholders have any influence. Examples of which include new legislation, elections, additional key stakeholders or crises. It is therefore important to keep a close eye on what is going on in the stakeholder process and the social context in which the change is taking place.

- Not every stakeholder process will work through each phase methodically. Some will remain in de information phase and never get off the ground or will move on without delay to the collaboration phase, under the influence of such factors as new legislation or a crisis, for example. There is no pre-determined endpoint in a stakeholder process. If the stakeholders take co-ownership of the change during the collaboration phase, they will also give shape and content to the process. The stakeholder-management process will draw to an end once the stakeholders have taken ownership of the change and have developed their own version of it. That is when the change is effectively consolidated in terms of sustainability and embedded in existing processes, systems and structures.

Influence without Power

MOVERS **FLOATERS** **BLOCKERS**