

A framework for conflict analysis in spatial planning for tourism



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ABSTRACT

The perspectives of diverse stakeholders on spatial planning and tourism development, on one hand, and natural values conservation, on the other, often lead to conflicts. An in-depth analysis of the sources of conflict is crucial for developing the appropriate strategies to manage them. This paper specifically addresses the current conflicts between tourism development and land use planning and natural values management. For this purpose, a case study was carried out on the *Troia-Melides Coast* (Portugal), a coastal area rich in natural values and currently under pressure from real estate and tourist developers. Interviews were carried out with 26 key-stakeholders. Based on the theoretical framework of Moore's model, a broad and integrated overview of these conflicts is presented. Conflicts are categorized as follows: institutional organization, public policies and legislation, power, others structural constraints (e.g. time and resources), information and stakeholders' interests, values and relationship.

1. Introduction

The relevance of studying conflict in the land use planning context is undeniable: “planning is inescapably about conflict: exploring conflicts in planning, and learning to work effectively with conflict can be the basis for a strong planning paradigm” (Flyvbjerg & Richardson, 2002, p. 61–62). By defining four core ideas on planning (spatial, sustainable, integrative and inclusive), the Royal Town Planning Institute clarifies that “planning is value-driven, i.e. concerned with identifying, understanding and mediating conflicting sets of values. It is also action-oriented, driven by the twin activities of mediating space and making of place” (RTPI - Royal Town Planning Institute, 2001, p. 2). This paper focuses on a key planning perspective defined by RTPI (2001) by specifically addressing the relationship between tourism development and spatial planning: the identification and understanding of the conflicts at stake is a crucial planning task.

It is considered that an overall view of the sources of conflict is paramount to the understanding of the context in which the conflict unfolds, and thus, for the definition of a mediated planning process that aims to reconcile tourism development with spatial planning. However, it is noted that there is a lack of studies and empirical evidence related to conflict analysis in tourism planning.

The literature references on tourism planning conflicts are associated with the various stakeholder groups' interests in tourism development (Markwick, 2000; Ritchie, 1999), with collaborative

approaches, particularly regarding divergent interests and power imbalances among diverse stakeholders (e.g. Dredge, 2006a; Lee, Riley, & Hampton, 2010; Yang, Ryan, & Zhang, 2013) and with the study of public interest in mediating tourism development conflicts (Dredge, 2010). Nevertheless, the analysis of the sources of conflict applied to tourism planning, as an essential procedure in the preparation for the conflict management process, is hardly mentioned in tourism literature (brief reference as “pre-existing conditions” analysis, by Yang et al., 2013). Herein lies the main contribution of this paper to literature concerning tourism planning conflicts and conflict analysis: the development of an integrated and overarching perspective of the sources of conflict between tourism development and land use planning and natural resource management – tourism versus territory conflicts. In this context, a coastal area was chosen as the object of analysis because it is subject to a strong urban-tourist pressure and, simultaneously, it has a high natural value, partially integrated into the *Natura2000* network, therefore leading to the emergence of conflicts: the *Troia-Melides Coast* (Alentejo Coast, Portugal). This coastal strip extends throughout 40 km and has a width of 5 km. The relevance of this case study lies in the fact that the conflict has escalated from an “emerging conflict” to a “manifest conflict” stage (Ury, 2000). According to Ferrão (2005: 14) “The coastal area is, more than any other area, a complex territory. The conflicts between the safeguard perspective and the development perspective are focused there”. The identification of tourism versus territory conflicts is based on the 26

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stakeholders' perspectives regarding the problems experienced in reconciling tourism development and spatial planning on this coast. These 26 interviewees include Public Administration Entities (Natural and Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Spatial Planning entities), Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS) and Tourist industry developers.

The approach chosen to identify the sources of conflict between tourism and territory, both in the Literature review section and in the Results and the Discussion and Conclusions sections, is based on the theoretical framework of Moore's model (Moore, 2003). Eight conflict categories are identified: A. Institutional organization; B. Public policies and legislation; C. Power; D. Other structural constraints; E. Stakeholders interests F. Stakeholders values; G. Information; and, H. Stakeholder relationship.

2. Literature review

2.1. The analysis framework for the sources of conflict

2.1.1. Conflict analysis relevance

According to Wilmot and Hocker (2010) and Schmid (1998), conflict exists whenever the parts are interdependent (the objectives of one condition the objectives of the other(s)) and when they become aware of the existence of conflicting objectives and interests. These conflicts arise from specific situations: shortage of resources (when there are inequalities regarding the access to resources or to its distribution); power control; in the participation in the decision-making process; and, different values (cultural, social and political).

Conflict analysis is usually mentioned in literature regarding: consensus building (Susskind & Thomas-Larmer, 1999); alternative disputes resolution (Susskind & Cruikshank, 1987); negotiation and mediation techniques (Moore, 2003), and specifically applying to natural resources management (FAO - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2000, 2005; FOC - Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 2005); and finally, in conflict management study and theory (Fisher et al., 2000; Wehr, 1979; Wilmot & Hocker, 2010). Prehistory analysis of antagonism among stakeholders is also mentioned in collaborative governance (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

Authors like FAO (2005), Fisher et al. (2000), Susskind and Thomas-Larmer (1999), Wehr (1979) and Wilmot and Hocker (2010), have specifically tackled land and resource use conflicts, and suggest that the most appropriate approach in managing a conflict is its prior analysis. According to these authors, conflict analysis allows: clarification and prioritisation of the issues that need to be tackled; identification of the conflict impacts and causes in order to identify the most appropriate strategies; understanding the stakeholders' interests, needs, concerns and viewpoints regarding conflict; assessment of the nature of the relationships among stakeholders, including their willingness and capacity for negotiation with other stakeholders; awareness of the conflict and of the necessary information for its resolution; assessment of the ability of the existing institutions to manage the conflict; assessment of the scope of powers that stakeholders should have to tackle current and future conflicts; and understanding the connection between land use and resource use conflicts and their social, political and economic contexts. Despite specific objections to the development of conflict analysis processes, such as being considered a waste of time and the interests at stake and the structural limitations already being evident, the relevance of this analysis is rooted in its contribution to the definition of the most suitable process for each specific situation (FAO, 2005; Susskind & Thomas-Larmer, 1999).

2.1.2. Typology of the sources of conflict

When it comes to identifying sources of conflict, there are several approaches to take into consideration. The definition of conflict suggested by Wilmot and Hocker (2010) has underlined some of its sources: conflicting interests, shortage of resources and rivalries caused

by competing interests between individuals or groups of individuals. However, other authors divide the sources of conflict into three groups: political, economical or cultural (Merrill, 2008) or political, economic and social causes (Deutsch, 2006FAO, 2005). For example, Deutsch (2006: 14–15) identifies two major groups of causes: psychological and social-political-economical. The psychological causes refer to the person's perceptions, values, ideologies, motivations, beliefs, etc. that stem from his/her experiences. This way of approaching the sources of conflict contrasts with the social-political-economical approach, which refers to the social, political and economic factors that could be at the basis of the conflict and objectively identifying the different economic and political interests. Another approach, which is frequently adopted in organizational theories (Cunha, Rego, Cunha, & Cardoso, 2007, p. 519), is based on the triptych composed by "resource conflicts" (which lie on the access and distribution of scarce resources), "intellective" (conflicts arising from different perspectives about facts and data) and "evaluative" (differences in tastes, inclinations and set of values therefore irreconcilable).

When conflict arises in the management of natural resources, some studies (FAO, 2000, 2005; FOC, 2005) identify the potential causes of conflict based on the "Circle of Conflict" developed by Christopher Moore in the 1980's (Moore, 2003). The causes of conflict identified in Moore's model (Moore, 2003) are not different from the other approaches presented above, however, they are very clearly structured into five different types – values, relationship, data, structural matters and interests (Fig. 1 and Table 1).

Based on the knowledge of the causes of conflict, Moore (2003) proposes a set of tasks to perform in conflict management (Table 1).

Based on the analysis of the five causes of conflict categories defined by Moore, the theoretical background on tourism vs. territory sources of conflict is presented in the following subsections.

2.2. Sources of conflict in tourism planning

2.2.1. Structural matters

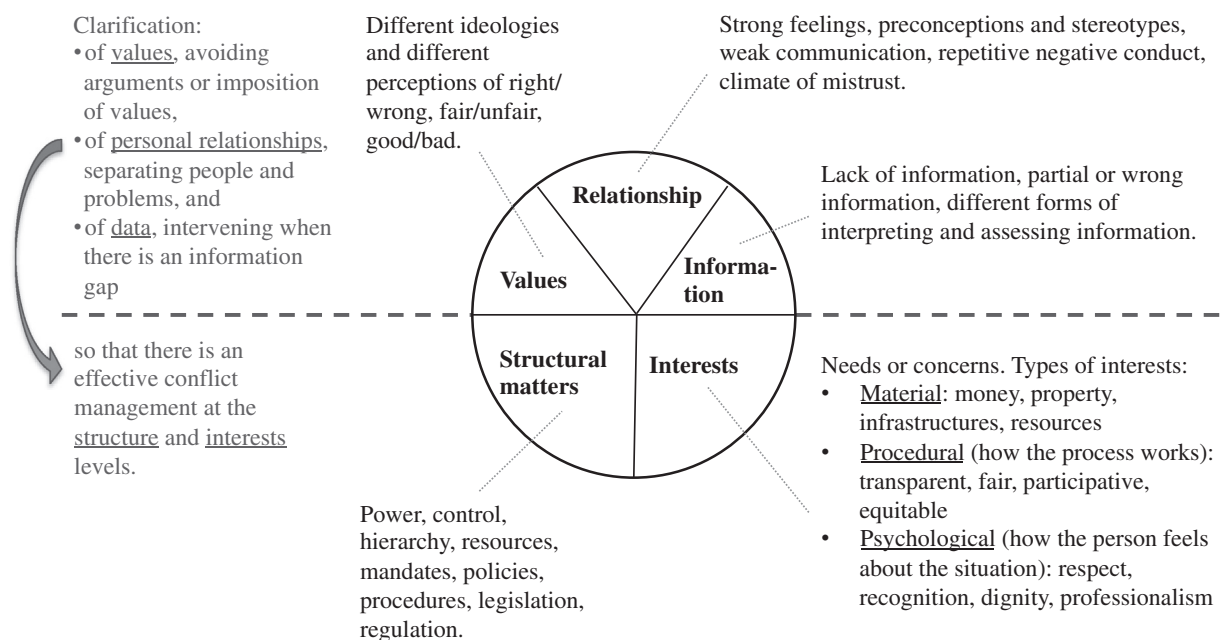
In their analysis of the interaction between stakeholders in tourism development and management in coastal areas, Caffyn and Jobbins (2003) conclude that a government with a centralising (top-down) command and control structure is unable to govern the complex dynamics of coastal zones adequately. The authors identify the exclusion of important stakeholders and the predominance of non-transparent decision-making processes as the main problems of this approach. The issues of bureaucracy, command and control structures, the inexistence of inter-agency coordination and the lack of participation, transparency and accountability, frequently addressed in the literature (e.g. Dredge, 2006a, 2006b; Dredge & Jamal, 2015; Ruhanen, 2013; Valente, Dredge, & Lohmann, 2015; Wong, Mistilis, & Dwyer, 2011), are considered structural matters. Another structural problem is the networked policy-making power and influence. Power inequalities are also frequently mentioned in tourism policy literature (e.g. Dredge, 2006a, 2006b; Dredge, 2010; Elliott, 1997; Lovelock, 2002; Stevenson, Airey, & Miller, 2008). Focusing on the public interest in tourism development, Dredge (2010) highlighted the prevalence of "decisions based on the preferences of the 'governing elite', which are often powerful developer groups" (Dredge, 2010: 105). Analysing the contribution of some conflicting organizations, excluded from planning processes, towards sustainable tourism, Lovelock (2002) highlights the fact that for conflict to arise, these stakeholders have to be empowered and they have that power precisely because they are not involved in collaborative processes. In addition to these two issues – institutional framework and power – Carter and Nunes da Silva (2001), FAO (2000, 2005), Ferreira (2007) and Mourato (2011) also identify "structural matters" related to public policies and legislation (sectoral vision and the lack of monitoring and assessment of policies and programs) and other general structural constraints involving the lack of human and financial resources, as well as the skills to anticipate and manage

Table 1

Types of conflict causes and their respective management tasks.

Source: Adapted from [FAO \(2005\)](#), [FOC \(2005\)](#) and [Moore \(2003\)](#).

Categories	Issues	Conflict management tasks
Values	Differences in ethical and moral concepts between the parties (what is right or wrong, good or bad, fair or unfair). Different ideologies. Different objectives and expectations that reflect different personal experiences. Inability to accept another set of values ("missionary" attempt to convert the other to our own set of values).	Identify values and prevent arguments based on them. Promote mutual understanding, acceptance and respect regarding the different values of the parts involved. Focus on shared interests or objectives, without attempting to bridge different values.
Relationship	Different personalities, misunderstandings, lack of trust, prejudice and discrimination. Incompatible behaviours (routines, methods styles), different expectations, attitudes and approaches to problem solving. Lack or poor communication. History of conflict or heavy atmosphere between the parts.	Recognize personal relationships and its history. Guide towards the development of positive perceptions and solutions. Stress the basic rules that must be followed by all the parties. Build relationships (or realign them) by fostering goodwill between the parts.
Information	Lack of awareness regarding some topics. Arguments based on information gaps (access to different data, unshared information). Lack of information transparency (access, share). Different ways of assessing or interpreting the information. Disagreement regarding the reliability of the information: methods used, sources. Lack of uniformity of concepts.	Identify information gaps and bridge them. Build a common language/clarify concepts. Reach an agreement about the information needed. Reach an agreement concerning the way the information is gathered and checked. Reach an agreement regarding the criteria to use as a basis for interpreting or assessing information. Improve communication.
Structural matters	Structural problems that are external to the parties involved: power issues, control, structures, resources, policies, procedures, legislation and regulation that condition the access to resources or to its distribution. Factors that prevent cooperation such as hierarchical structural and the responsibility in decision making, time constraints, geographical location.	Promote the transparency in the decision making process. Acknowledge the structural factors as basic conditions for the process. Adapt the process structure, methodology and logistics to the structural demands. Reach an agreement regarding the common complaints – excessive bureaucracy, weak representation, etc. Turn the conflict into an opportunity for social change and so identify sustainable and long-term solutions.
Interests	Different needs and aspirations. Competing interests. Lack of shared interests. Types of interests: Material – money, property, infrastructures, resources. Procedural – how the process works: fairness, openness, transparency and equity. Psychological – how a person feels about the situation - respect, recognition, credibility.	Identify common or shared interests. Highlight needs that can be met in different ways.

**Fig. 1.** Moore's conflict circle.Source: adapted from [Moore \(2003\)](#), [FAO \(2005\)](#) and [FOC \(2005\)](#).

conflicts and time constraints.

2.2.2. Material interests

Considering five key stakeholder groups – the public sector, private sector, local population, tourists and NGOs – and their respective characteristics as defined by Bramwell (2004, 2006), Buhalis (2000), Mason (2003) and Swarbrooke (1999), the public and private sectors have distinct and, at times, antagonistic interests. The public sector imposes limits on the growth of the tourism real estate offer, for example through zoning and the establishment of land occupation and building limits. This collides with the short-term profit maximisation interests of the private sector.

However, not much research has been carried out about the different interests in tourism vs. territory relationship. For example, Feng (2008) and Yang et al. (2013) identify the players with diverging interests involved in conflicts: tourism industry vs. host community, tourist vs. host community, tourism administration vs. tourist and host vs. host. Dredge (2006a) highlights material conflicts related to stakeholders' differing views on the importance of tourism and on funding local authorities.

Regarding this subject, the work of Ritchie (1999) and Markwick (2000) is worth highlighting. These authors focus on the various stakeholder groups' interests in tourism development in a national park in Canada and in the golf course developments in Malta, respectively.

In Ritchie's (1999) work in particular, the development of nature tourism seems to be consensual: both the economic interests and the environmental faction acknowledge the need to preserve natural and cultural heritage (albeit for different reasons). In this case, the interests of each different group diverge somewhat, but they are not a threat to other stakeholders' interests and can even be mutually complementary. Nevertheless, the existence of isolated conflicts between business and environmental sectors are recognized. The business sector focuses on the destination competitiveness, on the appropriate services offer and on the infrastructures to support the growth of tourism, whereas the environmental faction focuses, above all, on preserving the ecological integrity and restoring natural processes – particularly with regard to the protection of habitats for fauna and flora and the respective ecological corridor, thus preventing their fragmentation.

In the golf development case (Markwick, 2000), despite the benefits it generates to the economy, it also entails considerable environmental and economic costs. When dealing with the tourist products offer that have a greater visual impact on the existing landscape and that also consume more natural resources, these tourist products contribute to a loss of biodiversity. As they are also coupled with real estate development, the emergence of conflicts between the environmental and business sectors and also between the public and private sectors, becomes more evident. Generally speaking, such situations give rise to the emergence of extreme positions within the business and environmental sectors and the conflict arguments tend to focus on the consumption of land and water resources and the loss of natural and landscape assets. The material interests, specifically in the relationship between tourism and territory, can be organized in seven categories (based on Exceltur, 2007): 1) tourism development vs. natural values preservation, 2) tourist products, 3) occupation intensity, 4) urban system, 5) recreational use of beaches 6) land use and 7) accessibility and mobility.

2.2.3. Procedural interests

Caffyn and Jobbins (2003), FAO (2000, 2005) and FOC (2005) identify the exclusion of important stakeholders (tourist developers, NGOs, local stakeholders) as the main source of conflict in terms of procedural interests. In such situations, conflicts stem from disregarding or ignoring stakeholders that either have interests in certain resources or influence over them.

Although the subjects of inclusiveness, involvement in the process and marginalization of interest are constantly mentioned in the literature on tourism planning and policy (e.g. Dredge, 2010;

Dredge & Jamal, 2015; Lovelock, 2002; Stevenson et al., 2008; Wesley & Pforr, 2010), they are far from unanimous. In this context Araujo and Bramwell (1999) and Wong et al. (2011) demonstrate the limited involvement the private tourism sector and NGOs have in tourism spatial processes. These authors also highlight the importance of integrating these stakeholders in the planning process – particularly the private sector, given the primordial role it plays in investment and, consequently, the fundamental importance such investment has in the development of a region.

On the other hand, some authors (e.g. Bramwell, 2011; Dredge, 2010; Dredge & Jamal, 2015; Hall, 1999; Valente et al., 2015) underestimate the importance of including the private sector in the tourism planning process, considering that the private interests would override the public ones.

Concerning the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Bramwell (2004) highlights the protest, lobbying and educational activities of this faction, considering them political agents with a high degree of influence on environmental policies. The main criticisms of these environmental pressure groups centre on the fact that they often take a very simplistic approach and they are represented by individuals that do not live in the area or are familiar with it. For these reasons, their right to influence the development of that area is often doubtful (see Swarbrooke, 1999). Similarly, Lovelock (2002) also understands that the NGOs should not be regarded in the same way as tourism industry and governmental organizations. The NGOs have completely different interests, and consequently, different courses of action that are incompatible with the processes of reaching commitments. Lovelock (2002) also highlights that the NGOs contribute more when they are excluded from the planning process, meaning that although the conflict emerges when the NGOs are excluded, conflict is both constructive in the planning process and to the sustainable tourism achievement.

2.2.4. Psychological interests

Lovelock (2002) highlights the discontent of the NGOs with the low degree of formalization of the relationships during the planning process. Although this is also related to procedural interests, it is important to take into account the stakeholders' dissatisfaction.

2.2.5. Values

The different stakeholders' ideologies play an important role in the emergence of conflicting values (Moore, 2003). In this context, Lovelock (2002) highlights the different ideologies regarding tourism and the values of protected areas. In fact, the environmental sector and the tourism industry are usually mentioned as the stakeholders' groups with the most extreme positions and most antagonistic values systems and, consequently, where the emergence of conflicts is more frequent and more difficult to settle (Lovelock, 2002; Markwick, 2000). For this reason, Moore (2003) emphasizes the importance of identifying values, avoiding discussions around them, promoting mutual understanding, acceptance and respect for the different stakeholders' values. He suggests that the most appropriate strategy for conflict management is to focus on shared interests or goals, and refrain from attempting to sort out different values.

2.2.6. Information

Problems with lack of knowledge, information and information transparency (access and share) and discussion based on different levels of information are widely mentioned in literature review related to conflicts (FAO, 2000; FOC, 2005; Moore, 2003), spatial planning (Marques, 2008; Mourato, 2009) and sustainable tourism (Lovelock, 2002). In the latter case, the imbalance reflected in the access to information is highlighted. Given the tourism industry's financial capacity, it has a greater possibility of accessing new information and new knowledge. The relevance of information as a source of conflict and as a solution to the resolution of some conflicts is such that one of the ways to manage conflict situations is to implement a Joint Fact-Finding process (Ehrmann & Stinson, 1999).

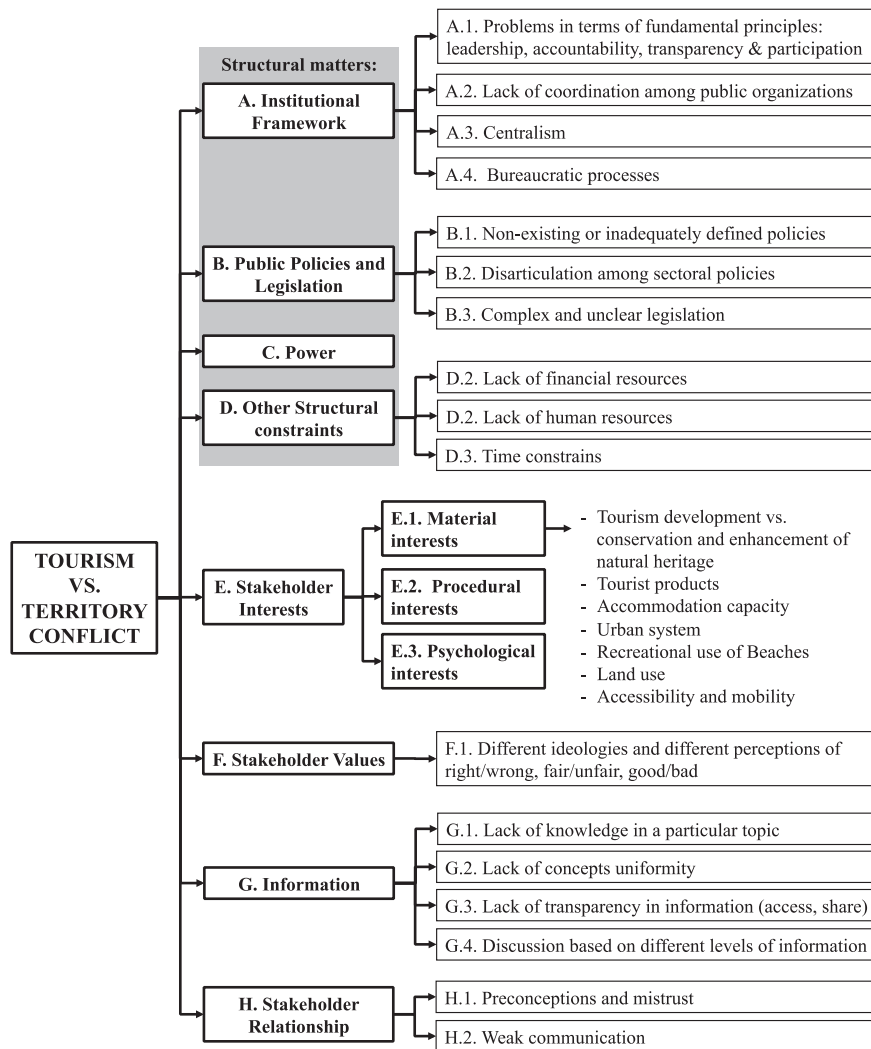


Fig. 2. Tourism vs. territory conflict analysis matrix.

2.2.7. Relationships

Conflict also emerges when there are prejudices, mistrust and weak communication among the stakeholders. In this context, Lovelock (2002) stresses the importance of the relationship between tourism and the environment in order to guarantee the necessary integration between environment and tourism and to avoid long and costly disputes. The fact that each institution has a specific organizational culture and specific human capital (different personalities, routines, methods, styles, expectations, attitudes and approaches in solving problems) also represents a strong obstacle to communication (Mourato, 2009).

Based on the five categories defined by Moore (2003) (Fig. 1 and Table 1) and on the literature review, the following matrix analysis for the tourism vs. territory conflict is proposed (Fig. 2):

3. Case study: Troia-Melides Coast

3.1. Case study site

The analytical focus is a “problem area”, i.e. where the conflicts between tourism and territory are clearly evident. The coastline is a territory of potential interest because, here, coexist a strong urban-tourist pressure and, simultaneously, the interest and need to conserve and enhance the natural values. This “territory problem” – Troia-Melides Coast – stretches along a coastal strip of 40 km and 5 km wide (Fig. 3). It is considered a homogenous unit according to different points of view. It is a coastal territory characterized by a dune system, being

predominantly occupied by forest, particularly by *Pinus pinea* and *Pinus pinaster*. Given its natural value, this territory was integrated into the Natura2000 network. It presents a homogenous tourist offer based on the delimitation of large areas of tourism development meant for urban-tourist occupation of high quality. The fact that tourist developers are part of large private organizations in the Troia-Melides Coast gives rise to emerging conflicts with unique features. The total number of existing and projected beds for this area is approximately 30,000. In short, the Troia-Melides Coast aggregates a set of standard problems related to the physical characteristics of the territory, of tourism and its actors. These facts substantiate its potential value as a case study for this research.

The research choice based on one single case study – the Troia-Melides coastline – is justified because the tourism vs. territory conflict has escalated in this area to a “manifest conflict” stage. This situation results from a set of actions filed in court and in the European Commission against the State by two Portuguese ENGOS. The fact that there are a wide variety of players involved, either directly or indirectly, makes the problem more complex. Conflicts of this nature, defined as rare and exclusive by Yin (2009: 47–49), or as extreme by Flyvbjerg (2006: 221), generally reveal more information.

A reasonable local level scale was chosen with the aim of integrating the perspective of private projects, but also broad enough to allow an evaluation of tourism vs. territory problems and the definition of a territorial tourism development strategy. The geographical unit of analysis selected was the sub-regional level (or supra-municipal level).

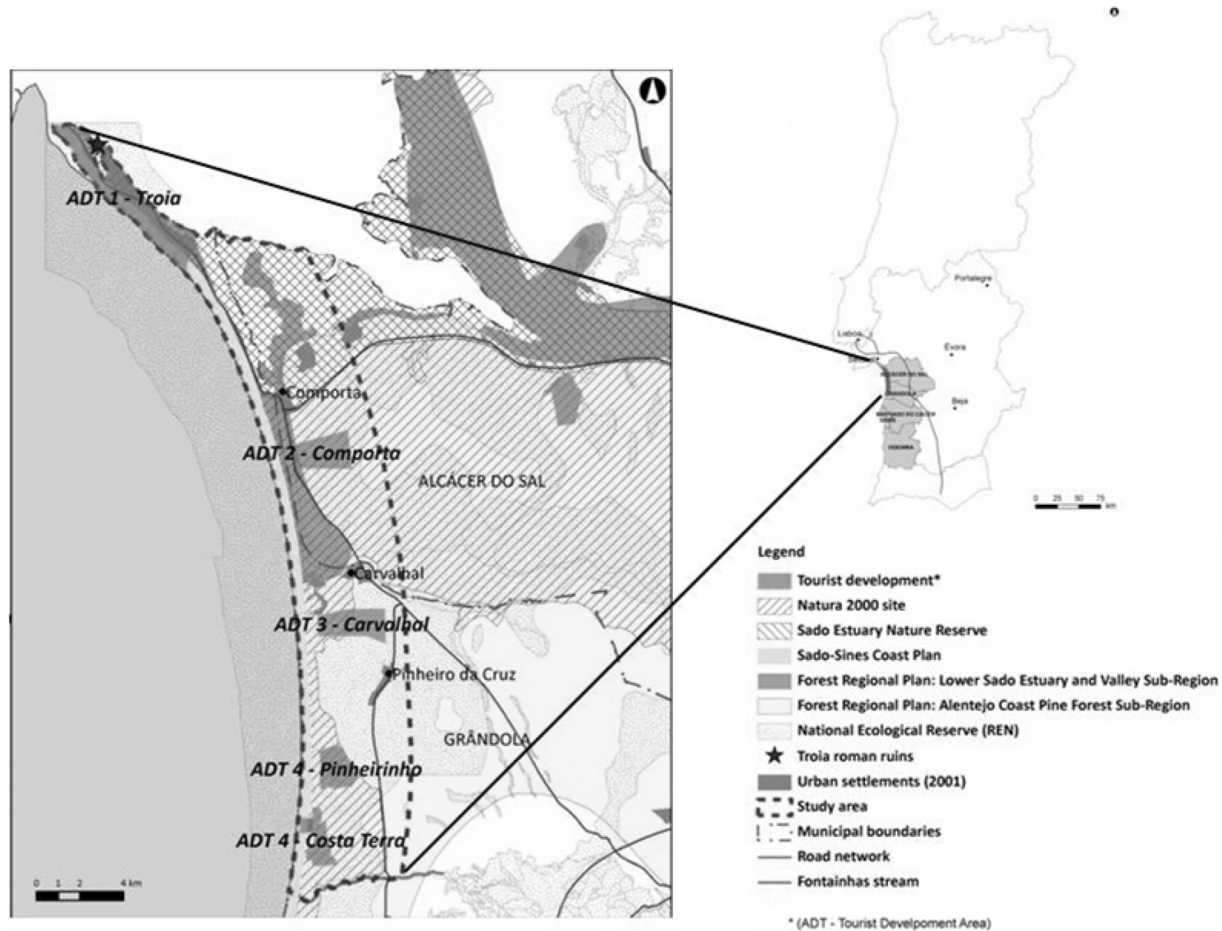


Fig. 3. Demarcation of the “problem region”: the Troia-Melides Coast.

3.2. Data collection

In order to understand the tourism vs. territory conflicts, a documentary analysis was drawn, focusing on the following distinctive points: 1) Framing the Portuguese context in which the conflict tourism vs. territory occurs; 2) Identification of the players involved in the conflict tourism vs. territory in *Troia-Melides* coastline and their interests, their relationship and the sources of conflict. 3) Understanding the tourism vs. territory conflict history in the *Troia-Melides* coastline, since the 70s. The direct observation method was also used through the participation in public discussions that took place during the preparation of the *Alentejo* Regional Spatial Plan. The objective of this documentary analysis was to draw the research triangulating structure, as far as possible, the collected information and thus ensuring the results credibility.

To enable a better understanding of the tourism vs. territory problems, semi-structured interviews were chosen because the human interaction that unfolds throughout the interview allows the researcher to gather a wealth of useful information as well as elements for reflection (Quivy & Campenhoudt, 2008, p. 192). Costa (1996) states in his doctoral thesis that interviewees withdraw from interview questions about disagreements and disputes among stakeholders, stressing the importance of diplomacy when tackling conflicts. In this context, understanding the perception that interviewees have about the sources of conflict included four steps: 1st) the focus was on concerns and not on interests (according to FAO, 2005, the word *interest* might have a negative connotation); 2nd) and 3rd) rather than talking about the sources of conflict, the terminologies used were “difficulty in reaching consensus” or “problems in tourism vs. territory harmonisation” (in the second step, the question was open and in the third closed); 4th)

intending to finish the interview with a constructive approach, the interviewees were asked to suggest measures to improve tourism vs. territory harmonisation.

The following four questions were then asked to the interviewees.

Q.1)

Identify the three main concerns of your organization when trying to bridge the gap between tourism development and spatial planning on the *Troia-Melides* coastline.

Q.2)

Identify the three main areas that are usually more difficult to reach consensus between tourism development and spatial planning on the *Troia-Melides* coastline.

Q.3)

In your opinion, what are the three main problems (from a set of ten options) when trying to bridge the gap between tourism development and the conservation and enhancement of the territorial heritage on the *Troia-Melides* coastline?

Q.4)

In your opinion, what are the three main measures that could bridge the gap between tourism development and the conservation and enhancement of the territorial heritage on the *Troia-Melides* coastline?

The set of options in Q.3 took into account the types of conflict sources presented in Fig. 2.

A letter was sent to 27 key players, public and private, responsible for policies and interventions that impact the *Troia-Melides* coastline, requesting their participation in an interview conducted by the Researcher. Only those who have had an active role concerning the policies and interventions on the *Troia-Melides* Coast were considered.

Others who could be affected by the conflict or that could contribute to its resolution were not considered. They were asked to suggest other potential interviewees in the interview (snowball technique), therefore another four interviews were conducted with the suggested entities. Unfortunately, the analysis of these four interviews did not prove to be relevant mainly due to the interviewees' detachment regarding tourism vs. territory coordination in Troia-Melides coastline.

Before the interview phase, four experts in the fields of Spatial Planning, Environment and Tourism were asked to test the script. Small changes were made to the script but hardly significant. A total of 26 interviews were held with public and private sector key-stakeholders: 18 Public Administration Entities, 3 ENGOs and 5 Tourist industry developers (TD). The 18 Public Entities included: 7 Natural and Cultural Heritage (H), 4 Tourism (T) and 7 National, Regional and Local Spatial Planning (SP).

3.3. Data treatment

After transcribing the answers to each question in different sheets, a content analysis procedure was used to analyse those answers. The responses to questions Q.1, Q.2 and Q.4 were grouped according to the categories defined in Fig. 2: A. Institutional Organization; B. Public policies and legislation; C. Power; D. Others structural constraints; E. Stakeholders interests (E.1. Material, E.2. Procedural and E.3. Psychological interests); F. Stakeholders values; G. Information; and, H. Stakeholder relationship. The responses distribution, in terms of the various categories (A to H), was validated by two conflict analysis specialists. The inter-judge agreement was 85%. All disagreements were resolved in discussion. Regarding the material interests, the responses distribution for the seven categories (based on Exceltur, 2007), presented in Fig. 2, was validated by three spatial planning specialists. The inter-judge agreement was 80%. Again, all disagreements were resolved in Discussion.

4. Results

This section systematises the responses to the questions Q.1 to Q.4.

4.1. Organizations' concerns between tourism development and spatial planning harmonisation

The responses to the question Q.1 (*What are the three main concerns of your organization concerning the harmonisation between tourism development and spatial planning on the Troia-Melides coastline?*) are presented in Table 2.

Out of a total of 102 replies, 64% of the interviewees' concerns are within the scope of E.1. Material interests.

Similarly to Section 2.2.2 Material interests, the “environmental” sector stakeholders, which include the groups of ENGOs and the Natural and Cultural Heritage authorities (H), are concerned primarily with the natural values preservation. The “economic” sector (public and private), which includes the Tourism public authorities (T) and Tourist developers (TD), are concerned with efficiency and efficacy. As Table 2 shows in this particular case, the tourism sector is concerned with questions concerning A. Institutional Framework and B. Public policies and legislation, thus creating an environment conducive to investment.

4.2. Tourism vs. territory sources of conflict

The responses to the question Q.2 (*What are the three main areas that are usually more difficult to generate consensus between tourism development and spatial planning on the Troia-Melides coastline?*) are presented in Fig. 4 and Table 3.

Out of a total of 112 replies, 46% are within the scope of Stakeholders interests (E.1. Material, E.2. Procedural and E.3. Psychological). An analysis of Table 3 reveals a high degree of divergence among the stakeholders – both in terms of their interests and

their value systems. These divergences stem fundamentally from the reconciliation of tourism development and territorial heritage conservation, the tourist development model based on the development of residential and golf tourism products and the occupation intensity (in terms of bed numbers).

In addition to the problem related to the public policies and legislation (which is frequently highlighted on the replies to question Q.3, see Fig. 5), the information (G) and communication among stakeholder (H), which according to Table 3, partially have to do with institutional organization (A) and planning processes (E.2), feature prominently.

The following results (Fig. 5) were obtained when asking (Q.3) the interviewees to indicate the three main problems (from a set of ten options) that prevented the harmonisation between tourism development and conservation and enhancement of the territorial heritage on the Troia-Melides Coast:

The three main obstacles to conciliation between tourism development and conservation and enhancement of territorial heritage are those considered in option 6: different interests at stake (19%), option 3: the institutional organization (also 19%) and option 2: lack of adequate local government financing, land management and urban control policies (17%).

Among the interviewees who selected option 6: different interests at stake, some of them claimed that ‘it is difficult to find points of consensus because the views are very antagonistic and the parts involved hold uncompromising positions’. Others warned that ‘more knowledge about the values to be protected is needed’. Most of the 11 actors who did not select this option 6 said that ‘there will always be different interests at stake. It's part of life. That's why conciliation is fundamental!’.

Institutional organization (option 3) was generally the object of criticism by all types of stakeholders – public and private – from the tourism sector. The main problems identified by the interviewees were the excessive number of entities involved, with overlapping of powers and the bureaucratic processes, making organization more difficult and the process more time-consuming. The solutions presented by the stakeholders interviewed always included ‘compacting’, ‘concentrating’ and ‘integrating’ bodies.

The stakeholders who have selected option 2, which refers to the lack of adequate local government financing, land management and urban control policies, considered it to be ‘THE problem’.

Regarding the communication among stakeholders (option 4), the interviewees highlighted that ‘it is not a problem of quantity, it is a problem of timing, quality and involving the relevant stakeholders - those who take decisions’.

The interviewees who selected option 5: Information Problems highlighted the ‘lack of technical skills on the part of some stakeholders’, the ‘knowledge of the natural, cultural and landscape values to be protected’, the ‘misinformation of the decision-makers’, the ‘lack of information associated with cartography, land structure and land value’, the ‘lack of clarity of the current legislation’ and the ‘imbalance between the public and private sectors in the access to information’.

The option 9 (Other Problems) was mentioned only by interviewees from the environmental sector, and it focuses on the ‘absence of a funding policy for nature conservation’, ‘limited human and financial resources’ and ‘lack of supervision’.

4.3. Main measures for improving the tourism vs. territory compatibility

The 68 measures proposed by the stakeholders for improving the integration between tourism development and the conservation and enhancement of the territorial heritage on the Troia-Melides Coast are distributed as follows (Fig. 6 and Table 4):

5. Discussion

In this section the results discussion is presented according to the eight types of conflict sources (A. to H.) presented in Fig. 2.

Table 2

Main interviewees' concerns related to tourism vs. territory harmonisation in the Troia-Melides coastline.

Types of concerns (# answers)	Interviewees' concerns about tourism development vs. heritage preservation	Stakeholder group
E.1. Material interests (67)	1) Tourism development vs. natural values preservation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustaining “the goose that lays the golden egg” • Natural values preservation • Tourism interventions with a negative impact on the landscape • Pressure to build on the coastline; environmentally correct integration • Harmonisation with natural values; coastal erosion; tourism that prevents the degradation of the natural values; water sustainable use; “When to say no”; natural values fragmentation; tourism expansion in <i>Alcácer do Sal</i> Municipality. • Environmentally correct integration; natural heritage and landscape enhancement; coastline preservation; identity maintenance; tourism that enhances archaeological heritage 2) Tourist products: quality of the tourism projects 3) Occupation intensity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive accommodation offer • Unexplored territory; low density 4) Urban system: pressure on existing infrastructures and facilities; protection of the structured settlement 5) Recreational use of beaches: Interviewees do not have any concerns 6) Land use: opportunity cost 7) Accessibility and mobility: access to beaches	H, SP, T ENGO, H, SP, T ENGO, SP H, SP H SP H, SP ENGO, H, SP, T, TD H, SP SP H, SP ENGO, H, SP, TD T, TD ENGO TD T, TD T TD
B. Public policies and legislation (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism projects funding • No nature conservation policy (no political support, instruments and funding) • Constant change of game rules; no flexibility in the regulation 	T, TD ENGO TD
A. Institutional framework (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial plans integration • Numerous entities; Licensing timings • Unclear definition of responsibilities (local authorities); no coordination between tourism development vs. spatial planning; overly sectoral vision of the spatial planning authorities • No decision and responsibility autonomy 	T, TD T TD
E.2. Procedural interests (8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitored planning; permanent assessment commission • Reconciling interests; need for a conflict manager • Need for tourism and spatial planning harmonisation • The national commission of the national ecological reserve (CNREN) only issues an opinion at the end of the planning process 	ENGO H, SP, T SP, T SP TD
G. Information (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuller knowledge of groundwater • Fuller knowledge of the values to defend and clear ecological corridors definition • <i>Natura2000</i> management process clarification 	H ENGO TD
F. Stakeholders values (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CNREN's approach; spatial planning's approach: resistant to innovation • Promoters with little environmental sensitivity; promoters focus: second residence urbanizations 	TD ENGO

Acronyms: ENGO – Environment Non-Governmental Organizations, H – Natural and Cultural Heritage authorities, SP – National, Regional and Local Spatial Planning authorities, T – Tourism authorities, TD – Tourist developers.

A. Institutional framework

There are common complaints among the interviewees regarding the centralism of state administration and its sectoral segmentation, the lack of coordination among organizations, the bureaucratic processes and the excessive time taken in the decision-making process (cf. [Tables 3 and 4](#)). Although these are widely identified in literature ([Caffyn & Jobbins, 2003](#); [Carter & Nunes da Silva, 2001](#); [Dredge, 2006a](#); [Dredge & Jamal, 2015](#); [Ferreira, 2007](#); [Ruhanen, 2013](#); [Valente et al., 2015](#)), some contributions are relevant to the conflict management process preparation. For example, while the public sector addresses the lack of coordination among organizations as a procedural perspective (*E.2. Procedural interests*), the private sector sees it as a matter of public administration organization (*A. Institutional framework*) (cf. [Table 2](#) and [Fig. 6](#)). Specifically for the tourism sector (public and private), time is a key-issue ([Table 2](#)) therefore their proposal focuses on the existence of a single structure or creation of an ad-hoc commission that promotes dialogue, like the CAA-PIN structure (Monitoring and Assessment Commission for Projects of Tourist Interest). Although the conflict management tasks proposed by [Moore \(2003\)](#) focus on the acknowledgement of structural matters as basic conditions for the process, it seems that some of those problems could be solved in the process preparation. In fact the *Procedural interests* (*E.2.*) measures, presented in [Table 4](#), are mainly oriented to solving some of those *Institutional framework* (*A.*) problems. Although those institutional framework problems were identified in the literature review, the concerns of each stakeholder group are now clear.

B. Public policies and legislation

Considering all the structural issues (*A* to *D*), this is the one that generates most concern and conflict among the stakeholders ([Tables 2, 3 and 4](#) and [Figs. 4, 5 and 6](#)).

Although the lack of a land use policy does not seem to be a problem for tourist developers, it is one of the biggest problems for the public sector. The “lack of adequate policies for local government financing, land use management and urban development control” is actually referred by the interviewees as ‘THE’ obstacle to achieving harmonisation between tourism and landscape and nature conservation ([Fig. 5](#)). The lack, the unclear or the sectoral vision of tourism development, nature conservation and spatial planning policies were identified as sources of conflict by the interviewees ([Table 3](#)). These problems caused a number of misunderstandings (*G. Stakeholder relationship*) and radicalised positions (*F. Stakeholders values*) that intensified the conflict. It is now clear what are the main Portuguese legislation problems that are at the root of the tourism vs. territory conflict.

C. Power

This issue is addressed in the analysis of the sources of conflict ([Table 3](#)). SP, T and TD groups consider that the environment entities hold an excess of power and the National Ecological Reserve Commission (CNREN) emerges with a veto power at the end of the process. The solution for this problem is included in the *Procedural interests* (*E.2.*) measures, proposed in [Table 4](#). CNREN should be involved in the process from the initial stage. Although the interviewees' answers in this

Table 3Specification of the causes of tourism vs. territory conflicts in the *Troia-Melides* coastline as identified by the interviewees, by type of conflict source.

Types of conflict sources (# answers)	Tourism vs. territory sources of conflict (interviewees' point of view)
E.1. Material interests (30)	1) Tourism development vs. conservation and enhancement of natural heritage: tourist resort development in natural areas, protected areas and Natura2000 zones; tourism strategy compatible with heritage conservation; developer interests vs. planning regulations; urban/tourist occupation on the coastline (2 km); compensation measures 2) Development of golf and residential tourism 3) Accommodation capacity 4) Urban system: linking tourist areas to urban system; population exodus due to rising housing prices in urban centres; maintenance costs for urban infrastructures with seasonal use 5) Beaches carrying capacity 6) Adaptation of land use to local characteristics; the need to make economic use of land 7) Access to beaches and parking
F. Stakeholders values (20)	Two distinct value systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The prohibitive stance of “you can't do anything”; ecological fundamentalism; the “the less, the better” culture not open to negotiation • The misappropriation of a unique landscape seen as a common good for private gain; the development of golf resorts; real estate products development; excessive number of beds; high density areas; the lack of developers' environmental awareness; the private sector's quest for immediate profit
B. Public policies and legislation (16)	Non-existing or inadequately defined policies, usually facilitating new urban areas; no land use policies; the need for nature conservation (and respective financing) policies; no clear policy from the Portuguese Tourist Board (<i>Turismo de Portugal</i>); spatial plans with confusing, unclear and ambiguous regulations); excess of overlapping restrictions (Natura2000 network, National Ecological Reserve, National Agricultural Reserve, natural protected areas, etc.); no supervision
H. Stakeholders relationship (15)	Ineffective communication; timing of communications; individualistic culture; no communication forums; communication problems regarding the excess of public administration bodies; communication outside appropriate channels; no active listening; difficult relationship with nature and biodiversity conservation institute (ICNB); no understanding with developers (not very aware of environmental issues)
G. Information (14)	Lack of scientific knowledge of natural, cultural and landscape assets worthy of protection on the part of some stakeholders; lack of cartographic information; inexistent knowledge of landowning structure; no information about: land value, the carrying capacity of the territory for tourism, environmental issues, and the residential tourism market and impacts.
A. Institutional organization (6)	No sectoral coordination; overlapping of powers in territorial matters; excess of authorities/agencies; centralism; bureaucracy
C. Power (5)	Environment sector has excessive power; National Ecological Reserve Commission (CNREN) with a veto power at end of the process.
E.2. Procedural interests (3)	Entities excluded from the process; current involvement is not effective; involvement does not occur at the appropriate phases and in structured way; no cooperation, collaboration and establishment of agreements and commitments.
D. Resources (2)	Human resources: need for new personnel; no negotiation skills for anticipating and managing conflicts; no technical know-how to conciliate tourism and territorial resources
E.3. Psychological interests (1)	Insufficient public financial resources. ENGOS not given due importance.

case study did not mention decisions that favour the powerful developer groups and economic interests, stated by [Dredge \(2010, 2006a, 2006b\)](#), organizations such as the ENGOS, excluded from the planning process, are at the root of the conflicts as stated by [Lovelock \(2002\)](#). In fact, this conflict escalation resulted from a set of actions filed in court and in the European Commission against the State by two Portuguese ENGOS. Moreover, this tourism vs. territory conflict in *Troia-Melides* Coast might have contributed towards a more sustainable tourism development, as also stated by [Lovelock \(2002\)](#).

D. Other structural constraints

Two types of resources problems were pointed by the H and SP authorities ([Tables 2 and 4](#)): human and public financial resources. It became clear in the interview that public investment in Environment and Spatial Planning is quite limited therefore these entities claim that the government should give more importance to the environment and territory, or improve the public administration, both financially and in terms of staffing and training ([Table 4, D. Resources](#)) or fund the

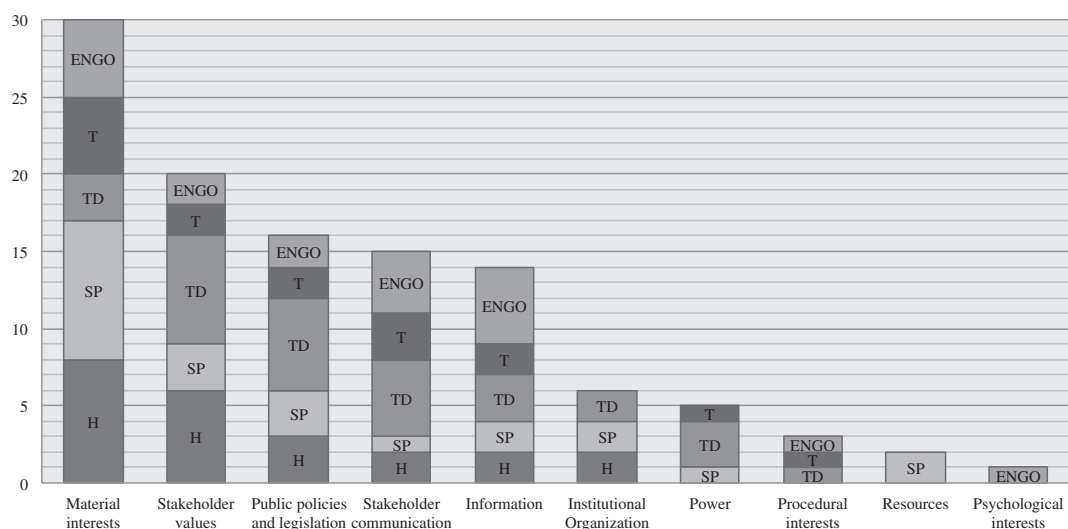


Fig. 4. Distribution of the themes identified by stakeholders as more difficult to find consensus between tourism development and spatial planning on the *Troia-Melides* coastline, by type of conflict source.

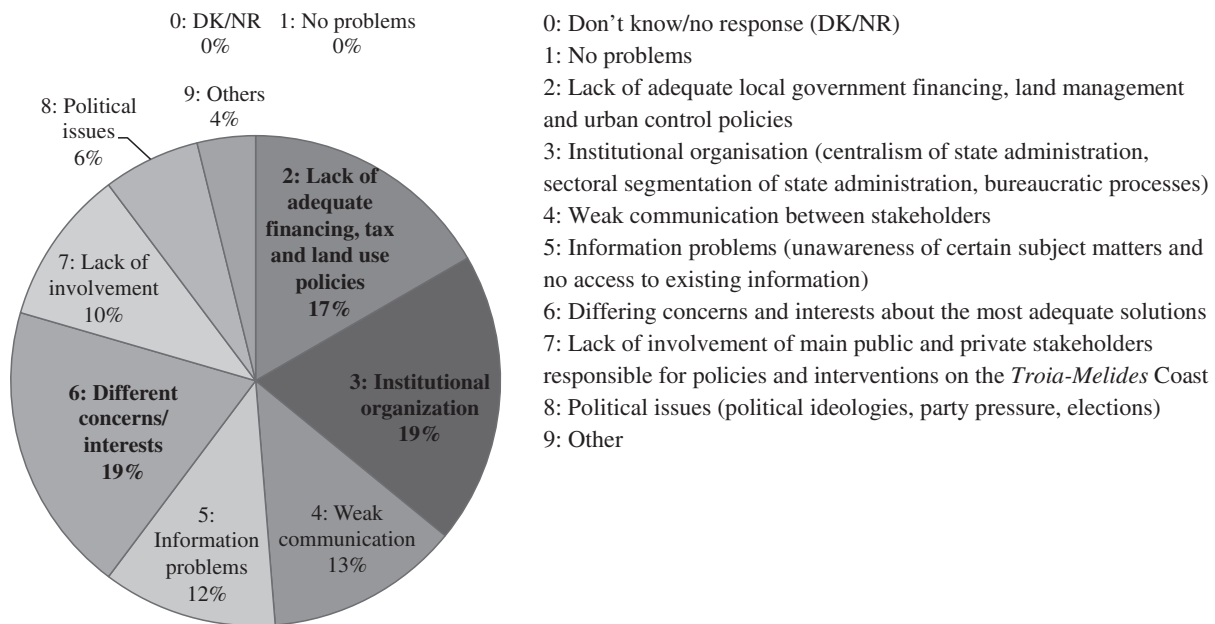


Fig. 5. Distribution of the main problems in harmonising tourism development and conservation and enhancement of the territorial heritage on the Troia-Melides Coast, as identified by the stakeholders by response option.

territorial management by tourism projects (Table 4, B. Public policies and legislation). Time constraints mentioned by FAO (2000, 2005) are highlighted in the interviews by the tourism sector (public and private).

E.1. Material interests

This is the subject in which the interviewees identify a higher number of concerns and sources of conflict (Tables 2 and 3 and Figs. 3, 4 and 5).

Table 4

Systematisation of measures proposed by interviewees, by type of conflict source.

Types of measures (# answers)	Measures proposed by interviewees for improving integration between tourism development and heritage preservation
B. Public policies and legislation (16)	Creation of a Land Law for fiscal purposes; taxation of capital gains from sales and different land income frameworks for urban and rural land Definition of Natura2000 conservation-related obligations Financing of territorial management by tourism Regional plan elaboration for the Alentejo Coast Simplification of spatial planning and tourism development legal frameworks Permit-granting processes streamlining Maintenance of rules (that are constantly broken)
E.2. Procedural interests (14)	Strengthening of joint work (namely in defining compensation measure) and of public/private articulation and involvement; reconciling interests in plans; creating a collaboration culture between stakeholders (trust, better communication)
G. Information (13)	Involvement of ENGOs in the process Knowledge consolidation of the values to protect; assessment of the territory capacity to absorb urban/tourist development growth; clarification of the cumulative impacts relevance Presentation of benchmark projects for reconciliation of tourism development with nature conservation; assessment of the gain for tourism by investing in conservation/enhancement of the natural heritage; clarification of how tourism activity can financially sustain territorial management Tourism benefits dissemination (to stakeholders/entities, local population, etc.); developers preparation for environmental qualification Considering the economic perspective of tourism and not only as an urban development problem: is there a market?
D. Stakeholders values (12)	What "is right" is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural values conservation; implementation of nature conservation obligations; investment in nature tourism • Linking of tourism development and promotion of Portuguese products • Accommodation offer and occupation density reduction • Guarantee that tourism expands into areas that are the continuation of existing agglomerations • Guarantee that tourism is coupled strictly with the demand levels, avoiding dependence on the fluctuations of real estate market cycles • Environmental conscious developers; public administration with greater commitment; stakeholders assuming a joint position above partite interests
A. Institutional organization (11)	Institutional coordination Processes and spatial planning instruments streamlining Existence of a single structure; creation of an ad-hoc commission that promotes dialogue, like the CAA-PIN (Monitoring and Assessment Commission for Projects of Tourist Interest) structure Tourism promotion agencies reduction ('current system generates confusion') More open stance, reducing corruption and increasing transparency; greater politicians' commitment ('they commit to nothing')
D. Resources (2)	Accountability of the public administration for the "No" Improvement in the public administration, both financially and in terms of staffing; training of agents

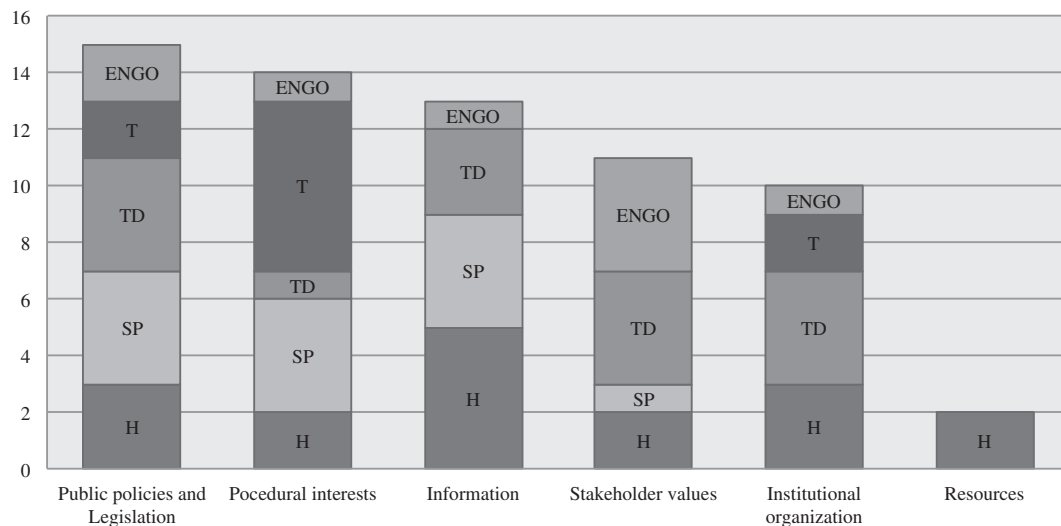


Fig. 6. Distribution of measures for improving the integration between tourism development and conservation and enhancement of the territorial heritage, by type of conflict source.

Similarly to Markwick (2000), the interviews highlight the conflict related to a tourism product: a golf course development. Besides pointing out the interests of the different groups, already studied by several authors (Ritchie, 1999, concluded that tourist developers are focused on the competitiveness of their tourist products and natural heritage entities are focused on preserving natural habitats), the results of the interviews allow an overview of all of the issues that are at the basis of conflicts. Although not particularly evident from the results obtained, the interviews show the real needs of the stakeholders. According to Moore (2003) (Table 1), identifying common or shared interests and highlighting needs that can be met differently are ways of managing these conflicts. As the findings laid down in Table 2 indicate, the existence of common concerns among the stakeholders involved is noted, which are essentially based on the: sustaining of “the goose that lays golden eggs” (H, SP and T); preservation of natural values (ENGO, H, SP and T); excessive accommodation offer (E, ENGO, SP, T and TD); access to beaches (E, ENGO, SP, TD); and, monitored planning, namely through the creation of a permanent assessment commission (H, SP and T). According to Ritchie (1999), and also referring to the case study aforementioned, there is a consensus among the different stakeholder groups regarding the need to preserve natural heritage.

E.2. Procedural interests

From the interviewees' perspectives, procedural interests are not exactly a source of conflict (cf. Table 3). They are considered as stakeholders concerns (Table 2) and measures that improve the tourism vs. territory harmonisation (Table 4). Public authorities (H, SP and T) are specifically concerned with the existence of a monitoring plan, a permanent evaluation committee and a conflict manager (Table 2). The ENGOs and TD are focused on their involvement in the process (Table 4). On the one hand, taking into account that TD (those who make investments that contribute to the further development of a region) are strongly affected by the decisions taken and that the ENGOs have considerable veto powers, they should be more closely involved in the processes (as stated for example by Araujo & Bramwell, 1999, and Wong et al., 2011). On the other hand, regarding the interests of the private sector, it is considered as Bramwell (2011), Dredge (2010), Dredge and Jamal (2015), Hall (1999), and Valente et al. (2015) do that the private sector's involvement should not be the same as the public sector's. The same rationale applies to the ENGOs. Although Lovelock (2002) highlights the relevance of the ENGOs outside of a cooperative process, it has become evident in this research that the ENGOs must be involved in the process and from its early stage.

E.3. Psychological interests

In this category, only one problem was identified and by one ENGO: the ENGOs have not been given due attention during the planning process (Table 3). This is a common complaint (cf. Lovelock, 2002). This paper reinforces the relevance of the ENGOs as being at the root of the conflict, as stated by Lovelock (2002). In fact, Bramwell (2004) also raises awareness about the increasing pressure exerted by the NGOs.

F. Stakeholders values

Based on the analysis of Tables 3 and 4, and Figs. 4 and 6, the main value differences (what is right and wrong) are found in the following situations:

- According to the H and ENGOs groups, the private sector's orientation towards short-term profit is wrong, resulting in a conflict of values between the public and private sectors.
- According to the H, ENGOs and SP, it is wrong for the private sector to develop a residential real estate offer instead of hotel accommodation and thus a conflict of values between the private and environmental sectors ensues.
- According to the H and ENGOs groups, the private tourism sector's lack of environmental awareness is wrong, resulting in a conflict of values between the tourism and the H and ENGOs groups.
- According to the TD group, the prohibitive position of the environmental sector is wrong, resulting in a conflict of values between the private business and environmental entities.

It can be concluded that the ENGOs and the TD groups are more focused on pointing out what is right and wrong (as stated by Markwick, 2000, and Lovelock, 2002). On the opposite side, the T and the SP groups are more moderate. Therefore the way the ENGOs and the TD take part in the process should be thoroughly analysed leading back to the discussion in E.2. *Procedural interests*. It can be also noted that, as shown in Table 1 by Moore (2003), one of the conflicts management tasks is focusing on shared interests or objectives and not on the stakeholders' values. In fact, as shown in Table 2, when the focus is on the stakeholders concerns the discussion does not fall on their values.

G. Information

From the stakeholders' perceptions about the sources of conflict

(Table 3 and Fig. 4) and the list of suggested measures proposed by them (Table 4 and Fig. 6), it can be stated that all the groups are dissatisfied, in particular with the lack of information related to the *Natura2000* network management, the natural and cultural values to be protected and the compatible activities. It can be concluded that there is, in fact, an enormous gap of information. This is the case where the Joint Fact Finding (Ehrmann & Stinson, 1999) perfectly fits as the solution for conflict settlement.

H. Stakeholders relationship

The *Stakeholders relationship* is neither a concern (Table 2) nor a measure (Table 4) for the interviewees to improve tourism vs. territory harmonisation. Nevertheless, regarding the tourism vs. territory conflicts causes, it is the 4th issue most cited (Table 3 and Figs. 4 and 5). Considering the results presented in Table 3, it can be concluded that those problems are all related to poor communication and the pre-conceptions and misunderstandings among the stakeholders (cf. Fig. 2). The lack of trust is identified as a problem by the interviewees, specifically regarding the *E. Stakeholders values* and the *H. Stakeholders relationship* answers (Table 3). Proposals to overcome these problems are mainly related to the planning process (*E.2. Procedural interests*), such as: public/private reconciling, coming around the table, creating a culture of collaboration among stakeholders (trust, communication, communication routines) (Table 4). This concern is mainly referred by the public sector tourism and spatial planning entities (Fig. 6).

6. Conclusions

As stated by Flyvbjerg and Richardson (2002) and RTPI (2001), the identification and understanding of conflicts at stake is a crucial planning task. However, there is a lack of tourism studies and empirical evidence related to conflict analysis in tourism planning. In this respect, this paper brings forth two methodological contributions.

The first one is the development of an integrated and comprehensive analysis of the sources of conflict between the tourism development and the land use and natural resources management (the tourism vs. territory conflict). As mentioned in the Introduction session, the literature references related to tourism planning conflicts address specific themes, or specific stakeholder groups, lacking the integrated view of the problem. This paper covers, simultaneously, many different subjects, such as the administrative organization, the public policies, the stakeholders view-points and their value systems and relationships and the information gap, as well as the perception of some of the key-stakeholders groups: public sector at the national, regional and local level (environment, tourism, culture and spatial planning), private sector (tourism developers) and the ENGOs.

The second contribution is the development and implementation of a framework of the sources of conflict, based on the theoretical framework of Moore's model (Moore, 2003), to a specific context: the tourism vs. territory conflict (Fig. 2). Although this framework has been applied in conflict analysis related to the management of natural resources (FAO, 2000, 2005; FOC, 2005), it has not been applied to tourism vs. territory conflicts. The problems in this domain can be included in the eight conflict categories (A to H) systematised in Fig. 2. Taking into account this matrix, the Stakeholders' values (F), their Relationships (H) and the Information problems (G) are now clear and therefore they need to be addressed to guarantee an effective conflict management at the Structural (A to D) and Interests (E) Levels (as stated by Moore, 2003, in Fig. 1). It is demonstrated that the information about conflict through the analysis of stakeholders' concerns, sources of conflicts and measures to improve tourism vs. territory harmonisation is crucial to the preparation of a conflict management strategy in any planning process.

However, this research method has some limitations. The tourism vs. territory conflict analysis is based on the perceptions of 26 key-

stakeholders through face-to-face interviews. They are not neutral and impartial concerning the problem that is being examined, therefore the reliability of part of the information collected is very difficult to check. The fact that the interviewees are an active part of the process is an information gathering limitation. However, it is also an advantage because their direct participation in conflict analysis allows a direct access to that information. Additional information sources were used to mitigate this limitation. That's why the document analysis and direct observation methods (Section 3.2) were applied to structure the research design to triangulate collected information and thereby ensure its verification and hence the reliability of the final results.

Given the methodological consideration mentioned above, this paper has made an empirical study of the tourism vs. territory conflict in a Portuguese coastal area: The *Troia-Melides Coast*. In this respect, the main results are as follow:

One of the main sources of conflict refers to the fact that the proposed tourist model is based on large residential golf resorts projects located in a unique landscape. The lack of a Land Use Policy and its land taxation instruments and also the existence of a local government financing focused on construction (B) fostered that kind of tourist development. Consequently, this contributed to the escalating of mistrust among stakeholders (H) and, subsequently, to the conflict escalation to a manifest conflict stage. These difficult relationships (H) highlighted more radical positions among the tourist developers and the ENGOs groups (F).

Also there is neither a Nature Conservation Policy nor any clear guidelines for the *Natura2000* Network management (B). These two areas, environment and territory, are areas of public administration with an enormous lack of territorial knowledge as well as human and financial resources (D).

There is no integrated and consensual vision regarding the compatibility of tourism development with the natural values preservation. This also gave rise to several misunderstandings (H) and radical behaviours (F). In this context, the majority of the public sector interviewees highlighted the relevance of a supra-municipal spatial plan where an integrated tourism vs. territory strategy would be discussed and coordinated. For this purpose, and considering that one of the conflict management tasks is to focus on common objectives and interests among stakeholders (cf. Table 1, Moore, 2003) the following five common topics were identified by the interviewees: sustaining of "the goose that lays golden eggs"; preservation of natural values; excessive accommodation offer; access to beaches; and monitored planning, namely through the creation of a permanent assessment commission.

Finally, it became clear that, in this type of conflicts, the building of trust among stakeholders (H) depends on gaining further knowledge about natural values and on gathering more information about *Natura2000* management, which is still very scarce (G). It also became clear that managing these conflicts requires a preparation on the part of the public administration human resources as well as an entity with the power to lead the process, which is currently inexistent (A and D).

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