Conflict resolution in coastal management

Interdisciplinary analyses of resource use conflicts from the Swedish coast

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Abstract:
Natural resource use conflicts at urbanized coasts and their analysis and resolution are the main theme of this thesis. Based on the analysis of four conflict cases from the Swedish coast I explore the ways the local management of coastal resources may be connected with a broader notion of sustainable resource management.
Two questions guide this study. The first one regards the theoretical and methodological development of coastal conflict research - it asks whether and how coastal conflicts can be analysed in an interdisciplinary way. To answer this research question, I developed an interdisciplinary conceptual framework for the analysis of local coastal conflicts. This framework is an example of the form methodologies for interdisciplinary knowledge integration can take in a natural resource management study. The framework combined and integrated knowledge from different discourses and disciplines of environmental conflict research with the knowledge from empirical conflict studies and allowed for more integrated and complex conflict analysis. The second question asked in this study is practice and management oriented and concerns the ways of improving practical conflict resolution with sustainable coastal resource management as a goal. The findings highlight the importance combinations of formal and informal resolution strategies have, the key role of practices of knowledge use and the importance of power imbalances among stakeholders for conflict resolution.
By setting out to link together the analyses of conflicts and conflict resolution in the practice of resource management and policy with the normative aspects of sustainable resource management, I highlight that interdisciplinary analyses of resource use conflicts and integrated approaches to conflict resolution should be incorporated in sustainable resource management and planning as a necessary part.

Keywords: coast, natural resource management, conflict analysis, conflict resolution, interdisciplinary methodologies, sustainable resource management, Sweden, Europe

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