



Training guide

Social Acceptance

Developing dialogue with your stakeholders

Applying social acceptance tools to avoid barriers in biobased projects





This guide was produced for a training event organised in February 2018 as part of the project BioBase4SME.

BioBase4SME is co-funded 60% by the INTERREG North-West Europe Programme (NWE). INTERREG NWE fosters transnational cooperation to make Northwest Europe a key economic player and an attractive place to work and live, with high levels of innovation sustainability and cohesion.

www.nweurope.eu/BioBase4SME

Authors of this guide: content by Axelle Larroumet – president of Hoblik www.hoblik.fr, supervised by Pascal Dagron – European cooperation manager for AC3A, editing, translation and layout by Monika Bogucka, Sarah Beigel and Marina Liger – AC3A.

This publication is co-financed by AC3A

www.ac3a.fr

Interreg 
North-West Europe
BioBase4SME
European Regional Development Fund


**AGRICULTURES
& TERRITOIRES**
CHAMBRES D'AGRICULTURE
ARC ATLANTIQUE


HobLik
Conseil & Stratégie

Interreg



EUROPEAN UNION

North-West Europe

BioBase4SME

European Regional Development Fund



Market research



Legal framework



Social acceptance



Life cycle
assessment



Business plan

Table of Contents

Preface	1
Chapter 1. Reasons to involve stakeholders.....	2
1.1. Social acceptance – a growing subject	2
1.2. Understanding environment and stakeholders	4
1.3. Long-term vision and strategic goals aligned to stakeholder communication to maximise engagement.....	13
1.4. Engaging stakeholders.....	17
1.5. Facilitation and participatory approaches	26
Chapter 2. Strategy and prospective: workshops to implement tools to involve your targeted stakeholders.....	27
2.1. General principle and context.....	27
2.2. Dialogue rules and programme.....	29
2.3. First session.....	30
2.4. Second session.....	32
2.5. Third session.....	34
References	36

Preface

Many companies implementing emerging technologies encounter barriers or objections from consumers or local stakeholders. “Social acceptance” is the result of a process where stakeholders and project leaders work together to find solutions to these barriers and objections. It is important to be aware that the stakeholders affected by a new product or process go way beyond the SME’s customer base. Involving stakeholders in a series of activities to establish relationships is essential - there are tools for this. Tools will enable SMEs to achieve legitimacy and credibility regarding the stakeholder, form a strong and well-communicated company mission statement and clear long-term vision and set up long-term connections with their stakeholders, resulting in trust.

This guide takes you through the context and the theory behind the social acceptance concept. It addresses SME managers and business support organisations, presenting a number of tools which can be useful for those launching new products or services in the bio-based economy, and beyond.

The tools can be applied by SME managers in North West Europe, but there are the property of their authors (see references).

Terminology

LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

The term “local stakeholders” in this guide is used to refer to any person in the local area who may be affected in some way by the launch of a new product or service, even if they are unaware of it.

PROJECT

“Project” is used in this context to describe the process of the launch of new products/services, a campaign to develop/boost and existing one.

Chapter 1. Reasons to involve stakeholders

1.1. Social acceptance – a growing subject

The importance of social acceptance

Social acceptance is a topic that is rapidly growing in importance, becoming a key subject for SME managers or “innovators” in the development of new products and services. As a consequence, it also becomes a new challenge for directors and leaders when launching these products on the market.

We live in an open, hyper-connected world, and therefore synergies happen naturally amongst businesses. Even a business operating on a local scale has links with other businesses elsewhere.

Currently consumer expectations are increasing. Consumers have access to a wide range of information, which is constantly providing them with more knowledge and this results in higher awareness. Consumers therefore require high quality products, which can respond to their specific and complex needs.

However, during the innovation process to meet these demands, new barriers appear. When consumers are unprepared for something new, innovation can bring about questions, doubts and fears. What really matters when developing a new product is the way in which it is perceived by others – you may see all the positive aspects, but not everyone will see them straight away.

The essential element in this context is to assure the legitimacy of the businesses ‘of the future’. In recent years, businesses have been increasingly viewed as a major cause of social, environmental, and economic problems (*Michael Porter, HBR, 2011*). Businesses are widely perceived to be making profit at the expense of the broader community. In fact, the legitimacy of businesses has fallen to a level which has not been seen in recent history.

The importance of stakeholders in social acceptance

Stakeholders in support of your product:

- Those who “sign up” are ‘partners’ of great strategic value
- You need develop the ability to detect support and make the most of it
- The product alone is no longer enough to make the difference
- Stakeholders in support are what actually makes innovation a reality in the end

Stakeholders are therefore a major strategic element and they need to be monitored. You need to specifically identify the context of your professional environment and the actors within this context. It is important to predict and understand the possible reactions of stakeholders when faced with your innovation. The first step is to identify which group of stakeholders would be in favour, and which group is prone to be against.

This must be included in a wider project risk management – consisting of “traditional risks” such as technical, financial... Apart from managing the technicality of product, you need to develop the ability to manage social and stakeholder risks. A step-by-step approach renders this process possible – a link to one stakeholder can facilitate the link to another.

Stakeholders are also strongly present in the *Corporate Social Responsibility* (CSR) approach; therefore, it is necessary to take this into consideration.

CSR: from legal compliance to commitment

- Concerning the market, the consumer ‘votes’ through his purchases for what he believes in
- Through CSR, purchasing products becomes a means for expressing one's ideal vision of society

The 21st century has shown that every company has an impact on its environment (economic, social, environmental)

There is therefore a need to have a clear view of stakeholders involved.

Shared values must be created. For decades, businesses have studied positioning and the best ways to design and implement activities. However, along the way, they have overlooked opportunities to meet fundamental societal needs and have misunderstood how societal issues affect value chains. It can be argued that companies have treated societal issues as marginal matters, and this has reduced their field of vision.

We think there is a growing interest for customers to understand the specific goals you are pursuing. More and more, consumers are interested in the reasons why you innovate. This is based on the observation that “people do not buy what you do, but why you do it.” With this statement, Simon Sinek shows how much more engaging it is to associate your stakeholders with your vision, with your personal, financial, or technical goals for success. Simon Sinek gives us a precious advice: instead of starting by talking about “what,” leaders should speak first and foremost about “why.”

“Why” by Simon Sinek

The recipe for success does not lie in your budget, nor in the intellectual quality of those around you, nor in a favourable market... it lies in your capacity to get your partners, your collaborators, your customers moving.

The ability to do this depends on the cause you defend, the beliefs you have and your vision. Your level of motivation will not be the same if you work simply for money or to participate to strive for a greater vision. Simon Sinek: “If you speak of what you believe in, those who believe the same will come to you.”

Decisions are above all emotional

Contrary to what is usually thought, decision-making, whether it is about embarking on an entrepreneurial adventure or buying a product, is rarely rational. Why buy a smartphone, when you only need it to make calls, for example? Simon Sinek explains that innovators and “early adopters” are better at making decisions that come from the heart. But deciding with one’s heart means deciding with one’s emotions, and deciding with one’s emotions means agreeing with the vision of the inventor, believing in something special and strong for the world around us.

What you do is simply proof of what you believe. What you do is the physical, concrete representation of what you want to bring to the world.

The notion of *membership* is at the heart of this topic because people act for what they believe in, regarding both how they spend their money and how they live their lives. Others, those who create the market, will then follow because a handful of people have already tried the service or product you offer and recommend it.

<https://startwithwhy.com/>

1.2. Understanding environment and stakeholders

Why target stakeholders?

Targeting and engaging stakeholders is of high importance while innovating, because the ideal vision of social acceptance is collective work. Social acceptance is the result of a process during which stakeholders and project developers work together to decide on a number of conditions which need to be fulfilled. The end objective of this is for a project to be integrated easily in its natural and human environment. Naturally, this does not prove true for all

stakeholders on all issues. The quality of your actions will depend on your ability to target stakeholders, to identify issues to be addressed together, and the way in which stakeholder engagement is implemented.

How to target stakeholders?

While innovating, it is essential to understand and anticipate the perceived disadvantages or benefits from stakeholders. Certain aspects that must be taken into consideration are:

- The level of knowledge, understanding of the technologies: awareness/culture (> information to anticipate fears) of external actors
- The perception of potential risks associated with the project can be: social, health-related, political, economic, but also technical
- The behaviour of the target audiences, the behaviour of the host territory
- An idea of possible alternatives to suggest (and assessment of their cost)

Stakeholder analysis

Stakeholder analysis is closely linked to change management, as well as to project management and risk management. Stakeholder analysis must be integrated in your business plan from the beginning and be introduced to the networking activities which you have already planned. Different individuals and organisations have varying motivations, expectations, and interests. Project management currently considers how a company can validate and run a project, but also, in a wider view, how the project will affect other people/the wider community. Shared values must be structured and communicated to stakeholders, and the cost/benefit ratio must be understood, because this is how the stakeholder considers the overall impact. Direct impact may be as follows: spoiling the landscape or job creation and indirect impact may be conflicts of use or devaluation of one production process for the benefit of another.

Project leader and stakeholders

Innovators need to be seen by stakeholders to be the legitimate actor to implement a given action, therefore your credibility must be widely recognised. Social acceptance refers to two essential parameters that are usually underestimated:

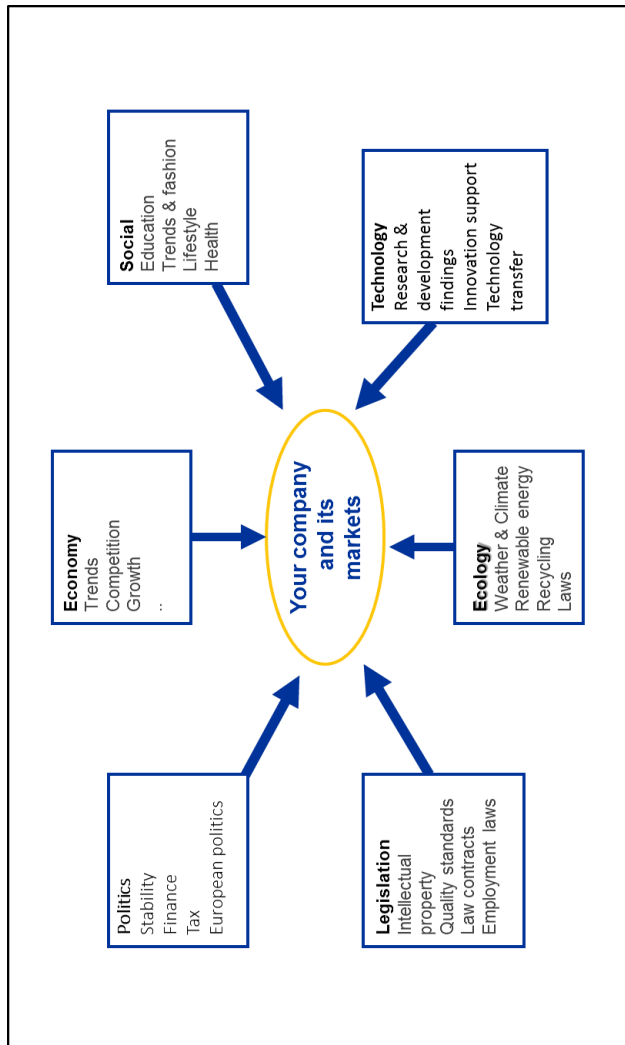
- The way the project is promoted in a technical, semantic, political, strategic, economic, social point of view
- The degree of confidence you show, especially through your mode of governance and ability to explain your strategy

It is therefore essential that the specific position of the project leader must be carefully prepared.

A good understanding of your environment

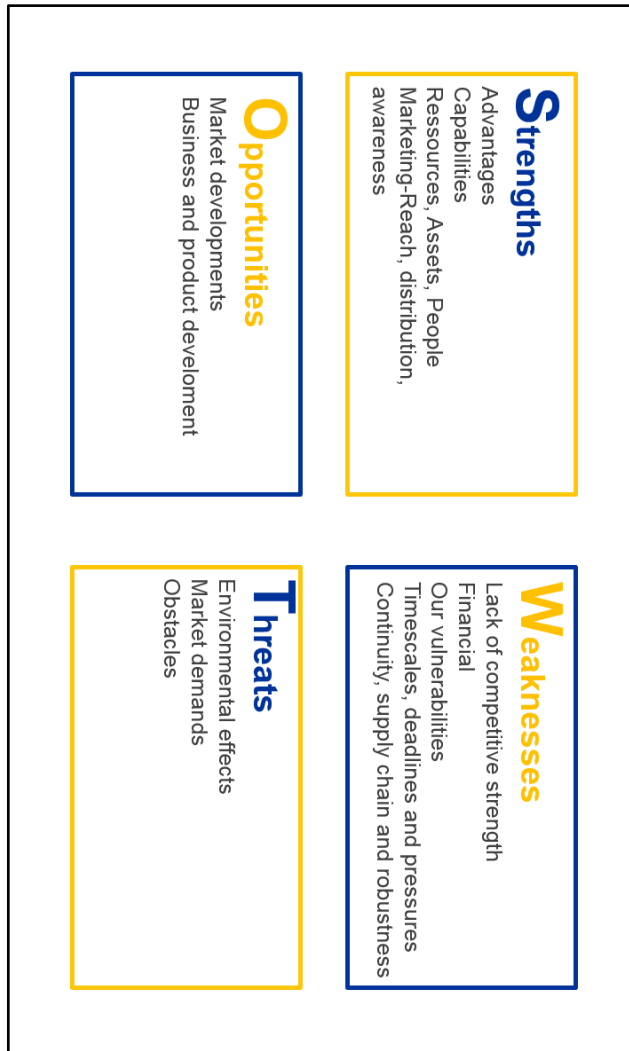
Identification of the most relevant stakeholders is a process which is best started by mapping and analysing stakeholders in order to understand your environment.

The *PESTEL* approach is one way to complete this phase:



PESTEL approach - Presentation Hoblik 5/01/2018

Another method is context analysis that helps understand the advantages and disadvantages of a project is the *SWOT analysis*. SWOT analysis takes into consideration aspects such as strengths and weaknesses, available opportunities, as well as possible threats to a project. The essential thing is to understand the factors that may compromise or contribute to the acceptance of a given project.



SWOT analysis- Presentation Hoblik 5/01/2018

SWOT Example of an Anaerobic Digester project in a rural area

Factors related to the context:

Threats

- No involvement from political authorities or authorities in the early stages
- Political rivalries (eg. opponents of mayors)
- Concern from local residents about the preservation of their quality of life
- Proximity of the anaerobic digester with local residents' homes/places of work
- Poor integration into the environment (environmental aspects, proximity to local residents, visual landscape, etc.)

Opportunities

- + Support from elected officials and political bodies
- + A local policy context which is favourable to renewable energies
- + Controlled and anticipated communication early on in the project
- + Facilitating access to information
- + Active involvement of the population in the consultation and decision-making processes

Factors related to the project:

Weaknesses

- Misunderstanding or doubts from the general public about the technology
- Unfulfilled commitments by the project leader on their control of technology during operation
- Recurring problems (eg. odours) on certain sites: this leads people to see the technology as a cause of an environmental issue
- Treatment of organic waste which has come from other places
- Lack of communication, late communication or defensive communication.
- Poorly targeted communication
- Use of language which is too technical for the general public

Strengths

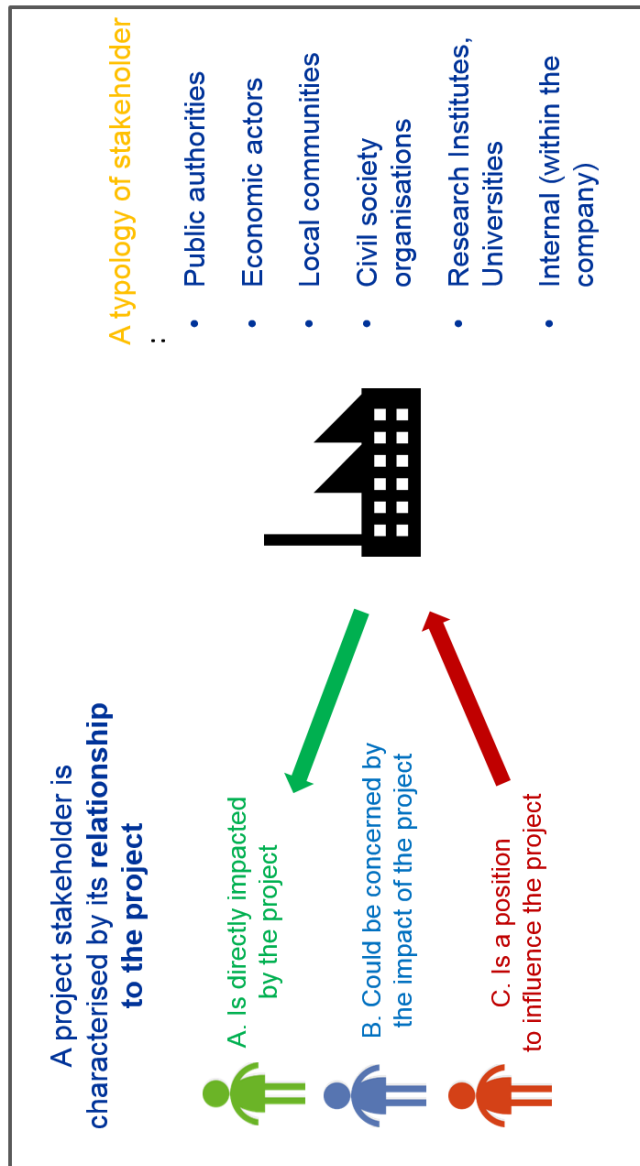
- + Environmental added value of the project: eg. the production of biomethane for transport vehicles
- + Local economic benefits: job creation, local taxes, renewable energy for heating
- + Other benefits: "industrial" tourism generated by the site, local assets

A potential diversity of links with stakeholders

Your relationships with stakeholders will be different with regard to the size of the stakeholder group, the nature of issues that you will be addressing, and the way you do it.

For example, working with employees, customers, suppliers, investors, or regulators within a traditional business interaction model will demand different techniques from working with broader groups such as local communities, families, civil society organisations, or supply chain workers. With them, you may be addressing legal and contractual issues, such as marketing, industrial relations, site selection, business planning, procurement, etc., while with others you will address emerging issues and new responsibilities, for example health risks, environmental impacts, social exclusion, or economic development, which consist of shared values. There are numerous ways to communicate with your stakeholders, such as one-way communication for market research, corporate communications, advertising, media publicity, or dialogue and partnership for implementing consultations, stakeholder advisory panels, online feedback, multi-stakeholder forum, or networks.

Stakeholder identification and mapping



Stakeholder identification and mapping - Presentation Hoblik 5/01/2018

How to characterise your stakeholders

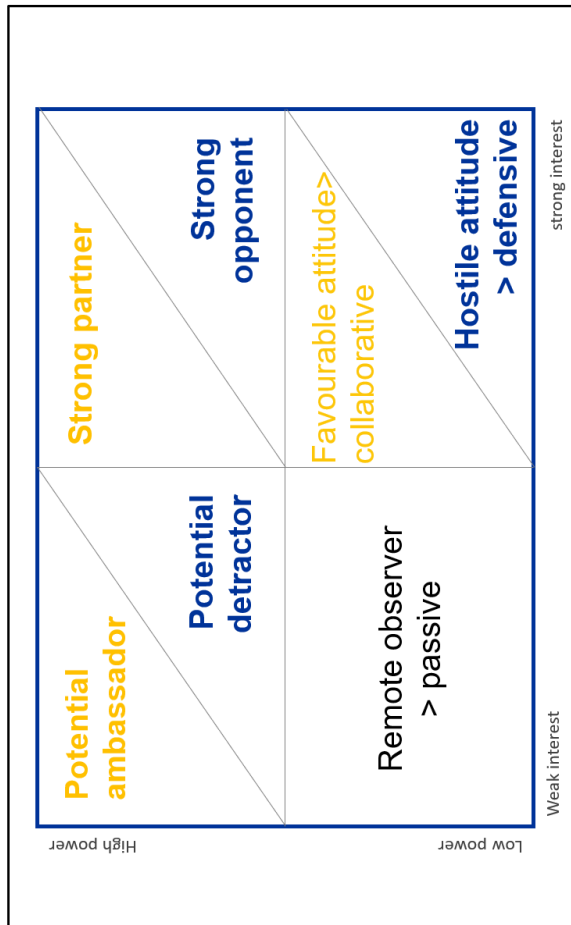
To analyse your stakeholders, you have to define the following:

- What is their level of knowledge? Do they know that your project exists? What is their level of (technical) understanding of your project?
- What is the scope of impact on stakeholder? What degree of impact does your project have on them (direct: customers, shareholders, employees, suppliers; indirect: neighbouring population, local community, NGOs, associations, etc.)?
- What is their level of power? Level of influence or mutual powers? What power can you have over them. What influence could the stakeholder have on the project?
- What is their level of interest? What do they think about your project? How much do they (or might they) support your project? What are the cultural compatibility or shared values (favourable or contradictory) regarding your project? How confident are they in your ability/credibility to carry out this project?

Stakeholder position

This will help you to define the position of your stakeholders.

For instance, the stakeholder showing strong interest, potential impact and power is a major stakeholder and must be managed specifically. The stakeholder that has strong interest plus strong impact, has a strong legitimacy.



Stakeholder position- Presentation Hoblik 5/01/2018

1.3. Long-term vision and strategic goals aligned to stakeholder communication to maximise engagement

Engagement and good communication

There is a growing need to communicate on your plan and strategy. Social acceptance was the central theme of the European Communication Summit in 2016 (<https://www.eacd-online.eu/insights/blog/european-communication-summit-2016-review>). The organisers conducted a consultation of 211 European communication professionals with the aim to give a better understanding of the evolving role of communicators in helping organisations to build trust with stakeholders and the wider society. However, before communicating, you need to have a clearly defined strategy.

How to create engagement

In order to create maximum commitment, you have to share your vision with others. There are a few tools favouring stakeholder engagement, such as:

- Understanding and sharing of issues that you want to tackle – stakeholders consider you relevant
- Understanding and sharing of the meaning of what you do – stakeholders consider that it makes sense and agree to follow you
- Understanding and measuring the value that you aim to deliver (targets) – stakeholders consider that you give an efficient response to their needs

As a consequence, your company gains the trust of stakeholders who believe in the success of the project and therefore the project leader.

Alignment with your strategy

To be most effective, stakeholder engagement must be aligned with your own business strategy. Setting strategic engagement objectives is a useful step towards developing a robust approach to stakeholder engagement. You need to question your political foundations and the consistency of your project with regard to these underlying principles. For this, you must have, for your business, a clear vision and readable associated strategies. In order to identify your political foundations, you must define what the political coherence of your project is, as well as how it fits into your underlying main principals – will it still be true in ten years? Another question that you need to answer is what the fundamental ideas of your main stakeholders are and whether you are in line with them.

Structuring your major foundations – Political Guidance Framework

To tackle this issue, a tool can be used: *Référentiel d'Orientation®*, or *Political Guidance Framework*, developed by Diagonart in 1998*. It helps to identify 4 types of key political elements: your missions and essential values, your major dynamics for development paths, the type of relationship you develop internally as well as externally, and finally, a few major objectives for the coming years:

* le Management Inventif, ED. Diagonart, juin 2006. Axelle LARROUMET, Joseph LUSTEAU



Source: *Référentiel d'Orientation®* - Diagonart Conseil

An example of Political Guidance Framework built through this method.
(Example of Mont Farm, UK), built through this method:

VALUES - MISSION	DEVELOPMENT PATHS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be and remain a FARMER ▪ Preserve the le FAMILY ASSETS (so that they can be passed on to a child) ▪ Preserve the PEACE AND PRIVATE LIFE OF THE FAMILY on this land which is also a living space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop PROFITABLE ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES to <u>maintain the agricultural part</u> ▪ Make the most of the knowledge M. B has in this field : ANIMAL FARMER ▪ Find solutions which require MINIMUM COMMERCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT
GOVERNANCE RULES	MAJOR OBJECTIVES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ REDUCE CHARGES and lose less money on the arable land ▪ MAINTAIN A FAMILY BUSINESS (quick decision-making and no staff charges) ▪ Maintain TRUSTING and FRIENDLY relationships with the different actors (suppliers, clients, partners...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ENSURE THE STABILITY of the farm (farm activities and others activities) together ▪ Increase PROFITS of the farm in order to reduce financial charges ▪ MODERNISE THE OLD CHICK BUILDINGS (after checking the profitability of the project)

Example of Mont Farm- Presentation Hoblik 5/01/2018

Structuring your strategic priorities – introducing client utility and shared value

Next, you need to work on positioning your business within various strategic activity domains. You will particularly focus on building a typology of needs that you want to address.

At the end, you want to answer the following question: which kind of value do I deliver to my ecosystem?

Example of Mont Farm:

Value	Highly technical way of farming	Provision of space and resources	Use and maintain the agricultural landscapes
	^	^	^
Clients	Poultry First Others?	Storage. Cars Others?	Contracting agri. services Local authority...
Needs	Quality, compliance with specifications (health measures, level of equipment, etc.)	Space Safety Proximity	Preserving the agricultural heritage of Mont Farm
Activities	Breeding chicks Renting out buildings and land		Cereal production Sheep farming

Example of Mont Farm- Presentation Hoblik 5/01/2018

Identifying common goals and shared values

Being in line with your stakeholders also means having common objectives, and cultural and shared values. Proper actions need to be implemented to increase synergies and find strategic areas of interest for you and your stakeholders. If a project leader is in contradiction with the stakeholders, a correct strategy must be implemented to manage existing opposition or potential disagreements and blocking points.

A three-step approach may be implemented to properly identify common goals and shared values with your stakeholders:

- Consider strategic business objectives – vision and underlying principles, strategic value, strategic stakes, main goals and priorities
- Facilitate discussion around these objectives and focus specifically on the implications this will have on your relationships with stakeholders
- Identify specific engagement objectives that link stakeholder engagement to your strategic business objectives

Strong arguments to promote your project

Introducing strong arguments helps construct your legitimacy as project leader and therefore helps gain the trust of stakeholders. Defining elements such as key issues, foundations, technical, financial, and human resources helps answer essential questions for the engagement of stakeholders.

Stakeholders as actors of change

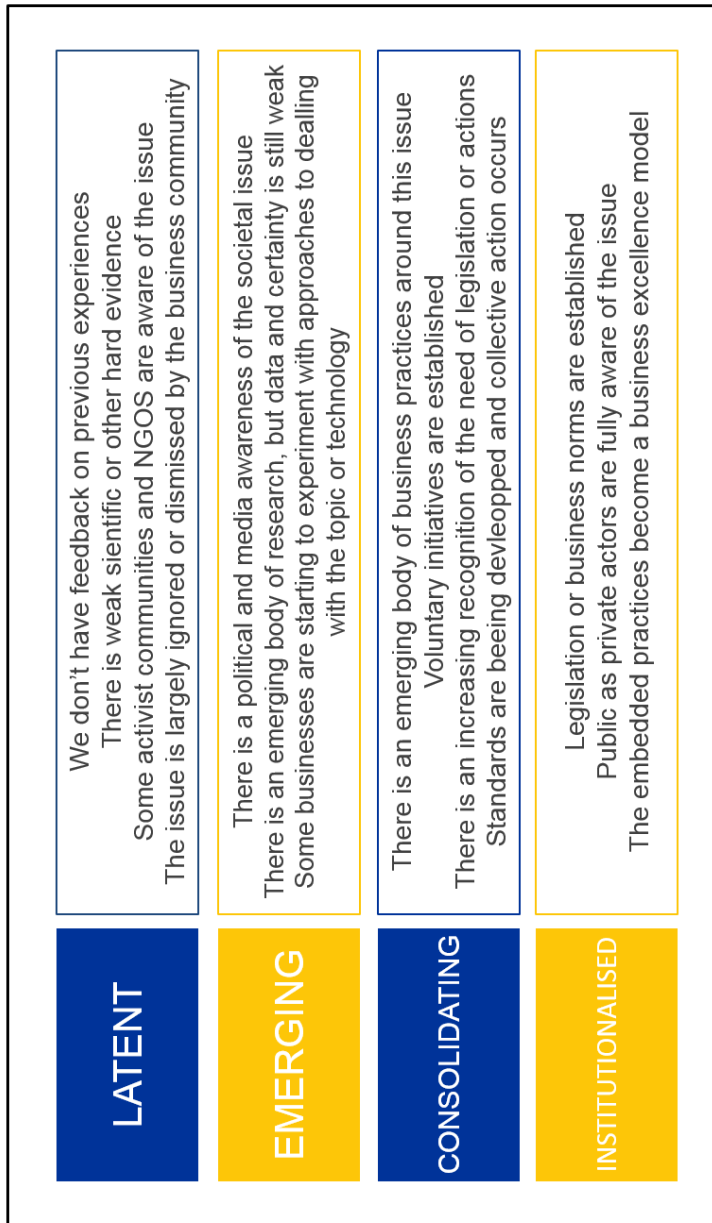
To make stakeholders believe that they can be the actors of change, you have to work on how to pitch your project to incite positive reactions (need to have a strong ambition and a clearly defined added-value). Faced with change and uncertainty, companies need to invest more energy in supporting stakeholders. As a consequence, each internal actor and external stakeholder potentially become powerful actors of change.

1.4. Engaging stakeholders

Designing the process to engage stakeholders

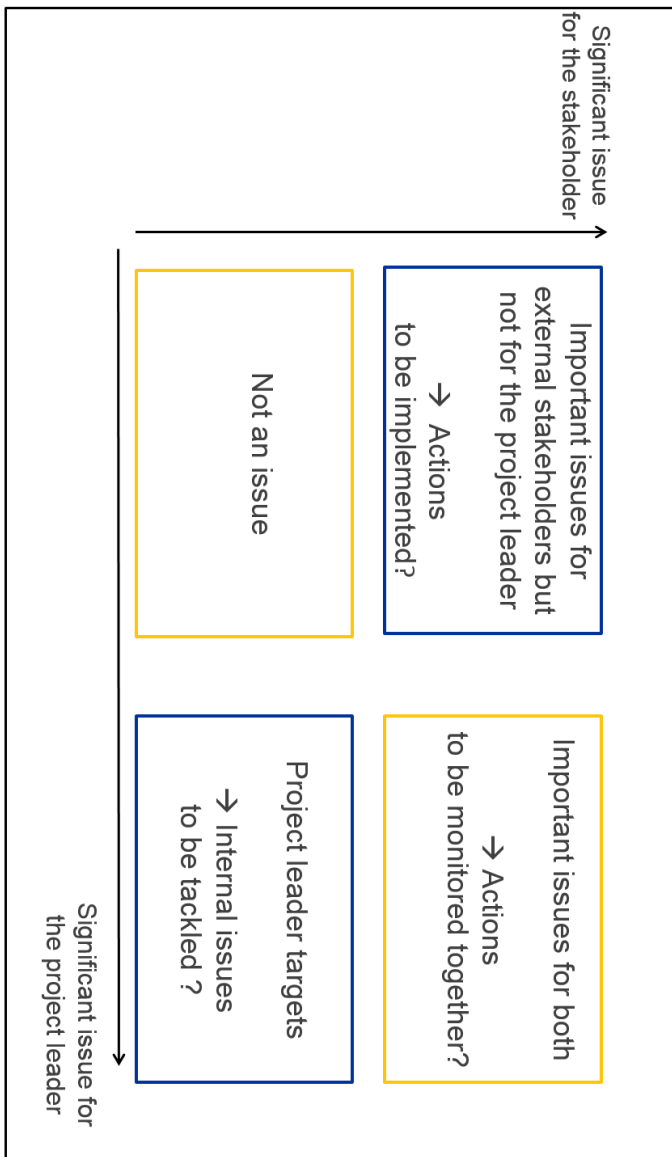
Prioritisation should be implemented according to the social maturity of issues. One useful way to understand the wide range of issues raised by the diversity of stakeholders is to consider the maturity of the issues. At each stage of maturity, there are different stakeholder expectations, external pressures, risks and opportunities, which you must understand in order to prioritise areas for engagement. This will then guide you in planning the actual engagement process.

Maturity of issues can be prioritised as in the example below:



Maturity of issues- Presentation Hoblik 5/01/2018

Evaluating the significance of issues for both stakeholders and the project leader is possible thanks to the following grid:



Evaluating the significance of issues- Presentation Hoblik 5/01/2018

Ranking stakeholders

Firstly, you need to target your major stakeholders. Identify the concerns of your stakeholders and the issues that may come about. Once you have a good understanding of the stakeholders involved, you can make some decisions, in particular how much effort to allocate to meeting their needs. Concentrate efforts on building a constructive dialogue with your major stakeholders. Choose a method of engagement which is adapted to your context. A participatory approach generally offers better results than a one-way approach, because it improves mutual trust and results in a better exchange of information. It is nevertheless more time consuming.

Prioritising influence-dependence

Another way to approach the question of strategic alignment is identifying those stakeholders that are likely to have the greatest impact on the achievement of your strategic objectives and those stakeholders who will be most positively or negatively impacted by your company's operations. This will enable you to prioritise your attention and action to ensure that you can achieve your strategic objectives, while respecting the rights of significantly impacted stakeholders.

Stakeholder interest – Power Matrix

A common way of approaching the issue of stakeholder management is to work on these two specific aspects:

- interest shown to the project
- ability to impact the project (power)

The *Power Matrix* tool aims to shed light on the interest of possible actors in the project, i.e. on the power or influence of an actor to make progress and achieve the expected results.

Power can result from the position, legitimacy or contacts and networking abilities of some actors. Interest may be based on the official mandate of an actor, but may also come from the hope of getting 'a piece of the pie' for their organisation or for personal benefit.

Project managers will have to bear in mind that power can also be used against your strategic intentions and that the real interests may be different from the officially declared interests.

High Interest/High Power: **potential partners** can be considered as “natural stakeholders”. They have interests and can influence the achievement of goals. You will try to build a strong partnership with them.

Low Interest/High Power: **ambassadors** also deserve attention, because of their power, they can behave destructively, for example when they are not informed and feel neglected.

Low Interest/Low Power: **spectators** may seem unimportant, but do not mistake yourself. They may be just cautious and have decided to wait and observe before showing more interest or using their influence. If you manage well, they could become supporters.

High Interest/Low Power: **supporters** are important despite their lack of power. We see that they are often the ones who bring skills and dynamism that makes cooperation work.

		STAKEHOLDER INFLUENCE ON ORGANISATION	
		Low	High
STAKEHOLDER DEPENDENCE ON ORGANISATION	high	Treat fairly Honor commitments to these stakeholders in line with company policy and strategic goals Endeavour to keep stakeholders satisfied insofar as balance of costs and benefits allow	Strategic threat or opportunity Real need to invest in engagement processes to understand concerns and develop solutions
	Low	Low priority Provide access to general channels of information Give some feedback when needed	Keep involved and informed But ensure balance between the concerns of high influence stakeholders and those people actually impacted by decisions

Power Matrix- Presentation Hoblik 5/01/2018

		STAKEHOLDER INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT	
		Low	High
STAKEHOLDER POWER OVER THE DECISION-MAKER	h i g h	Ambassadors > They must be kept satisfied Make a reasonable effort to inform and motivate them, so that they help during key moments of the project ...for example promoting your initiative in public, giving you access to their networks, providing you with support to find funding...	Potential partners > They must be managed closely Make maximum effort to engage them in your project, so they take on responsibilities, so that they are active in helping you achieve your goals.
	L o w	Spectators > No special action required but they must be kept under surveillance Make a minimal effort to inform them in order to gain some interest (so far low) and then gradually gain their support. They are potential supporters!	Supporters > They must be kept informed Make average efforts to inform and motivate them. They are excellent for passing on information. Give them tools to promote your project in their networks and ecosystems.

Power Matrix- Presentation Hoblik 5/01/2018

Identifying the most effective engagement methods - selecting the right combination of approaches to maximise engagement

There are a wide range of methods and tools available, each with advantages and limitations. Getting it right depends on selecting the right combination of approaches or techniques according to your particular situation, business, and stakeholders.

It will depend on a number of factors which have already been analysed: your strategic goals, the level of stakeholder engagement you aim, the maturity of the issue, your expectations regarding the outcomes of the engagement, available resources to achieve engagement, and the scope of change that you are seeking.

Building your stakeholder strategy – decide when and how

Once the respective needs identified, choose effective actions to succeed. You must be clear what you are aiming for. The most important aspects that you need to focus on are: information, consultation, and co-production.

Information concerns topics about which stakeholders should be informed, the best methods to inform them, and the frequency at which you inform them.

Consultation concerns the choice of topics, the best methods, when you should plan consultation, and when people need to be informed about consultation.

Co-production concerns that which needs to be co-produced within the target group, the chosen method to facilitate the process, the choice of invitees, and when you should organise such sessions.

Engagement methods

To decide how you are going to engage your stakeholder, you need to be clear about several points that will focus on assessing the most appropriate method.

Reaching strategic goals? Is the chosen method truly appropriate to:

- Establish with them the kind of **relationship** that we want?
- Generate the **short- / or long-term outputs** we need to reach our strategic objectives?
- Generate the qualitative or quantitative **information that the business needs for making decisions**?
- Do I have sufficient resources and time for applying this method / mix of methods?

Adapting to stakeholder profiles and needs? Is the chosen method truly appropriate to:

- To engage with this kind of stakeholder? Does it work with them?
 - > Do we currently have a relationship with these stakeholders that makes this approach applicable?
- Regarding to the stakeholders' mobility, availability. Is it suitable for their current location? to their schedule?
- Is it suitable for the number of people we need to deal with?
- Does it suit the stakeholders' current level of awareness and understanding?
- What practical issues need to be considered and addressed in order to make the engagement accessible/attractive to them?

Keeping the issue context in mind? Is the chosen method truly appropriate to:

- For the level of maturity of the issue?
- Regarding to the sensitiveness of the issue?
- Does it match with existing policy or legislative requirements that apply to the stakeholder group or issue?
- If the issue requires multi-stakeholder involvement, does this approach work for it?

According to the levels of engagement you are seeking, you will choose within a range of dedicated approaches.

1. No engagement required

No engagement. No communication. No relationship.

One task: identify and keep aware of stakeholder concern expressed through protests, letters, media, websites etc., or pressure on regulatory bodies and other advocacy efforts.

2. Monitor stakeholder's views

One-way communication: stakeholder to company. No relationship.

Engagement approaches: media and internet tracking; reports from other stakeholders, possibly via targeted interviews.

3. Inform or educate stakeholders

One-way communication: company to stakeholder, there is usually no invitation to reply. Possible medium-term relationship with stakeholders. *"We keep you informed"*

Engagement approaches: bulletins and letters; brochures, reports and websites; speeches, reference and public presentations; open houses and company tours; road shows and public displays; press releases, press conferences, media advertising, lobbying.

4. Consult stakeholder's view

When you need to gain information and feedback from stakeholders to inform decisions made internally. It is usually a limited two-way communication where company asks questions and the stakeholders answer. *"We will keep you informed, listen to your concerns, consider your insights, and provide feedback on our decision."*

Engagement approaches: surveys; focus groups; workplace assessments; one-to-one meetings; public meetings and workshops; standing stakeholder advisory forums; on-line feedback and discussion.

5. Involve and empower stakeholders

If you need to involve your stakeholders, work directly with them to ensure that their concerns are fully understood and considered in decision-making. It is usually a two-way or multi-way communication between company and stakeholders. Learning takes place on both sides. *“We will work with you to better understand your concerns and jointly develop alternative proposals. This work can influence the decision-making process. We will provide feedback about it.”*

Engagement approaches: multi-stakeholder forums; advisory panels; consensus-building processes; participatory decision-making processes.

6. Collaborate and empower stakeholders

If you need to develop mutually agreed solutions and joint plan of action, you will partner with or convene a network of stakeholders. You may also be willing to delegate decision-making on a particular issue to stakeholders.

It is then a two-way or multi-way communication between company(ies) and stakeholders. Learning, negotiation, and decision-making on both sides. At a high level, stakeholders may have role in governance, for decisions are delegated out to them.

“We require direct advice and participation from you in finding and implementing solution to shared challenges.” At a high level: *“we fully share the same strategic vision.”*

Engagement approaches: joint projects; voluntary two-party or multi-stakeholder initiatives; partnerships.

Integration of stakeholders into Governance Structure, as members, shareholders or on particular committees.

Content: social acceptance PowerPoint by Hoblik.

1.5. Facilitation and participatory approaches

A major challenge to face for the bioeconomy

The development of the bioeconomy is likely to strongly change certain activities, with new jobs and skills required, and to change territories as well as everyday life. Beyond economic and technical issues, the bioeconomy thus draws a change of society. The development of the bioeconomy is therefore a reflection that can be debated and appropriated by the whole of society.

Similarly, the reluctance - or rejection - expressed sometimes related to the bioeconomy (competition of land use between food and non-food production, modes of production, biotechnologies implemented in open or confined, use of living things, impacts on the neighbourhood, logging, etc.), are questions that are legitimate and that is important to collect and take into account.

This requires to light of the debates by different expertise, multi-disciplinary and multi-actors, pedagogy, consultation and transparency on the decision process.

Civil society organisations are becoming increasingly vocal and organised in pursuit of their advocacy goals. There is an elevating expectation from society in a wide range of areas relating to sustainable development; from environmental protection and human rights, to social welfare and corporate governance.

In this context, it is important to implement collective approaches for debate, which are compatible with the aspirations of citizens.

Using prospective tools

For this, you might have to use prospective tools and storylines in order to create a debate, anticipate potential blockages and by the end, allow develop complex solving problem through collective approaches

In the second chapter, guidelines for those willing to implement this type of tools are presented.

This methodology, by facilitating collective work, addresses the need to manage a broader partnership, engage civil society and overcome scepticism about innovation.

It refers to the *Prospective Préventive*® (Preventive Prospective), methodology developed by Diagonart and developed in Le Management Inventif, Ed. Diagonart, June 2006. Axelle LARROUMET, Joseph LUSTEAU.

Chapter 2. Strategy and prospective: workshops to implement tools to involve your targeted stakeholders

2.1. General principle and context

General principle

The objective of this chapter is to present a method for promoting group exchanges with your stakeholders.

The tools within this method have been developed for you to explain your project to a group and to organise mutual contributions from the group, resulting in the construction of a shared vision. The construction of your project is therefore a result of jointly elaborated elements thanks to a defined working method. If this is done in a strictly collective manner, working with the same group of people, the final result is personal, it belongs to those who participated in the dialogue.

The working method presented in this chapter is a “journey” in space and in time. It is also the possibility for you to explain why your project exists and its potential to grow through the contributions of the stakeholders.

The “space” will be marked out at the very beginning of the process by the participants and will remain the same throughout the entire process. The “time” will be variable between ‘now’ and ‘future’.

Stakeholder engagement process

The group exchanges which we are talking about here are meetings organised by you, SME managers. You are the facilitator of these meetings.

You build a list of local stakeholders – within the specific territory where your project is based.

You set the date for the first meeting, you book the meeting room, you create the programme and you invite the local stakeholders to attend.

You prepare in advance, ensuring that you know the tools well.

Your project - your public

You have to think about the fact that your project is unknown by many people. You cannot therefore see a large part of your stakeholder base. Many of these people are not your clients or your suppliers, they are 'neighbours' and so we tend to forget about them and think they are not interested by your project. Nonetheless, they must be considered when building your list of local stakeholders.



Diagram AC3A 2018

2.2. Dialogue rules and programme

Rules for the dialogue

As facilitator, you do not participate in the dialogue, but channel the discussions. The facilitator may intervene at any given moment and interrupt any person. The facilitator takes notes on everything that will have been said.

The group cannot question the tools and methods. The major themes presented to participants at the following session will originate from their exchanges in the previous session.

Within the group, the facilitator gives the right to speak to different participants. Any idea presented is acceptable and cannot be criticised. For the session to be constructive, any misplaced remarks, general formulations, and discriminatory intentions will be excluded from the exchange. The exchange is neither a discussion, nor a debate. Participants can express their ideas and their oppositions and move on to different ideas without transition. Nevertheless, they must remain related to the central theme. The group follows a plan and a strict agenda and the exchange may be brought to halt at any moment, according to the plan of the session.

As we are developing a collective construction of a shared vision, to reach this overall objective participants must be present at each session and for the whole of each session.

Programme for the dialogue

This programme's content is a result of a number of different training courses and collective works on facilitation. The SME manager, as a result of this work can review the programme in order to adjust the time.

An example programme is implemented according to the following agenda.

2.3. First session

Theme: What could the local bio-based sector look like in 2040?

Duration: Session lasts 2.5 hours

Aim: Projecting yourself for the future while taking into account current elements and context.

Phases of the session:

1. Explain the general framework of this collaborative process
2. Explain the objectives of the session, expected results
3. Building scenarios:
 - Starting point – which territory? Which actors? What activities? What joint image of 2018?
 - Problems observed today – a summary of major issues
 - The consequences for tomorrow
 - 3 or 4 possible future scenarios
 - Current trends which might influence the different future scenarios
 - What appears currently (emerging signals – see tools below)
4. Group decides on a date for the next session

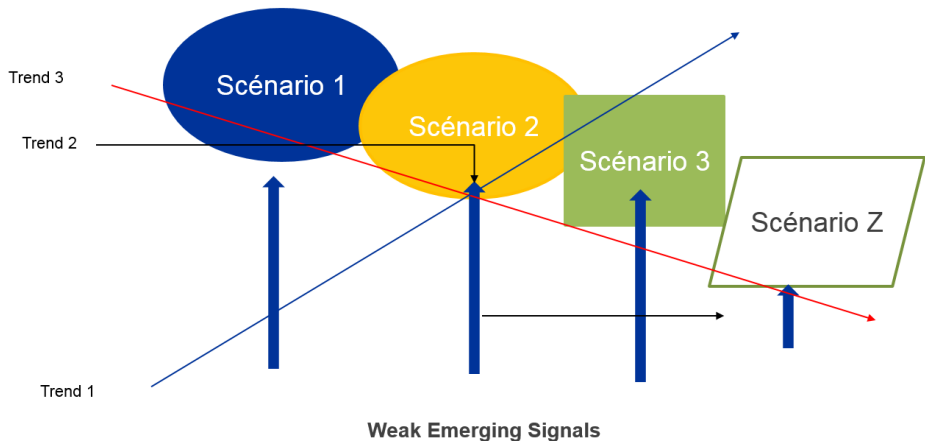
The result of this session is a number of “scenarios” including indicators for the present and the future. Trends presented by each participant are also included.

Tools used during the session

The group positions itself using the following table:

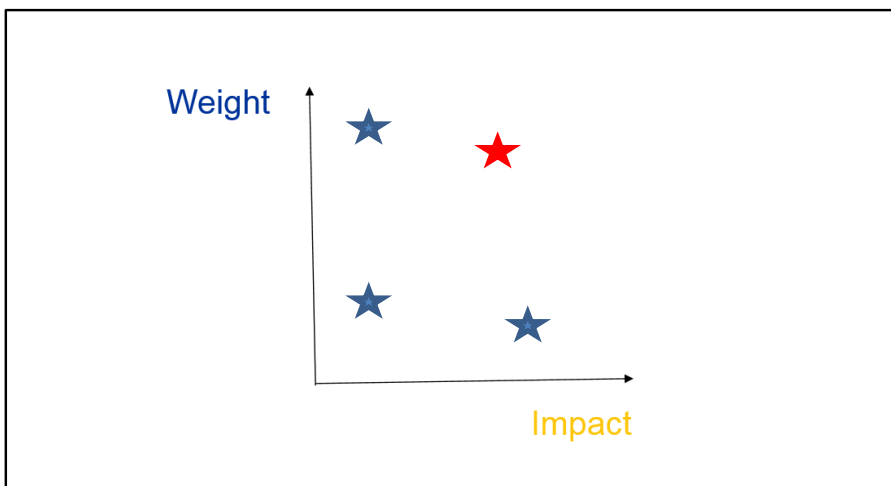
ACTORS		TERRITORY	
...		...	
...		...	
...		...	
...		...	
ACTIVITIES		REPRESENTATION	
...		...	
...		...	
...		...	
...		...	
...		...	

Each stakeholder will see signs that will decide how the future scenarios will pan out. These signs or “signals” can be of various types. It is important to monitor them, as they will shape your strategy and will allow you to adjust it and for the stakeholders to position themselves within the strategy. This tool is used:



Emerging signals – AC3A 2016

Prioritising the signals: the signals can be analysed in terms of impact using this tool:



2.4. Second session

Theme:	Defining the objectives of your project
Duration:	Session lasts 2 hours
Aim:	Define how you will continue to interact with your stakeholders – what will your future relationship be?

In a changing world, the unknown represents opportunities that need to be investigated. It is often the case that the client, user, or beneficiary is in a direct proximity.

The table to work with in this session is based on the means needed to respond to the future scenario identified in the previous session. The group of participants will be the sole author of the needs and target audiences. This will not, however, prevent further investigation with other groups or other beneficiaries, unknown during this session.

This session helps to clarify what the “frame of reference” for the project is to conduct activities responding to changing contexts and expectations of the public. The frame of reference or the business logic framework orientates the type of activities to implement and not to implement. This reference frame will help the manager to choose the emerging opportunities. After the first session the manager will see that they need to have tool to orient his/her enterprise. The frame of reference is to make objective choices. With these two sessions, the manager will easily make the first choices. Often, the project is in the draft stage at this point, but it has sufficiently strong and objectified roots allowing to present the project, share it, and to make it an individual or collective project.

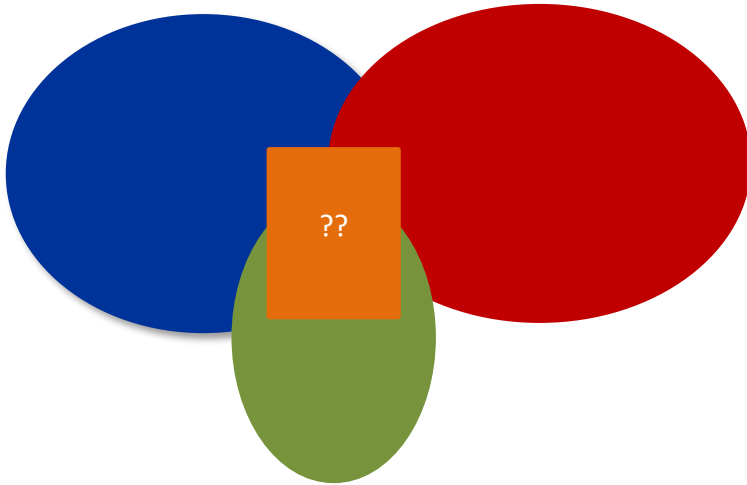
Phases of the session:

1. Reminder of the general framework, feedback on what happened in the previous session and possible realignment (however, the recorded texts remain unchanged)
2. Objectives of the session, expected results
3. Arbitration tools: facing unexpected, disturbing, or complicated situations, (Weight/impact template could be used).
4. Reconstructing new ways of thinking
5. Group decides on a date for the next session

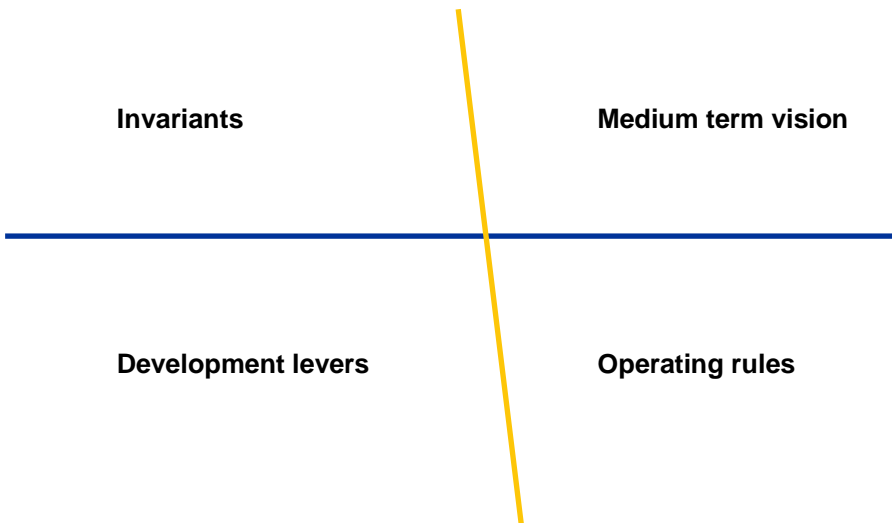
The result of this session is the connection between possible future (session 1) with the manager’s frame of reference.

Tools used during the session

Networks and geographical framework – why and when of people networks, map of influence areas:



Frame of reference:



Arbitration:

- Factors applicable in the frame of reference base on history,
- A hierarchy discussed with close stakeholders; use key phases leading to caesuras.
- Connection between manager's frame of reference and possible future
- Impact of emerging signs of evolution for the enterprise; Major arbitrations: how were they implemented in the management

2.5. Third session

Theme: How is the activity which we will develop useful – “utility” of the activities and analysis of what is missing on the territory

Duration: Session lasts 2 hours

Aim: Identifying the means needed to respond to the future scenario identified in the previous session

As a result, you will be forced to forget what you know how to do already and to think about what is not currently done or not well enough.

You know your capacity but you do not know the needs of your stakeholder or they are not well identified.

Phases of the session:

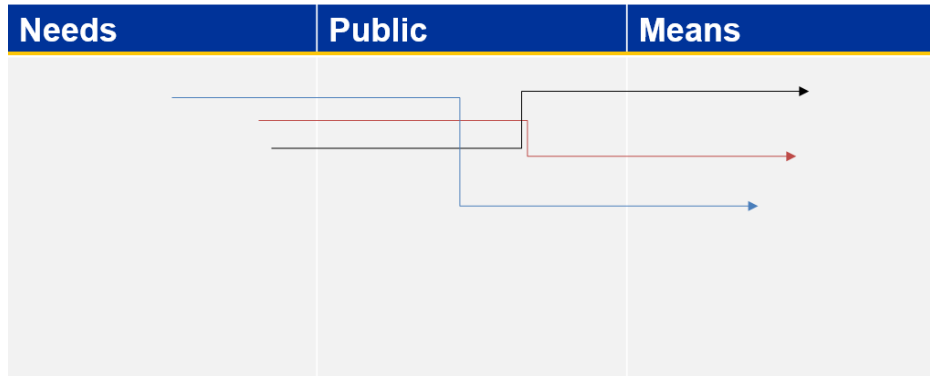
1. Reminder of the general framework, feedback on what happened in the previous session and possible realignment (however, the recorded texts remain unchanged) ,
2. Objectives of the session, expected results
3. Classical reasoning – I know how to do something, so I do it
4. Analytical reasoning – what do the actors of the territory need me to do?

The result of this session is to define the public needs and the possibility to propose solutions/products/services/support/...

The connection with manager's frame of reference and possible scenarios for the future.

Tools used during the session

Identification of the needs, publics, and means:



Attribution of needs to publics and means identified:

Needs	Publics	Number of potential beneficiaries	Known means	Means to be found
			Where and Who	What and how (training, workshops...)

References

Axelle Larroumet© - Méthodologie "Acceptation Sociale d'un Projet Innovant"



Hoblik www.hoblik.fr/

Prospective Préventive® (Preventive Prospective), Methodology Developed by Diagonart and Developed in *Le Management Inventif*, Ed. Diagonart, June 2006. Axelle Larroumet, Joseph Lusteau.

AVEC® Chambres d'Agriculture de l'Arc Atlantique





Interreg 
North-West Europe
BioBase4SME
European Regional Development Fund

www.nweurope.eu/BioBase4SME


**AGRICULTURES
& TERRITOIRES**
CHAMBRES D'AGRICULTURE
ARC ATLANTIQUE

www.ac3a.fr