



## Exploring

*As of 10.2010 (edit 29.8.2011, Florian Stellmacher; translation: 11.2016, Lars Kaiser)*

## Term

In spatial planning, exploring is an important activity to comprehend and recognise relevant developments, conflicts, perspectives and opportunities. Exploring is the basis for gaining overviews and creating situation assessments.

## General access of explorations

Exploring is the empirical examination of a territory on defined (geoscientific) characteristics (such as type of terrain, tectonics or climate) and thereby creating and presenting relevant data.

Exploring is a kind of small-scale discovery because it processes present facts as information (...).

Historically the term comes from military reconnaissance (...).

In a more general sense, exploring is used scientifically or for gathering and processing data and knowledge:

In politics and science exploring is used as a term for probing chances of successful activities or projects (...).

*(according to: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erkundung>, Access September 2010, translated)*

## Exploring in spatial planning

In spatial planning exploring, like in the military sense, is an important activity to comprehend and recognise the *relevant*

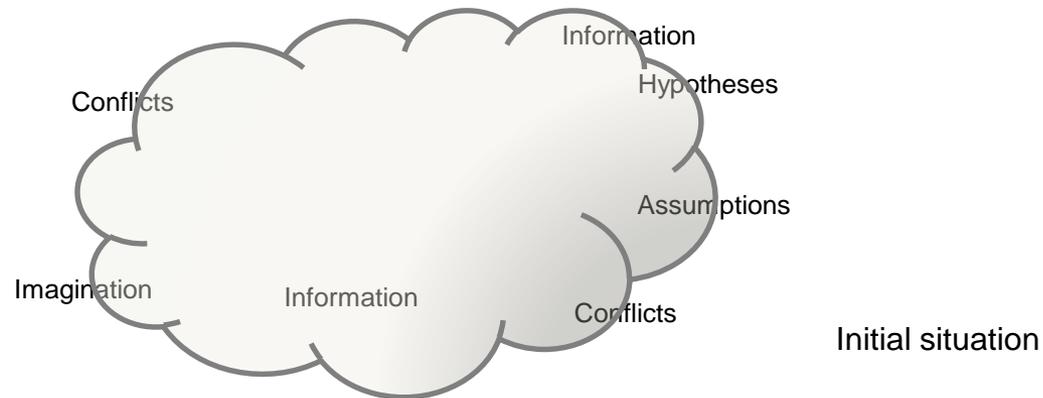
- developments,
- conflicts,
- perspectives and
- opportunities.

For simplification, all these aspects of spatial development are summarised as conflicts.

Exploring is the basis for gaining **overviews** and creating **situation assessments**.

## Initial situation

Often conflicts of spatial relevance are very vague in the beginning – comparable to a cloud consisting of different information, hypotheses and imaginations. This is the initial situation for many undertakings in spatial planning.



Source R. Signer

## Exploring conflicts of spatial relevance I

Each spatial situation has its peculiarities and thereby its own special conflicts.

In order to recognise relationships between two conflicts, a thorough exploration of the vicinities of known and/or supposed conflicts (hypotheses) has to be conducted.

Relevant spatial conflicts have to be explored as soon as possible:

- Exploring means asking;
- Exploring means diving into foreign areas of expertise;
- Exploring means creating overviews of conflicts.

## Exploring conflicts of spatial relevance II

In order to gain clarity on known (and unknown) conflicts it is required to further gather and describe them.

The following checklist is helpful

- Relevant actors for the conflict,
- spatial focus of the conflict,
- Countable, measurable or observable circumstances of the conflict as well as
- Evaluation of indicators that may help assessing a conflict.



ARL Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung (Hrsg.) (2011): Grundriss der Raumordnung und Raumentwicklung. Kapitel 4. Methoden der Raumplanung. Hannover

Scholl, B. (1995): Aktionsplanung. Zürich