***Trans-SEC*** *-* ***Conflict Prevention and Moderation System (CPM System)***

Trans-SEC is a living system, an organization. From this organizational perspective, Trans-SEC is a temporary and donor-funded organization. Furthermore, it is an intercultural, interdisciplinary and mostly virtual or distance network organization. And it is a large organization with more than 100 individuals from more than 15 institutes and universities participating in this research association. All these characteristics make Trans-SEC a complex organization or complex living system.

In complex living systems disputes or conflicts are most likely to occur. Conflicts are phenomena inherent in the very nature of these systems. Therefore it would be negligent not to pay attention to the characteristics of Trans-SEC and therefore to set up proper structures and procedures how to deal with challenging situations.

So far CPMs have successfully been implemented in the “business arena”, but they are new in research associations.

CPM is based on the assumption that conflict management is more successful and reliable if adequate structures and procedures have been established in advance. If everybody has agreed to these ex ante, the meta-conflict on how to handle an existing conflict is avoided.

Furthermore CPM considers that issues or disputes should be resolved timely and at the place where they occur in the system. Therefore, and because of Trans-SEC’s distance character, CPM has a decentralized structure with a Tanzanian entity, a German entity and the umbrella structure called “North-South-Group”.

* The field of dispute resolution or conflict transformation has advanced substantially during the last two decades. Most managers or leaders are not yet trained in the newest approaches and methods. Therefore external professional support bridges this capacity lack in organizations.
* Conflicts often escalate because individuals are not aware of or do not have the skills how to work with difficult situations appropriately. Even well intended actions can cause negative effects on the other side. Therefore CPM sensitizes for all these phenomena and promotes prevention so that situations do not escalate.
* Trans-SEC is an organization based on cooperation. It does not have a traditional top-down structure. Managers cannot always impose what has to be done. Then some institutes would leave the association. What’s more research needs debates and not orders. But constructive and fruitful debates. Therefore facilitation and mediation skills are of help to come up with the best decisions possible for the research association (win-win solutions).
* Trans-SEC is an intercultural organization. Relationships and human’s cooperation is based on different “mind sets” in Germany and Tanzania. This can easily cause misunderstandings or break downs. CPM raises awareness and empathy for these differences.