A strategy of innovative approaches and recommendations to support human life in the next decade

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A promising future

Protected areas are a key tool for sustainable development, through their role in sustaining ecosystem services - conservation of genetic resources; sustainable production of food and materials; reliable supply of pure water; and disaster risk reduction. They should be routinely integrated into both land, sea and water use plans and national development plans. We must utilize more inclusive approaches to protected area planning, establishment, management and governance, while recognising their primary nature conservation role, to ensure effective delivery of ecosystem products and services from protected areas through an equitable approach. It is necessary that protected areas are established and governed by policies and rules that lead to equitable and secure access to natural resources. A priority will be to incorporate socio-economic costs and benefits of protected areas into the planning and management to gain support for their establishment and management, from all stakeholders.

The current situation

Well-managed protected areas sustain water supplies, livelihoods, secure sources of food and other natural products, and can save lives through reducing risk from disasters. The Durban World Parks Congress recognized the need for a new approach towards protected areas that strengthen synergies between conservation and the maintenance of life support systems toward the aim of sustainable development. It also emphasized that effective participation in the planning, management and governance of protected areas by local and indigenous communities should be enhanced. Management of protected areas needs to include agriculture, forestry, fisheries, hunting, poverty reduction and water management alongside its more traditional conservation concerns. Since Durban, more attention has been centered on these issues, and some experience gained and lessons learned on how protected areas can and are serving as an accessible and affordable means of food security and subsistence, fresh water provision, and disaster risk reduction. Although these benefits are increasingly recognised, the protected areas community has failed to build strong links with institutions, government departments and corporations outside the protected area field that essential to effective management and are or could be using these ecosystem services. Nor are most governments persuaded of the value of these ecosystem services in the context of maintaining support for protected areas. We must build on experiences and lessons learned to ensure protected areas effectively contribute to food security, water and disaster risk reduction. Additional efforts are needed for strengthening capacity for planning and management of protected areas through stakeholder partnerships and multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approaches.

Recommendations for change

General recommendations

- Ensure that costs and benefits from aquatic and terrestrial Pas are distributed fairly, in the short and long-term with a full understanding of the balance of power among stakeholders
- Develop the necessary body of evidence to powerfully demonstrate the value and contributions of protected area ecosystem services to all audiences
- Strengthen technical expertise and capacity building – best practice guidelines, website, valuation, legal basis.
- Recognise the power of valuation systems to drive positive change in management and reach out to different industrial and development sectors.
- Gender needs to be mainstreamed in PA planning and management as men and women may play different but complementary roles in food security and in protected areas. Communities consist of a range of different stakeholders and local participation and engagement in PAs should include specific inclusion of groups such as men, women and youth as well as marginalized groups.
- Governments at all levels should develop cross-sectoral policies and mechanisms for integrating fisheries, forestry, agriculture, livestock and bush meat into water management policy and water resource development plans
- Resource management also needs to consider and address what happens outside the PA as the protected area may displace [fishing] [food production] efforts having an effect on food security and livelihoods.
- Create strategic messaging for upcoming international processes such as Sustainable Development Goals, Sendai Conference on Disaster Risk, World Forestry Congress and UNFCCC, recognising when and how protected areas can be a positive contribution to supporting human life**.**
- Nurture a new, multidisciplinary generation of "ecosystem service" leaders within the protected areas community to foster multi-disciplinary and non-sectoral discussions, build widespread understanding for protected area services.
- Protected areas community establishes better dialogue with humanitarian aid, civil protection, indigenous and local communities and other actors, forming a coalition to jointly resource and implement protected areas management for ecosystem services.
- Develop a group associated with WCPA that is open to companies working in or close to, drawing benefits from or actively supporting protected areas, to provide a forum and "supporters club" for protected areas in the wider business community.
- IUCN develop robust criteria or metrics to measure the success or failure of landscape approaches for reconciling competing land uses and achieving both conservation and production outcomes.
- Ensure that a summary of the main messages from Stream 4 is accepted by key institutions that can themselves benefit from ecosystem services in protected areas

Food security recommendations

- Strengthen land and water use planning through studies on the role and impact of protected areas in national food security and local livelihoods, including the quantity and quality of food obtained from

protected areas, their role in the "in situ" conservation of genetic resources and in the provision of ecosystem services to support sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries

- Prioritize areas that are particularly suitable for the in situ conservation of genetic resources for agriculture, forestry and fisheries when identifying and establishing terrestrial and aquatic PAs

- Sustainable hunting and fishing should be supported as a viable aspect of protected area planning and management to support livelihoods and cultures, increase food security, generate income, maintain populations within the ecological and societal carrying capacity of the environment, and build crucial support for the conservation of biological diversity and habitats.

- Governments, NGOs and other actors should focus on local solutions that can accommodate different governance mechanisms, including community-owned, community-managed and co-managed areas and systematically put people in the centre when planning and managing aquatic and terrestrial protected areas.

- Governments should apply a human rights based approach to conservation and natural resource management in protected area systems in line with international laws and guidelines that lead to equitable and secure access to natural resources and formal recognition of legitimate tenure rights. This is particular important for small-scale fishers, hunters and farmers in developing countries where food security and sustainable livelihoods tend to be critical concerns.

- Governments, NGOs and other actors should design spatial management measures in accordance with the desired outcomes. Protected areas may or may not be the right measure to address a specific objective.

- Ensure that Ramsar's new strategic programme includes the sustainable use of biodiversity for agriculture, fisheries and forestry as key elements in identifying, developing and managing wetlands of international importance.

- The full range of contributions aquatic and terrestrial PA make to food security – including generation of income and livelihoods should be recognized and more effectively incorporated into aquatic and terrestrial PA policy making and management.

- Support for aquatic and terrestrial PAs should be enhanced through efforts to increase incomes and livelihood opportunities for local people by improving access to markets, value-added processing, certification (including of organics and regional identification labelling), and by better organizing and capacitating local collectors, fishers, farmers and small PA-dependent businesses.

Water security recommendations

- Identify legal, institutional and social factors that produce a good synergy between protected area management and water security management. Choose examples of positive projects across organisations, document these, analyse and communicate lessons–the WCPA freshwater task force will monitor and actively support progress on these sites over the next decade. Link this to risk-management and business cases for investing in natural water infrastructure, and restoration initiatives.

- Reflect in the water price the benefits from protected areas for water supply, regulation and quality.

- Consider natural water infrastructure as a key investment in addressing water risk and a legitimate component in water security strategies.

- Strengthen partnerships with a wider group of stakeholders to promote the conservation and management of freshwater ecosystems. Enable civil society to engage effectively in water governance.

Disaster risk reduction recommendations

Building strong scientific evidence

- Need to go beyond currently anecdotal evidence and "case studies"
- Quantitative analyses on risk reduction benefits of ecosystems and their cost-effectiveness compared to other DRR options
- Spatial analyses of potential of DRR benefits of ecosystem conservation in areas of high vulnerability

Managing to deliver DRR benefits

- Change in design and management of PAs to effectively deliver dual objectives of conservation and DRR
- Integration of socio-economic aspects and community involvement in design of management measures
- Developing guidance and building capacity of PA managers on DRR

Communicating differently to others

- Reach out to and work together with core DRR constituencies (Risk managers, Engineers, Insurance)
- Develop a different vocabulary that speaks to core DRR actors (EbA, Eco-DRR only makes sense to conservationists)
- Communicate honestly about best management action needed to provide DRR benefits (not all PAs have DRR benefits, beyond PA-ecosystem management)

International networking for DRR

- Form an international network of eco-DRR including governments, NGOs and experts

Key partnerships needed

Effective and active WCPA specialist groups
A group of supportive companies
WCPA and CEM, FAO (as well as the other Rome-based agencies WFP, IFAD, other agencies in the food security space)
Biodiversity International
Relevant community-based and civil society organizations
Humanitarian aid and health organisations
CBD
Collaborative Partnership on Wildlife
Academic Institutions involved with conservation of genetic resources
Indigenous and community groups
Private sector businesses concerned with food
Ramsar
UNISDR
World Health Organisation
Alliance for Water Stewardship
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNFCCC
UNCCD
IPCC
Sustainable development goals
World Bank
UNDP
IPBES

Public and private protected area agencies and international, national and local organizations