

Going Global: IUCN's Global Program on Protected Areas

Nikita (Nik) Lopoukhine, Chair, IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, c/o Parcs Canada, 7th Floor, 25 Eddy Street, Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0M5, Canada; nik.lopoukhine@pc.gc.ca

Trevor Sandwith, Director Global Program on Protected Areas, IUCN, Rue Mauverney 28, Gland, CH1196, Switzerland; trevor.sandwith@iucn.org

Nigel Dudley, Vice Chair, Capacity Development, IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, Equilibrium Research, 47 The Quays, Cumberland Road, Spike Island, Bristol, BS1 6UQ, United Kingdom; nigel@equilibriumresearch.com

Sue Stolton, Partner, Equilibrium Research, 47 The Quays, Cumberland Road, Spike Island, Bristol, BS1 6UQ, United Kingdom; sue@equilibriumresearch.com

Ernesto Enkerlin-Hoeflich, Deputy Chair, IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, Tecnológico de Monterrey, Ave. Eugenio Garza Sada 2501, Sur Monterrey N.L. 64849, Mexico; enkerlin@gmail.com

TREVOR SANDWITH PRESENTED AN OVERVIEW OF THE IUCN GLOBAL PROGRAM ON PROTECTED Areas, illustrating IUCN's global role as a convenor and influencer of global biodiversity policy and practice. IUCN, established in 1947, consists of a triple helix of a globally distributed secretariat, Commissions and Member organizations, epitomized in the composition of this panel. Members of IUCN include national governments as well as non-governmental organizations, making it a unique structure, with non-voting observer status and the right to speak at the United Nations General Assembly.

The year 2010 can be regarded as a pivotal year for biodiversity policy. The Global Biodiversity Outlook 3 painted a grim picture of ongoing global loss of biodiversity, against which backdrop the significant achievements of national governments and other conservation agencies in establishing protected area systems stands in bold contrast. Protected area systems around the world have grown in representivity and cover, although much remains to be done, particularly in the marine realm. In the intervening landscape and seascape, biodiversity continues to be threatened, by increasing pervasive threats, such as climate change and alien invasive species, that magnify the already serious impacts of habitat destruction and overuse.

Despite the apparent difficulties of achieving global consensus on a post 2012 climate regime and of ensuring that the mutuality of biodiversity and climate is taken into account in multilateral policy, 2010 saw some distinct progress. The tenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention

Citation: Weber, Samantha, ed. 2012. *Rethinking Protected Areas in a Changing World: Proceedings of the 2011 George Wright Society Biennial Conference on Parks, Protected Areas, and Cultural Sites*. Hancock, Michigan: The George Wright Society.
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on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted a new strategic plan for biodiversity 2011-2020 that includes 20 important targets, including making linkages between biodiversity, ecosystem services and climate change. In the negotiations on climate change policy, there was the recognition that ecosystem-based approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation were an essential part of the solution.

Against this background, an IUCN-commissioned Strategic Review of the IUCN Program on Protected Areas was concluded in 2010, making far-reaching recommendations for the revised objectives and functions of a new Global Program on Protected Areas (GPAP). These included the reinstatement of the position of a Director and the strengthening of the GPAP through prioritized budget support. It also sought a renewed relationship with the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and the World Protected Areas Leadership Forum.

Among other imperatives described in the recommendations, the GPAP's renewed focus should include the following:

- Coordinate the activities involving protected areas across IUCN's global thematic and regional programs, leading to funding and implementation of joint initiatives and projects.
- Lead to increased support and synergy with the IUCN WCPA and the World Protected Areas Leadership Forum.
- Support the strengthened implementation of the CBD's Program of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA) through a strategic relationship with the CBD Secretariat and partner organizations.
- Integrate scientific discipline into the development of enhanced knowledge and institutional capacity to effectively manage systems of protected areas in all biomes.
- Mainstream protected areas into processes that maintain the integrity of ecosystems in the face of global challenges such as climate change and that underpin sustainable development.
- Advocate and communicate the essential role of protected areas through an enhanced communication program and through a strategic program for influencing global and national policy.
- Lead to a visible impact at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2012 and the sixth IUCN World Parks Congress in 2014.

The following are the currently identified priorities:

1. Enhance the capacity to *effectively manage* protected areas.
2. Mainstream protected areas as *natural solutions* to climate change.
3. Foster *equitable governance* of protected area systems.
4. Make the case for *sustainable financing* of protected area systems.
5. *Communicate and advocate* the value of protected area systems.

Highlighted activities

Protected areas are established to achieve the "long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values". This requires the measurement of these outcomes, and the development of the means to achieve these outcomes. The CBD Strategic Plan sets a framework for national governments to set and achieve national targets, and IUCN and IUCN WCPA are requested to provide technical support, including the application of management effectiveness assessments and the development of guidance across a broad range of activities in support of these goals. The Strategic Review of the GPAP emphasizes the need for enhanced scientific underpinning of management effectiveness and for developing appropriate capacity development

at national levels. Contemporary approaches to capacity development stress the importance of institutional and individual competence as outcomes of learning situated in practice. In addition, IUCN as a founder and promoter of a large component of this body of protected area policy must monitor and learn from the implementation of policy in practice and advocate enhancements at all levels. IUCN and WCPA have a rich heritage of involvement in guiding and enhancing best practices for the establishment and management of protected area systems, and many of IUCN's member organisations are the national parks and protected area management agencies of the world, including some of the largest and smallest agencies. The ability to develop and share lessons across these agencies is one of the key added values of the Union, epitomised in many ways by the decadal World Parks Congress, where peer to peer leadership across the globe is prominent, and independent of the limitations of political or multilateral processes.

Based on the conviction that resilient natural ecosystems are indispensable for sequestering and storing organic carbon for mitigation, and for maintaining the ecosystem services that are essential for societal adaptation to climate change, the conservation community has adopted wide ranging decisions in both the CBD and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations that recognize and employ ecosystem-based approaches. This has been the policy position of IUCN's thematic program on climate change that advocates nature-based solutions.

The existing, and increasingly important role of protected area systems in contributing to the cost-effective conservation of intact, connected, and therefore resilient ecosystems, has been supported by scientific and socio-economic analysis, including the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and the recently released The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) report. It has resonated with the parties to the CBD which has included direct references to ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation in the targets and goals of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020, in the PoWPA, and in many associated programs of work (Inland Waters, Forests, Agriculture, Marine and Coastal).

It has also been recognised in the deliberations of the UNFCCC negotiations on long-term Cooperative Action for mitigation and for adaptation, where there has been agreement on the causal link between ecosystem resilience and societal resilience to climate change, and the need to develop ecosystem-based approaches.

Opportunities for responding to these developments include the following:

- Developing guidance on how to address the impact of climate change on protected area systems and their objectives, at the site and system level
- Promoting the contribution of protected areas within ecosystem-based approaches to climate change mitigation at national and sub-national levels, including the co-benefits for biodiversity of REDD+ schemes, and carbon storage in biomes other than forests
- Promoting the contribution of protected areas within ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation at national and sub-national levels, including for maintenance of water and food security, disaster risk reduction, human health and alternative livelihoods
- Ensuring the participation of communities of all types, including indigenous peoples, local communities, the private sector and co-management structures, in the management and governance of protected area systems across the landscape and seascape
- Reducing the impact of climate change response measures on protected areas and the ecosystems they protect
- Promoting the use of protected areas in ecosystem-based approaches to address effects on biodiversity-based livelihoods
- Accessing funding for maintaining protected areas in the face of climate change and for both mitigation and adaptation purposes

Sue Stolton and *Nigel Dudley* outlined the way in which the IUCN WCPA was responding to this opportunity. In terms of social and governance issues (element 2 of the PoWPA), the IUCN WCPA is moving forward through these efforts:

- Working with experts to develop a methodology and best practices on social assessment of protected areas
- Interacting with key stakeholder on the relationship with Sacred Natural Sites and protected area commitments
- Producing guidelines on application of protected area categories in: Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas; and private sector reserves

Understanding the values, costs and benefits of protected areas is becoming an increasingly important focus for all those working in protected area. The IUCN WCPA is planning to contribute to the understanding of these issues in this way:

- Providing guidance on identifying and managing protected area networks to provide the widest range of possible benefits without compromising biodiversity conservation
- Identifying cross-sectoral partnerships to work on protected area and ecosystem service strategies

Protected areas and climate change have become a priority issue on many levels in recent years. The IUCN WCPA is contributing to the understanding of the relationship between protected areas and climate change through these efforts:

- Publishing guidelines and case studies on managing protected areas under climate change
- Developing and implementing tools to identify benefits from protected areas to help mitigate and adapt to climate change
- Developing guidance for governments in incorporating protected areas into national climate change strategies and action plans
- Promoting the Natural Solutions: Protected areas helping people cope with climate change report which IUCN WCPA collaborated with The Nature Conservancy, United Nations Development Program, Wildlife Conservation Society, The World Bank and WWF to produce in 2010

Given the many pressures on protected areas, such as the impacts of climate change, issues related to connectivity and corridors have been identified as one of the newly important areas for the PoWPA. The IUCN WCPA is taking a lead in several parts of the world to facilitate the following:

- The establishment and management of large scale connectivity conservation areas
- Voluntary structures and systems for the international management and recording of connectivity conservation areas, such as the Alps the Atherton Corridor in Australia

The IUCN WCPA is planning the following to build capacity for protected areas:

- A global standard syllabus and training materials for protected area managers, protected area system managers and rangers
- An accreditation system for academic institutions providing protected area training
- A global scholarship fund for protected area professionals

The IUCN WCPA has led the development of a management effectiveness framework, and national and site implementation. This work will continue in these ways:

- Supporting worldwide assessments of protected area management effectiveness (to help countries reach the PoWPA target of 60% of areas assessed)
- Developing, testing, and refining management effectiveness assessment systems to include more social and climate change impact indicators

Marine areas are still dramatically under-protected worldwide. The IUCN WCPA will thus continue a major effort to secure a well planned and effectively managed marine protected area (MPA) network. Specific actions include the development of the following:

Additional guidance for implementing the IUCN categories in MPAs

Methodology development and implementation of management effectiveness assessments in MPAs

In many part of the world protected areas require restoration of habitats, along with effective management. The IUCN WCPA is developing a new effort on restoration which includes the following:

- Publishing best practice protected area guidelines for ecological restoration
- Conducting further awareness raising, capacity building, monitoring, research, and support of implementation of restoration activities

Finally, but clearly very importantly, the IUCN WCPA has a new task force working with the IUCN Species Survival Commission looking at biodiversity and protected areas. This task force has two key areas of work:

- Conducting a meta-analysis of relevant studies, and establishing a system to manage data on trends in species of conservation concern in and out of protected areas
- Facilitating a process to develop a common global standard for the identification and validation of such key biodiversity areas

The panel concluded with reactions from *Ernesto Enkerlin-Hoeflich*, *Alan Latourelle* and *Jon Jarvis*, who reinforced and enhanced the underlying needs and approaches, with examples from Mexico, Canada, and the USA. In particular, they argued for the incorporation of a variety of approaches, as opposed to the setting of global standards, and for much greater communication with the public and thought-leaders on the issues of conservation, and the intersection with sectoral development needs and directions. Enhancing public awareness is a preoccupation for the heads of parks agencies around the world. Increasing urbanization, immigration, and aging populations in the developed world present particular challenges for making protected areas relevant.