

International Models of Protected Landscapes

Introduction

Our concepts of parks and protected areas—what they should protect, how, and even why—have expanded greatly in recent decades, as described in the article by Adrian Phillips in this issue. Both by necessity and design, models of conservation are increasingly more inclusive, embracing both natural and cultural values of lands where the two are related and indeed closely interdependent. Protected landscapes—outstanding, lived-in lands shaped by people over time—have produced a level of interest within the international conservation community such that guidelines for their designation and management have recently been developed. Examples of protected areas that include many or all of the characteristics of the protected landscapes model are growing in number and diversity, including heritage areas (and other park partnership areas) in North America. Examining some of this recent work in the context of international guidelines may inform future site-specific efforts, while contributing to the growing understanding of the challenges and benefits of protecting landscapes worldwide.

Protected Landscape/Seascape

Here, the term “protected landscape” follows the IUCN definition (IUCN 1994), which is quoted by Phillips elsewhere in this issue. Safeguarding the integrity of the traditional interaction between people and the environment is vital to the protection, maintenance, and evolution of protected landscapes. As described below, areas meeting this definition are given diverse names in different countries; thus, the IUCN categories are set out to apply a standard name to areas meeting this definition, in this case, Category V Protected Landscapes/Seascapes. Approximately one-quarter of the protected areas listed in the most recent *United Nations List of Protected Areas* (IUCN 1998) are cate-

gory V protected areas. By area, protected landscapes constitute slightly more than one-tenth by the world’s protected area estate. However, because the capacity of the international community to recognize protected landscapes is relatively new, the number and extent of areas that meet the criteria without formal designation may be underrepresented in these figures.

The principle distinction of category V is its emphasis on the interaction of people and nature. Over much of the world, healthy landscapes are shaped by human culture as well as nature. Rich biological diversity often coincides with cultural diversity.

As both a practical and ethical matter, failure to include diverse interests

intimately in protected area decisions is becoming increasingly unacceptable. In all but the most narrow of circumstances, conservation cannot be effective without the involvement of people closest to the resources. Protected landscapes make conservation possible in places where people live and work. They are the kind of places most likely to be the focus of community-based management. This has geographic and educational implications, as conservation is not just something that happens in a remote reserve distant from the experience of most people, but in their back yard, where they can see it.

This is not in any way to diminish or discount the importance of other kinds of protected areas to conservation. There is and always will be a vitally important role for strict nature reserves, wilderness areas, Category II national parks, and natural monuments. Protected landscapes should be seen as a complement to these types of protection models, not as competition. Indeed, as the field of ecosystem design becomes increasingly sophisticated, protected landscapes could be designated between and around more restrictive protected areas to provide buffer zones and habitat connectivity.

Ecosystem science is increasingly indicating the necessity of managing at large geographic scales to achieve functional benefits in ecosystem services, adding to the well-recognized need for suitable habitat for wide-ranging species. Protected landscapes offer opportunities for carrying out conservation over large areas; for example, as part of North American

initiatives such as the Yellowstone-to-Yukon (Y2Y) and Northern Appalachians–Acadia ecoregion projects.

Management Guidelines

Aware of the growing importance of protected landscapes, IUCN sought to provide guidance to them. A handbook on protected landscapes had been published by P. H. C. “Bing” Lucas in 1992, but was in need of updating in light of a wealth of new experience. A task force was established for the purpose, leading to the publication of management guidelines last year (Phillips 2002). The guidelines describe considerations for the planning and management of protected landscapes, providing guidance gleaned from experts from around the world. The guidelines are, in turn, founded upon 12 principles, listed in Table 1.

Because they are inherently cultural, protected landscapes are of course very different in appearance and expression in different regions and countries. Applying a common definition to all of them—and suggesting guidelines for their management—is not intended to homogenize their development or care. To the contrary, the very point is to celebrate and preserve their natural and cultural diversity.

Examples of Protected Landscapes

North American conservationists are perhaps most familiar with Category V Protected Landscapes of Europe, especially Western Europe. The management model, at least as we recognize it today, developed there during

Table 1. Twelve principles for the management of category V protected areas (Phillips 2002).

1.	Conserving landscape, biodiversity, and cultural values are at the heart of the category V protected area approach.
2.	The focus of management should be on the <i>point of interaction</i> between people and nature.
3.	People should be seen as stewards of the landscape.
4.	Management must be undertaken <i>with</i> and <i>through</i> local people, and mainly <i>for</i> and <i>by</i> them.
5.	Management should be based on co-operative approaches, such as co-management and multi-stakeholder equity.
6.	Effective management requires a supportive political and economic environment.
7.	Management of category V protected areas should not only be concerned with protection but also enhancement.
8.	When there is an irreconcilable conflict between the objectives of management, priority should be given to retaining the special qualities of the area.
9.	Economic activities that do not need to take place within the protected landscape should be located outside it.
10.	Management should be business-like and of the highest professional standard.
11.	Management should be flexible and adaptive.
12.	The success of management should be measured in environmental <i>and</i> social terms.

this century, especially since World War II. All of the national parks in the United Kingdom are in fact Category V protected landscapes, as are the French regional parks.

White Carpathians Protected Landscape Area. In the White Carpathian Mountains on the border of the Czech Republic and Slovakia, unnatural habitats have long been created and maintained by management of meadows for hay (Figure 1). Today there is no longer a significant market for the hay, and the meadows are filling in. Working in the White Carpathian Protected Landscape Area (PLA; formally, two PLAs on either side of the border), conservation groups recognize the natural and cultural value of these meadows and are working to keep them open. For some, the most important value is cultural, keeping alive a tradition that long defined their agrarian communities. Others stress the importance of biodiversity; species richness is reduced when the land is allowed to return to a “natural” forest-

ed state. Residents value the aesthetic qualities of the meadows and fields, and growing tourism interest in the area is placing an economic value on the appearance of the landscape as well. Efforts to preserve the landscape are taking many forms, including reintroduction of extensive grazing on a reduced scale, voluntary mowing of the meadows by traditional means (with a hand scythe) as a cultural activity, and more overt habitat manipulation, such as mechanized mowing as a substitute for agricultural practices. Efforts are continuing to find mechanisms for maintaining the benefits of traditional use of the land while adapting to the reality that the economic underpinnings of that use are gone, probably forever.

Pisac Cusco Potato Park. In the Andes of Peru, seven Quechua communities are proposing a “potato park” to ensure the future of agrobiodiversity in their area (Figure 2). Many varieties of potato and other crops have been developed here over thou-



Figure 1. The interaction of people and nature is disrupted by systemic economic change. The traditional agricultural activities in the White Carpathian Protected Landscape Areas spanning the border of the Czech Republic and Slovakia are no longer viable. Efforts are ongoing to restore meadow management by restoring some of the viability and accentuating the cultural benefits of maintaining the tradition. Photo: Jessica Brown.

sands of years. Creation of a protected landscape will not only protect the land these important genetic resources are on, but also the local knowledge needed to care for them and the cultural heritage intimately associated with them. It will help to ensure that this rich landscape continues to be managed in traditional ways, and should secure the rights of the local communities to maintain their custodial function of the resources (Alejandro Argumedo, personal communication).

These examples are put forward because of the clarity with which they illustrate the concepts of the interconnectedness of people and nature. However, landscapes do not have to be pastoral, nor shaped over millennia, to

be worthy of protection.

Relevance to Heritage Areas

As previously mentioned, protected landscapes as a broad management category will appear in strikingly different forms in different cultural, political, and economic contexts. The advent of national heritage areas (and similar areas not presently considered for the specific designation) in the United States certainly relates to the international model described here. Table 2 provides a brief comparison of suggested criteria for national heritage areas and key characteristics of protected landscapes, indicating several points of parallel philosophy. The overlap is not perfect, of course. Protected landscapes do not emphasize

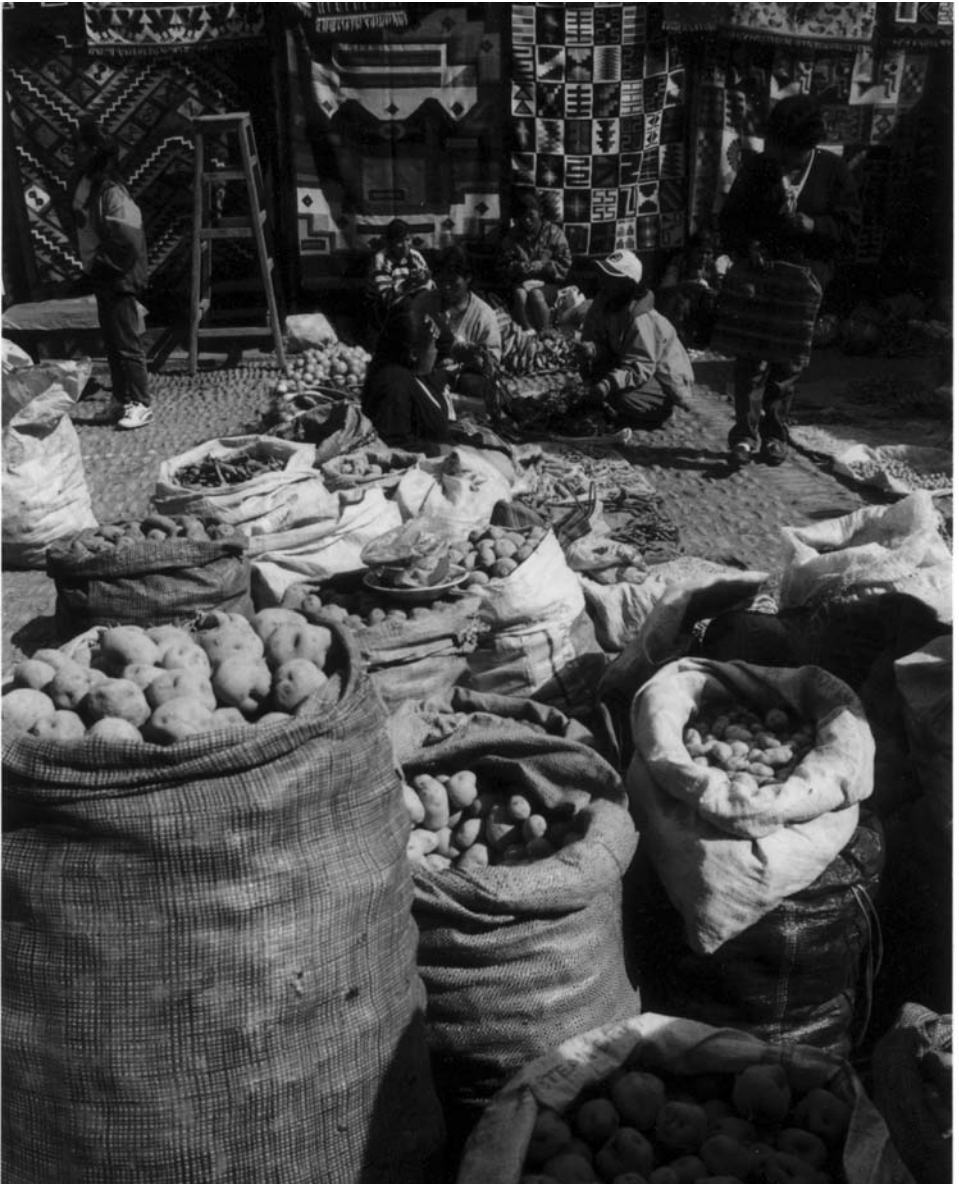


Figure 2. The interaction of people and nature over millennia in the Andes has produced areas of great agrobiodiversity. Seven Quechua communities in Peru are proposing a protected landscape to preserve genetic diversity of potato and other crops, and the local knowledge of how to care for them. Photo: Jessica Brown.

historical aspects (as a subset of cultural values) as do many heritage areas, for example.

And yet the affinities are very strong. A workshop on areas managed through National Park Service (NPS)

Table 2. Comparison of characteristics of heritage areas and protected landscapes. Heritage area column derived from NPS 2003; key characteristics of protected landscapes taken from Phillips 2002 (p. 12).

	Heritage Area	Protected Landscape
<i>Public/Community Role</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of widespread public support among residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Views communities as fundamental to success
<i>Planning and Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents, business interests, non-profit organizations, and governments are involved in planning • Management entity and units of government are willing to commit to working in partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management arrangements are determined by local circumstances and needs, and resolved through decision-making at local government or community levels
<i>Distinct/High Value</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assemblage of natural, historic, or cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage • Area provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, cultural, historic, and/or scenic features • Area retains a degree of integrity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area where people-nature relationships have produced a landscape with high aesthetic, ecological, biodiversity, and/or cultural values, and which retains integrity

partnerships (heritage areas, wild and scenic rivers, national trails and affiliated areas) identified the following four benefits of partnership areas (Tuxill and Mitchell 2000): they (a) help NPS reach new constituencies and build public support; broaden the impact of NPS; (b) offer lessons applicable to other settings; (c) foster a stewardship ethic among the general public; and (d) are strikingly similar to the benefits described in the category V guidelines.

Protected landscapes and heritage areas also offer tangible economic benefits, especially with regard to products and services that can be produced and sold or provided locally, and promoted with an identity associated with the locale or region. Not surprisingly, these economic opportunities are

emphasized in considerations of initiating or planning a protected landscape. These are areas in which conservation and development go hand in hand. There is an implicit caution, however, in the potential for an overemphasis on direct economic benefits. Neither conservation nor development should gain the upper hand, and thus balanced decision-making mechanisms and public involvement must be maintained to ensure that economic activities that derive benefits from the heritage in protected landscapes do not deter nor detract from its conservation. Heritage must be used without expanding to a scale of exploitation, potentially triggering a decline in the landscape that harbors it. The “protection” of landscapes is further enhanced by putting forward

the indirect and social benefits in equal measure.

In the majority of cases, the “interaction of people and nature over time” that “has produced an area of distinct character” now has or once had a fundamental economic use at its foundation, be it agriculture, forestry, resource extraction, etc. Sometimes creative mechanisms can be devised to restore some or all of the economic engine to a landscape, or else mimic that engine. But the temptation to support land interaction or use artificially is to be resisted, subject as it is to cessation of disassociated support.

The protected landscapes concept “reflects a visionary and pro-active approach, aiming to enhance values rather than simply to maintain or protect existing assets” (Phillips 2002). In practice, as the values of an area are to be considered holistically, there is often a degree of subjectivity as to whether a specific management change (e.g., an infrastructure development, or new land use) would enhance those values or diminish them. For this reason, a clear, adaptive management planning process is necessary to ensure that specific policies and activities within a protected landscape are in keeping with its overall objectives.

Protected landscapes and heritage areas are attractive in that they can broaden the participation of many different kinds of people in conservation. This also poses a challenge to managers, who must deal with a complex mix of stakeholders and partners unprecedented in the experience of protected areas.

On the other hand, that mix is already complicated in the case of coastal landscapes, where a growing proportion of the world’s population reside. Protected seascapes, in many forms, can play a highly significant role in determining the impact of population concentration on coastal environments.

But the expanding dimensions and diversity of these kinds of areas would suggest that they are attractive to many people, both local interested parties and policy-makers. Convergence of experience confirms that the inclusive approach to conservation and authentic heritage enhancement in the United States is consistent with protected area innovations elsewhere, suggesting opportunities for mutually beneficial exchange among practitioners, policy-makers, and sites.

Conclusion

Recently, David Lowenthal (2003) observed that “to become a viable goal, conservation ... needs to become more inclusive in three senses: it must care for all locales, not just a select few; it must involve all the people, not just a select few; it must laud all creative acts, not just those that preserve some past.” The protected landscape model presents one opportunity to make conservation more inclusive: by broadening the base of protected areas, broadening the number and variety of people involved in their management, and protecting features of people’s interaction with the land in ways that celebrate heritage and adapt for the future.

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