

Conservation and recreation in protected areas: reconciling opposites?

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Really opposites?

Yes if you are

- a died in the wool preservationist
- a recreation activist believing Nature is to be tamed and conquered

No if you are

- signed up to the Durban Accord
- recognise values and benefits of protected areas for all of society now and in future

The Durban Accord new paradigm

“In this changing world, we need a fresh and innovative approach to protected areas and their role in broader conservation and development agendas. This approach demands the maintenance and enhancement of our core conservation goals, equitably integrating them with the interests of all affected people. In this way the synergy between conservation, the maintenance of life support systems and sustainable development is forged. We see protected areas as vital means to achieve this synergy efficiently and cost-effectively. We see protected areas as providers of benefits beyond boundaries—beyond their boundaries on a map, beyond the boundaries of nation-states, across societies, genders and generations.”

The new paradigm $2 + 2 = 5$

Whole more than sum of the parts

Same and better

plus

Outreach environmentally

and

Outreach to stakeholders

Conservation and recreation together for decades

USA National Parks 1916: provide for public access and enjoyment of natural and historic areas, and conserve their scenery and natural resource

Canadian National Parks 1930: preserve features as national heritage....encourage public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment....leave unimpaired for future generations....health through outdoor recreation and relaxation....economic opportunity through tourism

New approaches

Scotland's National Parks 2000: conserve and enhance natural and cultural heritage, promote sustainable use of natural resources, promote understanding and enjoyment of special qualities by public, promote sustainable economic and social development of communities

Denmark's National Parks...?

The double duty of people and nature

Ingredients of success are an all-inclusive package of action

1. Develop multiple objectives
2. Assess opportunities and constraints
3. Implement management on the ground
4. Devise use and capacity constraints
5. Develop formal plan
6. Use external appraisal
7. Implement process of engagement
8. Implement modern governance

1. Develop multiple objectives

1. Ecological health and integrity
2. Aesthetic, spiritual and related values
3. Tangible use values: recreation, access, and ecotourism activities and supporting infrastructure

BUT 3 must be subservient to 1 and 2

2. Assess opportunities and constraints

Undertake objective assessment of opportunities and constraints in relation to fragility, rarity, uniqueness, cultural value, aesthetic appeal,

And assess carrying capacity for different levels of activity, eg. recreational and perceptual carrying capacity such as Limits of Acceptable Use

3. Implement management on the ground

Define primary management objectives for different parts of the protected area using

IUCN Guidelines for Protected Areas Management Categories

IUCN Guidelines for Protected Areas

Management Categories

- **Ia Strict Nature Reserve:** managed mainly for science
- **Ib Wilderness Area:** managed mainly for wilderness protection
- **II National Park:** managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation
- **III Natural Monument:** managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features
- **IV Habitat/Species Management Area:** managed mainly for conservation through management intervention
- **V Protected Landscape:** managed mainly for landscape conservation and recreation
- **VI Managed Resource Protected Area:** managed mainly for sustainable use of natural ecosystems

IUCN Management Categories

More important for subdividing area and guidance on acceptable uses

Use all Categories not just II and V, especially III, IV and VI, recognise I has restricted use

Ensure that juxtaposition makes sense in relation to objectives and practice: not I next to VI, but II next to III or IV and V next to VI

Good examples: Abruzzo, Italy; US National Parks Maritimes, Canada; Biosphere Reserves

Bad examples: French National Parks, Sumava

4. Devise use and capacity constraints

Using assessment of opportunities and constraints develop series of practical measures to constrain types and levels of use to ensure twin primary purposes are achieved:

1. Limit numbers through license and permit systems
2. Develop recreation areas

5. Develop formal plan

Develop of formal Plan for protected area embracing all previous steps and through process engagement with all appropriate stakeholders

6. External appraisals can help

Bring independence, objectivity and integrity by applying well tried and tested methods

1. EUROPARC Federation Charter for Sustainable Tourism
2. WWF PANParks
3. WCPA Europe Verification and Certification and expert volunteer advisers

EUROPARC European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

Requirements

- Developing and implementing a local strategy for 'sustainable tourism'
- Establishment of a permanent forum or equivalent arrangement for partnership between the park authority, local municipalities, conservation and community
- Independent assessment and decision making
- **BUT** no Charter protected areas in Nordic or Baltic countries

www.europarc.org

WWF PAN Parks

www.panparks.org

Goals

- Promoting wilderness and visitor management in Europe's national parks
- Monitoring management effectiveness
- Increasing public and political support of Europe's national parks
- Facilitating sustainable development through fiscal mechanism and fundraising
- Developing and marketing high quality nature-based products

Assessment

- Parks must meet 5 comprehensive principles: Rich Natural Heritage, Nature Management, Visitor Management, Sustainable Tourism Development Strategy, Partnerships
- Objective assessment and verification by trained experts
- Already certified 5 including Fulufjället National Park, Sweden and Oulanka National Park, Finland

WCPA Global network

Members: 1500 globally, 260 in Europe including all Nordic and Baltic countries, appointed by Chair of WCPA on recommendation of Regional Vice-Chairs, volunteer experts on all aspects of protected areas

Key topics:

- protocol on protected area evaluations using IUCN Management categories
- certification and verification project
- education and training initiatives

WCPA Europe Verification and Certification System

Objectives

- To pilot a system, relevant to both Europe and more widely, of verification and certification of protected areas under the IUCN Management Categories
- To test the proposed system in few protected areas in different parts of Europe
- To prepare a procedure for establishing a group of verifiers
- To finalise a training manual for verifiers
- To prepare a programme for capacity building of protected area staff including a pilot training course in co-operation with WCPA Europe Education and Training Task Force
- To prepare a model for a contract based verification and certification of protected areas on request

Organisation

- Working Group lead by Marija Zupancic-Vicar m.z.vicar@s5.net

7. Reconciling conflicts between stakeholders

Remember what engagement between different interests means: long and hard but absolutely necessary process

Develop consultation mechanisms tailored towards the constituents: open meetings, door to door consultation, school debates, closed sessions etc

Training in mediation and conflict resolution for all involved: WCPA Europe Education and Training Strategy and Network of Environmental Training Centres of Excellence

8. Governance to resolve conflicts

Protected Area governance needs to be modernised to play formative role in conflict resolution:

- Membership inclusive of all stakeholders
- Appointed on equal terms
- Clear roles and responsibilities established
- Government Ministerial and officials roles circumscribed

Advice to Nordic and Baltic countries

- Conservation can be opposites and in conflict but that is counsel of despair
- Takes time and shared commitment
- Plenty of practical tools to help: IUCN Management Categories and external validation systems
- Practical experience to help through WCPA global network
- Recreational and other interests should be regarded as having **positive input rather than negative impact**
- Nordic values of Friluftsliv 'the outdoor life' can be used