

The New Paradigm for Protected Areas: Implications for Managing Visitors in Protected Areas

David Sheppard

IUCN, Switzerland

david.sheppard@iucn.org

Introduction

Systems of protected areas¹ are an essential component of a healthy, functioning landscape. Protected areas deliver environmental goods and services which underpin sustainable development and human well-being. Such areas are vitally important for achieving key global targets such as the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

In recent years a number of highly influential events for protected areas have been held. The first of these events was the 2003 Vth IUCN World Parks Congress (2003 WPC) held in Durban, South Africa. This Congress brought together some 3,000 participants from 160 countries and embraced a rapidly growing and diversifying constituency for protected areas. The Congress reached out to a range of key stakeholders: political leaders; protected areas agencies; NGOs; the development assistance sector; industry; indigenous groups; and young people. In so doing the 2003 WPC served to focus global attention on protected areas, and generated renewed energy and support for future action. Importantly, the WPC produced a wide array of technical outputs which are shaping protected area global policy and practice.

The second key event was the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Convention of the Parties (COP) Meeting, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in February 2004. This meeting adopted a comprehensive and targeted Program of Work on Protected Areas. This Program was strongly influenced by the 2003 WPC outcomes and out-

lines a number of actions for countries to take in relation to the establishment and management of protected area systems.

The outcomes from 2003 WPC, together with the framework provided by the CBD Program of Work on Protected Areas, underpin a “new paradigm” for protected areas. Within the context of the new paradigm, the management of visitors to protected areas and the need to better engage with local communities in and around protected areas takes on particular importance. In particular there must be a shift towards planning for protected areas with and for, rather than against, people, as has been the situation in some cases in the past.

This paper will focus on some of the key messages from the WPC and the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas and their implications for the management of visitors within protected areas. The paper will cover: (a) the role of IUCN in protected areas; (b) an introduction to Vth World Parks Congress; (c) the key elements of the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas; (d) a new paradigm for protected areas, and priorities highlighted at the 2003 WPC; (e) Implications for the management of visitors to protected areas; and (f) conclusion.

IUCN's role in protected areas

IUCN, the World Conservation Union brings together States, government agencies and a diverse range of non-governmental organizations in a unique world partnership: over 900 members spread across some 140 countries. IUCN's mission is: “to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically

¹ Defined by IUCN as: “An area of land and/or sea especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means” IUCN (1994).

sustainable". Through its six Commissions, IUCN draws together over 10,000 expert volunteers in project teams and action groups focusing in particular on species and biodiversity conservation and the management of habitats and natural resources. IUCN operations are increasingly decentralized and are carried forward by an expanding network of regional and country offices, located primarily in developing countries.

Protected areas have been a major focus of IUCN's work since its origin in 1948. The Sixth IUCN General Assembly (IUCN GA) in 1958 in Athens, Greece, recommended the organization of the First World Conference on National Parks as a mechanism to exchange experience on nature conservation, and this was subsequently implemented in Seattle, Washington in July 1962. Since that time World Parks Congresses have been held every 10 years and have had a profound influence on protected areas thinking and practice worldwide. The Sixth IUCN/GA also recommended that the United Nations establish an International List of National Parks and Equivalent Reserves; the first of such lists, was published by IUCN in 1967. Since then the UN List of Protected Areas² has emerged as the definitive reference on the global protected area estate and it has recently been endorsed by the CBD³ as a key tool for global monitoring and assessment of protected areas.

IUCN's early work on protected areas was supported by the International Commission on National Parks, created in 1960⁴ by the Seventh GA of IUCN, (Warsaw, Poland). The Commission was established "to strengthen international cooperation in matters relating to national parks and equivalent reserves in all countries throughout the world". The Commission, which started with less than 40 members, mainly from the USA, Canada, the UK and France, has evolved into today's WCPA network of 1330 members in 159 countries (see figure 1).

IUCN established a Secretariat Programme on Protected Areas (PPA) in 1963 with one permanent staff position appointed in the early 70s. A close and effective working relationship between the

² Produced with the United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC).

³ Convention on Biological Diversity.

⁴ Now known as IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas.

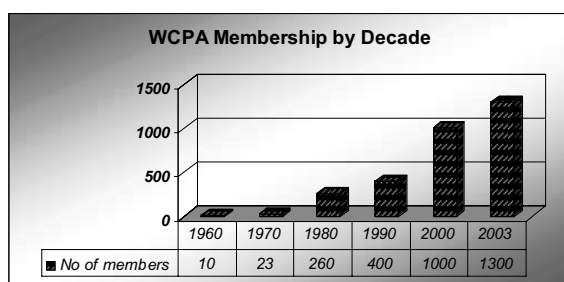


Figure 1: Evolution of WCPA membership by decade.

Commission and the Secretariat has always been a feature of IUCN's work in this area and has been one of the factors contributing to IUCN's global influence in this area.

The work of IUCN in protected areas has significantly increased since that time, both in complexity and quantity. One of the most significant activities is convening on behalf of IUCN the World Parks Congress every 10 years. IUCN's convening role in relation to protected areas has also been fundamental in convening Forums such as the World Protected Areas Leadership Forum, the annual meeting of the world's protected areas CEOs; and focussed workshops on issues such as World Heritage and mining. IUCN has also played a key role in relation to the establishing best practice for protected areas, particularly through its Protected Areas Guideline Series, and in influencing protected areas policy, through initiatives such as the IUCN System of Protected Areas Categories and projects such as the IUCN/EC Biodiversity and Development Project.

At a regional level IUCN, through the World Commission on Protected Areas, has also been very active. Sixteen WCPA regional programmes have been established; where possible these are linked with the IUCN Secretariat regional offices.

The Vth World Parks Congress

A key role of IUCN in relation to protected areas has been the planning and implementation of the World Parks Congresses. These have been watershed global events for assessing progress and setting targets for protected areas. Since 1962, Congresses have been convened as follows:

The Vth IUCN World Parks Congress (2003 WPC): "Protected Areas Benefits Beyond Boundaries" represented the largest and most diverse gathering of protected area experts in history. Congress Patrons – Former President of

Table 1: Summary Details on IUCN World Parks Congresses.

World Parks Congresses	When ?	Where ?	How many attended ?	From how many countries ?
First	1962	Seattle, USA	262	63
Second	1972	Yellowstone National Park, USA	1,200	80
Third	1982	Bali, Indonesia	353	68
Fourth	1992	Caracas, Venezuela	1,840	133
Fifth	2003	Durban, South Africa	2,897	160

South Africa, Mr. Nelson Mandela and Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan – set the scene in the inspiring opening session, urging delegates to celebrate one of the most significant conservation achievements of the last century - the inclusion of more than 11.5% of the earth's land surface in protected areas. However they also noted that many threats face these precious areas and urged all involved with protected areas to reach out - beyond their boundaries and constituencies - to engage the wider community.

The Congress illustrated the message of “Protected Areas: Benefits Beyond Boundaries” through an rich range of plenary sessions, workshop sessions, side events and exhibitions. More than 150 workshops (organized around 10 major themes) and 200 side meetings were held, underscoring the depth and richness of the technical component of the Congress. A wide range of stakeholders, including indigenous peoples, youth and the private sector, were actively involved in all Congress sessions. A range of communication tools was used throughout the Congress including theatre, video, song and dance as well as formal presentations. An unprecedented level of genuine engagement and partnership characterized the Congress. This is reflected in the nature of the Congress outputs and offers exciting new opportunities to work together in the future to implement the ambitious agenda arising from Durban.

The 2003 WPC delivered a number of key outcomes which will significantly impact the future of the world's protected areas. These included the Durban Accord and Action Plan, a set of 32 Congress Recommendations, a series of initiatives for African protected areas and a Message to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Since the Congress more than 50 pub-

lications have been produced, largely arising from the Congress Workshop Streams. Numerous commitments were also made at the Congress to assist the world's protected areas, including the establishment of 200,000 sq km of new protected areas, and support of more than US\$ 50 million to strengthen management of existing areas.

The CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas

The 2003 WPC adopted and transmitted a Message to the CBD. This message emphasised the importance of protected areas for both biodiversity conservation and for sustainable development. This Message was discussed at the CBD COP7 in February 2004 and this meeting discussed and adopted a wide ranging and ambitious Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PA PoW). This PA PoW includes many of the key recommendations for the Durban Accord and Action Plan. Its main objective is to ensure the establishment and maintenance, by 2010 for terrestrial and by 2012 for marine areas, of comprehensive, effectively managed, and ecologically representative national and regional systems of protected areas that contribute to achieving the three objectives of the Convention and the 2010 target to significantly reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss. The adoption of this PA PoW represents a watershed opportunity, binding country parties to far reaching action on protected areas. While the 2003 WPC played a central role in the adoption of the PA PoW it is only through the commitment of 188 national governments that real progress can be made for protected areas globally.

Table 2: Old and New Paradigms of Protected Areas (Phillips 2004).

<i>Topic</i>	<i>As it was: protected areas were ...</i>	<i>As it is becoming: protected areas are ...</i>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set aside for conservation • Established mainly for spectacular wildlife and scenic protection • Managed mainly for visitors and tourists • Valued as wilderness • About protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run also with social and economic objectives • Often set up for scientific, economic and cultural reasons • Tourism a means to help local economies • Valued for the cultural importance of so-called "wilderness" • Also about restoration and rehabilitation
Governance	Run by central government	Run by many partners
Local people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned and managed against people • Managed without regard to local opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run with, for, and in some cases by local people • Managed to meet the needs of local people
Wider context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed separately • Managed as 'islands' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned as part of national, regional and international systems • Developed as 'networks' (strictly protected cores, buffered and linked by green corridors)
Perceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewed primarily as a national asset • Viewed only as a national concern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewed also as a community asset • Viewed also as an international concern
Management techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed reactively within short timescale • Managed in a technocratic way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed adaptively • Managed with political sensitivity
Management skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed by scientists and natural resource experts • Expert led 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed by multi-skilled individuals • Drawing on local knowledge
Finance	Paid for by taxpayer	Paid for from many sources

A New Paradigm for Protected Areas

The 2003 WPC reinforced the need for a new paradigm for protected areas, as first articulated by Adrian Phillips, previously chair of IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas (Phillips 2004)

This paradigm reflects changing concepts of protected areas over time. The earlier concepts of protected areas were of large natural areas set aside primarily for conservation and for appropriate visitor enjoyment, as summarised in the "As it was" column in table 2 below. The trends of protected areas as noted in the "As it is becoming" Column in table 2 were reinforced at the Durban World Parks Congress.

The 2003 WPC demonstrated how the elements of this paradigm are being practically achieved. In particular a number of key issues relevant to this paradigm were highlighted at the Congress.

Targeted future expansion of the protected area estate is essential

World Parks Congresses since 1962 have called on governments to rapidly expand the number and extent of protected areas. In particular the recommendation at the Caracas World Parks Congress (IUCN 1993) called on governments to: "ensure through international cooperation that protected areas cover at least 10 percent of each biome by the year 2000". This

acted as a rallying cry for many in the protected areas movement and provided a stimulus for countries to expand their protected area estate. The results of this were seen at the World Parks Congress where the 2003 United Nations List of Protected Areas was launched. This noted there are now 102,102 protected areas covering 18.8 million km² in all, and 11.5% of the global land surface – representing a dramatic growth since

1962 when there were only 1,000 protected areas covering 3% of the Earth’s land surface. The rapid growth in the number and area of protected areas is shown in figure 2 below:

The Congress also noted that protected areas are a significant land use in their own right third only to forestry and permanent pasture (see figure 3 below).

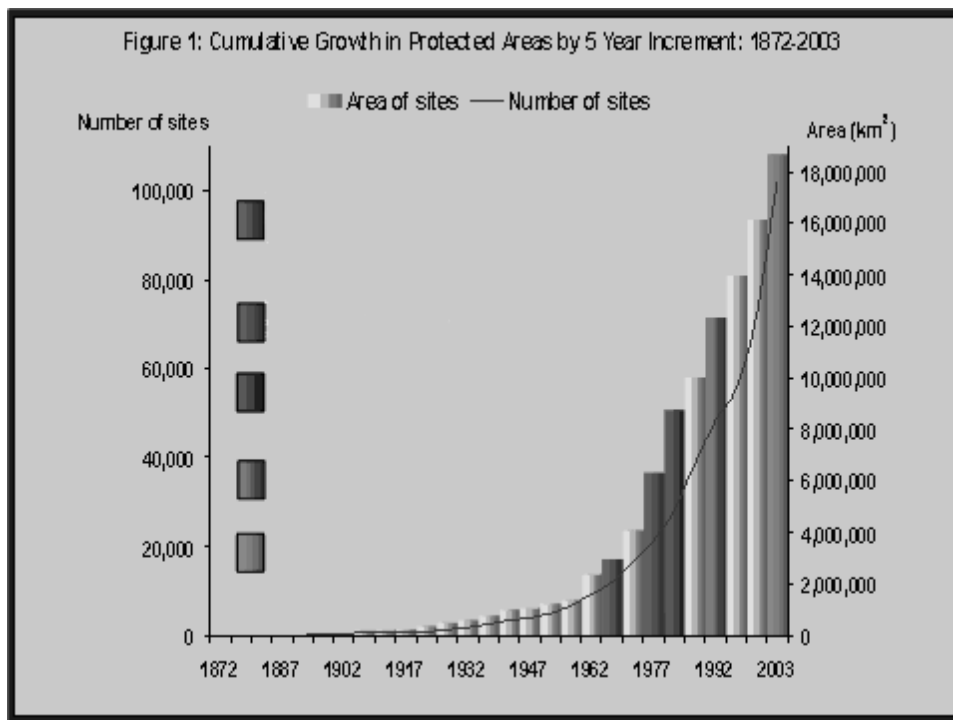


Figure 2: Cumulative Growth in Protected Areas by 5 Year Increment: 1872 to 2003.

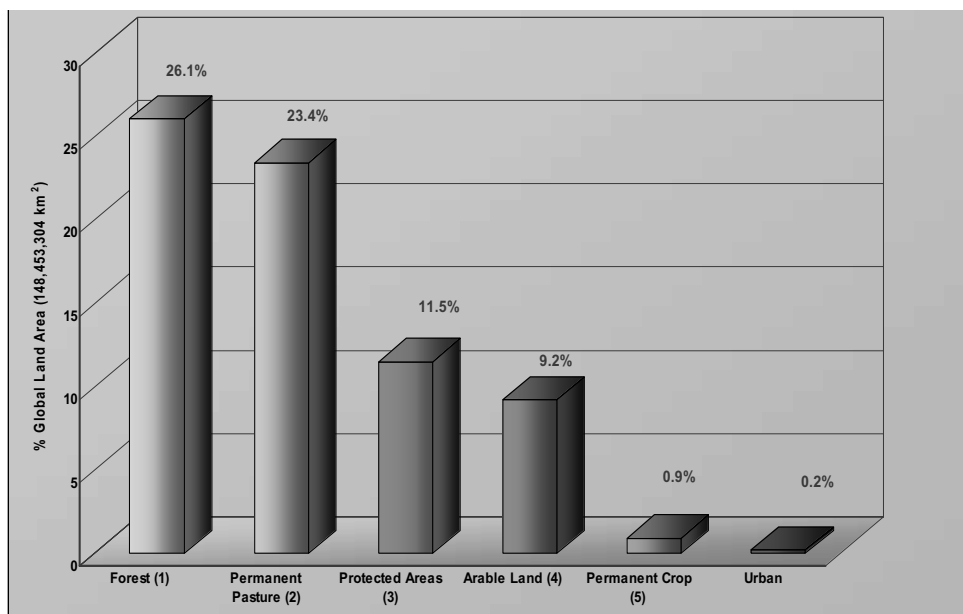


Figure 3: Protected Areas as a Proportion of Global Land Use.

Remarkably, the global estate under protection has gone from an area the size of the United Kingdom to an area the size of South America in just 4 decades. The current global coverage of protected areas exceeds the ambitious target set at the last World Parks Congress (Caracas, Venezuela, 1992) of ensuring that protected areas cover at least 10% of each biome by 2000.

While the number of protected areas has tripled over the past 20 years, with the majority of such areas being established in developing countries, there remain serious gaps in coverage. Initial establishment of protected areas often focused on criteria such as outstanding scenic values or wildlife rather than on biological or ecological criteria. Consequently, many national PA networks do not adequately reflect the distribution of biodiversity within national boundaries. Furthermore, most PAs were originally conceived in a national context and took no account of regional biodiversity or of the existence of similar networks in adjacent countries. The major exceptions to this rule are those countries that have adjusted their national networks to take account of biodiversity distribution, or those countries that have created their PA networks in recent times and according to modern ecological principles, such as Equatorial Guinea, Madagascar and Gabon in Africa and Lao PDR in Asia. For most countries therefore, there is a need to better compare PA networks with biodiversity distribution, regionally, in adjacent countries and outside protected area sites. This is essential to enable prioritization for the establishment of protected areas in the future.

New analyses presented at the World Parks Congress highlighted significant gaps in the coverage of certain ecosystems, particularly marine ecosystems, including the High Seas, freshwater and lake ecosystems, temperate grasslands, deserts and semi-deserts. Gaps in marine coverage are of particular concern given the poor relative level of protection of the marine area⁵. The most recent IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (IUCN, 2006) noted a dramatic growth in the number of species that are threatened with extinction, with now more than 16,000 threatened species worldwide. This dichot-

omy shows a clear need for the establishment and implementation of clearer and more effective conservation priorities; in turn highlighting the need for future protected areas to be more strategic in relation to biodiversity conservation and, specifically, to better target threatened species.

The need for more comprehensive and targeted protected area systems has been recognized. The WSSD⁶ and CBD have established ambitious targets relating to protected areas; specifically to establish an effectively managed and ecologically representative system of terrestrial protected areas by 2010 and a system of marine protected areas by 2012. Addressing these gaps and challenges requires expansion of existing protected areas, and the strategic creation of new ones, while ensuring the connectivity of suitable habitat between them. The Durban Congress emphasized that the establishment of future protected areas is essential, that it must be targeted and that it must be based on application of the best available scientific data and tools.

The effectiveness of protected areas must be strengthened.

The World Parks Congress underlined a key message from the late 1990's – the need to improving the effectiveness of existing protected areas and protected areas systems. This reflected the fact the many and growing threats and challenges facing protected areas and also the fact that many protected areas are not achieving their original objectives, such as biodiversity conservation. Thus the message from the Durban Congress was to improve the effectiveness of what we already have under protected area designation. While the period since the Caracas World Parks Congress was marked by a rapid expansion of the quantity of the protected area estate, the Durban World Parks Congress called for consolidation and for more emphasis to be placed on improving the quality or effectiveness of existing protected areas. The Congress highlighted the need to develop and apply new tools for assessing management effectiveness. A number of tools and approaches have emerged over the past decade, such as the IUCN Management Effectiveness Framework and the WWF/World Bank Man-

⁵ Marine protected areas are estimated to cover 0.8% of the earth's surface.

⁶ World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in 2002.

agement Tracking Tool, and these offer practical ways to assess the effectiveness of protected areas. Many of these tools are now being applied to protected areas around the world and such approaches need to be more widely used and linked to action by a range of actors including donors, protected area agencies and local communities.

The Congress noted that management effectiveness comprises many inter-related elements, of which capacity development and sustainable financing are particularly important.

Capacity Development

Improving the effectiveness of management of protected areas requires a significant increase in human and financial resources for protected areas and also strengthening the capacity of people and agencies involved. The World Parks Congress noted that the managers of protected areas and other primary stakeholders often do not have sufficient knowledge, skills, capabilities and tools to ensure that protected areas can more effectively respond to the challenges posed by global change. Enhanced capacity is essential and is needed at a range of levels, including for protected areas agencies, park managers, and key stakeholders. Protected Area management is a challenging task as noted by veteran conservationist, John MacKinnon: “After a lifetime of working in the protected area management business, I have finally worked out why the job seems so complicated...it simply is very complicated” cited in Appleton et al. (2003). Skills and competencies need to be more specialized than in the past requiring a range of innovative and adaptive approaches to protected area management. Competency requirements reflect the evolving nature of protected area management. Traditionally the protected area manager was an expert in the natural sciences, and management was seen as an exercise involving the application of expertise to natural systems. However, the challenges facing the protected area manager in the 21st century are increasing in scale and complexity and must be broadened to include skills in areas such as:

- Cultural and social expertise – for example relating to negotiation and conflict resolution required for activities such as initiating joint man-

agement arrangements with local communities and negotiating with a wide range of stakeholders;

- Information Technology – for example in relation to the application of GIS and web based tools for protected area management;
- Policy expertise – such as understanding and better influencing the broader legal framework and the other sectoral policies within which protected area activities need to be implemented; and
- Strategic Planning and Management – such as in relation to strategic planning and financial management.

This will require a change of approach on the part of protected area agencies, both in terms of recruitment strategies and also in terms of approaches to training and career development. The need for focused and effective training for protected area managers has never been higher and it is critical that it comprehensively address the skills needed for protected areas to adapt to the requirements of the 21st century. Existing training efforts, such as those implemented through the Wildlife Institute of India in Asia or through the Mweka Wildlife College in Africa, should also be strengthened and expanded.

Capacity development should be based on the assessment of skill needs and requirements. Recent work on the development of competency standards in Asia (Appleton et al. 2003) provide a useful model for the assessment of skills and needed competencies as a key element of establishing future directions for capacity development for protected areas. Capacity development must also target young people and encourage them to see protected areas as an attractive and viable career option. The World Parks Congress emphasized the importance of reaching out and engaging the support and energy of youth to build a prosperous future for protected areas. The protected areas profession needs to connect better with young people and empower the next generation.

Sustainable Financing of Protected Areas

Improving management effectiveness of protected areas requires the development of more reliable and sustainable finance flows for protected areas. The Durban World Parks Congress noted that protected areas require a significant boost in financial investment and noted that existing financial resources are still seriously inadequate. The Sustainable Financing Workshop Stream at the Congress considered that between \$US 20-30 billion per year would be required over the next 30 years to establish and maintain a comprehensive global protected areas system, including adequate coverage of terrestrial, wetland and marine ecosystems. Only about 20% of this is currently available. Under-investment by governments and others in protected areas means that these areas are often failing to meet their conservation and social objectives. Inadequate human and financial resources mean that many protected areas lack effective protection and management, particularly in developing countries. The challenge is to achieve a major boost in investment in protected areas and to develop more sustainable methods of protected area financing.

Protected areas must be better linked to sustainable development

The Durban Congress emphasized that protected areas are vital for both nature and for people. Experience highlighted at the Congress demonstrated that protected areas play a vital role in protecting vital ecosystem services, such as clean water and clean air, and thus are critical for supporting the livelihoods of local people. However, in many parts of the world protected areas as viewed as a barrier to the activities and aspirations of local communities. Many poor people also live in and around protected areas, which serve as a vital source of food and fibre. In a number of cases local communities have been excluded from decision making regarding protected areas, or worse, forcibly removed. As a result such areas have traditionally not been considered in the context of contributing to development objectives or to helping the livelihoods of local communities.

The Durban Congress urged governments and all involved in protected areas to make the link between conservation and livelihoods clearer and

more explicit. This is an important element of influencing decision makers to support the further expansion of protected areas around the world. This is particularly relevant in making the link between protected areas and global agendas such as the Millennium Development Goals relating to environmental sustainability and poverty alleviation and the 2010 targets agreed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, South Africa, August 2002) which aim to significantly reduce the loss of biodiversity. However this link has not been clearly articulated and this is one area where more attention is required in the future. The relationship between protected areas and the Millennium Development Goals and WSSD Targets is shown in Annex 1 of this paper. Values of protected areas to key resource and other sectors is also shown in table 3.

Protected area values need to be clearly articulated and communicated. Recent work by IUCN on the economic values of protected areas, (IUCN 1998), reveal that protected areas are often significant revenue-earning entities and can make an important contribution to local economies. For instance, recent studies indicate that Canada is expected to create \$C 6.5 billion dollars in annual Gross Domestic Product from the expenditure of participants in wildlife-related activities which sustain 159,000 jobs and creates \$C 2.5 billion in tax revenue each year. Australia receives over \$A 2 billion in expenditure from eight national parks – at a direct cost to Governments of some \$A 60 million. In Costa Rica, about \$US12 million is spent annually to maintain the national parks but foreign exchange generated in 1991, associated with these parks was more than \$US 330 million with 500,000 overseas visitors; park-generated tourism is the second largest industry in the country.

There is thus a clear message that investment in protected areas can provide significant benefits to national and local economies. Far from being locked up and lost to local users, these areas represent an opportunity for sustainable industries and for the generation of financial returns. However these messages are not being articulated and conveyed to decision makers. Those involved in protected area must communicate the linkages between protected areas and development objectives,

Table 3: Values of protected areas and principal sectoral policy implications.

<i>Biodiversity conservation:</i> nature conservation, health, agriculture, industry, foreign affairs
<i>Watershed protection:</i> natural resources management, water supply
<i>Storm protection:</i> disaster prevention
<i>Tourism:</i> economic development, transport
<i>Local amenity:</i> local government, recreation, public health
<i>Forest etc. products:</i> forestry, economic development, community affairs
<i>Soil conservation:</i> agriculture, natural resources management
<i>Carbon sequestration:</i> energy policy, foreign affairs
<i>Research and education:</i> research, science, education (all levels)
<i>Cultural values:</i> community affairs, local government

particularly through emphasizing the vital role that such areas play in the protection and enhancement of vital ecological services such as the provision of clean water. The role of protected areas in contributing to economic development through appropriate nature based tourism should also be better identified and communicated.

New and innovative approaches to protected area governance should be applied.

The 2003 WPC underlined one key element of the new paradigm: the shift of governance arrangements, from protected areas being run by central government agencies to being run by many different types of organizations and partners. The reasons are varied: in some cases this is a response to specific budget cutbacks or broader financial constraints. In other cases it reflects general patterns of decentralisation, where power and responsibility are being devolved from the centre, and with it power and responsibility for protected areas.

There are now many models of protected area governance. The 2003 WPC noted the need for a range of approaches to protected areas governance to be applied. One particular trend highlighted at the Congress was the increasing involvement of local communities and indigenous peoples in the management of protected areas. A number of specific examples of such areas, increasingly recognized as "Community Conserved Areas" were highlighted at the Congress.

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are increasingly involved in conservation and protected areas throughout the world. Experience has shown

that NGOs have an important role to play in the establishment and management of protected areas. They often have particular strengths in working with and through local communities for example. A critical aspect in relation to NGOs is the need to build more effective and long term partnerships with government agencies involved in protected areas. In many parts of the world the relationship between Government and Non Government organisations has traditionally been marked by suspicion. This needs to be replaced by an attitude of co-operation, partnership and mutual benefit, and there are many examples from around the world where NGO management of protected areas is working very effectively.

In many parts of the world the private sector is becoming increasingly involved in protected areas. There are limited successful examples to date of private sector management of protected areas but this appears to be an area with potential, although not without pitfalls. Potential advantages of private sector involvement in protected areas are the high level of motivation, relative efficiencies in management, and economies of scale available to large companies. On the other side of the coin, is the need for care, to ensure that conservation objectives are not subsumed by the "profit motive" and also the concern that very few private companies currently have the expertise necessary for effective conservation management. In South Africa, an increasing number of protected areas are being managed by the private sector. In Japan the Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund, also based in Japan, has made a considerable contribution to

nature conservation, with many programmes focused on protected areas, both in the region and internationally (Matsukawa 1996).

As well as examining alternatives to supplement government management of protected areas, there is a need to improve existing government structures and procedures in relation to protected areas. Options such as amalgamation of conservation oriented departments with similar objectives and the development of mechanisms for improving inter-agency coordination are being examined in many countries, such as Australia and Africa. One interesting trend in many countries, particularly in Africa, is the establishment of Parastatal bodies with responsibility for protected area management. Such agencies, which have been established in countries such as Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, have a greater level of independence and autonomy than traditional government agencies, particularly in relation to the ability to generate and retain revenue.

Another issue related to governance is the application of the IUCN Protected Areas Categories System. A number of countries are increasingly applying this system in their legislation and policy frameworks. (Refer to Annex 2 for more detail on the IUCN PA Categories System). A clear message from the 2003 WPC was the need for countries to apply a range of IUCN Category Types, within the context of their national systems plans for protected areas. This does not imply a retreat from the establishment and management of the more strictly protected areas, such as the category I and category II protected areas but it does imply the need to develop a system which can accommodate a broader range of activities without compromising conservation objectives.

A message from the 2003 WPC was that there is no right answer to the question "What is the ideal institutional structure for protected areas". The right approach will depend on the unique circumstances of each country -- in most cases it will involve a mix of the above governance options. It is assumed that this trend will accelerate in the 21st century. While this appears positive, it is important to be clear on the respective roles of these sectors in relation to government. It is critical that there be clearly defined management objectives for each

countries protected area system as a whole, and that this provides the framework for the clarification of roles of different actors.

Implications for the Management of Visitors to Protected Areas

The new paradigm for protected areas is changing the way in which protected areas are being managed and being perceived around the world. There are many elements of the new paradigm highlighted at the 12003 WPC which will have significant implications for the management of visitors and the involvement of people in protected areas in the future. These include:

Tourism, focussed on protected areas, will continue to increase in the future

Tourism is a major issue for the management of protected areas. This reflects the major influence and impact of this sector, with tourism and related activities now contribute to over 10% of global GDP and over 8% of global employment. Clearly, this is an industry which can positively or negatively impact the world's economy, environment, and culture, in a very significant way.

The tourism sector is characterised by considerable diversification. Tourism based in and around protected areas is one of the future growth areas over the coming decades, particularly as leisure time, mobility and environmental awareness increase. Protected areas serve as magnets for tourists and also for tourism developers; thus posing significant challenges and also opportunities.

Tourism was highlighted at the 2003 WPC in a number of ways – through a range of side events, a major plenary session and also in the key outcomes from the Congress – the Durban Accord and Action Plan. Congress delegates underlined that tourism is a critically important issue for protected area managers and stakeholders at many levels and that this importance will only grow in the future.

Global tourism is growing rapidly and is significantly outpacing the growth of global Gross Domestic Product. Tourism focused on protected areas is increasing at a relatively greater rate within this overall global growth. In many coun-

tries this growth poses many challenges – on the one hand tourism provides a vital source of revenues for park agencies which, in some cases, are seeing their revenues from traditional government sources decreasing. As noted above in the examples from Canada, Australia and Costa Rica, tourism related to protected areas makes a major contribution to national economic growth.

Tourism also provides a key means for protected area agencies to realize their objectives relating to visitor appreciation and enjoyment. On the other hand poorly planned and unregulated tourism can cause many negative impacts such as environmental degradation on ecosystems within and around protected areas and can also negatively impact on the livelihoods of poor people.

Delegates to the 2003 WPC called for increasing recognition on the part of all involved in tourism – from the side of the protected area agency and from the side of the tourism industry. There is a need to learn from past experience and, in this light, publications such as this which share the rich experience from around the world in relation to tourism and protected areas - both good and bad - is particularly important. There is also a need for much more effective dialogue between the tourism and protected areas sector and Congress delegates called for forums to be set up to facilitate and encourage such interaction.

The main implications for the management of protected areas, particularly in relation to visitor management are that:

- Increasing tourism growth focussed on protected areas will mean that agencies will have to strengthen their planning and capacity building activities relating to tourism. In many cases this will require protected areas agencies to recruit more specialists in tourism and visitor management;
- Protected area agencies will have to cooperate more effectively with the tourism sector. In some cases this will involve protected area agencies being linked with tourism within the one government agency, such as is the case in Tasmania, Australia. In other cases it will involve the development of joint programmes and initiatives.

The example from Canada, where Parks Canada has developed an Accord with the Tourism Industry Association of Canada, provides a useful example in this regard.

There will be an increasing focus on urban protected areas

The World Parks Congress noted that half the world's population now lives in cities and this proportion is expected to grow to 60% by 2030. These trends are expected to accelerate after 2030. Protected areas provide major benefits for urban dwellers, including education, recreation, and also the protection of vital services for cities such as the provision of clean water. The links between protected areas and health is also becoming increasingly clear and has been demonstrated by such innovative programmes as the Parks Victoria (Australia) Programme: "Healthy Parks, Healthy People" which encourages people living in Victorian cities to use and enjoy protected areas.

It is clear that urban residents can gain greater appreciation and love for nature through positive experiences in natural areas and open spaces. The importance of such experiences is only likely to grow with increasing urbanisation. The need for urban protected areas for education is also very important. Experience highlighted at the 2003 WPC noted that the management of protected areas in urban settings poses a set of unique challenges, such as in relation to issues like the management of fire and invasive species.

There is also a strong link between urban populations and political support given that voters are increasingly concentrated in cities. The base of political support for protected areas needs to be mobilised and broadened. Protected area agencies can contribute to this by offering positive and energising opportunities for city dwellers to interact with nature.

The main implications for the management of protected areas, particularly in relation to visitor management are that

- Governments and protected areas agencies need to give more priority to the development of protected areas in and around urban areas;

- More emphasis needs to be given within protected area agencies to the development of programmes which promote the appreciation and enjoyment of nature by urban dwellers;
- The management of the interface between urban areas and natural areas will require special skills and effective outreach and communication strategies on the part of protected areas agencies; and
- Innovative programmes such as the “Healthy Parks, Healthy People” Programme in Victoria, Australia need to be more widely applied and the results communicated.

People, at all levels, have to be more involved in protected areas

One of the key elements of the new paradigm for protected areas is that protected areas management has to shift from being “against people” to being “with and for people”. A clear and strong message from the 2003 WPC was that local communities and indigenous peoples must be more effectively involved in protected areas at all levels. The Congress specifically emphasised that the rights of indigenous peoples must be fully respected and noted that the indigenous involvement in protected area management has increased although there is still a long way to go. This is particularly important as many indigenous peoples live in areas of high biodiversity and usually have unique knowledge of the natural environment which can be applied in protected area management.

Protected areas agencies around the world have developed a range of programmes for better involving local communities in protected area management. These include the development of Advisory Committees for national parks, volunteer programmes and a range of other mechanisms.

The main implications for the management of protected areas, particularly in relation to visitor management are that

- Programmes for involving local communities and indigenous peoples in protected areas need to be more widely applied;

- Protected areas agencies need to ensure they have staff with skills in community outreach and consultation. This will involve the recruitment of new staff with skills in this area as well as retraining of existing staff; and
- Innovative examples of community management of protected areas, such as Community Conserved Areas need to be more widely encouraged and applied

Better information on visitors to protected areas is required

The 2003 WPC Congress noted the importance of better data to underpin decisions relating to protected areas. This is particularly relevant in relation to visitor use of protected areas, where the absence of global data on visitor use of the world’s protected areas is a limiting factor in developing cohesive visitor and tourism related policies and frameworks. Information on visitors is currently not collected consistently within or between countries and there are few agreed definitions and approaches in relation to visitor monitoring. IUCN has recently published guidance on this issue (Hornback & Eagles 1999) and it is hoped that this will encourage the application of more consistent approaches to visitor monitoring within protected areas.

Visitor information also needs to be more effectively applied at all levels. At national levels this will require greater use of visitor monitoring data in the development of visitor management policies. At the global level there is a need to integrate visitor data within the UN List of Protected Areas and within the World Data base on protected Areas (WDPA).

The main implications for the management of protected areas, particularly in relation to visitor management are that

- More emphasis needs to be placed by protected areas agencies on the collection and application of visitor use information;
- Consistent frameworks and standards in this area, such as those set out in (Hornback and Eagles 1999) need to be adopted and applied;
- Visitor Use data needs to be incorporated with the UN List of Protected Areas.

Conclusion

Protected areas are a vital element of attempts by countries to conserve their biodiversity and to support sustainable development. The challenges facing protected areas are significant and the nature of the work of the protected area agency is changing rapidly and very significantly. Many of these challenges are encapsulated within the new paradigm on protected areas. The management of visitors to protected areas will be influenced by the new paradigm. In particular, protected area agencies will need to be more responsive to the needs of visitors and to the needs of local communities in and around protected areas.

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