



# NAPA

## News from African Protected Areas

Nouvelles des Aires Protégées en Afrique



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**Edito (WPC – 8 months)**  
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### Economics and common sense

Ecosystems, or simply the Earth, are the support for life and provide many benefits that are now grouped under the term "services" (so-called ecosystem services). These are vital common goods for all living species. A frequently used example is that of pollination by insects, which allows plants to develop their fruits, and therefore allows men to harvest them. Without insects, no more fruits. We can then calculate the economic value of the service rendered by our six-legged friends; either through calculation of the replacement cost of the labor insects would no longer provide, should they happen to disappear, or by calculating the economic loss that would result in the (no) crops. Another example is the ability of wetlands to purify water that is flowing through, to store carbon, to provide fish reproduction sites... all these are "profits" and we can calculate their economic value. These services are indeed the product of the main functions of nature, when man recognizes their value. They have been and are the subject of multiple quantifications, particularly with regard to water resources, timber forests and the carbon cycle...

But it is obviously very difficult to calculate this value: it is difficult to quantify and rarely easy to isolate, often subjective, always evolving. Yet figures are all but rare (a first estimate for the whole of nature had established the value of services at \$ 33,000 billion per year, a few years ago). The idea behind this is that it is easier to explain to the "decision-makers" how to make a good decision for nature if it is

presented to them in their own jargon (the economic vocabulary). Putting a price on those profits (hitherto considered free) will allow them to be integrated into national economic planning schemes, or in the financial tables of private companies. In short, nature is a market value like any other, and once well understood, it should receive as much attention as the other products which man craves.

This approach eventually cleaved the world into three categories: those who do not understand it or are absolutely not interested (they are by far the most numerous), those who understand and apply it (the "environmental economists"), and those interested in the subject but who are left on the sidelines (collectively known as idealists, which is pejorative in this case).

I am one of the latter.

Like many in the 90s, I thought these figures were THE solution. And certainly, in some cases, they have been a source for positive solutions when "enlightened" companies finally changed their practices to become more responsible. When they successfully integrated the cost of their mistakes or inaction and changed their consumerist philosophy. But we were told that the time of "old fashioned" conservation (understand "conserving nature for nature") was over and that the economy would finally fix everything. That allowing these professionals to be in power, we would see what we would see. Twenty years later, it is clear that the graphs worsen (for nature) and the profits, if any, went to companies and not to nature.

A recent study cited by Le Monde Diplomatique in December 2013 was telling us that the services provided by bats in the U.S. are worth \$ 22.9 billion.

This is the value of the insects they consume each year, thus preventing human needs for insecticides. What a shock for President Obama if he gets informed! Will he ask to have bat nesting boxes installed in all schools of the country or on the White House? Or inversely, carelessly lending his ear to a shrewder economist, he might order that we exterminate all the bats? More insects means more insecticides used, more chemicals, more packaging, more transportation, more sales, more intoxication, more medicine... in short, a thriving economy.

We got there because the world is now only governed by the economy (well, part of the world, which thinks itself more important than all the rest of the planet). But should we really adhere to this philosophy? Shouldn't we meditate on that?

Remain the ideals. And the idealists. For them, it is simple. They just believe that nature is the mother of all and we must respect our mother, whatever the opposing temptations. What can be the economic value of a viviparous toad (*Nimbaphrynoïdes occidentalis*) installed on top of Mount Nimba, in Guinea, compared to the economic value of the iron ore on which it is living (estimated at several dozen of US\$ billion)? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Yet it has its place here and now and it is certainly not the banknotes which will replace this small frog.

It's time to say it. Time to accept it. And time to deal with it.

So if some figures help in the conservation of protected areas, let's use them, okay, that's great. But do not forget that the intrinsic value of nature surpasses all the figures. And that our protected areas are desperately trying to preserve what can't be quantified...

The main topic of this NAPA is the last part of our study on the impact of major funding on PA conservation (see NAPA 71 and 72); we suggest here some ideas to improve the performance of this large funding and try to put us on the path of the development of a best practices guide for major projects...

To be continued

**WPC – 8 months to go!**



**Good governance and effective management of protected areas in Africa in 2014...**

**A message for the World Parks Congress**

**Sydney 2014**

As mentioned in NAPA n°72, IUCN-Papaco has received more than **150 applications** (coming from **33 countries in Africa**) following the call for proposal we launched, in the newsletters NAPA 70 and 71, in order to win a fully sponsored participation to the World Park Congress in Sydney, November 2014! Thanks to all who applied as all applications were of great value...

Selection has been done carefully and **22 applicants** have been selected coming from the following countries: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC Madagascar, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

The stories they tell us will be presented in next NAPA (n°74) in April.

**+ more info to come soon...**



**IUCN WORLD PARKS CONGRESS SYDNEY 2014**

*Parks, people, planet: inspiring solutions*

**12 – 19 November 2014**

**Call for Programme Content**

This call is open to all protected area professionals, business people, international development workers, community groups, young people, health professionals, researchers, NGOs and more!

**Do you have an inspiring story about how protected areas help your sector or business, or about how your sector helps protected areas? If so, you're invited to be part of the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014 by contributing your inspiring solutions to the WPC programme. Please download**

the [Guidelines for Proposals](#) document to learn more about the Congress programme and the kind of proposals that are expected.

(<http://www.worldparkscongress.org/downloads/Guidelines%20for%20Proposals.pdf>).

Proposals for programme content should be put forward as ideas, case studies, or events, as the World Parks Congress is not a scientific conference with a typical call for papers. It is organized into eight streams, each of which deals with a particular set of challenges for protected areas and related issues in the decade ahead. The leaders of the eight (8) streams will determine how the proposed content can be built into the programme. For example, content could be presented as part of a workshop, panel discussion, pavilion event or e-poster.

Please note that not all proposals can be included in the programme. Stream leaders will be looking for those proposals that best contribute to the objectives of each stream. Proposals can be made via the content proposal portal above. You will be asked to indicate the stream that your proposal best fits. You can also indicate if your proposal relates to one of the cross-cutting themes. Please read the Guidelines for Proposals document for further information about the streams, cross-cutting themes and the kinds of proposals we are seeking.

**All proposals must be completed and submitted in the content proposal portal by 15 March 2014.**

An assessment panel will review all applications submitted by the closing date. The assessment panel will make the final decision on which proposals will be considered in the stream programme. Assessment will be based on a diverse set of criteria, including topics and technical expertise, regional and sectoral representation, as well as gender, ethnic and geographic diversity of the participants. The decision of the assessment panel is final.

Applicants will be notified of their acceptance of their proposal by **30 April 2014**.

Applicants will be considered to have accepted the offer to contribute if the applicant has registered to attend the Congress and paid the registration fee by **30 June 2014**. Offers that are not confirmed via this process will be allocated to other applicants.

All enquiries regarding content proposals for the World Parks Congress programme should be emailed to [programme@worldparkscongress.org](mailto:programme@worldparkscongress.org).

## Results and effects of major conservation projects on protected areas in West and Central Africa (III/III): a few directions for improvement...

*As part of a project on improving the management of Protected Areas in West and Central Africa, with funding from the French Development Agency (AFD), the IUCN African Protected Areas & Conservation Program (PAPACO) entrusted Afrique Nature International with the mission of assessing the value and relevance of major conservation projects for protected areas at several levels: from design to implementation of projects, in terms of results produced, sustainability of actions and effects, as well as at the interface between the different phases of a programme. The findings and conclusions of this study will be used to draft a guide to good practice for the design and implementation of such projects. In NAPA 71, the context within which this reflection was based was recalled as well as the main forms of support for protected areas. Factors hindering achievement of results were exposed in NAPA 72 and the last piece on this evaluation proposes axes and directions that will feed future reflections on the development of this guide to good practice.*

**More information on [www.papaco.org](http://www.papaco.org)**

### SUGGESTED DIRECTIONS

Napa letters 71 and 72 paint a worrying picture of the situation for protected areas in West and Central Africa and the impact of the major projects that affect them. In addition to strengthening specific activities in protected areas, biodiversity conservation is expecting an improvement in many areas: organization of the natural resources informal exploitation, controls on hunting and management of the trade in game meat, land management, production of fuel wood around major urban centers, infrastructure planning and modernization of the agricultural sector. Not to mention broader issues bearing on governance, citizen information or independence of the judiciary...

Proposing axes of reflection runs the risk of falling into a list of good intentions. It is difficult to adhere to a few quick conclusions, and so these proposals cover several areas of intervention, in the hope that everyone will find an idea to develop or apply. And after passing through the filter of review and discussion, they will feed into recommendations to the good practice guide that Papaco would like to produce for “big” projects.

### 1) Pay more attention to the identification phase, then design, based on a thorough analysis of the problems

Defining the right intervention themes, choosing the right spatial scale of intervention, and relying on past experience is not a waste of time. Everyone wins, not by extending the period of preparation, but by improving it through providing the means to organize real consultations with all stakeholders. To this end, *Planning by Objectives* (ZOPP), is more efficient than *Management by Results* (MBR).

- *Devote more time to a participatory problem analysis*

If the basis for a project is not properly constructed, it is likely that the performance expected will not be achieved. In general, the extent of degradation of the natural environment is not highlighted enough and the complexity of factors affecting it is ignored. Giving more importance to the problem analysis is an absolute necessity.



*Consultation is always a must!!!*

- *Rely more on personnel resources and avoid studies without a direct link to problems that need to be solved*

Discarding from discussions a team that participated in the implementation of a previous phase weakens the consultation phase. The simple recourse to consultants to construct a project in a few days, when instead we should focus on discussion workshops, achieves the same result. Dialogue and interaction between stakeholders remain the only way to reach the right solutions.

- *Take into account lessons of the past and failures, particularly in terms of integrated conservation and development projects*

Too systematic a reconciliation between conservation and development is a cause of the

failure of some initiatives. Integrated conservation / development projects have shown their limits and none has achieved the desired results (Brandon and Wells, 1992; Kiss, 1994; Barret and Arcese, 1995, Oates, 1995; Ite, 1996; Noss 1997; Spinage, 1998; Wells et al, 1999. Adams and Hulme, 2001). But they are still presented as a panacea without being able to move from theory to practice. Taking into account the errors of the past should help us progress.

- *Take care of ownership through involving all relevant stakeholders*

Improving the identification and design phase means that we give more attention to consultation with all stakeholders so as to improve ownership of the project. This applies to all actors: if efforts are still needed to increase participation by civil society, we should not neglect public or semi-public administrations.

- *Take more account of risks and assumptions*

The statement of risks and important assumptions should not be an academic exercise undertaken lightly. Their management is essential to avoid pitfalls and implement the planned activities correctly.

- *Require logical intervention frameworks and promote pragmatism by freeing up from the obsession with innovation*

Promoting a spirit of openness to new approaches is desirable, but innovation should not be an obstacle to efficiency. The main point is to strengthen or build the foundations of management systems that are likely to persist, in a relevant and adaptive way. It is pointless to waste funds on projects that aim to be innovative when the very foundations of the management of protected areas are not assured

- *Demand real indicators of the achievement of results*

We need to concentrate on indicators of achievement of results as this is the most important level to ensure, and so verify, project success. Designers of proposals tend to overlook this crucial planning stage.

- *Check the adequacy between investment / recurring costs and the beneficiaries' ability to support them*

Unless the forms of support can be modulated, it is better to stop funding projects when we know in advance that their achievements cannot be perpetuated.

*In concluding this section devoted to project design, the important thing to focus on is a realistic choice of*

objectives and outcomes. That comes back to carefully checking the match between:

- firstly, the objective chosen and the expected results and, secondly, the time allocated to attain them
- the amount of proposed funding and the management capacity of the recipients
- the volume of proposed investment and opportunities for subsequent management of recurring costs.



*Projects must be adapted to the stakeholders' management capacities and needs.*

The conservation of protected areas would proceed better if we stopped referring to projects that are known to have resulted in failure. Providing sufficient funding for the design phase would be more consistent with the proposed intervention and would increase the chance of success, as does the fact of seeking to strengthen synergies with complementary initiatives.

**2) In addition to direct conservation action in protected areas, make land management (in the sense of rational use) the cornerstone of conservation of the natural environment, particularly in surrounding zones**

It is necessary to place protected areas in the context of their socio-economic environment, by giving priority to the soil conservation in the surrounding countryside. **This does not signify a reduction in specific support for protected areas;** it should just be a complementary procedure.

• *Give nature space*

We should focus on creating large reserves (if possible over 10 000 km<sup>2</sup>) to ensure the survival of species communities inhabiting African savannas and forests, favoring a single space over a series of smaller reserves. But without abandoning actions that can be justified for specific sanctuaries or conservation of localized species.

- *Planning rational land use at national level while ceasing to think that decentralization can be applied to all sectors*

Land management is not sufficiently taken into account and little attention is paid to the problem of land tenure. It is in the peripheral zones of protected areas and the maintenance of ecological connectivity between natural sites that a concern for harmonious land use makes complete sense. In the context of decentralization, poorly prepared local authorities cannot assume all the responsibilities hitherto performed by the State. Nature conservation depends on a harmonious land use policy considered at the highest level. It is idle to pretend we can maintain ecological processes without working at a whole-country scale. Large projects can contribute to this.

- *Continue efforts towards sustainable forestry*  
Starting in the mid-1990s, the move towards a sustainable use of woody vegetation has been a priority, with the development of forest management plans (including municipal and community forests) and forest certification. Improving the legal and institutional frameworks as well as forest governance will be essential.

- *Manage wildlife populations outside protected areas more rationally*

Particularly in Central Africa, rational management of wildlife for food is a priority. Attempts to breed forest species to supply urban markets have not had the desired effect and the implementation of methods of sustainable wildlife harvest represents the only realistic way to combine local needs for animal protein and sustainability of harvested species. This is subject to relying on a properly organized supply chain for urban centers, and again, on the implementation of an efficient regulation framework.



*Agriculture represents a serious threat for PAs' borders all over Africa*

- *Improve the performance of departments responsible for agriculture and livestock*  
Particularly in West Africa, conservation pays for the inability of departments responsible for agriculture and livestock to respond rationally to the needs of population' growth. Slash and burn agriculture has long been a dead end; there are solutions, combining new crop varieties adapted to fallows and methods of conserving soils. Approaches better suited to the current context and able to benefit from large-scale funding will be vital for PA conservation.

### 3) Pursue efforts of coordination and look for complementarities to gain synergies favourable to conservation

Major projects should build synergies by motivating other bilateral or multilateral aid and fostering broad stakeholder engagement. They should also provide an opportunity to better reach and contact all stakeholders and encourage the transfer of technology and skills.

- *Improve coordination between donors*  
Despite undeniable efforts to pool resources and the flow of information, coordination between donors needs to be improved, for example by introducing a system of meetings, at least quarterly, between partners involved in conservation of natural resources in a given place at a given time.

- *Set up alliances of interest groups*  
Major projects should resist the temptation to operate in isolation. Inviting other donor agencies to join a particular initiative would ensure continuity of action during interphases and expand the scope of support. Some institutions may in fact contribute to the establishment of trust funds or only guarantee investments, while others limit themselves to technical support etc.

Oppositions that could stand between major projects and small to medium scale initiatives, between programs operating on very different time and spatial scales, or between the project approach and the establishment of environmental funds, are not suitable. It is appropriate there too, to react pragmatically since these approaches are clearly complementary.

- *Seek long-term partnerships in strengthening civil society*

Several examples demonstrate that local communities, which are empowered and benefit from development of adequate capacity, are able to lead a protected area management process at an

appropriate size and status (communal or inter-communal). The form of association (at village, inter-village, provincial, national or sub-regional level) that is promoted by projects aiming to strengthen the capacity of civil society, contributes to better sustainability of the results generated by the support provided.

Even if some initiatives are beginning to take this path, associations remain undeveloped and national non-governmental organizations struggle to make their voices heard. Efforts should be made to encourage vocations and support initiatives over a sufficiently long period to enable them to obtain the functional autonomy that guarantees their freedom of expression.

- *Ensure better coherence and synergies in the design / implementation of development projects in the regions surrounding protected areas*

This means being concerned about the search for a pooling of possible approaches, while adapting as best one can to each case and context. Very often, good intentions are not turned into contributions, mainly due to lack of communication at the appropriate levels of decision-making.

- *Open the GEF to other operators*  
Hitherto, the monopoly of the ten agencies and regional banks authorized to receive GEF funds does not encourage an increased research of efficient results. For example, opening up to bilateral cooperation agencies with proven experience in project implementation would be a welcome alternative.

### 4) Pragmatism in the implementation phases

- *Begin by focusing during the first phase of a project on capacity building and operationalising of activities*

The first phase of a support program should focus on capacity building instead of engaging right away in implementing activities. It should also be an opportunity to organize teams to revisit, in terms of operability, project components or even the structure of the logical framework, when too long a period has elapsed since conception.

- *Simplify procedures*  
Provided they are planned from the design phase, solutions exist to adapt procedures to local contexts, for example in the form of "rolling budgets". But as a general rule, efforts are still needed to adapt to the conditions of small projects when they are integrated into a large-scale program.

- *Provide possibilities to adapt to crisis situations or unforeseen opportunities*

More latitude should be left to allow adaptation to a new context, under conditions that are well established in advance. Nothing is more disheartening than to see the inability of a project to respond to a new constraint, or to reorient, whether for internal or external reasons.

- *Respect commitments made by partners*

Several projects have seen their achievements nullified by a lack of respect of commitments undertaken on co-financing, resulting in a truncated implementation. The GEF has suffered many setbacks in terms of co-financing and firm, definitive agreements should be required before taking account of the announcement of intervention by a partner. This applies equally of course to States, whose support and commitment, with appropriate grant subsidies, will remain just as essential to the sustainability of conservation actions.

- *Integrate project structures better in their context*

The creation of autonomous project units is one of the main handicaps to good national ownership. Major projects would certainly have more durable and manifold effects if their management units were systematically housed within (sustainable) protected area management structures.

### **5) Invest or ensure minimum financing? And if the response was both: invest but also ensure appropriate technical support and minimum financing?**

In the majority of cases, the difficulty is not investing but ensuring minimal, if not optimal, functioning. Support should even be reversed compared to the current approach by donors. Indeed, these should no longer only finance investments but instead take on the recurring costs. Because States succeed much better, at least in the field of protected areas, when they have to invest rather than ensuring daily operations.

The establishment of sustainable financing mechanisms is an interesting approach but it can only succeed if the credibility of the receiving management agency is assured. Emphasizing once again that sustainable funding should in no case be a substitute for financial involvement by the state.

Concerning the volume of funding to be applied to *in situ* conservation of biological diversity, the figure of one euro per hectare per year for areas of several hundred thousand hectares is a good order of magnitude. Medium-sized projects, around 300 000 to 500 000 euros, are enough to deal with the daily

problems of conservation that may be encountered in a good number of protected areas. But on the express condition that it is accompanied by, over an adequate duration, right from the start, a gradual replacement of external support.

### **6) Evolve towards a tempo adapted to the sector and maintain consistency: prolong the period of support by attaching a cap to withstand the effects of fashion**

- *Plan for the longer term*

Apart from its contribution to technical and financial support, the presence of a donor is important in terms of interest in the project topic by the authorities concerned. From this point of view, extending the period of support would be one advantage but another would thus be to retain the ability to improve the choices made because the recipient would no longer have to spend everything in too short a period of time.

- *Know how to resist the effects of fashion*

One area requiring consistency sits uncomfortably with too frequent changes in the focus of interest. Passing from one fashion to another, favoring one approach or a group of actors for a few years (decentralization, conservation/development projects, creation of new parastatal management structures, community-based management, co-management, use of consultants then sub-regional organizations or NGOs, then public-private partnerships etc.) will not be a rational and sustainable response if one turns at regular intervals away from the target.



*Some species (like the Derbyian Eland in West Africa) deserve specific supports in order to avoid their extinction and should benefit from in situ conservation (see next paragraph)*

- *Initiate actions of pure protection, especially for endemics*

Protection is not a rude or obsolete word. The speed with which the forests of West and Central Africa are emptied of their wildlife to become "silent" and the organization of mafia systems, valuing everything that becomes rare, should make us aware that the current level of effort may conserve a substantial proportion of the natural vegetation cover but will not avoid the irretrievable loss of many endemic species and other biological resources. It is therefore necessary to fund simple protection operations for the last relict populations of species of special interest and major projects can also engage in this.

### 7) Increase the sustainability of results

As already noted, one should reflect more on the post-project periods right from the design phase. A good way to better ensure the sustainability of achievements would be to start by relying on structures existing at the time of identification and which have every chance of remaining in place, especially if they benefit also from a strengthening of their capacity for action.

If it is clear that this relates first of all to the national management body, it is also important to identify operators in the private sector and civil society to expand the circle of "conservation allies"; matching resources committed in relation to the financial and technical capacity of beneficiaries remains an inescapable element for the successful subsequent management of the gains.

However, these precautions will not be enough if sustainable financing mechanisms cannot be implemented, in addition to strengthening the commitment of States. The creation of a foundation dedicated to protected areas that can collect and store funding other than from grants or subsidies, such as those generated by new financing tools (REDD +, payment for environmental services ) must always be accompanied by efforts to improve the effectiveness of the management structure in charge of the places to be conserved.

### 8) Communicate!

- *Raise the alarm on the insidious erosion of biodiversity and stop ignoring past references*

To justify the success of an intervention, it is tempting to simply compare the results to a recent base point, but one then forgets to mention the enormous degradation of natural landscapes that occurred during the last half-century in the two sub-regions. Not using the knowledge of the past to compare with the situation of today significantly

skews the value of the results obtained. The erosion of biodiversity is ongoing and insidious, but we only pay attention to disruptions to the equilibrium. What is not brutal quickly becomes trivial and the absence of arguments in favor of conservation contributes enormously to general lack of interest in this cause.



*Children education is a priority that big funding should help addressing*

- *Make better use of media support for major projects in a world of communication*

In general, insufficient use is made of the weight the media can have on major projects to promote the conservation of protected areas. On a continent where verbal expression is culturally predominant, the means available can help to contribute significantly to information / education that need to be developed.

- *Improve communication between agencies and within project components*

Too many problems of information about the implementation of activities are encountered to not insist on the need to pay more attention to communication, whether between teams charged with implementation, between agencies pursuing similar goals and even between implementing agencies and donors.

- *Convey the message of conservation to those responsible for decision making at sub-regional level*

The emergence of regional or sub-regional organizations should also lead to improved environmental awareness among new employees at this level of decision-making where one is more and more away from the scale of intervention of most projects.



### 9) Take the debate to the political level and include the long-term in the thinking

The conservation of protected areas depends on many other choices at the national policy level than only natural resource management. Environmental concerns must become priorities, on the same level as the economy, education, health or security. They should be part of any government action when it is desired to initiate development in the proper sense of the word and not just simply growth.

Since they are at the heart of public aid policies, major projects give donors a good opportunity to bring the debate on conservation to the right level of decision making, that is, the top of the executive. Even more than the common citizens, politicians do not respond to degradation or progressive disturbances. Only disasters can mobilize them. The heads of major donor institutions should commit more to bringing the advocacy for conservation and its corollary, rational land-use, to the highest political level and also think of bringing, because it is often blatantly lacking, technical support in this matter.

### 10) Dare to attack bad governance

When highlights the need for optimum utilization of rural areas or the importance of planning and regulation measures, conservation of protected areas can only be achieved by a society and administration in full working order. This is not yet the norm in most countries of the two regions, particularly in areas related to conservation. Though one should never generalize, the future of protected areas in Central and West Africa depends on no less than improved governance of the sector and above all of state institutions. The issue of governance is central, as it is crucial for the implementation of systems of sustainable management of natural resources.

- *The duty to intervene*

When, in some fortunately isolated cases, nepotism is involved, is it normal to continue to waste taxpayers' money without intervening? Excessive "political correctness" and a very easy rejection of any interference become more cynicism than respect for the beneficiary institutions.

- *Selecting and stabilizing staff*

As there is no good reason for donors to accept something that their supervisory authorities would not tolerate in their own countries, institutional problems which are often at the base of excesses, should be at the heart of preliminary discussions on any major aid program. Where necessary, imposing conditionality on global aid programs is simply an act of humanism.

The competition for recruitment is a necessity for the emergence of new talent and executive recruitment should therefore be systematically managed by independent firms. Retaining in place, including in the post-project phase, staff provided by the beneficiary State according to an independent selection process, should be a contractual obligation. This coupled with the need to place the management centers of protected sites as close as possible to these sites.

- *Demand transparency in decision making*

Refraining from matching an aid program to criteria and rules of governance does not serve the cause of conservation. The current rate of loss of natural habitats, increasingly serious assaults on the environment, especially on large animals, organized by mafia-like systems, should lead donor agencies to adopt more proactive attitudes.

- *Improve management systems by distancing them from too strong a control by political power*

It seems quite normal that the departments responsible for protected area management report regularly and with full transparency on their work programs to partners and other stakeholders. Helping these managers to develop or improve monitoring and evaluation services and control (internal and external), with periodic evaluations and audits as a precondition for further external support, is the best way to strengthen their autonomy and capacity to investigate performance. Major projects should thus be more concerned with improving the effectiveness of management structures and services responsible for the conservation of protected areas.

- *Do not forget to apply the rules of good governance to donors themselves and to other stakeholders*

Sometimes decisions on intervention are still being taken in the final phase, according to the unspoken and inadmissible principle of "the decision goes back to the funder". The HQs of donor institutions would also benefit from sometimes being more vigilant about the conduct of competitive bidding organized by their own services.

Concerning actors in the world of conservation, the opacity of NGO management and, curiously, their deficit in policy dialogue, are missed by many partners. In order to be good, governance cannot be exercised only in one direction.

- *Inform and train*

Substantive actions concerning governance should be led and target different bodies, such as Justice (judges and prosecutors), the territorial government or the security forces and defense, in addition to management authorities of protected areas and without omitting members of governments who can access their high position without any preparation.

### 11) Stop thinking that the regional approach is a panacea

The regional approach can only be discussed when it concerns information sharing, monitoring of the condition of natural environments, training, policy harmonization and the fight against cross-border or international trade in products of flora or fauna. It cannot be systematically recommended for conservation of protected areas, as this plays out primarily at local and national levels.

- *Take account of national diversity and reserve the regional approach for issues where it provides real added value*

The differences are too great between conservation services of two neighboring countries to continue to believe that the same tempo could be applied to all components of a regional project.

- *Avoid transforming regional structures that coordinate sectoral policy into implementing agencies*

- Institutions and regional networks have their purpose, but the current trend to entrust implementation to them can lead to a loss of available resources and goes against the fundamental principle of subsidiarity.

### 12) In the absence of conditionality, establish at least a contractual dialogue

Conditionalities have been gradually banned from the diplomatic then technical vocabulary. If dialogue is to be encouraged at all times and all places, the least we can ask would be for it to be contractual and binding when it results in an agreement.

- *Abandon disinterested attitudes that look like cynicism*

Contractual dialogue should clearly demonstrate the potential for suspension of the project and allow discussion about the composition of steering committees which are too often excessively linked to beneficiary institutions or managers, in the protected area sector. A partnership worthy of the name must include, in the agreement between the parties, the withdrawal of the donor as a possible hypothesis.

- *Improve the monitoring capacity of donor agencies*

Drastic staff cuts in aid and development agencies no longer permit adequate monitoring of project implementation. If a solution to the lack of staff cannot be found, external monitoring and evaluation systems should be established to allow timely alerts and change direction when needed. This would imply a less episodic support that could be provided by outsourcing this task, complementary to the usual evaluations at mid-term and the end of projects.



*Big projects can make a difference for biodiversity conservation if they are well managed and efficiently implemented*

## CONCLUSION

Probably as it happens in other regions, major projects have made an undeniable contribution to the cause of protected areas conservation. They have often taken up the challenge of restoring a situation after the almost total loss of control of a natural site. They have always allowed the biodiversity of the areas concerned to be maintained or the process of degradation to be reduced, and indirectly contributed to the fight against climate change.

Compared to medium-sized projects, they generally offer the advantage of a longer presence even if some effects will often be jeopardized by an abandonment of efforts during the interphase. But cumbersome decision-making processes, the persistence of ill-adapted procedures in the conservation sector and the mobilization of civil society as well as a lack of political commitment, coupled with a lack of voluntarism, considerably encumber the sustainability of achievements and the impact of these major projects.

Maintaining most of the beneficiaries in a "project culture" contributes significantly to this lack of recognition of the support provided. The task of

information / education / communication is greater than ever.

Success obviously cannot depend only on major projects. It will pass first through a profound change in attitudes in the countries concerned. Creating conservation alliances, pooling various complementary approaches, and above all the actors in different sectors, will allow bringing their contributions in support of protected area management and managers. But also we need to provide the services responsible for the conservation of natural resources with more than symbolic means to enable them to properly accomplish their mission which is of global interest.

It is pointless to delude ourselves: most states in the two regions will not be able to continue the activities initiated by major projects. The conservation of protected areas will remain dependent on external public or private assistance, probably for a long time given the current increase in pressures of all kinds. And this support for a field too often neglected by governments must remain large-scale, in terms of financial volume. It must also respond to conservation challenges and provide technical assistance, still being necessary whether contributing to advocacy or in specific areas.

Demanding more financial and technical assistance is not an automatic reflex: if the aid provided on a global basis for the conservation of protected areas is examined in detail, discussions and administrative aspects far outweigh the effects obtained on the ground. The path of pragmatism should be remembered: we are looking for intervention at appropriate and complementary scales, better identification of needs, more attention to the selection of actors and stakeholders by involving them as early as possible in the sake of ownership, commitment to sustainability of results including ensuring the adequacy of aid management capabilities and opportunities for higher cover recurrent costs. In a figurative way, some people are quick to translate this as "put in less money over more time." This is a short-cut as easy as it is dangerous, because on the contrary, the conservation of protected areas and the sustainable management of their peripheral areas are far too underfunded.

Any cooperation implies the shared commitment of both parties. This conclusion cannot ignore the States and beneficiary services. A great step would be made if the national parties undertook more efforts in planning and strove to present a vision for the conservation of protected areas so that the actions of their partners were included in their own

programmatic areas. This would imply, on their part, abandoning the simple request for means to permanently engage in logical outcomes and performance monitoring. Since it is a question of planning, how many states are prepared for the consequences of the fourfold population increase on the continent predicted during this century? Not only in terms of drastically increasing pressure on the environment but also in education, health and employment?

Safeguarding protected area networks, particularly in Central and West Africa will be a huge task, claiming to balance resolving emergencies with the implementing of actions over time. More than ever, in these two areas where national parks are so poorly represented (see Napa 71), improved support from large aid agencies will be essential to address such problems.

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This study has been realized in partnership with Afrique Nature International ([www.afriquenature.org](http://www.afriquenature.org))

More on [www.papaco.org](http://www.papaco.org)

### The Earth Skills Network: Training and Mentoring to Support Management Effectiveness

African World Heritage Sites and Protected Areas are invited to apply to an innovative skill sharing programme that will develop the capacity of Sites to meet organisational challenges.

Earthwatch has launched the Earth Skill Network and applications for funded training in 2014 close **on 28<sup>th</sup> March**. Read on for more information, or visit the Earthwatch website to download your application pack on: <http://eu.earthwatch.org/corporate-partnerships/partnering-with-earthwatch/earth-skills-network-2014/earth-skills-network-2014-protected-area>

### What is the Earth Skill Network?

The Earth Skills Network (ESN) is a unique collaboration between Earthwatch, UNESCO, IUCN and the business community. ESN connects leaders from the business and conservation world through mentoring and skill-sharing opportunities, focusing on strengthening protected area management.

ESN arises from an understanding that, although protected area managers have a wealth of ecological knowledge and practical skills, there are a wider suite of business skills, which do not typically form a large part of staff training.

Companies have a wealth of experienced staff and spend a lot of resources on training for effective business management, so the Earth Skills Network brings together experienced business mentors, recruited from the corporate world, with managers from Protected Areas, World Heritage Sites and management authorities, in a mentor-mentee relationship to transfer key business skills.

This training helps to ensure that sites have a strong organizational foundation and a strategic approach to management. It also increases understanding within the business community of the important role Sites play in safeguarding vital ecosystem services, upon which communities and businesses depend. ESN builds on five years of training UNESCO World Heritage Sites through the 'Business Skills for World Heritage' programme. Here's what Kishore Rao, Director of the World Heritage Centre had to say about this initiative, *"In a world where an MBA is considered a pre-requisite to managing any private sector company, it seems odd that management training is not readily available to those looking after some of the planet's most precious wilderness areas. I am delighted that this unique collaboration is building the expertise of the custodians of our natural heritage."*

### Why is the ESN relevant to me and my organization?

Most protected area site managers are trained biologists with several years of field experience, giving them solid grounding to respond to the wide range of challenges they face, from managing forest fires to counteracting poaching. However, effectively managing protected areas requires additional skill sets, which that are not always part of traditional staff training. Management challenges go beyond ecosystem health and include those related to running a Site's organisational systems and processes. If a protected area lacks organisational effectiveness then it will be compromised in its ability to deliver on management objectives.

By training staff in essential business management skills the ESN can help to ensure effective operations at your

Site. Applying these skills will help your organisation to make better use of available resources, identify and prepare responses to potential risks, develop the foundations for sustainable financing of activities, and much more. By joining the Earth Skills Network your organisation can:

- Access a fully-funded training programme in business planning and effective management.
- Receive mentoring from an expert with significant business experience in an international organisation, helping your site to take a strategic approach to tackling specific issues.
- Support the professional development of staff, helping them to develop the leadership competencies required to put their skills into practise.
- Network, connect with and support staff from other African protected areas.
- Have an opportunity for constructive dialogue with members of the business community, potentially with companies that are operating in your region.

### How is the programme structured?

The ESN training is focused around a 10 day intensive residential training, which takes place in Kenya and is co-delivered by a team of learning and business professionals. During the residential training, three protected area staff from one Site work with a business mentor to review the specific business challenges they face, and to develop a plan for applying the skills developed during the training. After the residential training, protected area managers continue to work with a business mentor to achieve their objectives for at least 12 months. Support, guidance and encouragement from the mentor and Earthwatch, combined with senior management support on the ground ensure effective outcomes.



*Business mentors and Site managers meet in Kenya for a 10 day training programme*

### What is the impact of the training?

Earthwatch have been running skills sharing programmes for five years, and have trained nearly 80 staff. These individuals return to their Site with new skills and motivation, and the support of a business mentor to help them put what they have learnt into practise. On the ground ESN is helping in numerous ways. For example, at one site the mentor and mentees have identified \$25,000 a year in cost savings, have organised a community engagement forum and are working on a number of

initiatives to enhance revenue generation through ecotourism. Here's what one protected area manager had to say about his experiences, "All I learnt from this program will help me to improve the management of the site where I work, and I will share it to my colleagues... We are now in a change process, to have a more entrepreneurial kind of management, instead of waiting for funds from donors, to be creative"



Business mentor from Shell working with the Director of Marojejy National Park, Madagascar

#### How can I find out more?

The application period for ESN is open until **March 28<sup>th</sup>** and Earthwatch are pleased to be able to offer fully funded training bursaries to 9 sites in Africa. Training will take place in October 2014. For more information and to apply visit the Earthwatch website, or contact Stacey Baggaley (sbaggaley@earthwatch.org.uk).

#### Must read

#### Sustainability of Forestry in Central Africa? Fighting against corruption: lessons learnt from RRI in Cameroon.

Marius TALLA: Spécialiste de la gestion du changement et de la lutte contre la corruption. Coach Rapid Results Initiatives.  
Romain CALAQUE: Coordonnateur Afrique Centrale pour les politiques et appuis aux programmes de Conservation de WCS

In addition to being threatened by soaring demographics and poor local governance, the Central African forest is further endangered by unsustainable forestry activities. Most of these are illegal and simultaneously affect the financial autonomy of the state, the survival of good practice businesses, the quality of life in rural communities as well as the survival of biodiversity. Low-impact techniques and political and economic incentives have been validated mainly through certification, but they remain marginal when measured against bad practices: indeed, this crisis is not a technical one, but one linked to governance. The decision-making process in the forestry sector with regards to law-enforcement is seriously undermined by rampant corruption, which leads to the forest's overexploitation and ultimately to its decline. However, the fight against corruption in this sector is gathering strength in the sub-region, including Cameroon, where innovative methods such as Rapid Results Initiatives (RRI) have been tested. When it comes to the transport of timber from community forests of eastern Cameroon between Bertoua and N'gaoundéré for instance, the Rapid Result Initiatives has resulted in the complete removal of the illegal racketeering road blocks within 100 days. Through field-players coaching of concrete objectives quickly achievable, this method has proved suitable to promote relevant practices and induce a change of mentality, despite the many obstacles created by corruption. The fight against corruption in Cameroon is based on a national strategy and requires multi-pronged approach, such as public expenditure tracking and promotion of whistleblowers. By combining the Rapid Result Initiatives with others tools of the fight against corruption, the law-abiding forest sector stakeholders, whether public, private, community and international partners can simultaneously contribute to the conservation of forest resources for future generations, and set an example for others sectors to strengthen the rule of law, which is essential for sustainable and equitable emergence of Central Africa. - Download the document at: <http://bit.ly/1fyhnxO>

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*The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of IUCN*