

Part Two

Chapter 4

introduction to values

Natural Values

Cultural Values

Economic Values

Social Values

Recreational Values

Identification of values

The values assessed by the Independent Scientific Committee (ISC) related to the natural and cultural heritage phenomena of the park and its social, recreational and economic aspects. These values are: earth sciences, soils, karst, aquatic, flora, fauna, landscape, fire, cultural and social heritage, tourism and recreation, economic valuation and the economic value of tourism.

The information for identifying values was drawn from existing documents and data sources; given the time and resources available, the ISC did not attempt an exhaustive compilation of all of the knowledge about the park's values, and for the same reason no new research was conducted.

Criteria used for assessing values

Condition

The criteria used for assessing condition were derived from existing recognised reporting frameworks or structures. The assessments include concepts of dependency, fragility, isolation and dispersion. In describing condition, some reference point or desired outcome is typically ascribed; for example, in vegetation assessments, pre-1750 extant is commonly used. However, it was considered inappropriate and outside the scope of the ISC to use such an approach for economic and social values; thus, in the chapters concerning these values, assessments of condition are not validated by describing reference conditions.

“The values assessed by the Independent Scientific Committee (ISC) related to the natural and cultural heritage phenomena of the park and its social, recreational and economic aspects.”

Trend in condition

Description of trend in condition is appropriate for some values but not others; where possible it has been measured within known timescales and referenced to the initial condition statement. The following measures were used as a guide:

- improving generally;
- improvement slight or patchy;
- no net change;
- declining in some places; and
- widespread or large declines.

Significance

Statements of significance have traditionally been used in natural and cultural heritage assessment. For this report, the concept has been extended to the recreational, social and economic values of the park to provide a comprehensive platform for analysis. Statements of significance were completed for each attribute of Kosciuszko National Park's values. The legal status (if any) formed part of this statement. The significance measures agreed to initially by the ISC were:

- international: not found 'commonly'¹ in the world;
- national: not found 'commonly' in Australia;
- state: not found 'commonly' in New South Wales;
- regional: not found 'commonly' in the Alps; and
- local or park: not found 'commonly' in the shires or park/shires.

These criteria were further developed and refined as the ISC's work proceeded.

Pressures

Pressures may arise from indirect or underlying societal and economic processes, or from activities that act directly on values, sometimes called proximate causes. A pressure on a value indicates that the value may be degraded unless the pressure is removed, reduced, or appropriately managed and its effects mitigated. Identification of pressures and their impacts is a valuable means of identifying where management strategies need to be developed.

Opportunities

The ISC identified positive management opportunities for some values, particularly those related to the legislative duties on National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to provide educational enjoyment and understanding of the park's natural and cultural values. These opportunities can be considered in the review of the plan of management.

Knowledge gaps

Knowledge gaps that require further research or data to elucidate significant or potentially significant values were evaluated for each of the value areas. These will assist in the future understanding, conservation and management of Kosciuszko National Park's significant values.

¹ 'commonly' is taken to mean usually, generally, ordinarily

Indicators

The ISC was asked to identify key performance indicators required for the management of the park's vales, to provide managers with the data and capacity to make informed decisions. These are of a strategic nature and focus on practical, achievable and repeatable monitoring.

Peer review

All papers in this report have been peer reviewed by other professionals in the appropriate fields or by other ISC members. The peer review process was considered important in order to meet academic standards and maintain an objective assessment.

