

# Using Tourism as a Tool for the Conservation of Protected Areas

Proceedings and papers presented at the  
2004 World Conservation Congress



# Table of Contents

1. 3 <sup>rd</sup> IUCN WORLD CONGRESS BANGKOK NOVEMBER 17 – 25 2004 .....	5
2. INTRODUCTION: TOURISM AT THE WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS .....	7
3. SPONSORED WORKSHOPS .....	11

## 3.1. UNESCO World Heritage Forum

World Heritage: Generating Support for Local Tourism Enterprises .....	12
Program.....	13
Introduction.....	14
Presentations .....	17
<i>Maureen Cunningham, Project Manager, Rare.....</i>	17
<i>Terence Hay-Edie, UNDP/BDP/GEF Small Grants Program .....</i>	22
<i>Art Pedersen, World Heritage Tourism Program, World Heritage Centre, UNESCO.....</i>	27
<i>Andy Drumm, Senior Ecotourism Specialist, The Nature Conservancy.....</i>	32
<i>Cornelius Van der Lugt Business and Industry Section, UNEP.....</i>	36
Panel Discussion: Responses from World Heritage Site Managers.....	38
<i>Francisco Usura, Director, Sian Ka'an Reserve and World Heritage Site, Mexico .....</i>	38
<i>Cristina Zea Ophelan, Bolivia National Service for Protected Areas, Noel Kempff Mercado National Park and World Heritage Site, Bolivia.....</i>	38
<i>Dr. Matheus Halim, Manager, Komodo National Park and World Heritage Site, Indonesia.....</i>	40
<i>Do Pantanal Matogrossense World Heritage Site, Brazil.....</i>	40
<i>Belize Marine Barrier Reef World Heritage Site, Belize .....</i>	41
<i>Yang Rui, Director, Institute of Resource Protection and Tourism, Tsinghua University, China.....</i>	42

## 3.2. The Nature Conservancy Workshop

Ecotourism as a Strategy to Promote Conservation and Environmentally Responsible Development .....	44
Program.....	45
Introduction.....	46

Panel Presentations.....	47
<i>Andy Drumm, Senior Ecotourism Specialist, The Nature Conservancy.</i>	47
<i>Cristina Zea Ophelan, Bolivia National Service for Protected Areas,</i>	
<i>Noel Kempff Mercado National Park and World Heritage Site, Bolivia</i>	53
<i>Rili Djohani, Director of the Indonesia Program, The Nature</i>	
<i>Conservancy, Komodo National Park and World Heritage Site,</i>	
<i>Indonesia. ....</i>	58
<i>Art Pedersen, World Heritage Tourism Program, World Heritage</i>	
<i>Centre, UNESCO.....</i>	63
 <b>3.3. The IUCN Netherlands Workshop</b>	
Biodiversity and sustainable tourism, IUCN related practices & policy.....	67
Program.....	67
Introduction.....	69
Presentations .....	70
<i>Robyn Bushell (Vice Chair- WCPA Tourism Task Force).....</i>	70
<i>Pham Trung Luong (Department of sustainable tourism Research and</i>	
<i>development, Vietnam) and Nguyen Minh Thong (country</i>	
<i>Representative IUCN Vietnam) .....</i>	70
<i>Anthea Stephens (IUCN South Africa/Fair Trade for Tourism South</i>	
<i>Africa) .....</i>	70
<i>Marielies Schelhaas (Netherlands Committee for IUCN) .....</i>	71
<i>Report from the WCPA Task Force on Tourism and Protected Areas...</i>	74
 4. TOURISM TRAINING SESSIONS FOR THE INSTITUTE @ IUCN.....	81
 <b>4.1. Planning Effective Natural and Cultural Heritage Interpretation</b>	
<b>Strategies</b>	
Program.....	83
 <b>4.2. Tourism Planning In and Around Protected Area</b>	
Program.....	87
<i>Andy Drumm, Senior Ecotourism Specialist, The Nature Conservancy</i>	
<i>Dr. Craig MacFarland, The Center for Protected Area Management</i>	
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## **1. 3<sup>rd</sup> IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS, BANGKOK, NOVEMBER 17 – 25, 2004**

The World Conservation Congress is the general assembly of IUCN, providing the opportunity for IUCN's worldwide constituency of members, Commission members, stakeholders and partner organizations to share information and experiences about their work in conservation. The Congress encompasses three principal elements: conducting the business of the Union, assessing the work of IUCN Commissions and taking stock of conservation.

While the extinction crisis intensifies, the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress has shown how reliable information and extensive know-how, a deep-rooted passion for life in all its forms, and powerful collaboration with all sectors of society can improve the wellbeing of six billion people and the 15,589 species identified in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

The nine days of the Congress underlined the concrete benefits of conservation action to poverty reduction and a healthy planet, and the effectiveness of the approaches and tools we have at our disposal. With huge areas of wilderness being lost every day, 1.4 billion people living along rivers with serious water shortages, glaciers and polar caps melting due to a 0.6 oC increase in temperature, the conservation movement now invites the world: work with us to reverse the trend.

Participants heard the world's latest scientific knowledge presented, saw landmark initiatives launched, took part in high-level debates, signed a number of agreements, and voted on over 100 resolutions on critical conservation issues, ranging from Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) to the conservation of our oceans.

"The decisions taken in Bangkok have the power to affect every single one of us," said IUCN Director General, Achim Steiner. "They have demonstrated the role of conservation in peace building, poverty eradication, food and water security, health and spirituality, and economic development. The global environmental agenda in 2004 is more than just a manifesto; it is a concern of global relevance and collective responsibility."

Her Imperial Highness Princess Takamado, Honorary President of BirdLife International, implored humankind to deal with the underlying causes of species loss and “think about the state of the world in the same way that we consider our own health”.

This premier conservation event attracted 4,899 people from all walks of life and from across the globe, including almost 1,000 of the world’s leading scientists, over 200 business representatives, more than 40 Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Environment, Agriculture, Tourism and Fisheries, as well as hundreds of conservationists, community and religious leaders.

The Congress, which takes place each 3 or 4 years, is designed to:

- define the general **policy** of IUCN;
- make **recommendations** to governments and to national and international organizations on any matter related to the objectives of IUCN;
- receive and consider the **reports** of the Director General, the Treasurer, the Chairs of Commissions and recognized Regional Committees and Fora; receive the auditors report and approve the audited **accounts**;
- consider and approve the **Programme** and **financial plan** for the period until the next ordinary session of the World Congress; ■
- determine the **dues** of members of IUCN; ■
- determine the number of **Commissions** and their **mandates**;
- **elect** the President, Treasurer, Regional Councillors and Chairs of Commissions.

The Congress further provides:

- a **forum for debate** on how best to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable;
- an opportunity for **contact** and informal **exchanges** between representatives of IUCN’s members, Commission members and the wider IUCN constituency.

For full details of the Congress and its outputs, see  
<http://www.iucn.org/congress/index.cfm>

## **2. INTRODUCTION: TOURISM AT THE 3<sup>rd</sup> IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS**

Tourism and biodiversity have a strong relationship that can be both positive and negative. The relationship is frequently discussed in relation to the threat of increasing pressure on natural areas due to escalating visitation and nature based recreation activities. While tourism and recreation can degrade natural areas, they can also facilitate protection. They can supplement funding of nature management and give a direct economic value that provides an incentive for local communities and governments to protect the natural environment. The importance of tourism is increasing, as one of the world's largest and growing economic sectors. For these reasons, it was an important component of the 3<sup>rd</sup> IUCN World Conservation Congress.

### IUCN and Tourism

Tourism, as a form of sustainable use of biodiversity, is a subject that relates to the activities of many different IUCN bodies. The World Commission for Protected Areas (WCPA) has had an a [Taskforce on Tourism & Protected Areas](#) since 1997, chaired by Professor Paul Eagles. Tourism related issues also touch on the activities of several other commissions within IUCN, such as the Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy and the Commission on Education and Communication.

The Task Force on Tourism & Protected Areas coordinated the integration of tourism-related issues into various sessions at the World Conservation Congress. The Task Force has also produced a number of internationally recognized publications for IUCN, some in collaboration with UNEP and the World Tourism Organisation.

(see <http://www.ahs.uwaterloo.ca/rec/taskforce/tmsoref.htm>)

At the regional and national level and within IUCN national committees, there are several tourism programmes and projects. IUCN Vietnam has a tourism programme and has supported communities in setting up community based tourism projects for frequent independent travelers and clients from tour operators. IUCN in South Africa founded the Fair Trade for Tourism Initiative which certifies accommodations that

operate in a sustainable manner. The Netherlands Committee for IUCN has a tourism programme which develops education materials for tourism colleges, advises tour operators and manages a small fund for field projects with tourism activities that contribute to conservation. Member organizations and affiliates of IUCN with a tourism programme include UNESCO, UNEP, The Nature Conservancy (see [www.nature.org/ecotourism](http://www.nature.org/ecotourism)), Conservation International, WWF and Birdlife International. All presented displays, posters, workshops and/or training courses at the Congress dealing with tourism and conservation.

### Contents Overview

This report provides a record of the key sessions where tourism and conservation issues were discussed. Copies of the power point presentations associated with each session are also provided and can be viewed by clicking on the highlighted text ‘[PowerPoint presentation](#)’ below each session title.

The key sessions involved three sponsored workshops, two training workshops and a roundtable discussion.

### Sponsored Workshops

#### 1. UNESCO – World Heritage Centre

##### *World Heritage: Generating Support for Local Tourism Enterprises*

World Heritage status may be used to enhance financial capital flows and knowledge in support of local sustainable tourism enterprises. Generating this support is thought to be crucial to effective conservation. Case studies and ideas from experts in the field using World Heritage status toward this end are discussed.

#### 2. The Nature Conservancy

##### *Ecotourism as a strategy to promote conservation and environmentally responsible development*

Tourism is a growing threat to biodiversity, yet ecotourism and sustainable tourism provide opportunities to establish sustainable conservation finance mechanisms and



promote environmentally responsible development in areas important for conservation. This workshop presents cases from the field and new strategies to achieve conservation goals through tourism management and ecotourism development.

### 3. IUCN - Netherlands

#### *Biodiversity and Tourism: IUCN practices & policy*

In this workshop the relationship between biodiversity and tourism was explored through current projects of IUCN (IUCN Vietnam, Fair Trade for Tourism South Africa, Netherlands Committee for IUCN, WCPA Tourism Task Force). The role of tourism, and visitor management to the IUCN was discussed.

#### Training Programs in The Institute @ IUCN Bangkok

##### 1. *Planning effective natural and cultural heritage interpretation strategies for visitors to PAs*

conducted by the University of Western Sydney, Australia

This half day workshop focussed on the role of interpretation in heritage management; different approaches to interpretation, how to design, implement and evaluate a programme in a variety of settings; and how to use interpretation to encourage local communities to value and protect their natural and cultural heritage.

##### 2. *Tourism Planning in and around Protected Areas*

conducted by The Nature Conservancy

This half day workshop, which was attended by over eighty conservation professionals, aimed to familiarize participants with some of the key issues and dynamics involved in ecotourism management and development by utilizing the newly published Ecotourism Development Manual and by building awareness of the Conservancy's systematic approach to ecotourism development in and around protected areas.

Dr. Craig MacFarland of the University of Colorado provided an introduction to the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) methodology as a key tool for ensuring tourism's sustainability in protected areas with reference to specific site applications in Latin America. The workshop also facilitated the sharing of experiences and generated discussion from participants.

### Roundtable Discussion

Tropical Resources Institute presented a roundtable discussion on *Birdwatching and Nature based Tourism*. The discussion explored the potential of international bird watching ecotourism to help protect the world's great variety of bird species and the ecosystems the birds inhabit, while also improving the quality of life for individuals and communities around the globe.

Robyn Bushell,  
Convenor, WCCC Tourism Program  
and Vice-Chair WCPA Taskforce on Tourism & Protected Areas.

Sponsored Workshops  
at  
World Conservation Congress

## Workshop 1

### UNESCO World Heritage Forum



## *World Heritage: Generating Support for Local Tourism Enterprises*

# **World Heritage: Generating Support for Local Tourism Enterprises**



## **Program**

**18th October 2004, 7:30pm to 10:00pm**

### **1. Presentations** – *“Factors in providing capital and other benefits to local communities in support of tourism goods and services”*

Facilitator: Professor Robyn Bushell, University of Western Sydney and Co-Chair WCPA Tourism Task Force

- Maureen Cunningham, Project Manager, Rare
- Terence Hay-Edie UNDP/BDP/GEF Small Grants Programme
- Arthur Pedersen, UNESCO, World Heritage Centre
- Andy Drumm, Director, Senior Ecotourism Specialist The Nature Conservancy
- Cornelius van der Lugt, Business & industry Div, UNEP

### **2. Panel and open discussion** – *“Actions for generating capital and support for local tourism enterprises. Ideas for World Heritage contribution to this effort”*

Panel Members:

- Francisco Usura, Director, Sian Ka'an Reserve and WH site
- Cristina Zea Ophrlanv, Bolivia national Service for Protected Areas,
- Noel Kempff Mercado World Heritage
- Dr. Matheus H. Halim, Manager Komodo National Park and WH site
- Ir. M. Awriya Ibrahim, Manger Ujung Kulon National Park and WH site
- Representative, Pantanal World Heritage site
- Representative, Belize Barrier Reef WH site
- Yang Rui, Director, Institute of Resource Protection and Tourism, Tsinghua University, The Three Parallel Rivers National Park and WH site

# **World Heritage Generating Support for Local Tourism Enterprises**

## **Synopsis**

Dr. Russell Staiff  
Tourism for Healthy Futures  
University of Western Sydney

### **Introduction**

World Heritage status may be used, it is argued, to enhance financial capital flows and knowledge in support of local sustainable tourism enterprises. Generating this support is thought to be crucial to effective conservation.

Art Pedersen, from the World Heritage Tourism Program, World Heritage Centre, UNESCO organised the workshop and provided the background.

He began the workshop by explaining the relationship between World Heritage and tourism. He firstly noted the two sectors of World Heritage: the World Heritage Committee and its two advisory bodies IUCN and ICOMOS plus the World Heritage Program that was responsible for policies and approaches at World Heritage Sites. Community development, for example, was within the brief of the World Heritage Program and tourism was one dimension of this work. There are two main domains of World Heritage tourism activities: (1) issues related to impacts are handled by the World Heritage Committee through the advisory bodies, IUCN and ICOMOS; (2) policies and approaches to tourism management are dealt with by the World Heritage Tourism Program, including innovative work like that of Rare (see Maureen Cunningham's presentation below).

The aim of the workshop was to brainstorm both ideas and obstacles to getting benefits to local communities from World Heritage Sites and, in particular, generating these benefits through local tourism initiatives.

A background statement and workshop brief was distributed before the meeting.

### Background

Generating capital and support for tourism enterprises that are significantly owned and managed by local communities is thought to be necessary for effective conservation of protected areas. It is assumed that by providing an alternative economic source to the more extractive industries, such as timber, or mining, negative impacts to site resources can be diminished and site values retained.

Providing this financial capital and know how to entrepreneurs has proven difficult. Training of local entrepreneurs has proven expensive and time consuming. The quality of local products may not be the standard desired by the majority of tourists. Coordination of tourism activities with protected areas has not been a regular practice. The process of building solid relations with the tourism industry and mobilizing the industry to contribute to biodiversity conservation has also proven difficult, limiting positive results. While gains to address these issues have begun to bear fruit, their full potential has not been realized and additional work is needed to bring these processes to maturity.

It is believed that World Heritage status can play a positive role in the sustainable tourism efforts to attract both capital and support for local tourism activities. Through the World Heritage Tourism Programme, begun in 2001, the World Heritage Centre and its partners have been involved in activities to maximize local economic and conservation benefits. This includes using World Heritage status to help engage the tourism industry to support local businesses.

### Workshop description

The workshop will provide ideas on the role of the World Heritage Centre and its partners in helping to generate capital flows and in kind services to support the development of local tourism products and services in and around World Heritage sites. The workshop will be used to gain advice for the World Heritage activities to address this objective. Key workshop questions upon which presenters and panel discussion will focus are: 1) what are the factors limiting the provision of benefits to local communities for their tourism goods and services, 2) what are the actions needed to generate capital and input to support these local tourism activities, and 3) what is the role of World Heritage in this mix?

A series of talks on, lessons learned and ideas related to generating capital and support to local tourism enterprises will be first presented.

This part of the workshop will be one hour in length and will include case studies in tourism enterprise development in and around UNESCO World Heritage sites (some of which are also designated as UNESCO Biosphere Reserves) that have co-operation with local communities as an objective. The studies will be selected from projects implemented by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and UNDP/GEF Small Grants Programme. Additional presentations on this theme will be provided by other experts.

Following the presentations, a panel of experts and site managers will interact with the speakers, offering their own experiences and drawing conclusions. During this hour, open interactions and discussions from all attending the workshop would also be encouraged. The final half an hour will be dedicated to forming conclusions and recommendations from the discussions. A key point of interest would be to determine the role of World Heritage and UNESCO in the implementation of the conclusions and recommendations. A report on summarising the content of presentations and discussions and the recommendations for conservation and tourism development practitioners will be published and disseminated.



## **Presentations**

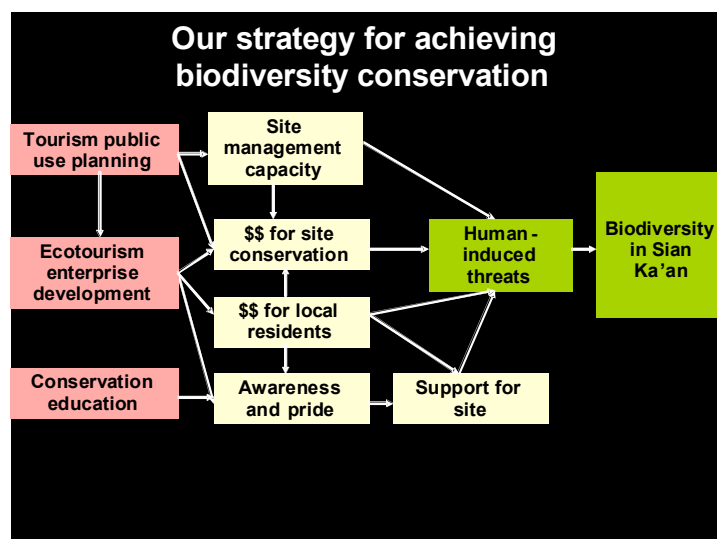
**Maureen Cunningham**

**Project Manager, Rare**

[PowerPoint presentation](#)

The Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve WHS in Mexico provides a model for community based ecotourism training because benefits for local communities and conservation are prime objectives. The Reserve receives 6 million visitors per year and so tourism is a significant threat, but equally it is an opportunity because of the coastal, marine and forest resources.

The strategy being employed for achieving biodiversity conservation has three prongs – (1) tourism and public use planning; (2) ecotourism enterprise development; (3) conservation education (see diagram).



Since 1997, fifty entrepreneurs and local guides were trained but it proved not enough because what was needed was business planning, and marketing expertise – in other words, MBA type-skills!

At the time the training program began, there were 8 cooperatives in existence and while their very existence indicated that small businesses could survive in the context of the Reserve, they were not necessarily successful or thriving. In fact, the cooperatives undercut each other and they were not employing the local guides that had been trained in the program. It was therefore obvious that there was a need for additional skills and new approaches.

As a result, Sian Ka'an Tours was established as a new enterprise. It was set up as a community-based tourism initiative. Some of the operating principles laid down as a foundation for the enterprise included the following. (1) An agreement in pricing (and this resulted in an increase in income of 24%). (2) Establishing a goal that 90% of revenue stays in the local community. (3) The implementation of tourism public use planning with the aim of establishing how tourism can be developed within the community. (This resulted in bringing tourism product and the protected area together because the public use plan was integrated into the protected area site plan.)

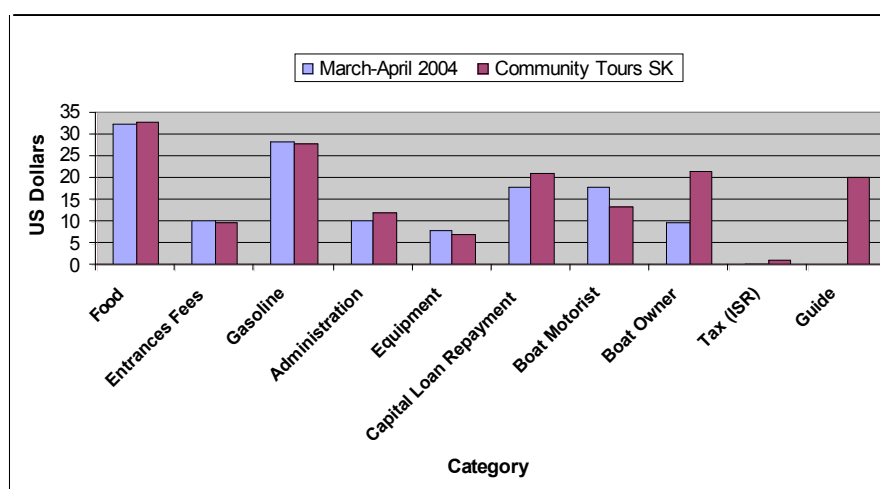
The results of establishing the community-based Sian Ka'an Tours can be seen in a number of ways:

### Revenue breakdown per Boat Tour

#### Comparison – Before and after Community Tours Sian Ka'an

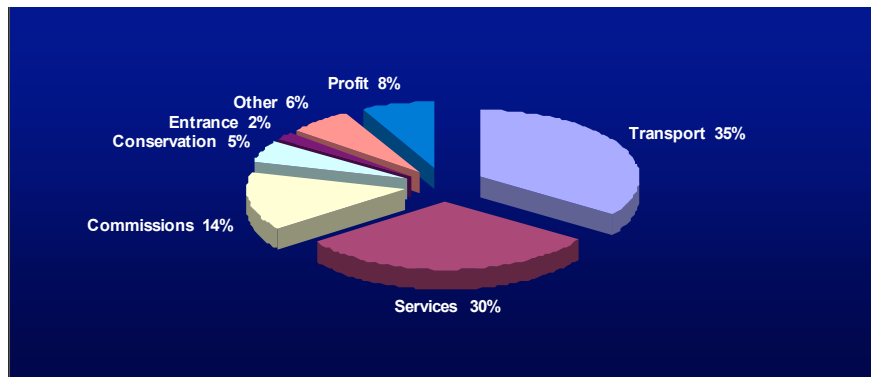
Boat tour before = US \$135

Boat tour after = US\$167



## Community Tours Sian Ka'an

July/August 2004



As Doña María de Lourdes de la Cruz, a member of the Punta Allen Cooperative and a member of Community Tours Sian Ka'an has recently said,

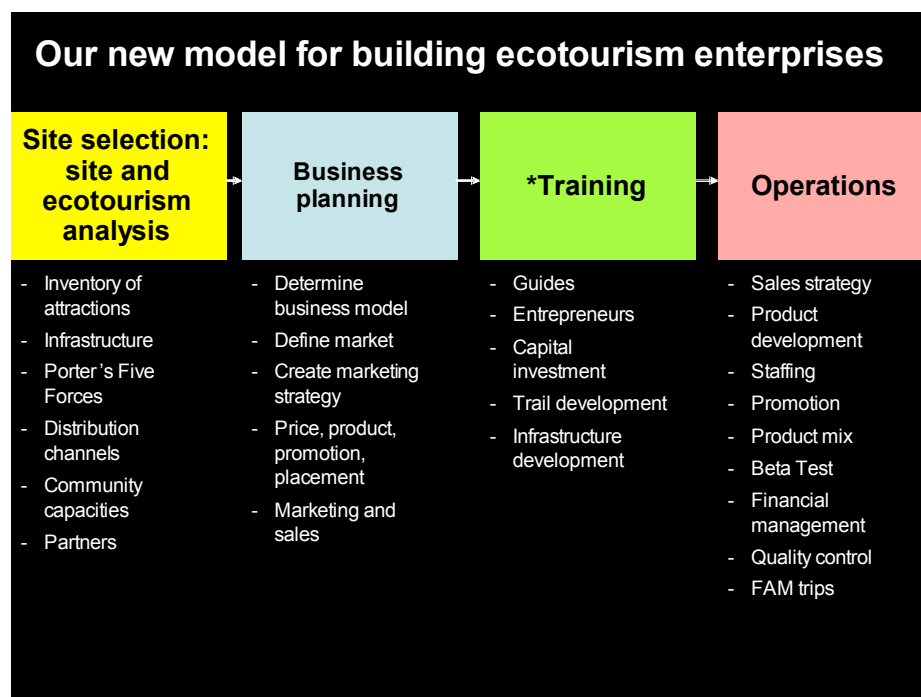
Although there are still members who want to do things like before, every day they are more convinced that what interests the tourists is conservation, contact with local people, and a well-planned tour. This is what we can and should offer. And we can do it, of course we can!

What worked? Amongst the many successes were the following: (1) Building quality evaluation into the process that included visitor satisfaction research, especially with regard to the local guides. (This resulted in only the best guides continuing to be used.) (2) Linking together local tourism operators and protected area management. (3) Diversifying the tourism product. This had the effect of decreasing the tourism impacts. (4) For the first time there was profitability. (5) Revenue was generated for conservation. (6) Four of the cooperatives have worked together on matters like pricing, tour marketing and operations. (7) Alliances were established with 23 tour operators along the Riviera Maya. (8) The business planning approaches and the assessment methods being used are being replicated at other sites.

What didn't work? (1) It was recognised that not all sites are suitable for tourism development (and therefore the selection of sites shouldn't precede ecotourism assessment as it did in this pilot project). (2) The aim was to develop a replicable

model for local community based ecotourism development but it was found that the model didn't work at all sites. (3) The whole project depended on skilled staff being present and therefore this raises the issue of the likelihood that the sustainability of the initiative beyond the life of the project, may not be possible without the Rare presence. (4) Threat reduction strategy is hard to measure in the short-term. (5) The project design was challenged by funding, partnering and administrative factors. (6) Some cooperatives did not join the alliance; others joined but did not participate in the Beta Test.

Lessons learned. (1) The guides were trained first but in future it is important to understand the market first – local guides may not be the most pressing need with regard to community based tourism development. Understanding the market (especially demand) is also important for product development and choosing the appropriate training. (2) Success is important to keep communities 'on-side' and to keep those involved motivated. (3) Long term viability requires partnerships with the private sector. (4) The commitment of local communities is essential. (5) Make local enterprises competitive. (6) Income substitution does not always work and threats take a long time to monitor. (7) A viable business plan is essential so that local entrepreneurs actually find work.



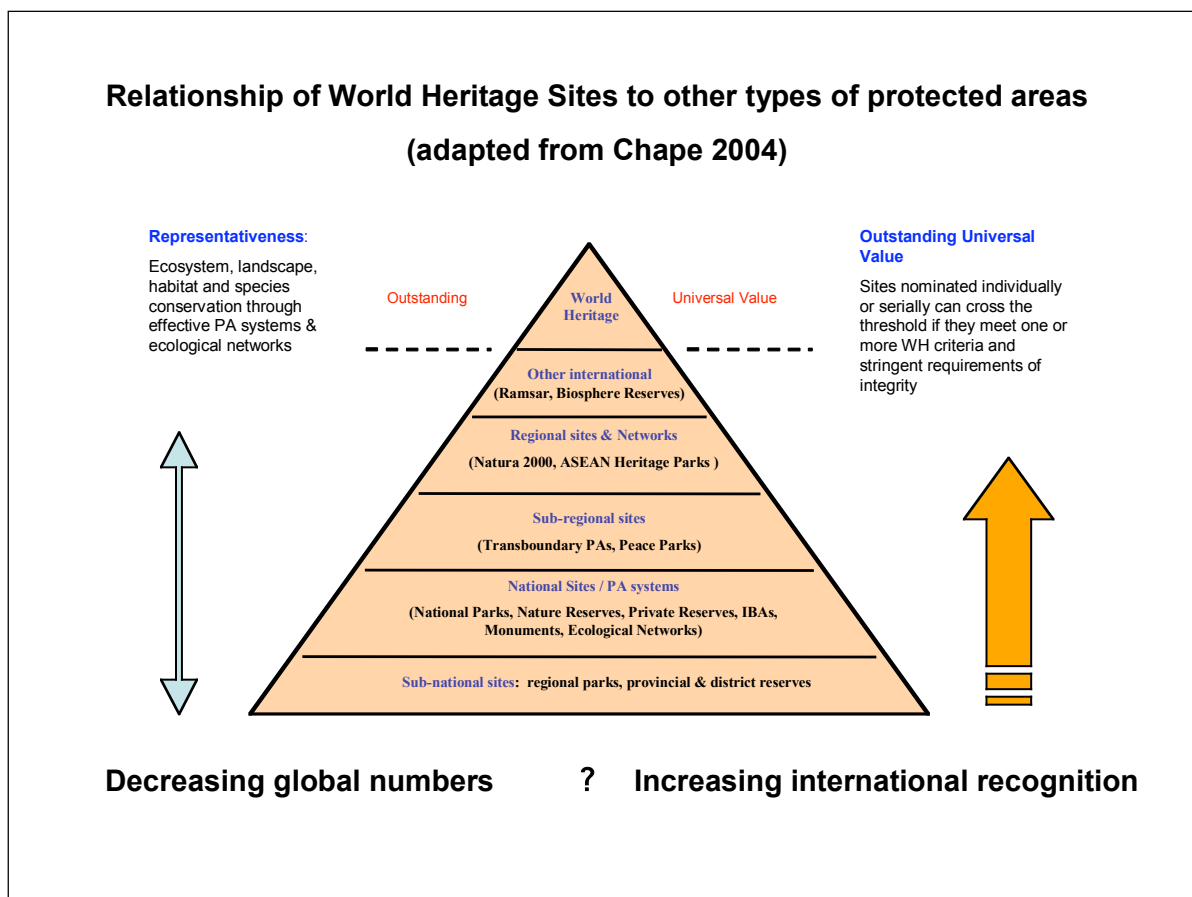
Recommendations to UNESCO include the following. (1) The importance of UNESCO's support against threats is crucial. (2) Financial and political support for implementing the model and public use plan is critical. (3) Supporting community enterprises in the initial stages of this sort of development is also critical. (4). Time is a major factor. This was a four year long project but it needs to be recognised that such projects need support for a long time if long-term viability is to be the outcome.

**Terence Hay-Edie**

**UNDP/BDP/GEF Small Grants Program**

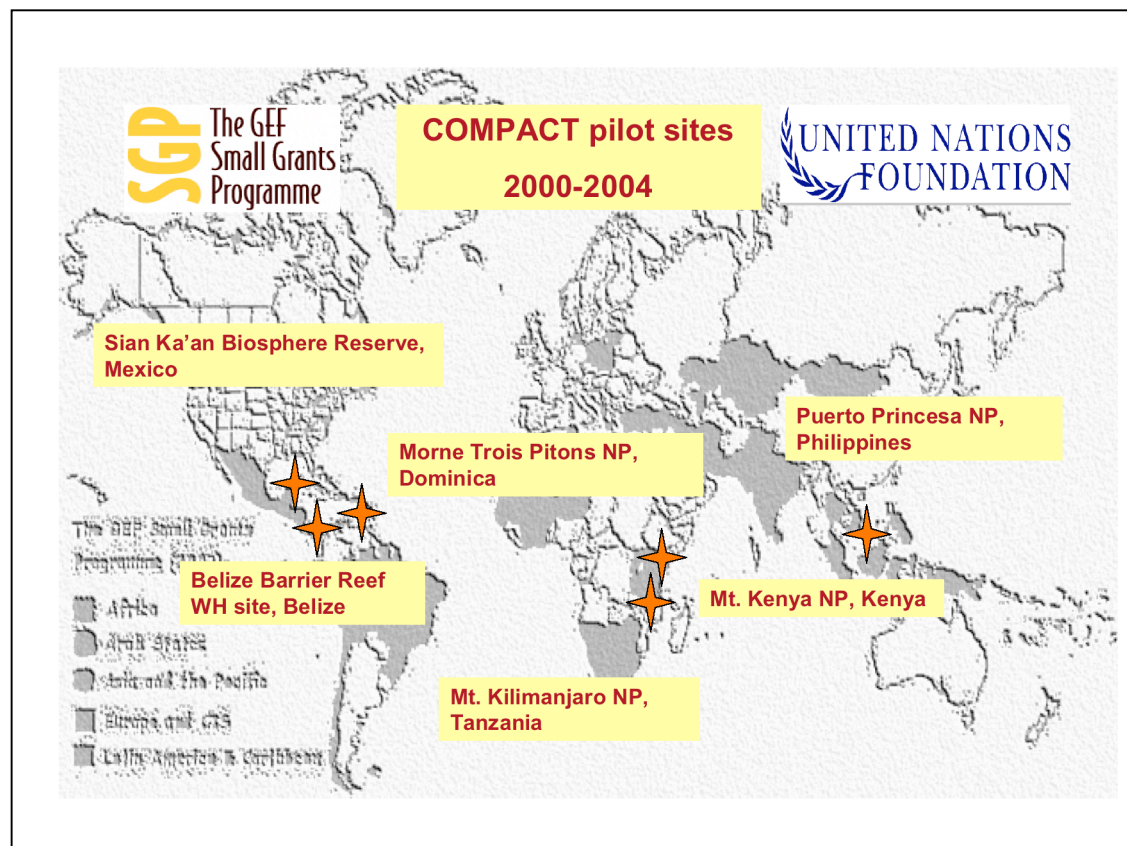
[PowerPoint presentation](#)

The GEF small grants program is supported by the UN Foundation. So why did GEF become involved in WH Sites? It was a matter capitalising on the fact that World Heritage Sites are the “crown” of the Protected Area system and the WH brand embodies unique and universal qualities. It was also a matter of scale. While the number of WHS is increasing, the number of WHS is small compared to the number of other Protected Areas.



The relationship between the secretariats of the WHS and GEF, SGP and CBD is based on a memorandum of cooperation that is based on four principles:

- (1) To encourage reciprocal learning by linking World Heritage sites and networks that each party supports in order to build national and community-based capacity to secure the long term sustainability of protected areas.
- (2) To ensure that good practice generated at the World Heritage site level is captured to inform policy debate through documentation or collaborative work, in particular focusing on project benefits for local and indigenous communities, and replication nationally and internationally.
- (3) To engage in resource mobilization with additional donors for projects linked to community livelihoods around existing World Heritage sites and landscapes proposed as future World Heritage sites.
- (4) To increase the visibility of joint GEF SGP-World Heritage related activities through dissemination of lessons learned amongst protected area professionals at the national and international levels.



## COMPACT WH site projects funded (December 2003)

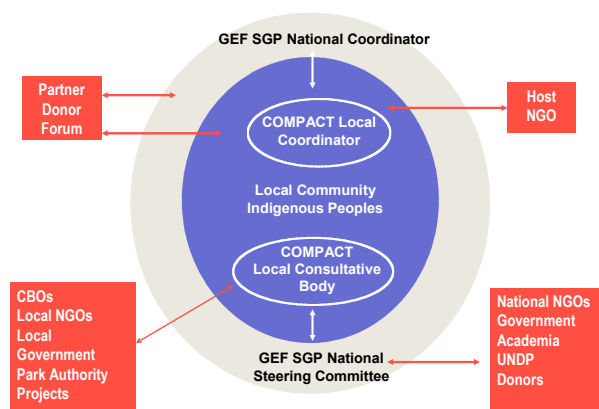
	Number of projects	Total Amount \$
Belize	21	592,790
Dominica	17	259,864
Kenya	28	675,820
Mexico	38	853,380
Philippines	16	307,272
Tanzania	22	716,913
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>3,406,039</b>

From 2000-2004, the small grants program has funded 150+ projects at six World Heritage Sites in a pilot phase. Many of these are tourism related.

These include –

- Buffer zone & outreach
- Sustainable tourism
- Small-scale irrigation
- Preservation of traditional ecological knowledge
- Micro-hydro & renewable energy
- Productivity of agro-ecosystems
- Apiculture
- Organic farming
- Community-managed fisheries

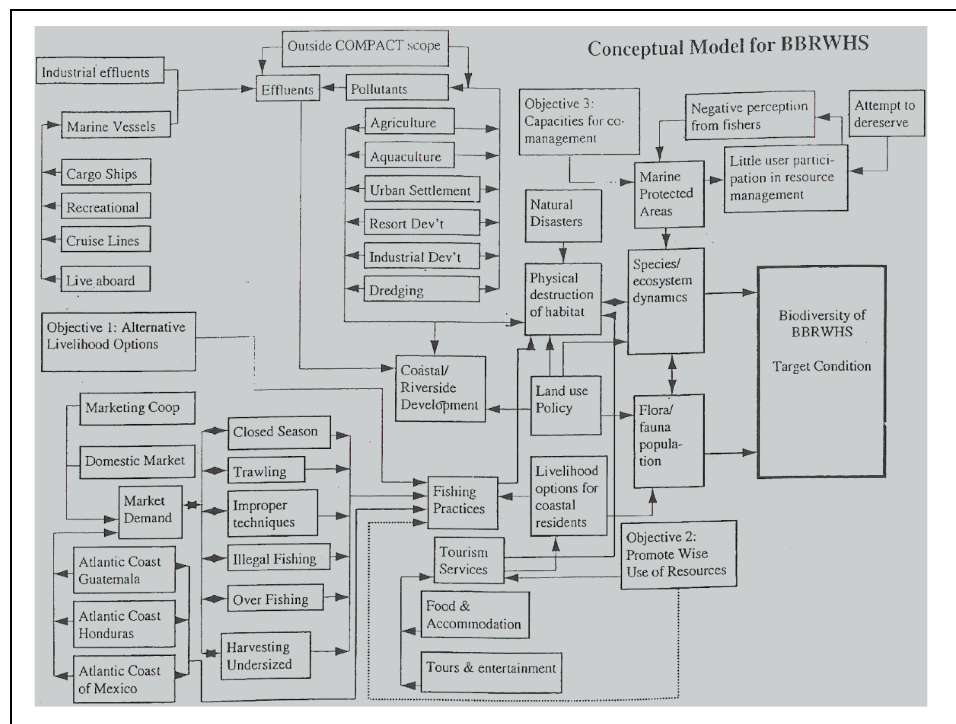
GEF SGP – COMPACT structure for each WH site





There are two structural levels to the COMPACT pilot site program – there is a consultative structure at each of the World heritage Sites that decide how the GEF monies will be deployed at the local level and there is a national structure that has oversight of the program.

The program uses a landscape approach so that there is a clustering of small grants for local communities using the landscape as a way of conceptualising the projects systemically, spatially and ecologically. Also critical to the program is the conceptual model used to ascertain all the threats at each site (and tourism has a prominent role in the threats conceptual model).



This is best illustrated by four examples.

(1) Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve WH Site, Mexico. 45 COMPACT projects include:

- Large number of local products (e.g. organic honey);
- Community-based ecotourism initiatives developed by Mayan organizations.

(2) Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System WH site, Belize. COMPACT grant to the 'Belize Tourism Industry Association':

- Developed an advanced marine tour guide training manual.
- Conducted the first advanced marine tour guide training program for tour guides using the reserves of the WH site.
- 12 participants completed the training and have been certified by the Belize Tourism Board.
- First ever nationally recognized specialization above the basic tour guide license.

(3) Mount Kenya National Park WH site, Kenya. COMPACT community-based ecotourism project at the Nkunga Crater Lake. The basis of the ecotourism project is a restoration effort – the removal of weeds from Crater Lake. The aim is to clear the lake in the knowledge that the tourists will come as a result of the clearing.

- Crater Lake site to be coupled with a new 'Observatory and Sky Museum' for an ecotourism circuit around Mt. Kenya.
- 2004: board of the 'Tourism Trust Fund' of the European Union approved funds to upgrade project.
- Funds from the donor partner will go directly to the beneficiary, the Mount Kenya Bill Woodley Trust.
- Morne Trois Pitons National Park WH site, Dominica. COMPACT grant to the 'Warmmae Letang' project:

(4) Implemented by the Laudat community to develop ecotourism activities in the 'Freshwater Lake' region within the WH site. The tourism product educates visitors about the flora and fauna of the lake. It generates income for the operators of boat rides and newly trained guides from the village of Laudat.

## **Art Pedersen**

### **World Heritage Tourism Program, World Heritage Centre, UNESCO**

#### [PowerPoint presentation](#)

#### Tourism Program Activities

Since 2001 the World Heritage Centre has initiated a number of tourism-related projects and actions. These include:

- designing projects that link tourism and conservation
- promoting local tourism products that support site conservation
- assisting in the production of site tourism plans
- distributing sustainable tourism information and training materials
- facilitating interactions between site management, local and national authorities and the tourism industry

A cornerstone of the Tourism Programme is the attempt to engage the tourism industry so as to encourage and facilitate its involvement in site conservation including support for local tourism enterprises.

Tourism Program initiative with UNESCO-UNEP RARE, United Nations Foundation: a four year project goal to link biodiversity conservation and sustainable tourism development in 6 World Heritage sites.

To create processes to promote the protection of important habitats:

- conservation education
- planning
- business development and marketing techniques

#### *Lessons Learned 1.*

Engaging the tourism industry to contribute to site protection and local community development has not been easy.

The World Heritage Centre and Partner NGO's need creative approaches to engage the industry in supporting local community tourism efforts.

There are several factors related to this:

In the vertical structure of large international tourism companies, linking local tourism products and the tourism industry face a number of issues -

- (1) Parent companies may be approached at the highest levels to advocate for their involvement in supporting site conservation and local products, but this may not guarantee that local products will be integrated into the operator's itinerary.
- (2) Gaps between upper management and the company representatives managing the day-to-day operations limit incentives for the use of local products and services.
- (3) Country company representatives are frequently changed and have limited time to address community issues therefore lessening the incentives to develop local business relationships.
- (4) Ground operators working in the destination country make decisions on local services and products.
- (5) Even though ground operators may be owned, or partially owned, by the European or North American parent company, ground operators working in the destination country may retain decision making powers over what attractions are visited and what services are used.
- (6) Ground operators are often small businesses with limited time and perhaps limited interest to become engaged with local communities in any significant manner.

However, there are positive indications - tour operators and hotels may:

- distribute information on the local products in their hotel rooms, planes and resorts;

- provide in-kind services in the form of business training to local communities to boost the quality of their service;
- explore donation systems;
- consider developing World Heritage tours;
- in some cases consider offering local products as add-on attractions for their clients.

### *Lessons Learned 2.*

To facilitate cooperation and aid for local products, an exposure of the private tourism sector's involvement and support to sites and local communities needs systematic media promotion.

If the tourism industry is helping at the site level, we need to help them promote their efforts so as to generate their continued interest.

Tourism industry involvement in business training for local communities to boost the quality of their services can be spotlighted by the World Heritage and the UN information and media networks. This provides the promotion the industry will need to maintain and increase its positive involvement.

World Heritage participation at international tourism trade fairs - the Berlin, International Travel Bourse, (ITB) and so forth.

### *Lessons Learned 3.*

For the ongoing expansion of industry support, it is important having the cycle of substantive local initiatives for industry to support and the media to report.

The ongoing implementation of conservation and local sustainable tourism projects, such as training local guides or micro enterprise development, is needed to provide activities that (1) the tourism industry can invest in; and (2) that provide the attractive activities that produce the media stories the industry is seeking.

#### *Lessons Learned 4.*

There is a need to attract those tourism market segments that are more geared to support conservation efforts at sites and the economic development in communities.

There is a need to broaden the support of the tourism market to gain positive conservation results from tourism.

World Heritage should attract tourists that maximize site conservation benefits and use local products.

Specialty markets (Earthwatch, volunteer groups and academic travel groups) using local products and logistical services help “train” local service providers and attract mainstream tourism markets.

#### *Lessons Learned 5.*

New tourism products often lack short-term potential to generate tourism revenue and be included in government marketing efforts.

Local community products linked to sites are rarely promoted through a nations international and national tourist campaigns.

A regional marketing approach that links several World Heritage sites and/or protected areas, may boost government interest and influence the entry of products into international and national promotional campaigns.

Attractions of less visited sites could be marketed as add-on attractions linked to heavily visited sites.

### *Lessons Learned 6.*

For many World Heritage sites and their satellite protected areas, a collective approach using a central information hub may aid marketing efforts for local products.

Site protection can be enhanced and local tourism-related economic development stimulated through a shared list of:

- qualified local guides at each site;
- a data bank of conservation activities for visitor participation;
- information on making donations.

**Andy Drumm**  
**Senior Ecotourism Specialist, The Nature Conservancy**

[PowerPoint presentation](#)

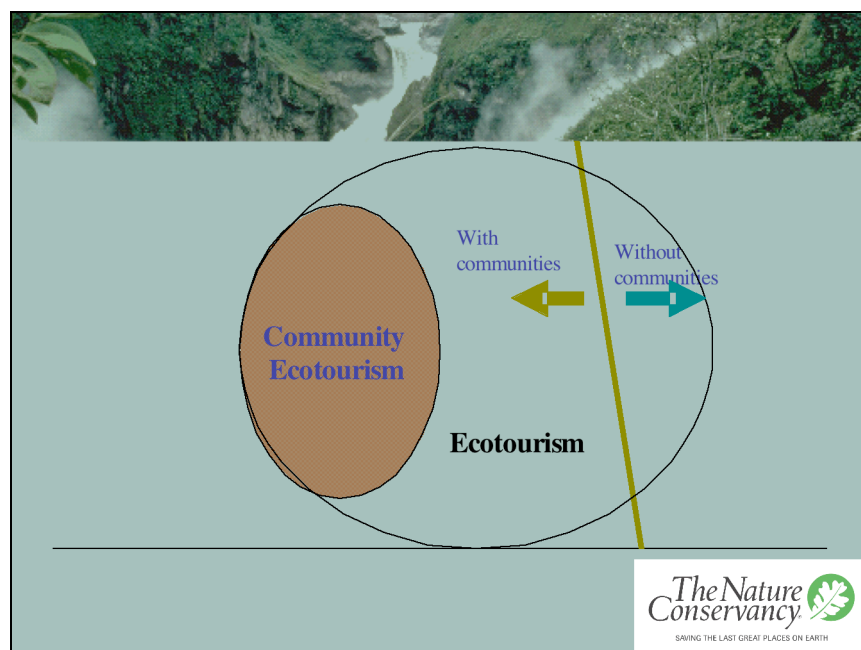
Community Based Ecotourism Development – ‘Bridging the Gap’.

Ecotourism is an important strategy for The Nature Conservancy, remembering that the chief aim of the organization is biodiversity conservation. The Nature Conservancy currently works at 17 World Heritage Sites including –

Amistad, Costa Rica and Panama  
Belize Barrier Reef  
Canaima, Venezuela  
Cockpit Country, Jamaica  
Darien Region, Panama  
Emas, Brazil  
Galapagos, Ecuador  
Komodo, Indonesia  
Morne Trois Pitons, Dominica

Noel Kempff Mercado, Bolivia  
Pantanal, Brazil  
Rio Platano, Honduras  
Sea Of Cortez, Mexico  
Sian Ka'an, Mexico  
Tikal, Guatemala  
Vizcaino, Mexico  
Yunnan, China

From NC’s perspective, community ecotourism is considered a sub-set of ecotourism and community ecotourism is defined as community owned ecotourism.





*Cofan Indigenous Community, Cuyabeno Reserve, Ecuador*

This, in many ways, was a laboratory for community ecotourism development. The Cofan Indigenous community put themselves into competition with the rest of the ecotourism industry and did well. The community has been working in ecotourism for fifteen years. The link between income generation and biodiversity conservation was quickly recognised. This resulted in self implemented quotas because of the importance of conservation to their ecotourism business. Fines were imposed within the community for anyone who broke the quota 'laws'. The community has developed zoned areas for hunting/not-hunting. The success of the "conservation effort equals ecotourism benefits and income generation" equation has had a ripple effect and other communities are seriously looking at conservation.

The Cofan Indigenous community established a monitoring system with other conservation agencies. They invested income into a turtle hatching program to increase turtle numbers because of the greater knowledge that has arisen because of the ecotourism/conservation program. The community entered into strategic alliance with mainstream tourism companies in the capital city. This has multiplied the visitor numbers and income.

The Kapawi Eco-Lodge is an example of a private sector-community joint venture. The strategic alliance with the mainstream tourism industry has produced 4,000 visitors a year and with an entrance fee system of \$10 per visitor, substantial revenue flows to the indigenous Achuar people. And so from a very insecure ecotourism operation has arisen a substantial one with important local employment, particularly local guides.

Overall, what have been the benefits to conservation from this ecotourism strategy?

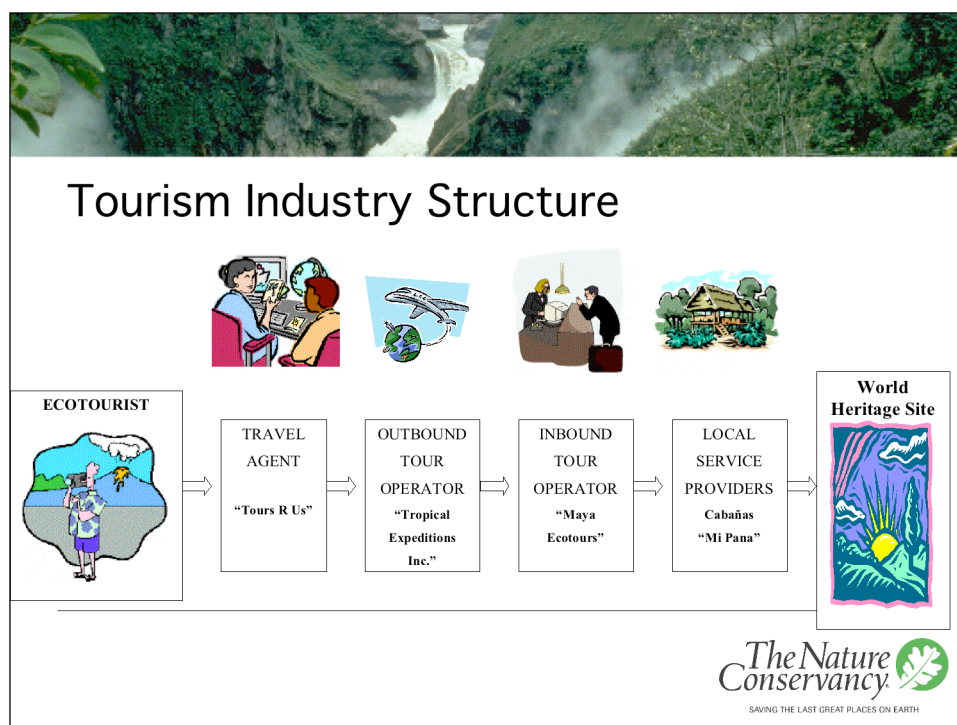
Cofan has established hunting limits on animal types and numbers.

- Macaws, hawks, & primates are protected for ecotourism value.
- Hunting, clearing, or timber harvest is not permitted in the area of the 60 km of hiking trails established for ecotourism.

- Cofan territory has been zoned for protection, ecotourism, and other uses for long-term sustainability of community and biodiversity, and therefore the ecotourism enterprise.
- The standards of living of the community is notably higher than surrounding villages, creating influential leverage for management by others.

If the goal is to get more tourism spending into the community and improve living standards with conservation outcomes, what are the barriers to success?

- Access to the tourist market. To get into the tourism market communities need proper business plans.
- Service provision capacity (guiding, food, financial management). Service standards have to be high for discerning tourists.
- Communications (logistical) – communications between remote communities and the tourism industry (urban based) is problematical.
- Language.



The structure of the tourism industry presents particular challenges. If one analyses the structure of the industry it can be quickly ascertained that in terms of the hierarchy and the way power and decision-making occurs, local ecotourism outfits, local communities and WH Sites are way down in the ‘food chain’. Further, one can discern the formidable forces with which local ecotourism operators must compete. It is not enough simply to make businesses successful. What is needed are joint ventures or strategic alliances with those parts of the tourism industry further up the chain. The Cofan Indigenous community example was a success because of such alliances.

What then is the role of the private sector with regard to community based ecotourism that has strong conservation priorities? It can have a positive role but it needs to be educated to seriously take on-board the following:

- Establish triple bottom line.
- Diversify product lines.
- Invest locally in training and capacity building.
- Develop joint ventures, strategic alliances.
- Institute and support community fee systems.
- Develop and support donation programs.

There are examples of the tourism industry beginning to respond to the conditions required for success with community based ecotourism projects. But what is also urgently needed is the illustration to the tourism industry, with empirical data, that the industry can indeed benefit from community based ecotourism enterprises.

What is the role of UNESCO World Heritage? There needs to be a re-definition about what quality tourism means at these major and iconic attractions. In other words, an insistence that ‘quality tourism’ means conservation outcomes at World Heritage sites and local community benefits at World Heritage Sites. There needs to be a major enterprise to educate both tourists and the industry that this is what tourism at World Heritage sites means. UNESCO has a significant role to play in propagating this conception and being instrumental in achieving these desired outcomes. It needs a long term vision about tourism and World Heritage sites and it also needs to consider partnerships with other global organizations that could further the cause – for example, donors, the private sector and NGO’s.

**Cornelius Van der Lugt**  
**Business and Industry Section, UNEP**

At the global and UN level, sustainable tourism requires, and is built upon, partnerships between UNEP, UNESCO, IUCN and WTO. For example, the UNEP-UNESCO partnership has resulted in a number of joint publications. The first was the World Heritage Manual Number 1, *Managing Tourism at World Heritage Sites*, written by Art Pedersen (2002). A new publication “Linking Protected Areas and the Tourism Sector: A Manual” produced jointly by UNESCO/UNEP/Rare addresses the linkages between protected areas and the private tourism sector.

What was the rationale? In the last four years it has been widely acknowledged that the realization of the goal of the preservation of biodiversity through sustainable tourism, cannot be achieved without private sector involvement. The publication targets protected areas site managers by providing a framework for a cost-benefit analysis that addresses the pressure points for protected areas exposed to tourism and the benefits from tourism for protected areas.

Part of the approach undertaken has been to highlight for site managers the importance of raising the awareness of tourists and tourist companies about the role of protected areas; that is, making them sensitive to the conservation objectives of a particular site. Another dimension of the approach has been to make site managers better tourism managers so that there can be a more effective integration of tourism and site management objectives.

How is this to be achieved? (1) It is important to understand the tourism industry, its structure, how it works plus an understanding of the issues faced by the tourism industry, for example, tourism companies have a brand to protect; that they work in a highly competitive and segmented marketing environment and so forth. (2) Articulating the opportunities for protected areas that can arise from tourism. (3) Provide an understanding of the necessity of building links with the tourism sector.

Just focusing on number (1) understanding the tourism industry requires, for example, an appreciation of a number of issues:

- The need for site managers to know their clients, tourists, consumers better than they often do – for example, knowing the market means knowing the difference between European, Japanese and US tourists; knowing their age, gender, education background and their needs/requirements as tourists.
- The need to know tourism companies better – for example, understanding that tourism products have a ‘shelf’ life of 18 months and that product development takes from 18 months through to 2 years.
- The need to look at different partners in the tourism supply chain and determining where site managers should focus their attention.
- Understanding the financial relationship – for example, if entrance fees are to be paid, should they be paid at the site or should they be included in the tourism product/package (and what are the implications of these types of decisions?). Is it possible to get donations from tourism companies? Do tourism company foundations exist (and can they be exploited?) and should this be part of the discussion?
- What do tourism companies want in return (and the recognition that there will be a requirement for reciprocity)? For example, should there be special access rights for tourism operators who are prepared to work closely with site management?

The manual concludes with a practical step-by-step guide about how to approach tourism companies – for example, the need for a proper business plan with proper financial reporting structures.

## **Panel Discussion: Responses from World Heritage Site Managers**

The theme of the session was ‘actions for generating capital and support for local tourism enterprises and ideas for the contribution of World Heritage to this effort’.

### **Francisco Usura**

#### **Director, Sian Ka'an Reserve and World Heritage Site, Mexico**

Originally the local community were made up of successful fishermen and now they are becoming successful tour operators. However, the community is getting tired of site managers bringing in NGO's and others to *see* their success; they often feel they are ‘living in a fishbowl’! Despite this sort of attention, what the community is not getting is government attention with regard to services, schools and so forth.

Consequently, the protected area managers are working with local NGO's to help them get other benefits for the local community other than the ones directly related to tourism and the income generation that has come with this – for example, capacity building more generally.

### **Cristina Zea Ophelan**

#### **Bolivia National Service for Protected Areas, Noel Kempff Mercado National Park and World Heritage Site, Bolivia**

#### **[PowerPoint presentation](#)**

What are the principle objectives of the national system of protected areas? (1) Natural and cultural heritage preservation in protected areas and (2) the promotion of sustainable economical development at local, regional and national levels. And what is the vision for tourism? Tourism in protected areas must be a tool for conservation and to be oriented toward a quality experience and the highest visitor satisfaction level. Such a vision is premised on the idea that well managed tourism can be an alternative for generating revenues (protected area and communities) and that tourism can be an economic alternative for local communities that live in protected areas.

The key issues for local enterprises include the following: organizational capacity; business administration skills training; rules for income distribution; alliances with the private sector (for tourism product investment and promotion). But the over-riding critical issue is how to build real community capacity for tourism management. In so doing though, there are some things that need to be heeded. (1) Promote local capacity building only in those protected areas that have a real ecotourism potential and have a real possibility of succeeding in the tourism market. (2) Ecotourism planning that takes into account market preferences and tourist expectations. (3) Communities themselves need to develop a business management vision. (4) Develop ecotourism programs with a strong local participation focus. (5) Promote ecotourism projects that are funded partially by donors and partially by communities in the form of labour.

What happens in Noel Kempff World Heritage? (1) There is a local guides association. (2) Twenty local guides have been trained. (3) The community ecotourism project is managed by the Noel Kempff museum. (4) The project runs at a deficit.

There is not good linkage between the ecotourism market, commercially based tourism and protected areas. Solid linkages are needed and these must involve the private sector becoming more involved with commercial ecotourism activities. But how are such linkages to be encouraged? How can the private sector be encouraged to move towards ecotourism operations that have a commercial footing?

- (1) Give concessions to the private sector with a good legal framework for such concessions.
- (2) Co-management of protected areas and local communities and local organisations so that there is a 'critical mass' when it comes to dealing with the tourism industry. This should be explored as a pilot activity/experience with the intention of establishing a legal framework for the tri-partite relationship between protected areas, local communities and the tourism industry.

World heritage sites provide an opportunity for such initiatives because of the iconic status of the brand.

Other issues? Knowing the tourist market. The private sector, potentially, has a primary role here. Also there is the importance of local training in tourism enterprises. The WHC possibly has a role here.

**Dr. Matheus Halim**

**Manager, Komodo National Park and World Heritage Site, Indonesia**

What is not always recognised is the importance of strong local government as a vehicle for the collaboration between national parks and local communities. There is a significant need to ‘educate’ local government about the benefits of the national park to local people and the local economy, and the dependency of local people on the park, especially as people in and around the park have very low education levels.

Consequently, the target should be on the younger generation with regard to conservation literacy and education and the role of national parks in conservation. There should be a campaign focus on teachers and primary-school students by, for example, introducing new skills that relate back to a World Heritage site like Komodo; skills like wood carving komodo dragons using Balinese wood carvers as teachers. (An idea like this does raise a new problem however because the best wood for carving are the trees in the park!)

Overall, there is the need for strategic planning when it comes to involving local communities in national park activities and initiatives.

**Do Pantanal Matogrossense World Heritage Site, Brazil**

What are the lessons learnt?

We have a resource but how does one transform this into a tourism product? And how does one do this without compromising what the site stands for?



- Infrastructure is needed otherwise the resource cannot be the subject of tourist visitation.
- Local services are needed and therefore there are a number of conditions operating for the provision of infrastructure and the development of a tourist product.
- Both infrastructure and local services require local community involvement and engagement.
- Visitors need to be contributing directly to the conservation mission of the park and therefore, strategies are required to achieve this.
- Access to the tourism market is crucial otherwise local community involvement and investment is in vain.
- The training of locals for the demands of the tourism market is needed.

### **Belize Marine Barrier Reef World Heritage Site**

What are the issues?

- The need for infrastructure.
- It is necessary to determine what protected areas have to offer. Tourism is only one option. Research, for example, is another option.
- A site that is dependent on tourism will be compromised because of the carrying capacity of the site therefore; tourism should be part of the mix and not something that produces a dependency relationship with protected areas.
- If tourism is an option then there is a need to be aware of (1) the capital requirements of infrastructure development; (2) the nature of marketing; (3) the need to integrate the local product into government/national tourism marketing policy and campaigns; (4) the fact one cannot operate in tourism in isolation from the industry as a whole.

In theory, because national governments are responsible for world heritage sites and have obligations with regard to world heritage, then it should be national governments that put money 'on the table' for infrastructure development etc. In reality, however, what is required are hybrid approaches that involve private enterprise, governments and local communities.

Ecotourism is not necessarily the answer; it's not necessarily a magic wand. Do local communities want ecotourism? Do we over-invest in ecotourism with regard to community development and world heritage sites? Do we tell communities that ecotourism is the 'magic fix'? When a community goes down this path, just how many guides should be trained so that local employment can be sustained?

We must learn from the recent mistakes that have arisen from the view that ecotourism is a 'magic fix' for World Heritage and community development.

What is the role of the World Heritage Centre? (1) It should work directly with national governments. (2) It should choose World Heritage sites that can sustain tourism and list those that cannot. (3) It should promote best practice for those World Heritage sites that are involved with tourism or community development (or both) by providing benchmarks and exemplary examples that other World Heritage sites can aspire to.

**Yang Rui**

**Director, Institute of Resource Protection and Tourism, Tsinghua University –  
Three Parallel Rivers NP and World Heritage Site, China**

The level of government involved can have a major impact on tourism at World Heritage sites: is it the responsibility of local or regional or national government? And if the answer is all three, then how should the responsibilities be divided?

The World Heritage Centre should monitor tourism activities at World Heritage sites and give technical support to measure tourism impacts. The Centre should also make suggestions about the different types of tourism activities at World Heritage sites and perhaps also make an inventory of what is happening where and what is the most appropriate activity given the special circumstances of different World heritage sites.

## **Discussion from the Floor**

- There is an issue with regard to the involvement of financial institutions like the Asia Development Bank in community-based environment / tourism / education projects. There is no guarantee of ongoing funding and sometimes the funding is suspended and this has a major impact on the projects involved.
- There is the need for external support for initiatives in many places where there is a potential for tourism at World Heritage sites with local community involvement.
- Increasingly there is the recognition of the role the Internet can play in involving local communities. UNESCO and the World Heritage Centre could have a role here by linking local community initiatives at World heritage sites through the WH website and thereby giving these initiatives a higher exposure/profile. In other words, by encouraging local community tourism organisations, at World Heritage sites, to develop websites that are then centrally linked through the World Heritage website.

## Workshop 2

The Nature Conservancy Workshop



# *Ecotourism as a Strategy to Promote Conservation and Environmentally Responsible Development*

## **World Conservation Congress**

*People and nature – Only one world.*

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### **Program**

**November 19<sup>th</sup>, 17:00-19:00 in room Break Out Room #12**

#### **Description**

Tourism is a growing threat to biodiversity, yet ecotourism and sustainable tourism provide opportunities to establish sustainable conservation finance mechanisms and promote environmentally responsible development in areas important for conservation. This workshop presents cases from the field and new strategies to achieve conservation goals through tourism management and ecotourism development.

Welcome and overview, Robyn Bushell, UWS and WCPA Tourism Task Force

Andy Drumm, Senior Ecotourism, Specialist, TNC

Cristina Zea Ophelan, Bolivia National Service for Protected Areas (SERNAP), Noel Kempff Mercado National Park and World Heritage Site, Bolivia

Rili Djohani, Director, Indonesia Country Program, The Nature Conservancy

Dr. Matheus Halim, Director, Komodo National Park and World Heritage Site, Indonesia

Art Pedersen, Tourism Director, UNESCO World Heritage Center

Q&A and discussion

Summary and closing: Robyn Bushell, WCPA Tourism Task Force

# **Ecotourism as a Strategy to Promote Conservation and Environmentally Responsible Development**

## **Synopsis**

Dr. Russell Staiff  
Tourism for Healthy Futures  
University of Western Sydney

### **Introduction**

The workshop was facilitated by Robyn Bushell from the WCPA Tourism Task Force. It consisted of four presentations by the invited panel, followed by an open discussion.

The workshop was introduced by Andy Drumm from The Nature Conservancy. He presented the context of the workshop as occurring in the wake of the COP-7 meeting of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. At the meeting, 188 governments around the world had agreed to an overarching goal of creating a network of protected areas on land by 2010 and at sea by 2012 that represent the full array of life on Earth, including currently underrepresented habitats such as marine and freshwater, deserts and grasslands. By these dates, these areas are to be created, effectively managed and adequately funded.

Panelists represented World Heritage sites where the Conservancy is working on tourism's role as a source of conservation finance, including Noel Kempff National Park, Bolivia, and Komodo National Park, Indonesia. In addition, a presentation was given by the Tourism Program Director of the World Heritage Centre, Art Pedersen.

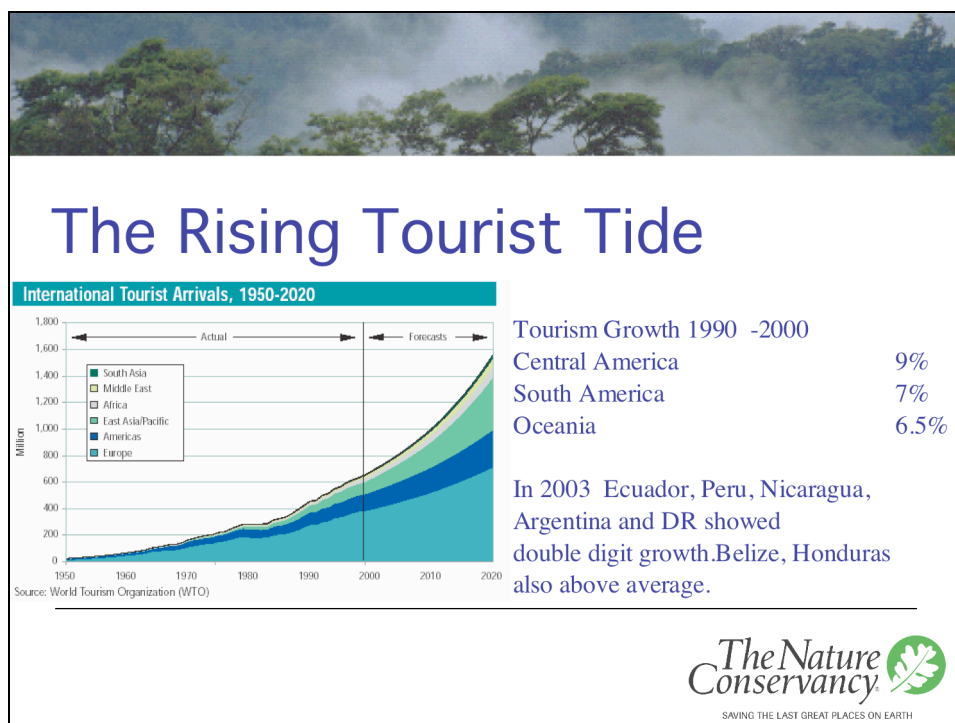
## Panel Presentations

**Andy Drumm**

**Senior Ecotourism Specialist, The Nature Conservancy**

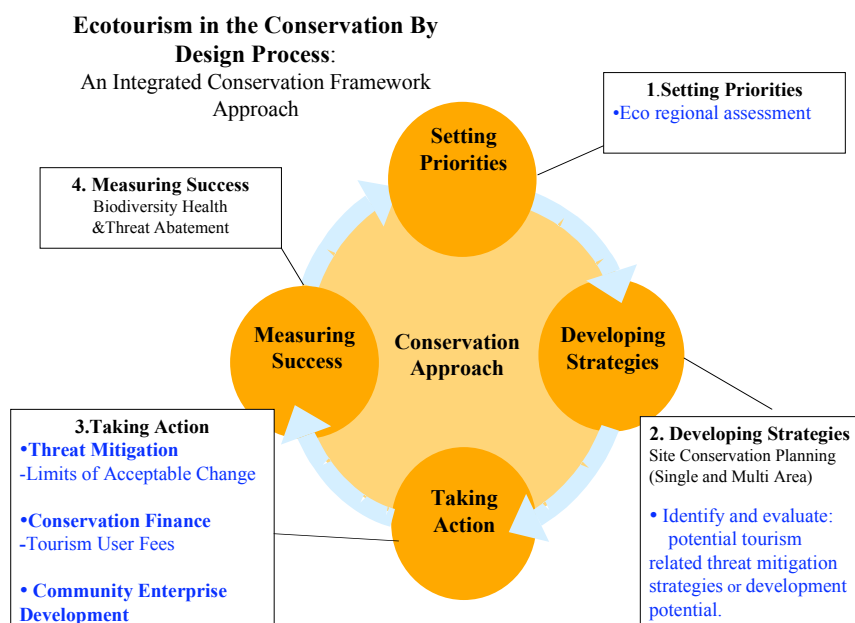
[PowerPoint presentation](#)

The rising tourism tide is affecting protected areas worldwide. The tourism growth 1990-2000 was 9% in Central America, 7% in South America and 6.5% in Oceania. In 2003, Ecuador, Peru, Nicaragua, Argentina and the Dominican Republic showed double digit growth. Belize and Honduras were also above average. If one compares the global growth rates provided by WTO, it is noticeable that they are much higher in the developing world than the developed world.

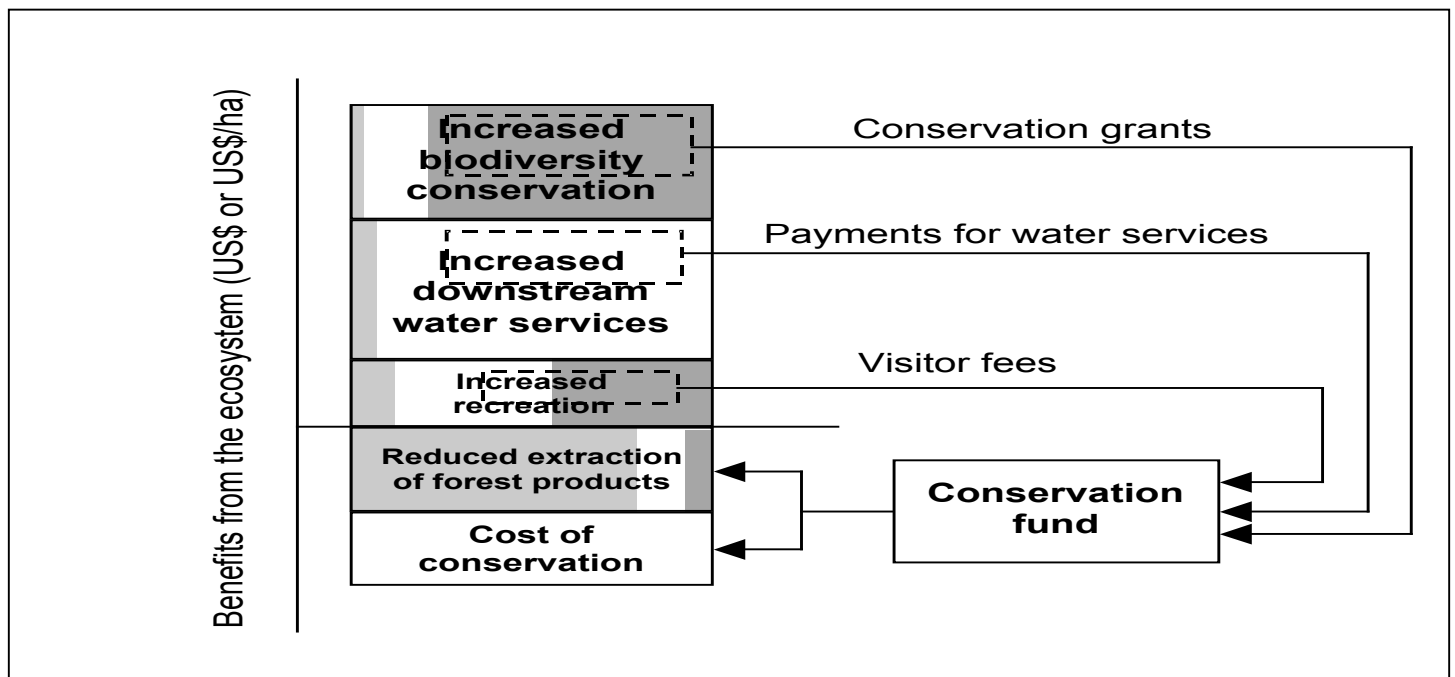


And in the developing world where are tourists going? There is no doubting the ‘magnet effect’ of protected areas. For example, in Costa Rica, two-thirds of visitors go to protected areas. The Eduardo Avaroa Reserve in Bolivia increased its visitation from 8,000 in 1999 to 48,000 in 2003. The Gladden Spit Marine Reserve in Belize had 500 whale shark tourists in 2003 but 1500 in 2004. The cruise line sector is up 15% in 2003 and land-based nature tourism stops are common.

Tourism is a growing threat to biodiversity. There is disturbance to wildlife, freshwater pollution, soil erosion and habitat destruction. But tourism also has benefits that include poverty reduction, employment and conservation financing especially through ecotourism and community development.







What are the potential financing sources for conservation? There are obviously a variety of sources that can be identified – for example, grants for conservation, payment for water resources, user/entrance fees and so forth.

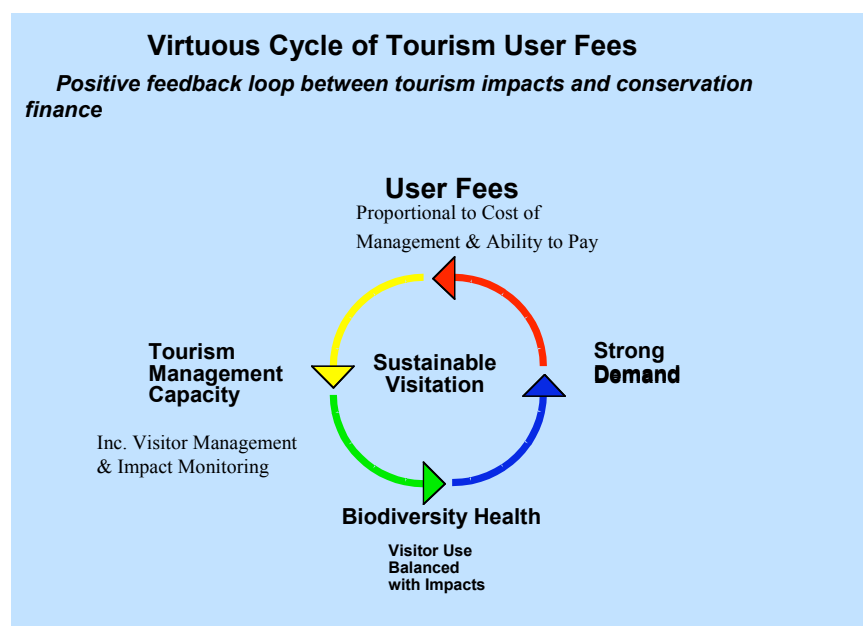
With tourism user fees a number of objectives are important:

1. Cost recovery – it is important that enough income is generated to at least cover costs.
2. Generate 'profit' – excess revenue after costs can finance conservation management activities.
3. Generate local business opportunities – for example, earmark user fees for enhancing the visitor experience; use interpretation to develop local business.
4. Maximise education opportunities – for example, charge low fees for locals and students; have a differential fee structure so that foreigners pay more or most compared to locals.
5. Use fees for visitor management – for example, charge high fees if congestion is a problem or the threat level is high so that demand is reduced in places of high visitation. Angkor World Heritage is a good example. They charge USD20 for a day pass.

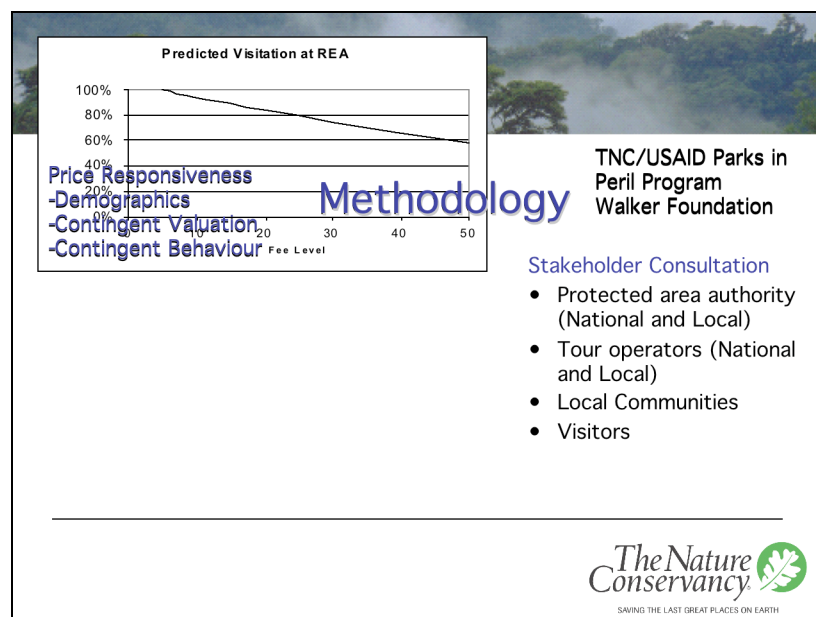
There are major challenges with regard to user fees.

1. There is insufficient protected area management capacity to deal with tourism. For example, there is often no understanding of what the real costs are with regards to tourism/visitor management and there is little information available about the real costs.
2. Overly low fees are being charged, for example, entrance to Komodo National Park costs USD3 and in Mexico national parks the entrance fee is USD2. Under-valuation leads tourism to erode the natural capital of the sites.
3. There is high leakage of income generated (both public and private) and thus revenues are often not reinvested in the sites themselves.
4. There is insufficient and unconditioned revenue flows to local communities.
5. There is no Virtuous Cycle in place that links visitor demand to the biodiversity health of the site.

Unless fees are based on the real costs of tourism, it is impossible to achieve both sustainable visitation and improvements in biodiversity.



The Nature Conservancy has designed and implemented a number of test cases for implementing different income generating mechanisms from tourism. The tourism-based sources of conservation finances have been tested at three sites - Eduardo Avaroa Reserve, Bolivia; Gladden Spit Marine Reserve, Belize and Islas del Golfo, Baja California, Mexico. The objective was to evaluate visitor price responsiveness and make recommendations for tourism-based fee mechanisms for protected area systems.



The methodology was developed and funded by The Nature Conservancy, USAID Parks in Peril Program and the Walker Foundation. Price responsiveness was measured using demographics, contingent valuation and contingent behaviour. Stakeholder consultation included protected area authorities (both national and local), tour operators (both national and local), local communities and visitors.

The overall outcome can be expressed in these terms: the fee level can be increased if the conservation outcomes are part of the contribution from the user's fees. Also the test cases illustrated how the tourism industry can benefit from higher fees and an increased level of infrastructure development.

What were the achievements of the test case program? The pilot tourism fee program has been completed at all three sites. In Bolivia, USD600,000 in new income has been generated for Eduardo Avaroa Reserve with USD100,000 going to local community development. The test case success has resulted in the national government extending the experience to the whole protected area system. In Belize, diver fees have been initiated at Gladden Spit Marine Reserve. In Mexico, Friends of the Wild Baja fund for visitor donations was designed and implemented with tour operators at Islas del Golfo Marine Protected Area. Tourism operators generally were reluctant about fees believing that it would reduce both demand and profitability but the test case methodology showed them that, in fact, the opposite was the case.

From the experience of the test case program, a number of recommendations can be made.

- Ensure that a Virtuous Cycle exists so that there is a positive feedback loop between user fee levels, demand and the health of the conservation targets.
- With regards to the fee systems: (1) Establish a visitor registration system and data base. (2) Fee control should be at the local protected area management level rather than through legislation. (3) The money must be retained by the agency and especially at the site where it is collected. (4) Share revenue, conditionally, with local communities.
- With regards to the distribution of revenue: (1) Fund site management with a priority on the implementation of a tourist management plan. (2) Establish a site-focussed fiduciary fund. (3) Establish a local community fund.

What conclusions can be drawn from this experience?

- Protected areas should have an income generation strategy that includes fees and tourism.
- Fees should generate sufficient revenue to at least recover the cost of providing recreation opportunities.
- Developed country visitors want to pay more than locals at sites in developing countries.
- Survey visitors to evaluate price responsiveness and review fees at equivalent sites when setting fees. Communicate the evaluation of the price

responsiveness to the tourism industry to illustrate to them that fees are not anathema to their interests.

- Involve stakeholders, especially the tourism industry and local communities, when setting fees.
- Evaluate the responsiveness amongst visitors as a way of illustrating to the tourism industry that fees are not anathema to their interests.

**Cristina Zea Ophelan**

**Bolivia National Service for Protected Areas, Noel Kempff Mercado National Park and World Heritage Site, Bolivia**

Ecotourism in Noel Kempff Mercado National Park, World Heritage Site, Bolivia:  
Are there real benefits for conservation?



The biodiversity values of Noel Kempff are as follows:

- The site consists of humid tropical rainforests, seasonally flooded savanna, Brazilian cerrado, gallery forests, thorn scrub, dry forests and large expanses of wetlands similar to the pantanal formations found in Brazil.
- A bird list of over 630 species and approximately 130 mammals.
- Abundant populations of giant otter, fresh-water river dolphin, jaguar, giant anteater and the very rare and endangered maned wolf.

- The Caparu Plateau is drained by numerous perennial rivers that flow over the plateau giving rise to more than 10 spectacular waterfalls.
- These waterfalls are combined by this unique plateau formation framed by the rugged backdrop of mesas, rivers and dense forests.

The ecotourism program in the park is a recent tourism development and is managed by the national protected area service. In 1993, the execution of the “ecological tourism program implementation in Noel Kempff was started and financed by a Swiss technical cooperative. The tourism infrastructure consists of 2 lodges, Los Fierros and Flor de Oro.

The objectives of the ecotourism program are as follows: (1) Give tourists the opportunity to visit and get to know the unique natural and cultural history of Noel Kempff, creating an ecological conscience, but with the lowest physical impacts on natural resources. (2) Offer economic and educational benefits to the local communities that live around the park.

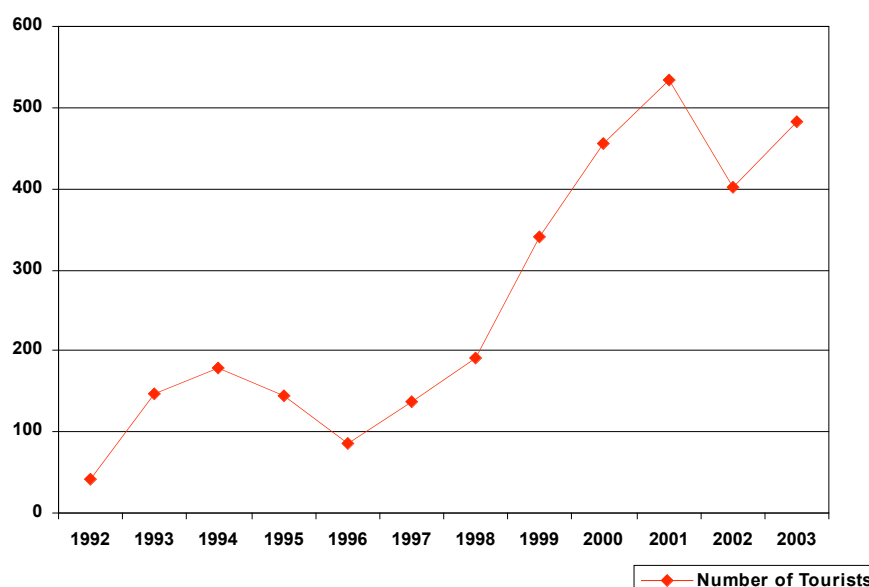
### **INVESTMENT FOR ECOTOURISM PROGRAM IN NOEL KEMPFF MERCADO NP**

<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
ECOTOURISM IN NOEL KEMPFF MERCADO NATIONAL PARK – SWISS	Usd. 800.000.-
CLIMATIC ACTION PROGRAM	Usd. 351.842.-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Usd. 1.151.842.-</b>

The relatively large investment in the ecotourism program has seen an increase in visitor flows but incomes have been going down and the costs of running the program have increased.



## VISITOR FLOW IN NOEL KEMPF MERCADO NATIONAL PARK (1992 – 2003)



What is the state of the program at the moment?

- The ecotourism program is in deficit.
- Profits are not high enough to cover the maintenance costs of the program.
- There has not been any further investment in infrastructure despite the increasing number of tourists each year.
- Touristic services cover the operation and infrastructure costs for the international market segment (including the marketing of the site).
- The program has diversified the supply side of tourism with more and different options for visitors.
- Alliances have been made with 42 tourism operators and national and international travel agencies.
- A local guides association has been established in the “La Florida” community.



What needs to be changed?

- Need a business management vision (including a business plan for the ecotourism program).
- High quality services are needed to increase tourists' satisfaction levels but in order to do this, it is necessary to know more about the type of tourists who are attracted to the site.
- Need to show the community the benefits that arise from an engagement with tourism in order to increase community involvement in tourism activities.
- There is a need for tourism management capacity building in communities.

What lessons have been learnt?

- Ecotourism in protected areas needs a management business vision, in order to obtain successful economic and environmental results.
- Good financial planning is required for ecotourism activities.
- A good knowledge of the tourist market and tourists' expectation is essential.
- Ecotourism in protected areas needs a good monitoring system to adequately manage the impacts of tourism.
- Successful results in ecotourism programs are related to a considerable investment in infrastructure, equipment maintenance, a high quality of services and good market knowledge.

What are the challenges for the future?

- Provide concession to tourism operators so the private sector are encouraged to get involved with tourism to Noel Kempff National Park.
- Guarantee local communities involvement in such concessions by the establishment of private enterprise and local community alliances.
- Establish a legal and administrative framework for the protected area-ecotourism experience so that the 'rules' are clear to all involved.
- Promote the building of local capacities for ecotourism management (including the organizational levels of the management structure).
- Get it right at one site and then make this experience the model for other sites.

What does the PA management expect from the introduction of tourism concessions?

- Improved tourism services and facilities at Noel Kempff Mercado National Park.
- Increasing revenues from tourism.
- Strengthened local community capacities for business administration in ecotourism activities.
- That the ecotourism program will help achieve the conservation goals of the site.

Overall, ecotourism must be a tool for conservation, otherwise (1) it is not ecotourism and (2) the tourism/conservation /protected area partnership cannot progress at all.

**Rili Djohani**

**Director of the Indonesia Program, The Nature Conservancy, Komodo National Park and World Heritage Site, Indonesia**

[PowerPoint presentation](#)

## **Background**

At Komodo, all the interested parties in conservation and tourism and community development have to accommodate the following: biodiversity; tourism activities; communities (3,500 people live in the park and most are small scale fishers); fisheries; regional development priorities.

There are major threats to both marine and terrestrial ecosystems in the national park for example, from illegal activities including fish bombing although there has been a decline in this activity 1993-2004. The objectives of the park include the general benefits that can arise from tourism. Community awareness is an important on-going process as is the development of alternative livelihoods in the park including seaweed cultivation and ecotourism.

Monitoring and research are crucial. A twenty five year long management plan has been approved and there is a zoning system operating in the park. There is a

collaborative park management initiative in place. Park financing is dependent on ecotourism development.

The need for tourism concessions arose out of a number of significant events. Firstly, the Asian financial crisis of 1997 (the government's conservation budget was cut by 80%). Secondly, in 1998, the decentralisation of political power in the post Sukharno epoch and, thirdly, global issues of recent times (terrorism, SARS and so forth). The combined result was a drop of visitation from 36,000 in 1996 to 12,000 visitors in 2001). In the wake of these events funds were desperately needed.

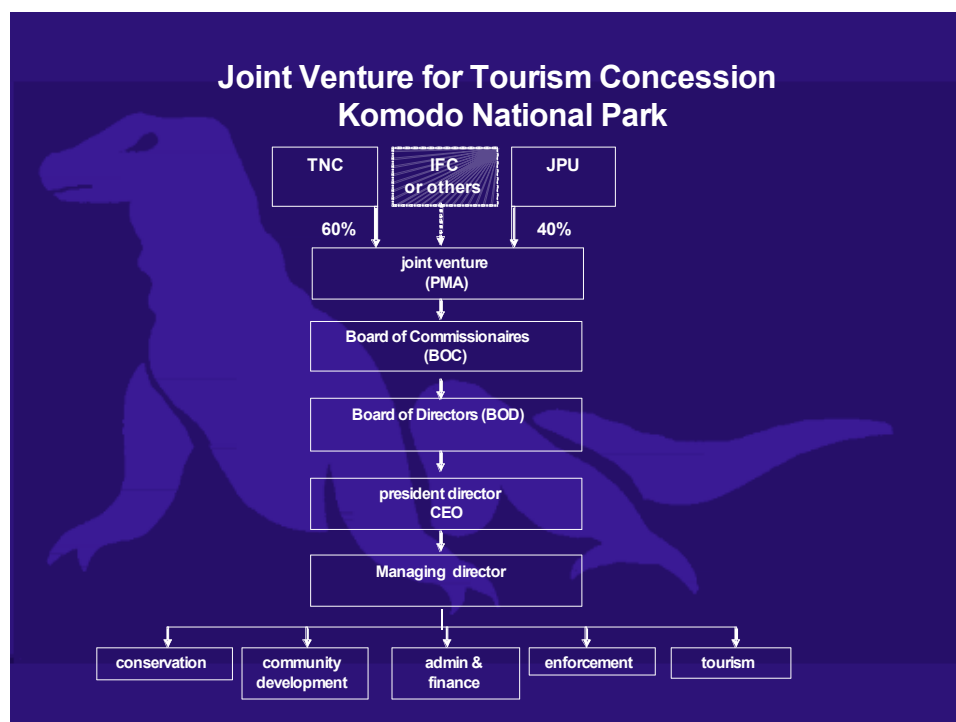
We began by working out what it actually cost to run/manage the park because unless we knew this we could not proceed. We discovered it cost USD 2 million per annum and this covered park planning and evaluation; enforcement; awareness, training and education; monitoring and applied research; the alternative livelihoods program; tourism promotion and management. While this is a daunting figure it must be remembered that Komodo is an extraordinary and major strategic asset that has enormous tourism potential for sustainable marine tourism, for both the low and high ends of the market and for producing a high quality experience.



We examined all the sources of income for the park and then undertook a comparative study with Galapagos by examining seven areas: park management (including, laws and enforcement); park financing (including user fees); ecotourism development; local communities; training and awareness; monitoring and research; alternative livelihood programs. We then undertook a number of planning studies from 2001 to 2003 that would also be a training and capacity building exercise plus an exercise in park infrastructure monitoring and evaluation. These planning studies included: financial and economic analyses; cost-benefit analyses; tourism management and marketing; enforcement and improving the park's organizational structure; establishing a micro-enterprise fund; collaborative management structures; monitoring and evaluation in its own right. The tourism planning study, for example, identified that tourists will pay more if there is a quality experience/attraction and in Komodo's case tourist guiding was considered central to a quality experience.

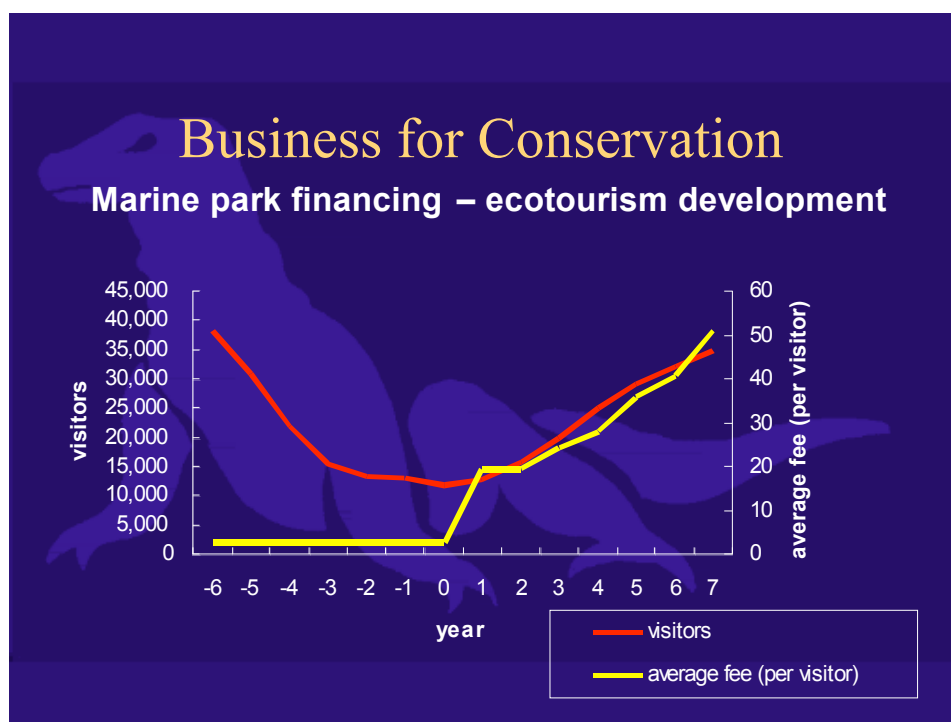
### **Tourism Concession in Komodo National Park**

This was a joint venture that involved PT Putri Naga Komodo, The Nature Conservancy, Jaytasha Putrindo Utama under the auspices of the Ministry of Forestry, IUCN and UNESCO, sponsored by USAID, Packard and Global Environmental Facility (GEF).

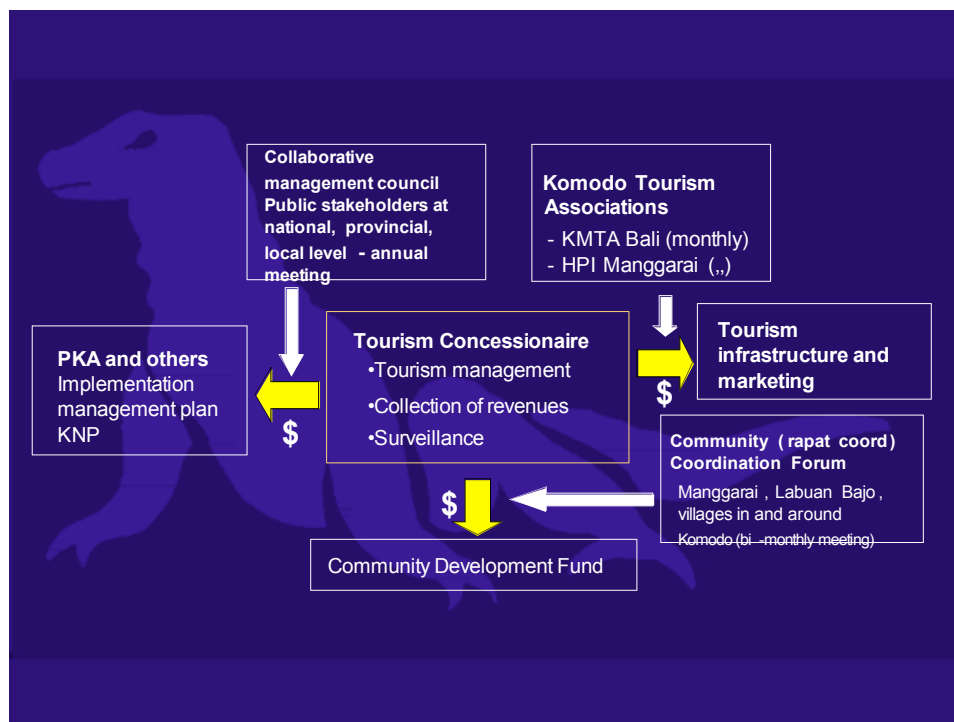


The objectives of the Komodo Tourism Concession were as follows: (1) protect natural resources. (2) Develop a self-sufficiency model based on sustainable ecotourism. (3) Manage specific park functions for long term management, protection and operation. (4) Foster the involvement of local people in park and business operations. (5) Ensure the livelihood and culture of local communities.

The venture obviously included the tourism industry and the business plans and agreements reflected this relationship. The tourism company that was involved became part of park management and was integrated into what the national park was about because the bottom line was conservation. It was critical that revenue should be generated for preserving the environment and a number of decisions were made to achieve this: (1) Develop the necessary infrastructure for higher revenues from ecotourism. (2) Negotiate for better air-access to the national park. (3) Promote both sea-based and land-based tourism. (4) Market packages from Bali. (5) Adjust gate-fees and operator-fees to higher levels. (6) Change the visitor mix so that there are a greater number of high income/spending visitors to the park.



The projected income for the next 7-10 years is USD15 million including a heavy emphasis on grants. In the long term the aim is to increase park income so that the park is self-sufficient and less reliant on grants. The future direction for the park can be summarized as a program of conservation, resource protection, tourism management and promotion, micro-enterprise development and monitoring and applied research. The tourism concession is the engine, the financial engine of the park.



So what are the perceived benefits of the tourism concession? (1) Achieving self-sufficiency for park management. (2) Gaining improved park facilities and infrastructure. (3) Improving enforcement within the park. (4) Having on-site capacity building. (5) Increasing the park's constituency. (6) Having effective tourism management and marketing. (7) Establishing community development projects. (8) Having a well-managed park.

It is important that what we are doing at Komodo is not done in isolation. There is much to be gained from learning from and with others; from a constant exchange of ideas with others in ASEAN, South Africa and the Pacific.

**Art Pedersen**

**World Heritage Tourism Program, World Heritage Centre, UNESCO**

*Value Adding: using World Heritage sites to achieve conservation goals.*

Since the adoption of the World Heritage Convention, 788 sites have been inscribed onto the World Heritage list and 154 of these are natural sites. Value adding is possible because of the discrete set of sites. Nevertheless, tourism is a major management concern at World Heritage sites.

Within the World Heritage organization there are two strands to the World Heritage and tourism relationship: (1) the World Heritage Tourism Program within the World Heritage Centre in Paris and (2) a strand within the World Heritage Commission's work. The Commission has two advisory bodies – IUCN and ICOMOS – and both these bodies deal with tourism impacts. The Commission can prevent inappropriate tourism development by applying diplomatic pressure.

With regard to value adding the following points need to be made.

- Few World Heritage sites have tourism and public use plans. There is an overwhelming need for such planning and preferably as part of the inscription process and definitely before inscription.
- The World Heritage Centre can facilitate inter-institutional and inter-government cooperation. UNESCO is good at holding meetings! The Centre can also promote regional development.
- The World Heritage theme is a story that can potentially link sites, places and tourism itineraries and where interpretation is a critical feature of the linkages. For example, UNESCO's World Heritage kit for primary school children indicates the education potential of the World Heritage story and this can be realized within a tourism context.
- There is no doubt about the growing power of the World Heritage brand or label within tourism and so again there exists the potential to capitalize on this by using the brand to link attractions/sites in commercial products.
- The Centre has the capacity to help promote the local product (specific World Heritage sites) at international Tourism trade fairs.

- There is the capacity to link World Heritage sites to less known sites within a region. World Heritage sites can be a platform for add-on tourism attractions within a retail product/itinerary.
- However, this all presupposes a dynamic engagement with the private sector. Where such partnerships have evolved, the results have included tourism infrastructure development and conservation monies from the private sector partners.
- There is a growing interest in World Heritage tours where some of the profits visibly go back to the sites – in other words, consumer pressure is there for observable conservation/restoration outcomes from their tourist dollar.
- The World Heritage tourism program continues to work with tour operators and the accommodation sector to help local communities to develop tourism in and around World Heritage sites.
- UNESCO/World Heritage is an attractive organization to partner for conservation/tourism ventures because a socially responsible image can accrue from such partnerships. The tourism industry can well afford such an image.



## Discussion from the Floor

- The issue of governments changing their political colors and therefore the problem of the long term viability of the involvement of private enterprise in protected areas. On the other hand, private enterprise is often more reliable than governments that come and go. It's a two-sided issue. The panel responded by pointing out the need to ensure that the structures within government bureaucracies are maintained irrespective of governments coming and going. Nevertheless it was appreciated that it is sometimes difficult to maintain the viability of ecotourism when political circumstances radically change especially in countries with government instability and/or unpredictability or where corruption is rife.
- Community-based ecotourism is small in scale and the bottom line is not so rigid. These operations tend to be more flexible and are therefore less vulnerable to fluctuations. Where community-based tourism is established it is important to recognize that tourism should be just one activity in the economic portfolio. After all, tourism itself is notoriously fickle and unpredictable as the SARS, Avian Bird Flu and terrorist attacks have all recently illustrated. Tourism does, obviously, involve risk. Protected area managers need to be realistic and must have a number of economic activities going that all generate income. It is unwise in the extreme to rely totally on tourism. Tourism is a very stratified/differentiated market. This needs to be understood. Often as one part of the market declines or changes, another part of the market does the opposite.
- In Peruvian protected areas, tourism has become either *the* major threat to biodiversity or one of the major threats. Why? (1) The application of the wrong paradigm for visitor management. For example, carrying capacity does not work. (2) There is no effective tourism planning. What is required is an acceptable change approach to tourism. More transparency is required and real decisions have to be made about what kind of tourism protected areas will have and how much biodiversity will be compromised.
- There's not enough understanding of tourism and tourists – their needs, their demands, their desires – and this includes locals as well as international

visitors. There is a great deal of naivety about the nature of tourism and tourists among protected area managers tourism and this makes effective planning impossible.

- There is much more to ecotourism and protected areas than fees and income. There are other important outcomes from the relationship, especially educational outcomes for both the visitor and the local community.
- There's too much 'greenwashing' by tourism companies 'posing' as ecotourism operations.
- The stability of governments has been mentioned but what about the stability of park management regimes? This is also an issue. Management regimes also change and this can have a major effect on partnerships including ecotourism partnerships.
- Community participation and ecotourism: how can local communities benefit? How can they develop ecotourism? How can capacity be built in local communities so that they are equipped to develop ecotourism that is, in itself, a sophisticated market? These are huge questions. Today we touched on this by focussing on commissions and fees. In this day and age the frameworks do exist for the integration of communities, the private sector and protected areas in ecotourism enterprises so that all stakeholders are part of the process and derive the benefits. However, there is an over-riding warning: communities should never put all their eggs into the tourism basket!

## Workshop 3

### The IUCN Netherlands Workshop



### *Biodiversity and Sustainable Tourism IUCN related practices & policy*

## **Biodiversity and sustainable tourism IUCN related practices & policy**



### **Program**

**November 20, 12-2 pm Break out Room 2**

Welcome

Willem Ferwerda/ Marielies Schelhaas - Netherlands Committee for IUCN

Robyn Bushell - WCPA Tourism Task Force

Sustainable tourism in protected areas, WCPA and tourism

Pham Trung Luong - Department of sustainable tourism Research and development, Vietnam

Nguyen Minh Thong – Country Representative IUCN Vietnam

IUCN Vietnam and tourism: community-based sustainable tourism activities in several areas and ecosystems in Vietnam

Anthea Stephens - IUCN South Africa/Fair Trade for Tourism South Africa

Fair and responsible tourism businesses: the relevance of socio-economic factors and marketing

Discussion

Summary and closing

**Moderator:** *Willem Ferwerda* - director of the Netherlands Committee for IUCN

**Workshop Coordinator:** Netherlands Committee for IUCN, Marielies Schelhaas,  
[marielies.schelhaas@iucn.nl](mailto:marielies.schelhaas@iucn.nl)

# **Biodiversity and Tourism: IUCN practices & policy**

## **Synopsis**

Marielies Schelhaas  
IUCN Netherlands Committee

### **Introduction**

Tourism and biodiversity have a strong relationship, that can be both positive and negative. Tourism can degrade natural areas, but can also be a reason to protect nature and culture. It can fund nature management and give nature a direct economic value, providing an incentive for local inhabitants and governments to protect nature. The importance of tourism is increasing, as tourism is now the largest economic sector in the world, and it is still growing.

Tourism, as a form of sustainable use of biodiversity, is a subject that relates to the activities of many IUCN bodies. This workshop presented good practices of tourism activities of IUCN organizations, in South-Africa, Vietnam, The Netherlands and of the Tourism Task Force of the World Commission of Protected Areas (WCPA).

Goal of the workshop was also to discuss the present and future role of IUCN in tourism.

## **Presentations**

Four good practices of tourism activities of IUCN organizations were presented at the workshop:

- Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas and Tourism.

*Robyn Bushell (Vice Chair- WCPA Tourism Task Force)*

The goal of the WCPA Task Force for Tourism and Protected Areas is to develop a broader understanding and knowledge of the relation tourism and protected areas. Therefore the Task Force has produced several publications about tourism management in protected areas, it developed guidelines and case-studies to investigate models for tourism management and provides information for managers, planners and researchers in park-based tourism, community conserved and private conservation initiatives, that utilise tourism as a tool for biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation.

- IUCN Vietnam and Tourism: Community-based sustainable tourism activities in two areas and ecosystems in Vietnam

[PowerPoint presentation](#)

*Pham Trung Luong (Department of sustainable tourism Research and development, Vietnam) and Nguyen Minh Thong (country Representative IUCN Vietnam)*

Tourism is a main subject for IUCN Vietnam. IUCN Vietnam has supported communities in setting up community based tourism projects for backpackers and for clients from tour operators in two regions in fragile ecosystems in Vietnam. Both are mainly focused on community based activities to achieve a broad local basis and resources for nature conservation.

- Fair and Responsible Tourism Businesses: Fair Trade for Tourism in South Africa (FTTSA).

[PowerPoint presentation](#)

*Anthea Stephens (IUCN South Africa/Fair Trade for Tourism South Africa)*

FTTSA is an independent initiative of IUCN South Africa that encourages fair and responsible tourism. Therefore a trademark for tourism businesses (like lodges, hotels) is developed, based on fair trade principles (fair wages, respect for human rights and environment, fair distribution of benefits, etc). To measure fair trade in tourism there are made objective and practical criteria. Criteria are objectively and practically. Apart from using the trademark, businesses profit also from joint marketing.

- Sustainable Outbound Tourism in the Netherlands

[PowerPoint presentation](#)

*Marielies Schelhaas (Netherlands Committee for IUCN)*

The Netherlands Committee for IUCN has a broad tourism programme with the aim to make Dutch outbound tourism more sustainable. Touroperators are one of the main partners. There are several projects, like linking touroperators and conservation projects in destination countries, bringing Dutch tourism organisations that work on sustainable tourism together in a network (for exchange of knowledge, common projects), there is a small grants for tourism programme, etc.

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

The discussion focused on the role of IUCN and tourism.

Issues that were discussed:

- Is there a need for a more integrated approach on the level of the international secretariat?
- Does IUCN need to undertake more activities regarding tourism than it currently does? And if so, on which fields?
- Can IUCN play a role in providing information and conditions on how tourism can enhance biodiversity conservation?
- Certification: is certification an important tool for IUCN, how does it contribute?
- How can we use the information of the presented good practices (and other experiences) in IUCN?

## **Conclusions and recommendations for IUCN**

The workshop discussion focused on recommendations to IUCN on how IUCN should deal with tourism, now and in the future. The conclusions are diverse, but the general tone of the discussion and of the recommendations was clear: a stronger role of IUCN in regards of tourism is required.

Some conclusions and recommendations:

- Tourism is increasingly important in biodiversity conservation, both as a major threat and as a major opportunity. Therefore IUCN should play a more active role in tourism, both in sustainable (or responsible) tourism in general, as more specific in community based tourism and ecotourism.

- The tourism task force of WCPA is a good example of how tourism can have a place in the IUCN commissions. The experiences of the task force can be a starting point for further discussions and implementation. The Durban recommendations (recommendations made as a result of the discussions during the World Parks Congress in Durban, September 2003) should be taken into account.
- The scope of tourism is broader than protected areas only. Almost every subject of IUCN touches on tourism, every commission has a link, whether it is communication, protection of species, the importance of communities, ecosystem management etc. It also links to programmes like the Biodiversity and Business programme and others.
- Tourism is a cross cutting issue for IUCN. There is need for more coordination and for an IUCN policy on tourism in IUCN.
- Members of IUCN and IUCN offices have experiences from where a lot can be learned of. Make the best practices and information that is already available in IUCN more accessible.
- One focus for IUCN should be the scientific basis of sustainable tourism. In recent years a lot of research has been done, but there are gaps in the available scientific information and there is no overview of the available knowledge.
- Continue the work that is already done (by IUCN offices, members etc), fill gaps (on information and experiences) and link the available work to IUCN committees, programmes and to members and memberstates. Don't try to find complete new roles for IUCN.
- One role of IUCN international is (a.o.) coordination of the available knowledge and finding strategies to spread and link that knowledge.
- IUCN is a network organization. IUCN can play a role in bridging information between members and to the member states.
- A role for IUCN is collaboration with relevant organizations (like UNEP, WTO) and the private sector (tour operators, travel industry).
- Certification is a concrete and practical tool to make sustainable tourism visible and measurable. Fair Trade for Tourism South Africa shows how it can work out in practice. Apart from the advantages, launching a successful certification scheme is also complicated and expensive. IUCN should investigate the possibilities of certification in an IUCN tourism programme.
- Fixed indicators for sustainable tourism don't exist, general benchmarking is therefore necessary. There can be a role for IUCN in the international process of guidelines on sustainable tourism. The main focus for IUCN should be nature conservation and biodiversity, but also pre-conditions (international standards like human rights, labour conditions) should be part of the indicators of sustainable tourism.
- Planning and management of tourism activities is very important. The tourism task force of WCPA and member organizations like The Nature Conservancy already have a lot of information regarding this issue.
- Training, education and communications are of vital importance for success. Links with CEC and its Learning Network are required.



**Following steps**

The conclusions and recommendations of this workshop will be sent to the participants of the tourism discussion at the WCC. It will also be sent to key persons at the secretariat and at commissions of IUCN.

NC-IUCN and WCPA tourism task force will start a discussion for more basis and coordination regarding tourism in both secretariat and commissions. The results of this workshop will be used in the discussion and the following steps.

The first discussion was at the WCC, on 23<sup>rd</sup> of November, with some people from the international secretariat and IUCN and member organizations with tourism expertise.

## **Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas**

### **Report from the WCPA Task Force on Tourism and Protected Areas**

Vice Chair, Professor Robyn Bushell

Head, Tourism for Healthy Futures, University of Western Sydney, Australia

#### **Overview**

The WCPA Steering Committee created the Task Force on Tourism & Protected Areas in 1997 with Paul Eagles as the chair. The Terms of Reference of the Committee can be found at <http://www.ahs.uwaterloo.ca/rec/taskforce/tmsoref.htm>.

Since its formation the Task Force has been involved in many activities. The most prominent include:

#### **1. The development of policy documents**

Three major documents have been produced by the Task Force.

Guidelines for Public Use Measurement and Reporting at Parks and Protected Areas, was published by the IUCN in 1999. It is available in printed form from the publication office of the IUCN in Cambridge, UK. An electronic copy in Adobe pdf form is available from: <http://www.ahs.uwaterloo.ca/~eagles/parks.pdf>. A Chinese version is also available.

Guidelines for Tourism in Parks and Protected Areas of East Asia, was published by the IUCN in 2001. This document is available in printed form from the publication office in Cambridge, UK. An Adobe pdf form is available from: <http://www.ahs.uwaterloo.ca/rec/taskforce/eastasia.html>. Chinese and Japanese versions will soon be available.

Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas: Guidelines for Planning and Management, was co-published by the IUCN, World Tourism Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme in 2002. An Adobe pdf form is available from: [http://iucn.org/themes/wcpa/pubs/pdfs/tourism\\_guidelines.pdf](http://iucn.org/themes/wcpa/pubs/pdfs/tourism_guidelines.pdf). The WTO funded the translation of the document into Spanish and French. The Parques Nacionales Espana funded publication of the Spanish edition distributed at the WPC. WTO is looking for a funding partner to publish the French edition; the IUCN Montreal office has identified a potential funding partner to translate and print the document in Chinese.

## **2. The integration of tourism-related issues into various sessions at the Vth World Park Congress.**

While neither a Stream nor Cross cutting theme of the Congress, Tourism was an important sub-theme.

Tourism featured mainly in the 'Building Support' and 'Finance' workshop streams, and was a topic within several cross cutting themes, in particular the World Heritage and Marine theme.

The [Day 9](#) Plenary session included a panel discussion on Strategic Alliances featuring Tourism.

The Congress Recommendations included Rec 5.12 *Tourism as a Vehicle for Conservation and Support of Protected Areas*. A key action arising from the Tourism Recommendation is to strengthen ongoing strategic alliances between IUCN - WCPA and key stakeholders involved in the development of policy and guidelines, seeking a more sustainable partnership between tourism and protected areas. This was advanced through the work undertaken leading up to the Congress.

The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), The International Ecotourism Society (TIES), Conservation International (CI) all sponsored major side-event programs and launched important publications dealing with Tourism and Conservation. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) also had a major presence in workshops.

All tourism sessions in the main program and side events were very well attended with a wide range of stakeholders including PA managers, policy makers, NGOs, academics, community - in particular Indigenous groups and industry bodies and operators.

The Task Force held a two-hour general meeting open to all on Day 3 of the Congress. 53 people attended, many apologies were also recorded. At this meeting the Chair, Prof Paul Eagles outlined the work of the Task Force, its outputs to date, opened discussion and comment on future action plans, and invited input to the Tourism Recommendation. A second meeting was convened for detailed discussion and input to Recommendation 5.12. The Chair also thanked the past Co- Chair, Mr Mavuso Msimang , CEO South African National Parks, for his support of the Task Force.

The Congress Exhibition also featured many displays and publications relating to visitation and nature-based tourism activity.

The Task Force made an input to SBSTTA 9 'Message to the Convention on Biological Diversity' through the post Congress Liaison Group on Protected Areas meeting in preparation for COP 7 in 2004.

The Task Force can continue to play a useful role within the WCPA and with other IUCN Commissions, in particular the Commission on Education and Communication and the Ramsar programme. The Task Force welcomes opportunity to work with other Task Forces within WCPA and to support the IUCN *Building Support for Protected Areas* 10 year plan.

## **Tourism Issues Covered at the Congress**

The world's tourism and recreation industry provides considerable benefits to protected areas and the communities adjacent to or within them. These benefits include greater appreciation of cultural and natural heritage and greater knowledge of the interplay between humans and their environment. High quality recreational, spiritual and educational experiences for park visitors will foster increased interest and commitment to the protection and conservation of biodiversity and cultural values.

If poorly planned and managed, the negative ecological, social and cultural consequences of tourism can be considerable. Tourism can contribute to the deterioration of cultural landscapes, threaten biodiversity, contribute to pollution and degradation of ecosystems, displace agricultural land and open spaces, diminish water and energy resources, and drive poverty deeper into local communities.

Therefore tourism in and around protected areas must be a tool for conservation: building support and raising awareness of the many important values of protected areas including ecological, cultural, sacred, spiritual, aesthetic, recreational and economic. It should help generate income for conservation work. In keeping with the UN Millennium Development Goals tourism affiliated with conservation (both PAs and Community Conserved Areas) should also contribute to the quality of life of local communities; provide incentives to support Indigenous people's traditional customs and values; protect and respect sacred sites; and, acknowledge the legitimacy of traditional knowledge.

Careful and strategic implementation of policy together with proactive and effective management of tourism is essential. To be an effective conservation tool however, requires increased understanding of both its beneficial effects and its negative consequences. This requires quite considerable capacity building of park staff and communities if they are to ensure the desired outcomes. It also requires a much better level of understanding of park visitation patterns, numbers and trends; of visitor motivation and satisfaction; guidance in many park management issues, such as policies on licensing, concessions and permits; and much more sophisticated understanding of effective conservation awareness, education and interpretation strategies.

Park visitation and nature-based tourism are a critical component of fostering support for parks and the conservation of biological and cultural heritage. For effective public private partnerships there is need for collaboration and co-operation between natural resource management agencies, the scientific community, government bodies and international agencies concerned with biological and cultural heritage policy and tourism planning and local people, the tourism industry, and the visitors.

The need for this positive relationship is highlighted in the Congress Recommendation on Tourism. The key issues include:

- i. Providing financial support for protected areas;
- ii. Supporting sustainable use of biological and cultural diversity;
- iii. Linking practice to conventions and guidelines;
- iv. Fostering attachment to heritage through visitation and effective conservation education;
- v. Encouraging stewardship amongst locals;
- vi. Working with local stakeholders
- vii. Supporting local and Indigenous community development and poverty alleviation; Co-management of PAs and
- viii. Contributing to civil society, engendering respect for others and for our natural and cultural heritage.

### **Tourism Outputs from the WPC**

i) CAB International agreed to publish a selection of papers presented at the Congress, Benefits Beyond Boundaries: Tourism & Protected Areas, The World Parks Congress, 2003. edited by R. Bushell & P. Eagles.

ii) A chapter (Ch 12) *Protected Areas and Tourism* in the IUCN publication Friends for life: Building Support For Protected Areas edited by Jeff McNeely.

iii) Three reports from the Congress have been published in leading international journals:

Eagles P.F.J. (2004) *Tourism at the Fifth World Parks Congress, Durban, South Africa, 8–17 September 2003*. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, (12) 2, pp. 169-173.

Staiff, R. & Bushell, R. (2004) *Tourism & Protected Areas: Benefits Beyond Boundaries*. Annals of Tourism Research, 31 (3), pp.723- 726.

Buckley, R. (2004) in the Journal of Ecotourism (forthcoming)

iv) UNEP and Conservation International launched Tourism & Biodiversity: Mapping Tourism's Global Footprint 2003 by C. Christ, O. Hillel, S. Matus & J. Sweeting. The publication contains an interactive CD- Rom Mapping Tool. The document can be found on the UNEP web site [www.uneptie.org/pc/tourism/library/mapping\\_tourism.html](http://www.uneptie.org/pc/tourism/library/mapping_tourism.html)) or at the CI web site: [www.conservation.org](http://www.conservation.org).

v) UNESCO World Heritage Centre distributed copies of Tourism & World Heritage Areas: a Practical Manual for World Heritage Site Managers by A. Pedersen, UNESCO & UNEP, 2002.

vi) UNEP, The International Ecotourism Society and The Rainforest Alliance with the World Tourism Organisation ran a half day workshop on *Ecotourism and Sustainable Tourism Policies and Certification programmes*. The presentations are available on the UNEP website [http://www.uneptie.org/pc/tourism/wpc\\_workshop.htm](http://www.uneptie.org/pc/tourism/wpc_workshop.htm)

vii) The Nature Conservancy (2002) publication Ecotourism Development: a manual for conservation planners and managers Vol.1 by A. Drumm & A. Moore was distributed in four languages. <http://nature.org/aboutus/travel/ecotourism/resources/>



## Vth World Parks Congress 2003 Recommendations – WPC RECOMMENDATION 5.12 (APPROVED)

### Recommendation 12

#### **Tourism as a Vehicle for Conservation and Support of Protected Areas.**

The world's tourism and recreation sector potentially provides significant benefits to protected areas and associated communities. While tourism alone is not sufficient to support protected areas or community development, it can provide economic benefits, opportunities for communities, opportunities for land acquisition for protected areas, greater appreciation of cultural and natural heritage, greater knowledge of the interplay between humans and their environment, and increased interest in and commitment to the conservation of natural and cultural values. In this context, visitation, recreation and tourism are a critical component of fostering support for parks and the conservation of biological and cultural heritage. Careful and strategic implementation of policy together with proactive and effective management of tourism is essential.

However, the ecological, social and cultural costs of tourism can be considerable. Even limited impacts may have major conservation significance. If not planned, developed and managed appropriately, tourism can contribute to the deterioration of cultural landscapes, threaten biodiversity, contribute to pollution and degradation of ecosystems, displace agricultural land and open spaces, diminish water and energy resources, disrupt social systems, and increase poverty.

Tourism in and around protected areas must be designed as a vehicle for conservation: building support; raising awareness of the many important values of protected areas including ecological, cultural, spiritual, aesthetic, recreational, and economic values, and generating much needed income for conservation work for the protection of biodiversity, ecosystem integrity and cultural heritage. Tourism should also contribute to the quality of life of indigenous and local communities, provide incentives to support traditional customs and values, protect and respect sacred sites, and acknowledge traditional knowledge.

There are many stakeholders concerned with protected areas, and thus managers need resources and training to enable them to work effectively with different constituencies, including the tourism industry, local communities and visitors. There are numerous conventions, charters and guidelines that can be of assistance, including, inter alia:

- a. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) *Guidelines on Tourism in Vulnerable Ecosystems*;
- b. The ICOMOS *International Cultural Tourism Charter: Managing Tourism at Places of Heritage Significance*;
- c. The IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas' (WCPA) publication *Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas: Guidelines for Planning and Management*;
- d. The UNESCO *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*;
- e. The World Tourism Organisation *Global Code of Ethics for Tourism*;
- f. *The Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism*.

Therefore, PARTICIPANTS in the Stream on Building Broader Support for Protected Areas at the Vth World Parks Congress, in Durban, South Africa (8-17 September 2003):

1. RECOMMEND that the tourism sector, including appropriate institutions, associations, and operators, work together with protected area managers and communities to ensure that tourism associated with protected areas, in both developed and developing countries:

- a. Respects the primacy of the role of conservation for protected areas;
- b. Makes tangible and equitable financial contributions to conservation and to protected area management;
- c. Ensures tourism contributes to local economic development and poverty reduction through:
  - i. Support to local small and medium sized enterprises;
  - ii. Employment of local people;
  - iii. Purchasing of local goods and services; and
  - iv. Fair and equitable partnerships with local communities;
- d. Uses relevant approaches that encourage appropriate behaviour by visitors (e.g., environmental education, interpretation, and marketing);
- e. Uses ecologically and culturally appropriate technologies, infrastructure, transport, facilities and materials in and or near protected areas;
- f. Monitors, reports and mitigates negative impacts and enhances positive effects of tourism;
- g. Communicates the benefits of protected areas and the imperative for conservation; and
- h. Promotes the use of guidelines, codes of practice and certification programmes.

2. RECOMMEND that key decision-makers work with the conservation community, including the IUCN WCPA Task Force on Tourism and Protected Areas, to ensure that tourism:

- a. Supports the sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage;
- b. Supports local and indigenous community development and economic opportunities:
  - i. Provides political and financial support for the establishment, extension, and effective management of protected areas;

- ii. Supports implementation of relevant international agreements, national legislation, and guidelines on protected areas;
- iii. Fosters respect and stewardship for natural and cultural heritage through visitation and education: and
- iv. Promotes the use of culturally appropriate participatory processes.

3. THEREFORE RECOMMEND to key international and national agencies, local authorities and the private sector to support research and development to:

- a. Understand the links between tourism, conservation and community development;
- b. Establish reliable data on protected area tourism;
- c. Determine optimum types and levels of protected area visitation;
- d. Promote appropriate monitoring and evaluation;
- e. Promote effective visitor management;
- f. Encourage policy development on protected area tourism;
- g. Provide appropriate tourism training for protected area personnel;
- h. Provide effective interpretation and education;
- i. Understand visitor experiences, behaviour and impact; and
- j. Develop appropriate tools and techniques for sustainable finance of protected areas through tourism.

4. ENCOURAGE dissemination of these recommendations and coordination of their implementation by the IUCN WCPA Task Force on Tourism and Protected Areas.

Stream: Building Broader Support for Protected Areas

Stream Lead: Jeff McNeely

Motion Lead: Robyn Bushell

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# Tourism Training Sessions

for



**The Institute @ IUNC**

## Training Session 1

# “Planning Effective Natural and Cultural Heritage Interpretation Strategies”



**Dr. Russell Staiff**

**Professor Robyn Bushell**

Tourism for Healthy Futures  
University of Western Sydney  
Australia

<http://www.uws.edu.au/tourism>

<http://www.edu.au/heritage/SOH>

# **“Planning Effective Natural and Cultural Heritage Interpretation Strategies”**



## **Program**

**Saturday 20th November 2004, , 14:00 – 18:00**

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Presentation: Planning and Heritage Interpretation Issues  
- Russell Staiff
3. Workshop 1
4. Five Stages of Interpretation Strategic Planning - Russell Staiff  
Case-study: Minnamurra Rainforest Centre - Robyn Bushell
5. Workshop 2
6. Summary and Evaluation

## **FIVE STAGES TO EFFECTIVE HERITAGE INTERPRETATION PLANNING.**

[PowerPoint presentation](#)

### **Stage 1: Policy and Planning**

1. What is the rationale of an interpretation program? How does it further the strategic plans of the organisation? How does it realise or embody the mission statement (or vision statement) of the organisation?
2. What are the aims of having an interpretation program?
  - What is the goal or mission statement for interpretation?
  - Who are the stakeholders (institutional & community & others)?
  - How will decisions be made?
  - What are the achievable objectives (performance criteria) of the interpretation program?
3. What models of interpretation are going to frame/contextualise/inform the interpretation program of the site?

### **Stage 2: Strategic Planning**

4. Identify resource issues
  - What are the management issues of the resource/attraction that impinge on interpretation?
  - What are the visitor management issues of the site?
  - What is the funding/staff allocation?
  - Do the staff have appropriate training/skills/educational qualifications?
5. Identify and define the target audience.
  - What are the demographic characteristics (eg age, gender, education level, origin)?
  - What are the psychographic characteristics (eg motivation, level of interest, attitudes & beliefs, receptiveness)?
6. Identify current interpretation issues, practices and the 'competitive environment'.
  - Who is doing what, where (locally, nationally, globally)?
  - What are the contemporary issues in interpretation and how will the intended program respond to these?

### **Stage 3: Development of the Program**

7. Content.
  - What concepts?
  - Which research/expertise?
  - What are the key issues/debates?
  - What themes/linkages will be used?
  - What are the key messages to be transmitted?
  - Who has editorial control over the content?
  - Are there 'ownership' or copyright issues to be resolved?
8. Structuring the Content.
  - What are the links between the content and the site?
  - What are the interests, background etc. of the audience/visitors?
  - What are the interests of site managers & stakeholders?
  - What are the interests of the interpretation team?
9. Communication Techniques.
  - What techniques best serve the content & the content issues?
  - What techniques best serve the site?
  - What techniques best serve the policy & planning issues?
  - What techniques best serve the target audiences?
  - What techniques reflect the strengths/experience of the interpretation team?
  - Are there emerging trends/issues in the use of particular techniques and media?
10. Design an Integrated Visitor Experience.
  - What types of experiences? Access? Duration? Activities? Which target audiences?
  - Target messages?
  - An interpretation centre?
  - Linking content (through concepts, themes & messages) with communication techniques.
  - Timing – short or long term programs (&/or activities)?
  - What are the environmental impacts of the program?
11. Devise a marketing strategy for the proposed interpretation program.
12. Devise an administrative structure to organise & run the program.

#### **Stage 4: Implementation**

13. Design & Produce a Draft Program.
  - Both design & production should be executed in the context of Stages 1-3.
  - Production includes all texts, all visuals, all media, & all the documentation (eg policy documents, bibliographical resources, planning documents etc.).
  - Design includes visual composition, guided tours/talks & itineraries, interpretation centre, layout, signage, displays, models, posters, diagrams, audio-visuals, brochures and/or guide-books, presentations, guide manuals etc.
14. Review draft design & production against the decisions made during stages 1-3.
15. Produce the Products & Implement the program.

#### **Stage 5: Evaluation of the Program**

16. Evaluation should ensure that –
  - All the stakeholders (eg organisation, community, interpretation team, visitors etc.) involved in the interpretation program understand the rationale and the nature of the evaluation;
  - That the evaluation involve measurable objectives/performance criteria;
  - That relevant material be collectable;
  - That results are balanced and reliable & recommendations be relevant, feasible, timely & accommodate the interests of the stakeholders and the organisation.
17. Evaluation must be on-going & assess the effectiveness of the interpretation program and determine whether –
  - The policies, rationale, aims and objectives of the interpretation program are being met and are appropriate;
  - Resources are optimally allocated and used within the program;
  - The strategic plan retains relevance to both the organisation and the market;
  - The design, the production & the implementation of the program is appropriate for & satisfies the target audiences.

Staiff, R. & Bushell, R. (2004) Strategic Planning Heritage Interpretation for Visitors: Issues and Process at Minnamurra Rainforest Centre, NSW.

## Training Session 2

# “Tourism Planning In and Around Protected Areas”



**Andy Drumm**

Senior Ecotourism Specialist  
The Nature Conservancy

**Dr. Craig MacFarland**

The Center for Protected Area Management and Training  
University of Colorado

## Tourism Planning In and Around Protected Areas



### Program

**November 21<sup>st</sup>, 9:00 - 13:00**

#### **Time**

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 09:00 | Welcome and overview, Andy Drumm, TNC. Objectives.   |
| 09:10 | Brief introductions by participants  |
| 09:30 | Introduce Ecotourism Manual Series. Why? For Who? What? Highlight link to Conservation Area Planning (CAP) process |
|       | Questions  |
| 10:30 | Break  |
| 10:45 | Identify core costs  |
| 11:00 | Introduction to Limits to Acceptable Change (LAC) methodology, examples of implementation – Dr. Craig MacFarland   |
| 12:00 | Questions and cases from the participants  |
| 12:30 | Summary and Close. Provide Diplomas  |
| 12.45 | Workshop adjourned   |



## **Tourism Planning In and Around Protected Areas**

### [PowerPoint presentation #1](#)

This half day workshop, which was attended by over eighty conservation professionals, aimed to familiarize participants with some of the key issues and dynamics involved in ecotourism management and development by utilizing the newly published Ecotourism Development Manual and by building awareness of the Conservancy's systematic approach to ecotourism development in and around protected areas.

### [PowerPoint presentation #2](#)

Dr. Craig MacFarland of the University of Colorado provided an introduction to the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) methodology as a key tool for ensuring tourism's sustainability in protected areas with reference to specific site applications in Latin America. The workshop also facilitated the sharing of experiences and generated discussion from participants.

The Nature Conservancy is providing tools to help governments, communities, conservation organizations and resource managers:

- Prioritize the most important natural areas for conservation and identify gaps in current protected area systems.
- Create conservation area plans and sustainable financing for protected areas, accounting for large-scale threats to biodiversity.
- Develop effective and practical conservation solutions that allow for productive and sustainable use of natural resources.
- Establish measures to monitor the progress of conservation activities.
- Build support among communities and policy makers
- Access information and lessons learned through assessments, capacity building and knowledge sharing systems.

The following chapter from “Ecotourism Development: A Manual for Conservation Planners and Managers” was used in the teaching of this course.

### [Visitor Impact Monitoring and Management](#)