

## Stream V: Evaluating Management Effectiveness

### Management of protected areas in arid environments:

#### Constraints & prospects

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The following key concerns were expressed in the context of the management of arid land protected areas of the WESCANA region. Most programmes of protected areas still fail to positively engage local communities and thus fail to have a holistic approach. This is seriously compromising the sustainability of protected area programmes.

The management of arid land protected areas need to give due consideration to:

- Over six thousand years of bio-cultural diversity
- Wealth of indigenous knowledge and practices
- Mobility of the pastoral people
- Fragility and fragmentation of ecosystems
- Scarcity of natural resources and degradation of landscapes
- Inequitable distribution of resources (poverty spots)
- Ease of vehicular accessibility renders dry land wildlife vulnerable
- Poor enforcement of protected area legislation
- The need to enhance and foster political support

The following recommendations were agreed:

- 1- Encourage positive traditional land use practices around protected areas.
- 2- Support information sharing mechanisms to assist in transfer of lessons learnt.
- 3- Conserve and apply traditional knowledge.
- 4- Demonstrate to local communities the benefits of protected areas.
- 5- Encourage transparency in the management of protected areas to help foster greater equity.
- 6- Increase efforts to address illegal trade of wildlife in the region.