

Protected areas

Cornerstones of biodiversity conservation

Goal 3.1: To provide an enabling policy, institutional and socio-economic environment for protected areas

Target: By 2008 review and revise policies as appropriate, including use of social and economic valuation and incentives, to provide a supportive enabling environment for more effective establishment and management of protected areas and protected areas systems.

Suggested activities of the Parties

- 3.1.1 By 2006, identify legislative and institutional gaps and barriers that impede the effective establishment and management of protected areas, and by 2009, effectively address these gaps and barriers.
- 3.1.2 Conduct national-level assessments of the contributions of protected areas, considering as appropriate environmental services, to the country's economy and culture, and to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals at the national level; and integrate the use of economic valuation and natural resource accounting tools into national planning processes in order to identify the hidden and non-hidden economic benefits provided by protected areas and who appropriates these benefits.
- 3.1.3 Harmonize sectoral policies and laws to ensure that they support the conservation and effective management of the protected area system.
- 3.1.4 Consider governance principles, such as the rule of law, decentralization, participatory decision-making mechanisms for accountability and equitable dispute resolution institutions and procedures.
- 3.1.5 Identify and remove perverse incentives and inconsistencies in sectoral policies that increase pressure on protected areas, or take action to mitigate their perverse effects. Whenever feasible, redirect these to positive incentives for conservation.
- 3.1.6 Identify and establish positive incentives that support the integrity and maintenance of protected areas and the involvement of indigenous and local communities and stakeholders in conservation.
- 3.1.7 Adopt legal frameworks to national, regional and sub-national protected areas systems of countries where appropriate.
- 3.1.8 Develop national incentive mechanisms and institutions and legislative frameworks to support the establishment of the full range of protected areas that achieve biodiversity conservation objectives including on private lands and private reserves where appropriate.
- 3.1.9 Identify and foster economic opportunities and markets at local, national and international levels for goods and services produced by protected areas and/or reliant on the ecosystem services that protected areas provide, consistent with protected area objectives and promote the equitable sharing of the benefits.
- 3.1.10 Develop necessary mechanisms for institutions with responsibilities for conservation of biological diversity at the regional, national and local level to achieve institutional and financial sustainability.
- 3.1.11 Cooperate with neighbouring countries to establish an enabling environment for transboundary protected areas and for neighbouring protected areas across national boundaries and other similar approaches including regional networks.

Suggested supporting activities of the Executive Secretary

- 3.1.12 In collaboration with key partners such as OECD, IUCN, WWF and the secretariats of other conventions compile information on relevant guidance, resource kits and other information on incentive measures including those relating to the development of incentive options.
- 3.1.13 Compile and disseminate, through the CHM and other media, case-studies on best practices on the use of incentive measures for the management of protected areas.

3.1.14 Compile and disseminate through the CHM and other media best practices on ways and means to integrate the use of incentive measures into protected area management plans, programmes and policies including opportunities for the removal or mitigation of perverse incentives.

Learn more about Goal 3.1:

Key activities include:

- Identify legislative and institutional gaps and barriers
- Conduct assessments of the contributions of protected areas
- Harmonize sectoral policies and laws
- Consider principles of good governance
- Identify and remove perverse incentives
- Identify and establish positive incentives
- Adopt legal frameworks for establishing and managing protected area systems
- Develop incentives to support the full range of protected areas, including private protected areas
- Identify and foster mechanisms for funding protected areas through ecosystem services
- Develop mechanisms for achieving institutional and financial sustainability
- Cooperate with neighbouring countries to establish an enabling environment for transboundary protected areas

What is an enabling environment for protected areas?

A protected area enabling environment is the set of laws, policies, practices and attitudes that govern the society within which a protected area system is based, and that affect the degree to which a protected area system can be effectively established and managed.

What are positive and perverse incentives?

A positive incentive is a financial instrument or policy (such as a tax or tax break, fee, fine or financial reward) that has a positive impact on biodiversity in general, and on protected area specifically. Examples include tax reductions for landowners who conserve forests, environmental fines for pollution, market-based premiums for sustainably harvested products, biodiversity offset policies, and airport departure taxes that subsidize the protected area system. A perverse incentive is a financial instrument or policy that has a negative impact on biodiversity and protected areas, often unintended. Examples include inappropriate subsidies for timber harvesting, agricultural policies that result in inappropriate use of pesticides, and land tenure systems that favor land clearing over land conservation.

What are private protected areas?

Private protected areas include areas of land and water that are owned and managed by individuals, non-profit organizations and for-profit companies. There is a wide range of types of private protected areas, including for example private game reserves, wildlife sanctuaries, and recreation lands. Although these areas are not owned or managed by a national or local government, these areas can still provide valuable conservation benefits to the protected area network.

What is an assessment of protected area enabling environment?

An assessment of the protected area enabling environment is an analysis of the extent to which relevant laws, policies, practices and attitudes hinder or enable effective protected area establishment and management.

What steps are involved in assessing the protected area policy environment?

Typical steps involved in assessing the protected area policy environment include:

- a) Identify the key issues that are limiting the management effectiveness of the protected area system, including the key weaknesses, threats and policy constraints. A system-level management effectiveness assessment will typically identify and prioritize these key issues.
- b) Identify the suite of laws, policies and practices that are likely to affect these key issues. For example, a weakness in protected area capacity might be the result of policies related to natural resource education; the threat of logging might be the result of conflicting jurisdictions over

resources within a protected area; and the threat of tourism development might be the result of inappropriate or non-existent land-use planning.

- c) Once this suite of laws, policies and practices has been identified, the next step is to analyze specifically how each affects key weaknesses, threats and policies, and to then develop and prioritize strategies. These strategies may involve creating or modifying existing laws, policies, financial mechanisms and sectoral practices across a wide spectrum, and will therefore require extensive participation of relevant stakeholders.
- d) Develop indicators for elements of an effective protected area policy environment, including, for example: policy coordination and communication; land-use planning laws, policies and practices; economic development and natural resource use policies; the legal and judiciary environment; national environmental leadership; and protected area policies.
- e) Monitor the effectiveness of these strategies and the status of these indicators, and adapt them over time.

What is an assessment of the value of protected areas to the national economy?

An assessment of the value of protected areas to the national economy entails both a review of the values and benefits of protected area systems, as well as a review of those values contribute to the national and local economies, along with their contribution to human wellbeing.

What steps are involved in assessing the value of protected areas to the national economy?

Typical steps involved in assessing the value of protected areas to national economies include:

- a) Develop a coordination team and build coalitions of multiple stakeholders to both conduct the evaluation, and promote the findings;
- b) Conduct a situation analysis that reviews the context of the assessment, including, for example, the political, economic, social and cultural context of protected areas;
- c) Identify the values to be assessed in the study, including direct use values (ecosystem goods and services that are used directly, such as timber, medicinal plants, tourism); indirect use values (ecosystem services that provide benefits beyond the ecosystem itself, such as storm protection, carbon sequestration); and non-use values (intangible ecosystem goods and services, such as spiritual values). Examples of values frequently included in such assessments include: water quality and quantity, income from tourism, income from forestry, agriculture-related services, fisheries, flood protection and abatement, coastal protection, soil stabilization, carbon sequestration, subsistence and livelihoods, and medicinal plants and resources.
- d) Assess the contribution of each of these values to the national economy. Valuation methods include market price, replacement cost, damage cost avoided, net factor income, hedonic pricing, contingent valuation, choice modeling and value transfer, among others.
- e) Design and implement a communication strategy to promote and communicate the results of the valuation study. This step is essential in order to ensure that a broad range of policy stakeholders fully understand the full value and range of benefits provided by protected area systems.

What are some key documents that can help in the implementation of Goal 3.1?

Resources for assessing and enabling the protected area policy environment can be found at:

<http://www.cbd.int/protected/tools/>