When protected areas support local and national economies

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The Dyfi Biosphere Reserve in Wales, UK





The floodplain prevents downstream flooding – a ecosystem service from the protected area ...

... only a handful of people in the valley would see it that way



Bogota gets 80% of its drinking water from Chingaza National Park, worth millions of dollars every year, but most residents have no idea of this link

Governments know the value of ecosystem services in principle but seldom prioritise them over new roads, mines and agricultural development in practice...





Knowing that protected areas are not just "wasted space" but have their own economic benefits can be an important way of gaining support ...

... although it is dangerous to link all protected areas to economic benefits

The value of a penguin on the Great Coast Road in Australia

Lut Makes



Some people have profound ethical misgivings about putting a value on nature.

For that matter so do I; but I have become convinced that sometimes it can be a very useful tactic



With support from the CBD, we are collecting a set of case studies of immediate economic benefits from protected areas...

...ignoring potential benefits, such as possible value of genetic materials from biodiversity

Economic values from protected areas vary in scale, security, sources of funding and particularly in who benefits

Iceland – nature-based tourism now the largest contribution to GDP

Tanzania – tourism largest source of foreign exchange



However, far fewer people benefit from this money in Tanzania than they do in Iceland

Principles for Justice and Equity in Access to and Distribution of Benefits from Ecosystem Services in Protected Areas



In 2013, Finland's national parks earned €115.5 million total visitor spending and supported 1,484 jobs; of which €56.2 million and 716 jobs were the result of visitors solely or mainly attracted to the area because of the national park

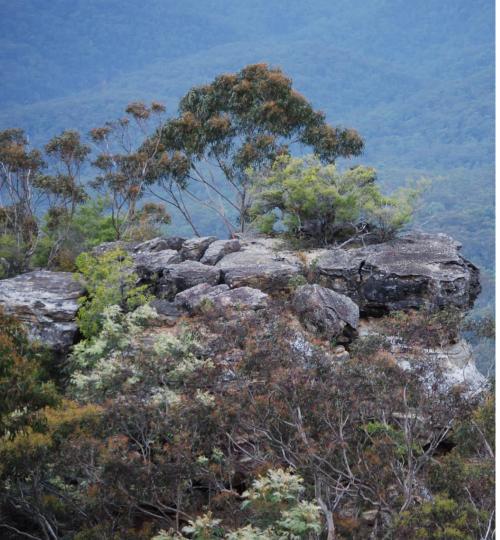
This secured support from an otherwise unsympathetic government

Total revenue from Ranthambore National Park in India was estimated at US\$3,163,753 in 2011

Lake Skadar National Park in Montenegro produces over €4 million (US\$4.6 million) a year from fish production and honey alone.

In 2014, the pine nut harvest in Bikin National Park and surrounding reserves in Russia earned villagers around US\$60 million. Verified Carbon Standard funds to compensate for the Sochi Olympics' emissions earned over US\$550,000

Revenue earned from Bwindi National Park in Uganda supports the rest of the country's national system



There are undoubtedly major economic benefits from many protected areas

► These often come in places where there are few other economic options

They can build support from otherwise unsympathetic governments...

but only build long lasting support for conservation if the values reach the people living in or near protected areas

Not all protected areas can "pay their own way" and we must not overemphasise economic values

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