



## *Conserving the Peace:*

*Cooperative Approaches to Conservation, Livelihoods Generation and Disarmament*

## *Report from Durban – World Parks Congress*

December 1, 2003

### ***About the World Parks Congress***

The IUCN World Congress on Protected Areas is a once-a-decade global forum for setting the agenda for protected areas, for sharing lessons-learned and best practice in establishing and managing protected areas for the conservation of biodiversity. It offers a unique opportunity to take stock of protected areas; provide an honest appraisal of progress and setbacks; and chart the course for protected areas over the next decade and beyond.

The 5th IUCN World Parks Congress was held in Durban, South Africa from 8 to 17 September, 2003.

The challenge for the 2003 Congress was to establish how protected areas are relevant to the broader economic, social and environmental agenda for humankind in the 21st Century, including reducing poverty, empowering communities and preventing conflict. The theme of the Congress responds to this challenge: "Benefits Beyond Boundaries".

Towards that end, and under the auspices of the UNDP-supported 'Conserving the Peace' initiative, IISD was invited to co-organize a three-day workshop on best practices in management of protected areas in zones of ongoing or recently-ended conflict, and tools for conservation practice.

#### **The outcomes of this process were:**

- Contacts established with protected areas managers, policy makers and researchers dealing with these issues around the world, including Nepal, Colombia, Guatemala, Cambodia, DRC, Chad, Niger, and Angola.
- Raising the profile and external awareness of the UNDP Post-Conflict Conservation project amongst the leaders of the global conservation community
- Recommendations put forward from the Congress on Peace, Conflict and Protected Areas, setting an agenda for action on these issues by IUCN, as well as guidelines for dealing with conflict.

**World Parks Congress: Workshop Stream II.3**  
***Supporting Protected Areas in Times of Violent Conflict***

Organizers: Jeff McNeely (IUCN Sr. Scientist),  
Uday Sharma (IUCN Councillor, Nepal)  
Jason Switzer (IISD, on behalf of UNDP)

*Unpacking the Relationship between Protected Areas and Violent Conflict*

Conflict is back on top of the international agenda, if indeed it ever left. Over five sessions and nearly 30 presentations from experiences around the globe, this stream of workshops reviewed key lessons learned in the practice of conservation in situations of violent conflict, conflict prevention and post conflict reconstruction, and reviewed some of the action research designed to tease these out. A core group of about ten people, and about 10-20 others in each session, sought to identify the factors that proved vital for effective conservation in conflict-prone or openly-violent situations, the areas where further effort or research is necessary, and the actions IUCN and its members might take to carry these recommendations forward.

Participants affirmed that peace is a fundamental precondition for the conservation. Protected areas benefit from peaceful conditions both within and between countries, and can contribute to peace when appropriately designed and managed, with peace as an explicit goal. Protected areas can also contribute to fostering peaceful cooperation across borders.

Many protected areas are located in politically and socio-economically sensitive regions where the risk of conflict has been historically high, or within countries facing significant insecurity. Participants recognized that situations are dynamic – peace today may be conflict tomorrow.

In some instances, protected areas can be a focus, a home base for and source of finance for insurgencies, and suffer from the impacts of war. The outbreak of armed conflict can halt and reverse conservation and management efforts and destroy natural resources, lives and livelihoods, through the subsistence strategies of displaced peoples, and the exploitation of valuable resources by unscrupulous actors. Poverty is moreover linked to and exacerbated by conflict and poor governance.

The establishment and management of protected areas in sensitive situations can influence and be influenced by peace and conflict dynamics, both negatively and positively. Protected areas can displace people, introduce new influences and undermine traditional livelihoods and community structures.

In fragile situations, participants stressed the importance of ensuring that protected areas managers have the capacity to understand, evaluate and address the challenges.

*Towards effective protected areas management in times of conflict*

Key factors participants identified as necessary for effective conservation in times of conflict, drawn from case studies in Asia, Europe, Africa, and Latin America include:

- Involving local communities proactively in conservation that is carried out with their consent and support through:
- Engaging community members in conservation decisionmaking and management
- Capacity building and education,
- Developing self-motivated conservation: incentives for continued conservation and mechanisms to ensure local benefit sharing, as well as provision of means to meet basic

needs in times of crisis as an alternative to exploitation of protected areas (e.g. humanitarian relief, alternative livelihoods).

- Maintaining a management presence on the ground,
- Maintaining a level of donor support throughout crisis, with particular gratitude expressed to the UN Foundation for its flexible response to the crisis in the DRC.
- Ensuring that protected areas field staff are adequately trained, experienced in conflict settings, well-equipped and continually supported (e.g. regular communications, and reliable funding) to maintain conservation effectiveness, as well as their morale and safety.
- Being able to call international attention to the plight of the site, through such mechanisms as the ‘World Heritage in Danger’ listing
- Working effectively with other actors, including United Nations, human rights, development and humanitarian assistance, security and military forces.
- Developing and utilizing a code of conduct or protocol for field staff in dealing with key management challenges such as corruption, dealing with armed groups, and carrying firearms (e.g. DRC, Colombia and Guatemala).

#### *Strengthening the Enabling Framework for Effective Conservation*

Several actions were identified as important for enhancing the likelihood of effective conservation during violent conflict. These included:

- Establishing an international crisis response team, to provide training and community mediation services, and technical support to field based protected areas staff.
- Strengthening international and national legal instruments that provide a measure of accountability for damage to World Heritage Sites and other protected areas, as well as to protected areas field staff, in times of armed conflict
- Seeking international recognition for the ‘neutrality’ of protected areas field staff as custodians of national and international patrimony (in a way similar to that of workers for the International Commission for the Red Cross), such that their lives and safety are respected while they are carrying out their duties;
- Integrating protected area conservation as an ethic into military and peacekeeping training programmes and operations.
- Integrating the conservation ethic into humanitarian relief efforts, such that these strive to minimize negative effects of their relief operations on protected areas;

#### *Strengthening Conservationists’ Management Capacity*

Protected areas managers have rarely made conflict monitoring, prevention and peace building a core element of project design. Yet because the conflict context is so important to the effectiveness of conservation, and because peace is dynamic and can erode rapidly, participants stressed that efforts be undertaken to adapt analytical and management tools, such as the Social Impact Assessment, the development sector’s Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) methodologies, ecological indicators, and Law Enforcement Monitoring (LEM), to systematically monitor and evaluate:

- The conflict context and baseline ecological indicators
- The impact of protected area management on the conflict
- The impact of the conflict on the protected area.
- Opportunities to minimize conflict-increasing impacts of the protected area, and to maximize its peace-building impacts.

Likewise, because frontline staff bear the risks of violence in the context of open conflict, and their families suffer if they are hurt or injured, particularly where they are the sole wage-earner,

the participants urged the establishment of a fund to assist families of protected areas staff killed or injured in the line of duty.

#### *Integrating Conservation in Post-Conflict Reconstruction*

The post-conflict phase can be a window of opportunity for positive change, but can also be a time of rapid environmental degradation, as resources are auctioned off to pay war debts and restart development. As a result, participants urged that efforts be made to ensure that post-conflict social and economic development take into account the importance of protected area integrity and conservation, and called for prompt coordinated action in the immediate post-war phase to rehabilitate affected protected areas after conflict has ended.

#### *Engaging in Policy Dialogue to Prevent Conflict*

Many of the root causes of violent conflict extend far beyond the range of activity of conservation actors, yet have significant impacts on conservation effectiveness. For that reason, organizations supporting protected areas were urged to explore appropriate means to advocate in support of human rights, improved governance, and poverty alleviation. Corruption, both at the level of the protected area, and more broadly in the society in which the protected area is situated, were recognized as a prominent management concern with a strong relationship to conflict. It was recognized that not enough is known of effective means to reduce corruption, inter alia by:

- Strengthening disciplinary measures and positive incentives for staff
- Promoting transparency of revenues
- Establishing local democratic institutions
- Bringing a spotlight onto leaders through media, international actors and advocacy groups

A key means for finance of many conflicts is traffic in valuable commodities. Many of the tools developed by the conservation community, such as certification of sustainably-produced commodities (e.g. Forest Stewardship Council), are valuable means for reducing this traffic and should be promoted.

Because mutual interest in natural resources can be a basis for cooperation between countries, participants urged countries experiencing tensions or conflicts with neighbours to explore protected areas cooperation as a basis for peace-building.

#### *Areas for Further Research and Action*

Participants concluded by highlighting several areas deserving of further attention. The Commission on Environmental Law and the Commission on Environmental, Economic, and Social Policy expressed interest in taking research and thinking forward in several areas:

- Identifying the range of international instruments available or feasible in times of armed conflict:
  - to enable the capacity for international crisis response through the United Nations
  - to provide a neutral status to protected areas personnel,
  - to enhance accountability for impacts on protected areas and field staff.
- Compiling guidelines and examples of good practice in protected areas management in times of armed conflict, and in post-conflict reconstruction

**Recommendation from Workshop to World Parks Congress:  
Peace, Conflict and Protected Areas**

A just peace is a fundamental precondition for the conservation of biodiversity and other natural and associated cultural resources, and one to which all sectors of society should contribute. Protected areas benefit from peaceful conditions both within and between countries, and can contribute to peace when they are effectively managed. Protected areas can also contribute to fostering peaceful cooperation across borders, which led to the preparation of Transboundary Protected Areas for Peace and Co-operation in the WCPA Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series.

Many protected areas are however located in politically and socio-economically sensitive regions where the risk of conflict has been historically high, or within countries facing significant insecurity. Protected Areas can be both a focus and source of finance for conflict, and suffer from it. The outbreak of armed conflict can halt and reverse conservation and management efforts and destroy natural resources, lives and livelihoods. Poverty is linked to the cycle of conflict and poor governance.

It is therefore urgent that relevant actors understand, evaluate and address the challenges of establishing and managing protected areas in conflict-prone situations, drawing on international mechanisms such as the World Heritage in Danger listing to apply political pressure and mobilize financial support.

Therefore, PARTICIPANTS in the 5th World Parks Congress, in Durban, South Africa (5-17 September 2003):

RECOMMEND that governments, non-government organizations, local communities and civil society:

- 1- RECOGNIZE that the establishment and management of a protected area can influence and be influenced by peace and conflict dynamics;
- 2- DEVELOP the capacity for international rapid response to provide training, mediation and support for field based protected areas staff in times of crisis including armed conflict.
- 3- ENSURE any humanitarian relief efforts minimize negative effects on protected areas;
- 4- REVIEW, DEVELOP AND ADAPT design and management tools, such as Social Impact Assessment, Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA), ecological, and law enforcement monitoring (LEM), to systematically monitor and evaluate the impacts of peace and conflict dynamics on protected areas, and the impacts of protected areas on those dynamics, using the results to inform practice;
- 5- INVESTIGATE AND IMPLEMENT international and national instruments to strengthen protection of World Heritage Sites and other protected areas in times of armed conflict and post-conflict reconstruction (Draft Convention on the Prohibition of Hostile Military Activities in Protected Areas), and enhance accountability by all parties for their impacts on , protected areas, and people, including field based staff;
- 6- ENSURE that post-conflict social and economic development takes into account the importance of protected area integrity and conservation.
- 7- ENSURE that any parties supporting protected areas in the field in conflict situations are recognized as neutral in that capacity;

- 8- ENABLE a management presence to be maintained in protected areas in times of armed conflict through contingency planning and other means.
- 9- ENSURE that protected areas field staff are adequately trained, equipped and continually supported to maintain conservation effectiveness, morale and safety.
- 10- CALL on donors and other supporters to remain and provide continued funding and assistance to protected areas in situations of conflict.
- 11- PROMOTE continued involvement of local communities in conservation through their engagement in protected areas management, capacity building, education, incentives and benefit sharing, and provision of alternatives to exploitation of protected areas in times of crisis.
- 12- SUPPORT prompt coordinated action to rehabilitate affected protected areas after conflict has ended;
- 13- INCORPORATE protected area conservation in military and peacekeeping training programmes and operations.
- 14- URGE countries in situations of real or potential conflict with other countries to explore protected areas cooperation as a basis for peace-building.
- 15- ESTABLISH a fund to assist families of protected areas staff killed or injured in the line of duty.
- 16- ADDRESS root causes of violent conflict by promoting respect for human rights, improved governance, the elimination of corruption, poverty alleviation (see WPC recommendation 5.29). and certification of sustainably-produced commodities (e.g. Forest Stewardship Council)
- 17- INCORPORATE these recommendations into existing IUCN and World Heritage guidelines and best practice, including the Draft Code for Transboundary Protected Areas in Times of Peace and Armed Conflict.
- 18- RECOMMEND, with a view to mobilizing action by key parties, that IUCN's Commission on Environmental Law, its Commission on Environmental Economic and Social Policy, World Commission on Protected Areas and other appropriate parties establish a Task Force to:
  - a. IDENTIFY AND REPORT ON the forms of international instruments available to enable the capacity for international response (as per clause 5) to provide a neutral status to protected areas personnel and to enhance accountability for impacts on protected areas and people including field based staff in situations of armed conflict.
  - b. COMPILE guidelines and good practice examples of protected areas management in times of armed conflict and in post-conflict reconstruction
  - c. MONITOR and report on implementation of this recommendation at regular intervals

## **AGENDA & LIST OF SPEAKERS**

### **Workshop II.3. SUPPORTING PROTECTED AREAS IN TIMES OF VIOLENT CONFLICT**

**Coordinators:** Jeff McNeely (IUCN), Uday Sharma, and Jason Switzer

**Location:** Room 2C-2

What tools do protected areas managers need to deal with the issues raised by violent conflict? How can they harness their activities to contribute to peace and cooperation? How can support for protected areas be maintained in the face of threats that are far beyond the influence of a protected area agency? This workshop will provide examples of the issues raised by violent conflict for protected area managers. Expected outputs include:

- Guidelines for managers of protected areas in times of conflict;
- Principles for conflict-sensitive protected areas design and management;
- Research agenda on unanswered questions for those dealing with conflict issues in protected areas (preventing/during/post-conflict);
- Principles for addressing protected area issues in post-conflict reconstruction;
- Congress Recommendation on Peace, Conflict, and Protected Areas

### **11 SEPTEMBER**

#### **1100-1230: Session 1. Overview of Protected Areas and Violent Conflict**

Chair: Holly Dublin, Sr Advisor IUCN Eastern Africa

- Chair's Introduction: the Management Challenges to Protected Areas in Times of Armed Conflict,
- Conserving the Peace: Identifying the Conservationist's Role in the Prevention of Armed Violence, by Jason Switzer (Canada)
- Conflict and Protected Areas: Experience from Around the World, by Judy Oglethorpe, WWF

#### **1400-1530: Session 2. Managing Protected Areas in Times of Violent Conflict**

Chair: Uday Sharma, Director General, Department of Plant Resources, Nepal

- Managing Protected Areas During Times of Violent Conflict, by Carla Short (USA)
- A World Heritage Site Caught in the Middle: The Case of Mt. Nimba, West Africa, by Salamady Toure, Coordinator, Programme Conservation de Biodiversite du Mt. Nimba (Guinea)
- Panel Discussion: Supporting Protected Areas in a Time of Political Turmoil: The Case of World Heritage Sites in the Democratic Republic of Congo, with Kes Hillman-Smith and Guy Dubonnet (UNESCO), Annette Lanjouw (IGCP)



**1600-1730:** Session 3. **Managing Protected Areas in Times of Violent Conflict**  
(continued)  
Chair: Uday Sharma

- Conflicts and Economics: Experience from the Amazon, by Nelson Angulo and Jorge Naveda (Venezuela)
- Managing Protected Areas in Colombia: Practical Measures for Dealing with Real Challenges, by Juan Carlos Riascos de la Peña (Colombia)

## **12 SEPTEMBER**

**0900-1030:** Session 4. **Managing Protected Areas in Times of Violent Conflict**  
(continued)  
Chair: Mahesh Banskota, Director, IUCN Nepal

- Threats to Nepal's Protected Areas from Civil Conflict, by Pralad Yonzon (Nepal)
- Dealing with Impacts of Insurgency on a World Heritage Site in Assam: The Case of Manas National Park, by Asheem Srivastav (India)
- Implementing Protected Areas Management in a Conflicted Context: Palamau, India, by M. Biswas, India

**1100-1230:** Session 5. **Managing Protected Areas in Times of Violent Conflict**  
(continued)  
Chair: Mahesh Banskota

- Los Katios National Park: World Heritage in the Midst of Conflict, by Edgar Emilio Rodriguez (Colombia)
- Tayrona National Park, Colombia: International Support to Conflict Resolution Through Tourism, by Jens Brüggemann (Germany) and German Corzo (Colombia)
- Managing a World Heritage Site in the Midst of Conflict: the Case of Comoe, Côte d'Ivoire, by Frauke Fischer (Germany)
- Management and Conflict in Air-Ténéré, Niger, by John Newby (UK)

### **Session 6 + 7. Discussion:**

Draft Resolution on Protected Areas in Times of Violent Conflict

## 13 SEPTEMBER

### 0900-1030: Session 8. **Managing Protected Areas to Prevent Conflict**

Chair:

- Protected Areas and Conflict: Analysis and Management, by Conrad Steenkamp (South Africa)
- Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment as a Tool in Planning, Design, and Management of Protected Areas, by Anne Hammill, (Canada)
- Resolving Community-Protected Area Conflicts, by Christina Ellis, Jane Goodall Institute
- Protected Areas and Conflict in Guatemala, Marco Corso (Guatemala)

### 1100-1230: Session 9. **Helping Protected Areas Recover from Conflict**

Chair: Uday Sharma

- Recovering from Conflict: The Case of Dinder and Other National Parks in Sudan, by Wouter van Hoven, Mutasim Basheir Nimir, and a representative of the pastoral community
- Recovering from Conflicts: The Case of Quicama National Park (Angola), by Roland Goetz and Wouter van Hoven and Martinsh Pinto
- Recovering from War: The Case of Plitvice World Heritage Site, Croatia, by Vinko Bartolac (Croatia)
- Recovering from Conflict in Cambodia, by Chantal Elkin, Conservation International

### 1400-1530: Session 10. **Towards Outcomes**

Facilitator: Jason Switzer