

E-discussion on Participatory Conservation December 2001 – February 2002

The World Bank's Biodiversity and Participation Teams from Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development Department (ESSD) and the Environment and Natural Resources Division of the World Bank Institute invite you to join an important E-Discussion:

*Participatory Conservation: An Internet Discussion about Participation
Issues for Protected Area Management*

The discussion for three topics will run from December 10, 2001 to February 23, 2002. It is being co-organized by a World Bank team from ESSD (Gunars Platais, Parmesh Shah, Nancy Diamond, Elisabeth Nkrumah and Alan Isaac) and from the World Bank Institute (Gayatri Acharya, Arati Belle, Scott Johnson and Andy Hooten). This electronic discussion is part of a larger effort to capture good practices related to the use of participatory approaches in more recent protected area management projects.

Who Can Subscribe?

We are inviting individuals, within and outside the World Bank, with experience in participatory protected area management projects. We welcome insights from any protected area management projects and not just those funded by the World Bank or the Global Environment Facility. Please feel free to share this notice with colleagues. We apologize in advance for any cross-postings of this invitation.

How to Join and Subscriber Options

Go to: <http://vx.worldbank.org/cgi-bin/lyris.pl?enter=parks_participation>

OR

Send a blank e-mail to: <lyris@lists.worldbank.org> with the following command (put your name in the brackets): Subscribe parks_participation [your name]

OR

Send a blank e-mail to: <Join-parks_participation@lists.worldbank.org>

You will receive an automatic welcome message that contains guidelines for participation and options for receiving e-mail messages from the list.

After you have signed up, you can change how you receive messages from the list by sending an e-mail to: <lyris@lists.worldbank.org> with one of the following commands in the body of the message:

1. Set parks_participation digest (to receive one daily digest of all messages each day)
2. Set parks_participation index (to receive one daily index of message subject lines)

Posted messages will be available, starting December 11 at: <http://vx.worldbank.org/cgi-bin/lyris.pl?enter=parks_participation>

Topics and Organization

We selected three topics based on staff interviews and a literature review. Each topic ties participation to the current debates related to protected area management. During the December 10 - February 23 period, each of the three topics will be discussed for two weeks. A summary of comments will be sent to subscribers and posted on the World Bank web site. Subscribers will receive a notice for each new topic, including a topic summary and key questions. We will break for the winter holidays from December 24, 2001 - January 13, 2002.

TOPIC 1. Moving Beyond Local Pilot Projects: Innovations in Scaling-Up Participatory Conservation [Dates: December 10-21]

Description:

In the field of biodiversity conservation, there is a trend away from pilot protected area projects in just a few communities toward multi-community, multi-park and multi-country activities (e.g., eco-regions, trans-boundary activities, etc.). High budget pilot projects may be participatory but are not necessarily replicable or sustainable. Scaling up has been difficult. Projects designed to cover large geographic areas and multiple communities and jurisdictions face a different set of participation challenges. Both types of projects often build dependencies and lack exit strategies.

Key questions:

- How can localized participatory projects scale up and remain participatory?
- When have participatory processes been successfully used to involve and resolve conflicts between multiple communities?
- What communication strategies have been successful for cross-site learning within projects?
- How have multi-country and/or eco-regional protected area activities included meaningful stakeholder participation by communities?
- What types of exit strategies have been successfully used to end external funding for large-scale, multi-site protected area projects?

TOPIC 2. Thinking Outside the Box, Changing the Box: Experiences with Linking Participatory Conservation to Governance Reforms [Dates: January 14-25]

Description:

Protected area project managers have a wide range of opinions about what their projects can do to address the systemic/structural correlates associated with meaningful participation. While some have claimed that these issues are beyond the scope of their project (as they well may be in some cases), others have managed to initiate reforms or coordinate their efforts with on-going reforms (e.g., legal frameworks related to protected areas, wildlife, forestry, co-management, tenure, decentralization and planning, resettlement). In some places, meaningful participation may not take place without attention to basic procedural rights related to rights to information, rights to public assembly, rights to sue and NGO registration and funding regulations.

Key questions:

- When have protected area projects successfully linked their efforts to other governance reforms related to tenure security? How has biodiversity governance become more participatory as a consequence?
- When have protected area projects successfully linked their activities to reforms in logging or mining concessions and how has this improved stakeholder participation in biodiversity conservation?
- Under what conditions has coordination with decentralization policies broadened participation in biodiversity governance?
- When has participation in protected area project planning led to more participatory local and national planning processes?
- When has involvement in participatory protected area projects led to systemic changes within government partner institutions?

TOPIC 3. Crumbs, Christmas Trees, Committees or Control: Buying Constituents for Conservation [Dates: February 12-23]

Description:

Participatory conservation is about control and incentives. Governments make decisions about how much decision-making control (and power) that they are willing to share with communities. Often, governments are not willing to share very much control or open up decision-making to all stakeholders. Most protected area projects work with local committees that are existing village committees or parallel to them and these are often dominated by elites. Governments decide on what types of incentives should be provided to communities to compensate them for a loss of access to resources and to promote pro-conservation and sustainable management behaviors and attitudes. However, most projects and protected area staff lack the resources to enforce community obligations. Some communities feel they were not adequately consulted or that governments have not respected their prior claims to resources. They continue to exploit park resources and view conservation incentives as barely adequate entitlements ("crumbs"). Other communities are disappointed by inadequate community funds delivered by revenue-sharing schemes and conflicts arise over their distribution within communities. These communities want protected area projects to meet all kinds of community development needs (Christmas Trees), even when these needs are totally disconnected from conservation objectives.

Key questions:

- How have projects and government partners created and enforced direct links between conservation incentives (e.g., development activities, enterprise support, increased involvement in decision-making) and changes in conservation behavior and attitudes?
- What successful local committee structures and mechanisms have been set up to distribute development resources from integrated conservation and development projects? How have these worked within communities and across communities? What types of capacity building have broadened committee participation? How have projects avoided elite-dominated local committees?
- When have cash payments and individual contracts been used successfully to increase conservation behaviors and support for protected areas?
- What are the conservation tradeoffs of supporting communities that are already conservation constituents and managing their lands for biodiversity conservation versus working where the local population is hostile to the establishment of a protected area?

E-Discussion Background and Objectives

We have organized this E-Discussion to better understand what advances have been made in participatory conservation, for projects managed by the World Bank (particularly Global Environment Facility projects) and elsewhere. There has been more than a decade of experimentation with participatory approaches in protected area projects. While some managers believe in the value of stakeholder consultation, they are less comfortable with the development side of Integrated Conservation and Development projects and are questioning their contribution to conservation and the appropriateness of their scale. Others are finding new ways to address conservation problems via participatory analysis for project operations and more participatory governance in the long-term. More often, they are looking at how to address the more systemic correlates associated with participation, e.g., tenure security, conflict, and benefit distribution. Some staff are discovering innovative approaches, despite well-documented institutional constraints within the World Bank, the GEF and host country institutions. These innovations are the focus of this electronic discussion and related activities.

In the summer of 2001, ESSD made plans to update an earlier 1998 review of participation in biodiversity conservation projects funded by the GEF and managed by the World Bank. However, World Bank biodiversity managers were not keen for another formal desktop review of projects. They were much more interested in interactive, process-oriented dialogue and short,

practical written products on creative approaches to common problems. They identified a need, to share more lessons learned, within and outside the World Bank. They recommended focusing on protected area projects that were in the operation or planning stages during the last five years. We used a two-part process to identify these priority issues: individual interviews with experienced World Bank and GEF staff involved in protected area management and a review of recent literature. The annotated bibliography of World Bank, GEF and conservation literature is nearly complete. In addition, we are organizing this electronic discussion and a concurrent roundtable discussion series based in Washington, DC. As a next step, we will be writing brief discussion notes to summarize this research and these conversations.

Future Plans

Summaries of each of the three e-discussions will be sent to subscribers and posted on the World Bank website. In addition, during the course of the list-serve discussions, we will also be holding a Washington, D.C.-based roundtable series on these same topics. All contributions will then be distilled into three short and practical discussion notes targeted to protected area project managers.

Related Links

Proceedings of Biodiversity Conservation and Use: A Seminar via Internet, The World Bank Institute Environment and Natural Resources Group, June 20-July 21, 2000.
<www.worldbank.org/devforum/forum_biodiversity.html>