

WG5: International Cooperation for Protected Areas

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Session 1 : Regional cooperation for protected areas

presentations were given on the following subjects:

- Transboundary conservation areas and international cooperation on protected areas management

- Regional cooperation initiatives including
Transboundary Manas Conservation Area (Tra MCA),
Yellow Sea Ecoregion Support Project (YSESP),
ASEAN Mangrove Network (AMNET)
Coral Triangle Marine Protected Areas System (CTMPAS)

Session 2 : International framework for protected areas

presentations were given on the following subjects:

- World Heritage and Biosphere Reserves, and the interaction between them;
- International cooperation on migration corridors (the example of the Partnership for East Asian – Australasian Flyway);
- CBD LifeWeb Initiative – a global donor partnership seeking funding for protected areas.

- Sharing good practices and lessons from local based initiatives:
 - joint biodiversity monitoring mechanisms,
 - joint fundraising
 - joint efforts for safeguarding shared ecosystems,
 - development of joint management plans
 - capacity building
 - joint livelihood improvement programmes
 - joint efforts to control wildlife crime, etc...

- Common threats that were identified in (transboundary) conservation areas include:
 - Habitat loss (including as a result of invasive species and fragmentation);
 - Human-wildlife conflicts
 - Livelihood issues (local communities and indigenous peoples)
 - Development pressures
 - Weak law enforcement
 - Ineffective management

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presentations in session 3

Session 3 : International aid and training

presentations were given on the following subjects:

- International technical cooperation
- Cross-sectoral approach to PA management and involvement of local communities
- International / regional financial cooperation

Session 4 : New construction of international cooperation for protected areas in Asia

presentations were given on the following subjects:

- Proposal on Pan-Asian collaboration on Protected Areas

- Existing international collaboration networks (including ASEAN Heritage Parks , EUROPARC)

- Ensuring well managed protected areas (IUCN Green List of Protected Areas)

- Healthy Parks Healthy People

- Building Regional Capacity for Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA)

- ❑ The need for comprehensive and sustainable approaches to conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems.
 - Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA | TS) and
 - IUCN Green List of Protected Areas

- ❑ The need for integrated approaches to protected areas. This includes different aspects, such as:
 - Mainstreaming biodiversity in policy, planning, management, and national development programmes, and achieve cross-sectoral collaboration
 - Integration of protected areas with planning and management at the landscape / seascape level;
 - Active involvement of local communities (including indigenous peoples)

- Financial sustainability
 - Not depend only on international organizations / financial institutions alone, but require strong financial commitments from participating governments
 - Independence from donors after the initial stage

- Capacity Development as a principle approach to development assistance, and carried out through technical assistance.

- Biodiversity and ecosystems drive sustainable development.

Message from WG5

- In this WG, we analyzed the status and issues related to international collaboration in a wide range of protected areas and assessed a new framework for regional collaboration for the future in Asia.

WG5 Key Messages

- Protected areas have an important role in the conservation of biodiversity and the sustainability of the ecosystems that underpin development. In order to properly fulfill these functions, Asia's protected areas need enhanced regional collaboration and international cooperation including with neighboring countries.
- Asia already possesses an impressive portfolio of internationally and regionally significant protected areas. These amount to some 429 World Heritage Sites (natural and mixed); Biosphere Reserves; Ramsar Sites; Geoparks; and ASEAN Heritage Parks across the Region's 24 countries. This wealth of natural assets demands greater collaboration to promote and better manage them at Asian scale.

WG5 Key Messages

- The call for improved collaboration between protected areas in Asia has come over many years and from numerous quarters, some internal and some external to the region. All of the multilateral environmental agreements by definition enshrine principles of collaboration with the CBD acting as the principle convention dealing with protected areas.
- ASEAN's Heritage Parks network, Transboundary Manas Conservation Area (TraMCA), Yellow Sea Ecoregion Support Project (YSESP), ASEAN Mangrove Network (AMNet), Coral Triangle Marine Protected Areas System (CTMPAS), Partnership for East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAFP), Heart of Borneo initiative (HOB) and Greater Mekong Sub-region Core Environment Program and Biodiversity Corridors (GMS CFP-BCI) are good practices of regional collaboration.

WG5 Key Messages

- An analysis of regional protected area collaborative networks from around the world has drawn lessons for Asia and suggested steps to further the creation of Asian protected area collaboration.
- The first Asia Parks Congress in Sendai, Japan leading one year later to the IUCN 6th World Parks Congress (WPC) in Australia offers an opportunity to move forward regional collaboration for Asia.

WG5 Key Messages

- **Approaches to direct international collaboration for protected areas:**
 1. Asian countries need to enhance collaboration across various fields of work including protected areas. Regional interventions also complement rather than compete with national efforts on protected areas which are now, more than ever, being driven through the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas;
 2. Reinforcing the importance of regional perspectives in various aspects of collaboration on protected areas is critical. Global protected area gatherings such as the upcoming WPC should always incorporate regional perspectives into planning, deliberations and outcomes. Whilst the WPC is structured thematically it should accommodate regional differences and needs in developing solutions to the protected area challenges and opportunities that lay ahead;

WG5 Key Messages

- **Approaches to direct international collaboration for protected areas:**
 3. Recognizing the need for comprehensive and sustainable approaches to conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems. Concrete examples are the Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA-|TS) and IUCN Green List of Protected Areas;
 4. An analysis of regional collaborative networks for protected areas from around the world has identified following **lessons for Asia:**
 - a. Embrace diversity
 - b. Ensure a site level focus
 - c. Ensure an added value
 - d. Create light effective governance
 - e. Face up to the financial sustainability challenge

WG5 Key Messages

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- Identified lessons for Asia
 - a) Embrace diversity. Recognize that Asia is extremely diverse and different approaches to addressing protected area issues will be legitimate in different contexts. The natural sub-regions of Asia (South Asia, East Asia and Southeast Asia) should be accommodated whilst embracing Asian perspective on protected area issues. Regional collaboration should accommodate diverse membership including the institutions, sites and individuals who make up the protected area community in Asia. It should also consider commonalities among often very diverse members.
 - b) Ensure a site level focus. Experience shows that building a network around protected areas themselves has a galvanizing effect. Sites become emblematic symbols of collaboration and protected area stakeholders are reassured that efforts are directed at conservation on the ground, including engagement of indigenous and local communities. Integration of protected areas into planning and management at the landscape and seascape levels is also needed.

WG5 Key Messages

- Identified lessons for Asia
 - c. Ensure an added value. Regional collaboration should foster cooperation which adds value to what is already underway. Functions such as facilitating, convening, brokering and fostering innovation are known to be valued. In addition it should advocate for protected areas across the region, including transboundary collaboration.
 - d. Create light effective governance. Successful networks have a governance structure that is responsive to the needs of the network, including capacity development, without being overly complex and bureaucratic.
 - e. Face up to the financial sustainability challenge. Most protected area collaborative networks struggle to achieve financial security, however, the pursuit of this goal is paramount. The development of shared commitments supported by specific national commitments should be pursued. Business models which are based on diverse funding sources and income streams, such as public private partnership for protected areas (PPP), are desirable.

WG5 Key Messages

- **Approaches to direct international collaboration for protected areas:**
 5. Call upon interested stakeholders relevant to protected areas in Asia to further development of an appropriate Asian protected area collaboration.