

Tourism and Protected Areas

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Outline

- The role of tourism in protected areas
- Challenges
- Priorities as solutions

The role of tourism in Protected Areas

- Well-managed protected areas (PAs) are recognized as a significant aspect of biodiversity conservation strategy (Watson et al. 2014; Cazalis et al., 2020; Joppa et al., 2016)
- International tourism continues to grow substantially exceeding pre-pandemic levels. Visits to PAs increased during the pandemic.
- Tourism in protected areas contributes to
 - gross domestic product (GDP),
 - contributes to local livelihoods,
 - helps raise funds for conservation

The role of tourism in Protected Areas

Ecotourism, sustainable tourism, nature-based tourism or community-based tourism are forms of tourism that are aligned with sustainable development through preservation of the environment in line with safeguarding socio-economic development.

It is respectful of cultural heritage and the local culture.

It empowers the local or indigenous communities in developing their principles for visitors.

For instance, in the Muddus, Padjelanta and Sarek National Parks (Sweden) that are Diploma holding areas, Sami villages in the National Park decided to close some areas to visitors due to avoid disturbance to reindeer herders.

Challenges

- Challenges can endanger the sustainability of PAs and the viability of tourism
 - Insufficient investment and ineffective management.
 - Unsupportive policy and regulatory structures for sustainable tourism development.
 - Limited benefit-sharing arrangements with communities.

Insufficient investment and ineffective management

- PAs worldwide are in general underfunded (IUCN ESARO; 2020; Coad et al., 2019)
- The lack of investments endanger the conservation value and sustainability of protected areas
- PAs face challenges to balance tourism with the delicate ecosystems
- Planning and management of tourism has a potential to mitigate adverse effects of tourism such as being overcrowded with tools such as conducting carrying capacity work

Develop supportive policy and regulatory structures for sustainable tourism

- By providing incentives, protected area managers can collaborate with the local community, the private sector and NGOs to improve sustainable tourism initiatives.
- Developing and implementing clear and robust legal frameworks for this collaboration are critical to engage various stakeholders.

Limited benefit-sharing arrangement with communities

- Limited or weak benefit-sharing mechanisms between protected areas and communities can result in
 - benefits being limited to few or more advantaged members of the community
 - Leakages from the contributions to local economy
- Synman et al. (2018) point out that equitable and transparent benefit-sharing arrangements can lead to a higher possibility of success for communities, tourism businesses and to meet conservation goals.

Four priorities as solutions

- 1.1 Increase public investment in protected area management
- 1.2 Increase collaboration between relevant public institutions
- 1.2 Build capacity of protected area managers.
- 1.3 Undertake regular visitor assessments.
2. Encourage the growth and diversification of tourism
 - 2.1 by developing a strong incentives policy to support tourism in protected areas
 - 2.2 by developing measures to diversify tourism in PAs.
3. Build mechanisms to share the benefits.
4. Support increased research to strengthen the science-policy interface.

- Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) 2030 targets

- Target 1

- Ensure that all areas are under participatory, integrative and biodiversity inclusive spatial planning and/ or effective management processes...while respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.

Capacity-development of protected area managers

- Right training and expertise of PA managers
 - Develop data analysis skills
 - Develop negotiation skills
 - Develop an understanding of the legal framework
 - On-the-job education for staff

Build mechanisms to share the benefits

Tourism impact	Opportunities to increase benefits
Direct	Implementing inclusive governance models
	Building capacity and developing skills
	Developing formal revenue- sharing mechanisms
	Promoting sustainable use of natural resources
Indirect	Encouraging employment of local labour for tourism & PA management (e.g. local guides)
	Encouraging local sourcing of goods by tourism establishments
	Providing support for agricultural production (e.g. promoting local products, revitalizing heritage seeds)
	Offering small grants for business and small enterprises

European Diploma for Protected Areas

- Annual reporting for European Diploma for Protected Areas includes a section on education and scientific interest where it consists of information related to information policy for visitors, adequate information provided to visitors including booklets, maps and cards and current and completed research.
- Data and information regarding the number and distribution of visitors in time and space is also required.
- European Diploma for Protected Areas contributes to better comprehend tourism in diploma holding areas through the collected data and information and dedicated dialogue and cooperation with the managers of diploma holding areas.

- Thank you for your attention!