

Comments welcome

This statement (Preamble and Recommendations) was agreed by the International Expert Workshop 'Linking Nature Conservation and Poverty Reduction', hosted by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation on 2-4 November, 2006. The participants have agreed to circulate this statement amongst their networks and to request comments on the recommendations. All the comments received will be considered by the workshop participants who will then determine how to take these recommendations forward. Please send your comments to Barney Dickson of Fauna & Flora International (barney.dickson@fauna-flora.org) by 10th January 2007.

International Expert Workshop "Linking Nature Conservation and Poverty Reduction"

Nov. 2-4, 2006

Federal Agency for Nature Conservation

International Academy for Nature Conservation, Isle of Vilm, Germany

Preamble

The participants of the international expert workshop "Linking Nature Conservation and Poverty Reduction", representing international and German nature conservation organizations and agencies and research institutions, acknowledge that

- Conservation activities affect poor people directly and indirectly;
- Poor people often depend to a high degree on natural/biological resources and it is these resources that conservation strives to safeguard;
- Poverty affects the effectiveness of conservation measures and often leads to environmental degradation;
- Conservation organizations, institutions and agencies need to take this into account.

Recommendations

The participants of the workshop agreed upon the following general principles to guide the work of conservation organizations, institutions and agencies where their activities affect poor people:

1. Conservation activities should create benefits to those poor people.
2. If that is not possible, conservation activities should at least not harm poor people.
3. If that is not possible, poor people should be adequately compensated for the harm suffered. Compensation should only be considered as a last resort.

By formulating these principles, the workshop participants wish to

- Contribute to the ongoing debates and policy formulations, inter alia by identifying possible steps leading to better practice;
- Emphasize the linkages between conservation and development;
- Stimulate a better consideration of the poverty-conservation linkages within both the conservation and the development communities;
- Identify knowledge gaps.

When applying these principles, the following points have to be taken into consideration:

- Defining what are “poor people” and what is “poverty”;
- The short- and long-term needs of poor people;
- Benefits of conservation activities to poor people should outweigh the costs of conservation;
- “Benefits” should be understood in a broad sense to include “empowerment”, “strengthening of rights” and other monetary and non-monetary contents;
- The importance of genuine participatory approaches.

Some of the factors that may need to be addressed to ensure that conservation activities deliver benefits to poor people are the following :

- Tenure rights;
- Conservation management;
- Governance;
- Inter-agency cooperation;
- Level of environmental degradation;
- Level of poverty.

In order to apply these principles, we need to develop:

- Methods to include social impact assessment of conservation activities;
- Guidelines for designing conservation measures that benefit poor people;
- Criteria for appropriate and equitable compensation schemes.

Next steps / tasks

- Consider using these principles to develop a code of conduct for conservation organizations;
- Promote research on linkages in poverty-conservation relations;
- Disseminate case studies on good and bad practice;
- Encourage dialogue with development agencies on these poverty-conservation linkages;
- Support international biodiversity conventions to address livelihood issues, inter alia the CBD and CITES.