

SOLUTIONS IN FOCUS: Transboundary Protected Area Solutions



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On behalf of:



of the Federal Republic of Germany



PANORAMA

SOLUTIONS FOR A HEALTHY PLANET

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This publication has been made possible in part by funding from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

Published by: IUCN, Gland, Switzerland

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Citation: Clamote Rodrigues, D. and Fischborn, M. (eds) (2016). *Solutions in focus: Transboundary protected area solutions*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. 34 pp.

Cover photo: Maritime-Mercantour European Park (Italy, France) © Francesco Tomasinelli
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Joint ranger service patrols during winter time in the Krkonose Mountains National Park (Czech Republic, Poland)
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Back cover photo: Zun Torey Lake, part of the Daursky Nature Reserve (Russia) and a larger trilateral transboundary conservation area, Dauria International Protected Area (China, Mongolia, Russia) © Maja Vasilijević

Design: Imre Sebestyén jr. / UNITgraphics.com

Available from: IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)
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www.iucn.org/publications

IUCN would like to sincerely thank all solution providers for their contributions and time.

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PANORAMA: Solutions for a Healthy Planet

Introducing the “*Solutions in Focus*” series

PANORAMA is a partnership initiative to facilitate learning from success in conservation. It promotes examples of inspiring solutions that showcase how nature conservation can benefit society. PANORAMA enables the wider application of such solutions through cross-sectoral global learning and exchange. Through a modular case study format, solutions are being dissected into their replicable “building blocks”.

This booklet is the first in a series of compilations assembling PANORAMA solution case studies on a defined topic. “*Solutions in Focus*” zooms in on a topic of interest covered by PANORAMA, allowing to explore common elements and shared learnings across success stories. It is a snapshot of the PANORAMA portfolio at a given time, rather than a representative assembly of selected “best practices” on the issue at hand.

All solutions featured in this booklet, and many others, are available on the PANORAMA web platform www.panorama.solutions. We invite everyone to visit and explore the platform, and share their own examples of solutions.

What if we could learn from each others' success?

PANORAMA
SOLUTIONS FOR A HEALTHY PLANET

PANORAMA process and delivery mechanisms



Foreword by WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group

The benefits of transboundary conservation are numerous and obvious to those familiar with the negative impacts of fragmentation on ecosystem functionality. However, to successfully facilitate the cooperation required to achieve effective transboundary conservation, the process can be complex, costly and long. In order to ensure that decision-makers, funders (often the same entities) and donors embrace the essential role that these types of initiatives can play in building resilience to local and global threats, they need to be made aware of successful case studies. In this way, the theory of benefits can be backed up by real examples. This can also help to motivate and encourage the proponents of transboundary conservation to continue in their endeavours.

The IUCN WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group (TBC SG) was established in 1997 and currently has more than 260 members who give of their time voluntarily to support the work of this global network. One of the greatest achievements of the TBC SG is the development and publishing of the IUCN WCPA Best Practice Guidelines '*Transboundary Conservation: a Systematic and Integrated Approach*', made available in 2015. The Guidelines contain many transboundary conservation case study examples and have been used to support capacity building initiatives. The TBC SG has also been preparing TB eNEWS to enable exchange of relevant information, but it requires funding in order to ensure that it can be compiled and published on a more regular basis. It is here that synergies with the PANORAMA initiative are possible in that it provides the platform on which transboundary conservation success stories may be published, shared, discussed and scaled-up. The TBC SG welcomes the opportunity to work with PANORAMA and looks forward to building on these synergies. The more transboundary conservation success stories are showcased the more chance we have of seeing them succeed elsewhere.

Maja Vasiljević and Kevan Zunckel,
WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group Co-Chairs



Transboundary conservation in the Selva Maya through park ranger exchanges



Solution provider

Rudy Herrera and Jorge Uribe, GIZ



Summary

Through the exchange of park rangers from two natural protected areas of global importance at the border of Guatemala and Mexico, managers of these advanced in the identification of common challenges and developed joint agendas. As a result, both sides implement concrete binational actions improving communication, control and surveillance strategies, reducing threats to regional biodiversity and hence elevating the transboundary protected area governance.



Location

Guatemala and Mexico

Impacts

Improved coordination between the management authorities of both natural protected areas. Based on a common plan and a shared working agenda, there is more communication between local authorities that facilitates appropriate decision making and effective protection. This in turn benefits the integrity of the ecosystem and its services. Improved institutional presence and strengthened capacities within the communities along the border. Both protected areas dedicate their time and personnel more efficiently to generate environmental awareness about the importance and benefits of protecting this shared forest. Strengthened capacities of park rangers on key aspects like fire management and biodiversity monitoring. Through specific trainings and exchanges, park rangers have improved their capacities and developed common strategies to reduce impacts of illegal hunting, fires and illegal logging. A joint monitoring program for key species like jaguars, tapirs, and others has also been developed. This in turn reduces illegal activities like poaching and leads to a better understanding of the wildlife population dynamics of target species



© Selva Maya Programme GIZ

Building blocks

1

Transboundary exchange to define common activities

To address multiple threats to the integrity of the shared ecosystems, such as wildlife and fauna trafficking, the protected area agencies' directors and rangers carried out exchanges. As a result, a strategic plan for control and collaborative monitoring helped to implement binational management and conservation strategies.

2

Regular review of the Annual Operative Plan (AOP)

The threats, involved local communities and capacity strengthening needs that were identified through the exchanges informed an Annual Operative Plan (AOP). Implementation progress of the AOP is reviewed regularly, so the staff can keep track and allows for the plan's adaptation if necessary.

3

Transboundary exchange workshops and training for rangers

Area specific capacity development activities raised capacity and foster exchange. Topics included integrated fire management, biological monitoring and experience exchange in joint patrols to detect illegal activities and monitor wildlife.

4

Transnational institutional working group

A supplementary strategic working group, anchored at the federal level in both countries, acts as a political mechanism for transboundary protected area management, laying the foundation for a future legal framework.

Enhancing Sustainability and Cooperation in Transboundary National Parks



Solution provider

Sanna-Kaisa Juvonen, Metsähallitus, Parks & Wildlife Finland, Vantaa, Finland

Summary

Cooperation in transboundary National Parks (NPs) Oulanka in Finland and Paanajärvi in Russia was strengthened through implementation of a joint cross-border project that enabled the personnel of the NPs to work closely together in hands-on activities. The activities made the common history come to life, which helped in leaving behind past grievances through achievement of common goals and enhancing sustainable tourism within the Oulanka-Paanajärvi twin park.



Location

Oulanka National Park, Finland and Paanajärvi National Park, Russia

Impacts

Limits of Acceptable Change methodology was taken into practice in Oulanka National Park in order to guarantee sustainable tourism and recreation within the NP. Sustainable Tourism Development Strategy for Paanajärvi National Park was developed, which strengthened the ecological and socio-economic sustainability of the NP and cooperation between tourism sector, NP and other stakeholders. Sustainable tourism practices were standardized in the Oulanka-Paanajärvi twin park. Channeling of visitor use to decrease risk of overcrowding and disturbance in ecologically sensitive areas in the National Parks was improved. Waste management of Paanajärvi NP was developed, strengthening ecological sustainability of the NP.

Nature interpretation and visitor guidance practices and methods/effectiveness of communication on nature-oriented tourism and cultural heritage were strengthened enabling better understanding and interpretation of natural and cultural significance of Oulanka and Paanajärvi National Parks and their shared common history. Sense of common history and future was strengthened.

Personal contacts between NPs increased and management unified through implementation of joint action. Commitment to joint work increased.



METSÄHALLITUS





Building blocks

1

Development of GIS-based electronic information points

Nine electronic, multi-lingual information points in- and outside the NPs provide entertaining information about the possibilities for experiencing nature in the parks, encouraging also visitation across the border.

2

Training and certification of National Park guides

A training system for nature guides and principles governing the certification of guides were developed in cooperation with an educational institute. This helps intensify the visitor's experience thanks to guides that are specialised in sites.

3

Enhancing sustainable tourism in transboundary NPs

Research institutions conducted assessments of ecological sustainability of tourism and recreational use in both national parks. Sustainable Tourism Development Strategies were developed or their implementation strengthened to ensure long-term sustainability of ecological and socio-economic development of the whole territory.

4

Sharing a common past through preservation of cultural sites

The fact that the NPs share common roots and want to share a common future as well was highlighted through the preservation and reconstruction of cultural sites, promotion of cultural tourism and dissemination of information. The border area was ravaged in past wars, and enhancing understanding of the past can promote peace and cooperation in our time.

5

Strengthening transboundary cooperation through joint action

The implementation of joint projects that e.g. developed employment opportunities has made transboundary cooperation part of the daily work in the management of the two transboundary National Parks, merging them into one real functional unit.

Transboundary coordinated natural development and national park extension



Solution provider

Silke Weich, Dutch-German Nature Park Maas-Schwalm-Nette



Summary

The project focuses on protected areas along the Dutch-German border intersecting the municipalities Roermond, Roerdalen (Netherlands), Wassenberg and Wegberg (Germany). The aim of the project was to further develop a common national park region and to highlight its common history and its present-day significance. It provides the transboundary improvement of nature and landscape quality by connecting and valorizing habitats. An agreement on common zonation and a sustainable tourism concept were developed.



Location

Roermond, Roerdalen (Netherlands) and Wassenberg, Wegberg (Germany)

Impacts

The project included measures for a more diverse and improved cooperation across the Dutch-German border, extension of National Park recreational zones, coordinated habitat management and promotion of sustainable tourism. Particular impacts included:

1. Establishment of networks of volunteers and stakeholder organizations focused on nature, forestry and tourism, which provide a basis for coordinated broad-scale conservation;
2. Strengthened cooperation between border municipalities, which enables further transboundary cooperation for an improvement of the ecological and economic situation;
3. Improvement of ecosystem integrity through extensive habitat restoration and enhancements, and
4. Enhanced tourism infrastructure, which increased name recognition of the transboundary area and thereby supports local tourism industry and its stakeholders. Improved cooperation, strengthened transboundary networks, and a common national park zonation can be used as a basis for further transboundary nature conservation measures.



gemeente Roermond



Stadt Wegberg



Transboundary Parks
EUROPARC



Building blocks

1

Transboundary working group for nature conservation

A transboundary conservation working group, including private and governmental conservation groups, coordinated cross-border landscape protection measures. Through workshops, forestry management options were discussed and a concept for use of the transboundary natural region developed.

2

Transferring of national park zonation between two countries

Before the project, there was no consistent protective zonation across the protected areas that are included in the German part of transboundary National Park Region MeinWeg. By applying the Dutch NP zonation to the NP region's German portion, the working group made the protective status of all involved protected areas comparable, easing future cooperation and assessment of progress on process protection targets.

3

Coordinated transboundary measures to improve and connect biotopes

The project included transboundary nature and landscape management measures to improve habitats and the biotope network, such as heathland restoration, habitat management for reptiles and amphibians and renaturalization of water bodies.

4

Transboundary sustainable tourism

To encourage nature-friendly behavior of visitors and to create consciousness of locals about ecosystems and the region's common history, multiple measures were taken to foster transboundary cooperation in the sustainable tourism sector, including development of wooden tourism infrastructure and walking routes, workshops for local tourism stakeholders and coordination of transboundary public relations.

Transboundary cooperation for the removal of an invasive river plant



Solution provider

Lenka Reiterová, Podyjí National Park



Summary

Eradication of the neophyte Himalayan balsam was a successful joint project of two bordering national parks, Thayatal (Austria) and Podyjí (Czech Republic), that led to a significant decrease of Himalayan balsam plants in the area's river valley, which acts as the border between the two parks and countries, and return of native plants. The most important success factors were the common approach to river valley management, access to both river banks by Czech staff, change in management of river valley meadows, and ongoing joint monitoring.



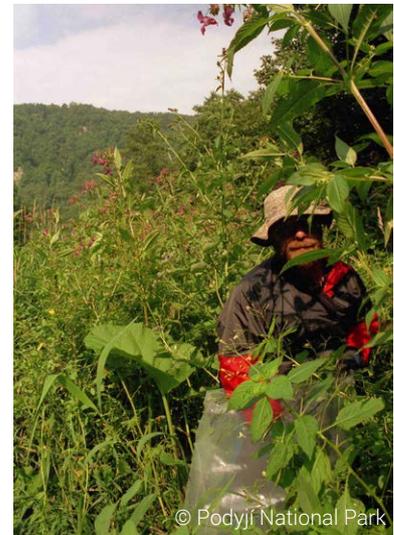
Location

Podyjí National Park, Czech Republic and Thayatal National Park, Austria

Impacts

The joint invasive species monitoring and eradication project was a great success. The Himalayan balsam has disappeared from both national parks with the exception of a few single stocks. In this way, problematic impacts on the Thaya River's ecosystem due to the rapid spreading of the neophyte were prevented. Targeted removal of Himalayan balsam started in 1995 on the Czech side and in 2001 on the Austrian side following establishment of Thayatal National Park in 2000. The population of Himalayan balsam then decreased rapidly. The surprising positive effect was enhanced by big floods in 2002, which also prevented Himalayan balsam from massive spreading. Since that time, the plant has practically disappeared from the river valley. The joint monitoring and removal of Himalayan balsam and other invasive neophytes in the river valley, along with mowing of river meadows by local landowners, occurs every year. These annual measures are still necessary to control the Himalayan balsam in the valley. The experience of successful cooperation through joint invasive species eradication and monitoring efforts provided added value that encourages and facilitates future transboundary collaboration.





Building blocks

1

Invasive plant monitoring

Both parks' staff monitor the river valley for infestations of Himalayan balsam once a year. A boat is used to monitor the occurrence of the plant along the river banks, especially in areas that are hard to reach overland. Participation on monitoring and management activities has been divided in accordance to the capabilities of both parks.

2

Transboundary protected areas staff communication

The two park directors meet 4-5 times per year to discuss the status of the invasive plant monitoring and removal. Furthermore, other staff members from both parks meet whenever needed to share information regarding the monitoring and removal efforts.

3

Joint transboundary removal of an invasive plant

Invasive plants occurred on both sides of the Thaya River, and were therefore removed from both sides by staff from the respective parks. Individual plants were removed by hand and preferably during the adolescent life stages before seeds emerged.

4

Coordinating meadow management with local landowners

Private meadows occupy a significant portion of the river valley within the Thayatal National Park. The economic benefits for farmers to cultivate these meadows are too low to warrant crop-raising. Therefore, to prevent establishment and spread of neophytes, the park's staff coordinated with farmers to regularly mow the meadows for financial compensation.

Good Water Neighbors: Rehabilitating the Jordan River through transboundary cooperation

**Solution provider**

Marina Djernaes, EcoPeace's Center for Water Security

**Summary**

EcoPeace Middle East established "Good Water Neighbors" (GWN) in 2001, to raise awareness of the shared water reality of Jordanians, Palestinians, and Israelis. The project develops political will for transboundary cooperation on water and sanitation. The GWN methodology is an original idea based on engaging cross-border communities and utilizing their interdependence on shared water resources to develop dialogue and cooperation for sustainable water management and advancing peacebuilding.

**Location**

Jordan, Israel, and Palestine

Impacts

EcoPeace successfully raises awareness of shared water issues among Palestinians, Jordanians, and Israelis and brings them together to jointly advance sustainable cross border water and sanitation projects and improve the natural environment. In 2015, EcoPeace presented a regional Master Plan for the Jordan River Valley, which with the support of community leaders and members identified, advanced common solutions to cross border environmental challenges. EcoPeace widened the constituencies of support for a shared vision of the valley. As more and more people articulate the geopolitical, social and environmental benefits of investing in the river's rehabilitation, the issue has garnered the attention of national decision makers and key world powers. In 2016, EcoPeace established a Center for Water Security in Washington DC to advance the resolution of water security issues in other conflict zones across the globe by replicating EcoPeace GWN model. The center seeks to disseminate best practices and adapt programming and strategies to the specific circumstances in the given locations.



EcoPeace
Middle East



Building blocks

1

Bottom Up - Grassroot initiative

Meetings among communities across the conflict, for which the common ground is the safeguard of the shared watershed, are facilitated. Together, the communities identify projects that speak to the self-interest of both sides, gaining the capacity to advance solutions even within a turbulent political environment. The combination of a strong youth program and outspoken adult leadership creates the political will of local leaders to get involved.

2

Top Down - National and International initiative

Top-down initiatives to create broader political awareness are carried out, including: research and development of a concept paper to explain and document the issues, advocacy for national and international support, and establishment of media relations to heighten political awareness and to convey the information to the public. Public opinion and demand for action plays a decisive role in dictating the political agenda to local leaders as well as national decision makers.

Promoting transboundary co-existence of large carnivores



Solution provider

Brady Mattsson, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria



Summary

The project used a participatory decision-making process to develop a transboundary bear management plan for a nature park in Italy (Prealpi Giulie) and an adjacent national park in Slovenia (Triglav). The project led to a joint agreement for the allocation of resources (money and staff time) toward satisfying all stakeholders concerned about brown bears in the Transboundary Julian Alps Ecoregion. Some of the actions will be implemented through jointly funded park projects from 2017-2026.



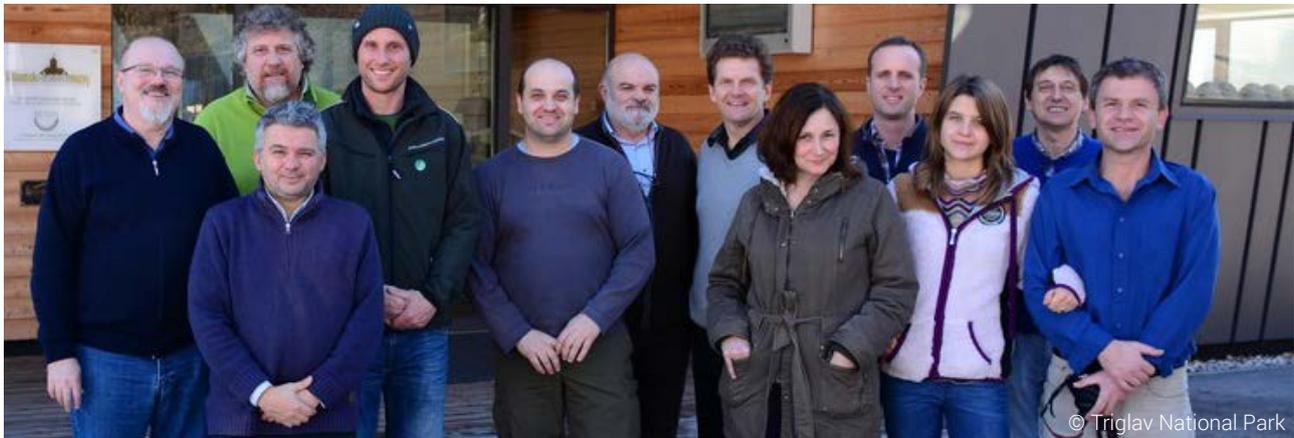
Location

Parco Naturale Regionale delle Prealpi Giulie, Italy and Triglav National Park, Slovenia

Impacts

The joint, participatory process led to improved stakeholder engagement and allowed for more frequent communication between authorities of the two protected areas. Authorities from each park came to a common understanding of shared objectives, actions, external factors at least partly beyond their control, and their linkages regarding bear management. The project generated a decision-analytic tool that can be expanded to inform an adaptive bear-management program. The authorities also learned about structured decision making as a participatory decision-analytic process, which they recognized can be applied in other projects. The agreed upon actions are expected to help increase carrying capacity of brown bears within and beyond the transboundary area by >50%, maintain sustainable agriculture by retaining small farms, and minimize conflict among stakeholder groups. During the project, Slovenian park authorities successfully lobbied for a change in legislation that reduced administrative hurdles to remove bears from the wild following disturbances to private property. Reducing this administrative burden will improve the public perception of protected area management of brown bear in the transboundary region.





Building blocks

1

Identifying and framing the transboundary decision problem

A core team composed of two structured decision-making coaches plus one authority from each protected area formulated a joint transboundary management question: “Over the next 10 years, how can the managers of both protected areas allocate their resources to best satisfy all stakeholders concerned about brown bears in the Julian Alps?”

2

Identifying joint transboundary management objectives

Six stakeholder groups were consulted about this question: nature conservation, agriculture, forestry, tourism, research, local communities and municipalities. A set of quantifiable objectives were identified to represent the main trade-offs and concerns across stakeholder groups while serving as success measures for the transboundary conservation efforts.

3

Transboundary management options and external factors

Park authorities identified external factors with a high degree uncertainty about their magnitude and effects on the objectives. A status quo scenario and an optimistic one, representing possible future trajectories for the external factors, were developed. Park authorities assigned a percent allocation toward each management activity in a way they believed would most likely achieve the objectives under each scenario.

4

Modelling transboundary consequences and trade-offs

A Bayesian decision network, which provides a visualization of a quantitative decision model, was developed and all stakeholders agreed on set of predictions and satisfaction scores to represent the averages among each participant’s inputs in the decision analysis.

5

Determining & implementing transboundary resource allocation

The recommended allocation option is defined as the one with the greater expected stakeholder satisfaction, calculated based on the Bayesian decision network. A sensitivity analysis was run to check the robustness of the recommended allocation to uncertainty and can lead to recommendations for further research to improve decision-making.

Promotion of transboundary nature protection and sustainable nature tourism



Solution provider

Riina Tervo, Metsähallitus, Parks & Wildlife Finland, Inari, Finland



Summary

The project was carried out from 2006-2008 in the transboundary protected area called Pasvik-Inari Trilateral Park (Finland, Norway, Russia). It focused on promoting nature protection and sustainable nature tourism in the area by developing: 1) joint methods for nature monitoring; 2) joint guidelines for sustainable nature tourism; 3) joint action plan; and 4) EUROPARC transboundary park certification.



Location

Vätsäri Wilderness Area (Finland), Øvre Pasvik National Park (Norway), Øvre Pasvik Landscape Protection Area (Norway), Pasvik Nature Reserve (Norway, Russia)

Impacts

Joint brown bear monitoring became a success story. Monitoring results are needed for managing the bear population, and these are of interest to local people. Waterfowl monitoring results were shared between the three countries, even though the method was not harmonised in the three countries. There were recreational and health benefits to local people and visitors through new hiking trails, and increased knowledge through educational and information materials. Effort was made to serve the local people well: information was provided in national languages and in English, and materials were produced especially for school children. The established nature tourism working group increased information exchange and networking among tourism entrepreneurs. Dissemination of information was built in all activities of the project. There was increased knowledge about international cooperation in nature conservation and nature tourism among the target groups. During implementation of the project, ideas to jointly address both cultural and natural heritage were developed. Later, a project called ABCGheritage – Arctic Biological, Cultural and Geological heritage was implemented from 2012-2015.



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NORWEGIAN INSTITUTE OF
BIOECONOMY RESEARCH



Transboundary Parks
EUROPARC



Building blocks

1

Joint nature-focused research and monitoring

One of the aims of joint nature-focused research and monitoring was to harmonize contrasting national methods. Harmonised methodology facilitates data exchange and analysis to inform park management and protect target populations (brown bear, golden eagle and waterfowl).

2

Establishing transboundary guidelines for sustainable nature tourism

Joint guidelines were developed, combining different sets of principles regarding sustainable nature tourism in Norway and Finland, which also incorporated input from entrepreneurs, the nature tourism working group and the project's Steering Committee. These guidelines were added to the Action Plan for nature protection and sustainable nature tourism in the area.

3

Transboundary action plan for nature protection & sustainable tourism

The developed action plan has two main parts: part A describes the area's natural and cultural history, legislation, land use, and management plans; part B, the 10-year vision, describes the joint aims and strategies of the cooperation. Finally, concrete actions are suggested. This is considered an advisory plan, focusing on common long-term guidance.

4

Certification as a transboundary protected area

Pasvik-Inari Trilateral Park received EUROPARC certification as a transboundary area in 2008, renewed in 2013. Application requirements include a joint long-term vision and guiding rules for future cooperation along with an action plan. Bilateral and multilateral agreements between Finland, Norway and Russia were also needed for certification.

Transboundary collaboration in a conflict and post-conflict context



Solution provider

Georges T. Muamba, Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration



Summary

Due to the increase of threats such as poaching, a joint initiative has been agreed by DRC, Rwanda and Uganda to protect eight neighbouring protected areas of the Greater Virunga sustainably and effectively, demonstrating that conservation across borders is possible, even during armed conflicts and political unrest. As a result, transboundary committees have been set up, joint patrols carried out, and park managers make decisions jointly with authorities and local communities.



Location

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda and Uganda

Impacts

The successful collaboration between DRC, Rwanda and Uganda has resulted in a formalised ministerial agreement with another due to be signed in the near future, to protect the area's biodiversity and flag species such as the Gorilla by pooling human resources together.

The neighbouring communities of the protected areas are involved in the management of the park, and they actively take part in the operational planning process and the evaluation of the joint strategic plan, and as a result are more willing to conserve natural resources and use them in a sustainable way. Different activities

aimed at further supporting the development of local communities are being created such as beekeeping, eco-tourism and the construction of drinking water tanks.

An operational joint surveillance system made up of rangers from the three different countries is being implemented across the national borders, and intelligence on illegal activities provided by the surveillance system is shared among all the park managers, creating a more thorough and informed approach to terminating illegal practices.



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European Park Maritime-Mercantour: how long term transboundary conservation can lead to a juridical common management structure



Solution provider Patrizia Rossi, Alpi Marittime Nature Park



Summary

Starting from their territorial contiguity, and common natural and cultural heritage, the two parks (Alpi Marittime Nature Park and Mercantour National Park) have created a unique protected area of about 1000 km² across the French/Italian border. A long partnership process, at first originated by the need of common wildlife management, then led to sustainable development and common visual identity. Thanks to a growing number of integrated projects, the two parks developed a shared vision, and have finally created a common juridical structure following a new EU regulation: European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC).



Location European Park Maritime-Mercantour, France and Italy

Impacts

Environment: common management of existing ibex population; reintroduction of the bearded vulture; common monitoring of the wolf natural re-colonization; transboundary scientific research, such as the All Taxa Biological Inventory (ATBI).

Sustainable development: trail network, common signposting system, sustainable tourism (the parks signed jointly the EUROPARC European Charter for Sustainable Tourism and presented a common strategy and action plan for the whole transboundary area).

Financing: funding of the Maritime-Mercantour Integrated Transboundary Plan (ITP) with 10 million EUR thanks to Interreg ALCOTRA European Programme. This plan consists in six integrated thematic projects: scientific research and nature conservation, cultural identity, territorial management, eco-tourism, soft mobility and environmental education. The plan has also stimulated local community involvement.

Governance: on May 2013 the EGTC Maritime-Mercantour was officially established, giving birth to the first European Park and producing new ambitious goals such as its inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage List. This idea now involves other five Italian protected areas, creating a continuous land stretch comprising all the ecological successions from the highest mountain to the Mediterranean Sea. In 2013, the area was included on both the Italian and French UNESCO Tentative Lists as a transboundary natural property with the name of "the Alps of the sea".



© European Park
Maritime-Mercantour

Transboundary integration and enhancement of public transportation system in a National Park region



Solution provider

Jörg Weber, Saxon Switzerland National Park, Bad Schandau, Germany



Summary

Public transportation offers in the transboundary National Park region of Saxon and Bohemian Switzerland were successfully enhanced in a way that conserves natural landscapes while enabling an intensive nature experience for visiting tourists. A broad alliance of representatives from regional politics, tourism, nature conservation, transport and local population created a transportation networking concept whose implementation led to a significant increase in passenger numbers.



Location

Saxon Switzerland National Park, Germany and Bohemian Switzerland National Park, Czech Republic

Impacts

The project was a great success. The cooperation among the broad alliance of stakeholder representatives within the transboundary region has created a basic structure of attractive railway lines and bus lines. Furthermore, the connectivity across the Elbe River is ensured by regular ferry lines, and the train station in Bad Schandau has been turned into the region's central mobility hub. Coordinated and multilingual passenger information and marketing are promoting awareness of the transportation offers among visitors and locals. The implemented measures are visible in figures: passenger numbers have considerably increased, in particular in transboundary connections, where a doubling of annual passenger numbers has been recorded in 2013.

A shifting to public modes of transportation contributes to reducing damages to natural systems in the region of the two National Parks.



© National Park Saxon Switzerland



Formalizing transboundary protected area governance



Solution provider

Nicholas De Goede, South African National Parks



Summary

South Africa and Namibia have formulated a 'Joint Operation Strategy', a treaty signed by both governments, which oversees the management of Richtersveld National Park (South Africa) and Ai/Ais Hot Spring Game Park (Namibia). The strategy ensures that management plans, community involvement and income generating projects for the parks are collaboratively planned and all decisions must be reached unanimously through joint governing boards and committees.



Location

!Ai-!Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier Park, Namibia and South Africa

Impacts

The harmonizing of the two countries' policies and legislation, such as the legalisation of cross-border radio licences received from both governments, is identified as a good example of progress made since the signing of the treaty between Namibia and South Africa. Through the joint tourism management plan, activities such as the Desert Kayak Trails and the Desert Knights Mountain Bike Tour have contributed to making the !Ai-!Ais/Richtersveld a financially viable transfrontier protected area.



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Visa free travel for tourism across borders in a transboundary park



Solution provider

Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area



Summary

In a major step to enhance tourism to the world's largest terrestrial transfrontier conservation area, the governments of Zambia and Zimbabwe launched the Kavango Zambezi (KAZA) Transfrontier Conservation Area univisa in November 2014. The KAZA univisa is a common tourist visa for the Southern African Development Community region, being piloted by Zambia and Zimbabwe for six months. After the pilot period, the univisa is intended to be rolled out to three other KAZA partner countries, namely Angola, Botswana, and Namibia.



Location

Zambia and Zimbabwe

Impacts

Eligible tourists are saving time and money because they only need to obtain one visa to visit both countries, resulting in enhanced and shared tourism benefits between the countries sharing the KAZA Transfrontier Conservation Area.



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Transboundary collaboration in the European Green Belt Initiative



Solution provider Sandra Wigger, EuroNatur Foundation



Summary The European Green Belt connects 24 countries and includes a vast range of landscapes from forests to coastal habitats. The European Green Belt Initiative is a transboundary collaborative project which includes nearly 150 governmental and non-governmental organizations, enterprises and scientific institutions, with the shared goal to conserve biodiversity, support local communities and aid natural resource management.



Location Europe

Impacts

Ground-breaking steps to establish a sustainable governance structure were taken in 2012 with the creation of the 'Coordination Group', which was designed to develop the European Green Belt Initiative, organize Pan-European Green Belt conferences and oversee communication. This process led to the official establishment of the European Green Belt Association e.V in February 2015.

Despite there being marked differences in the four sections included in the initiative; the Fennoscandian, Baltic, Central European and Balkan Green Belt regions, and that the Green Belt is often along former border zones, this project has been able to work with countries which have politically sensitive histories towards a shared conservation goal.

Through the initiative, there are programmes in environmental education, cultural heritage and societal integration. For example, in the Fennoscandian Green Belt there is extensive transboundary park-to-park cooperation and collaboration by scientific organizations, which are supported by government-level political decisions.



© European Green Belt Association

Transboundary strategy for communication about nature conservation



Solution provider

Brady Mattsson, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria



Summary

The project used a participatory decision-making process to develop recommendations for transboundary cooperation in targeted external communication about nature conservation in the two national parks. The project led to a joint agreement about the allocation of resources (money and staff time) to maximize public opinion about nature conservation activities in the parks. Some of the actions will be implemented through jointly funded park projects from 2017-2020.



Location

Bavarian Forest National Park, Germany and Šumava National Park, Czech Republic

Impacts

The joint, participatory process led to insights for parks' staff in coordinating their external communication about nature conservation in the parks and enhanced communication between authorities of the two protected areas. Authorities from each park came to a common understanding of shared objectives, actions, external factors at least partly beyond their control, and their linkages regarding external communication about nature conservation in the parks. The project generated a decision-analytic tool that can be expanded to inform an adaptive external communication program that can be linked to surveys and other analyses of public opinion.

The park authorities also learned about structured decision-making as a participatory decision-analytic process, which led to new insights about their respective external communication programs and activities. The joint communication activities are expected to improve public opinion of maintaining or increasing non-intervention areas, natural resource management activities, and trustworthiness and competence of parks' staff. Improved public opinion and transboundary cooperation are expected to enhance peace, biodiversity, and other ecosystem services in the transboundary region.



© Bavarian Forest National Park



Developing a transboundary network of protected areas to improve nature experience



Solution provider

Andrea Sedlatschek, Burgenland Regional Management, Pinkafeld, Austria



Summary

The main aims of this project were to create a lasting network between protected areas to achieve a better understanding of protected areas among locals and visitors, and to create awareness of the parks' value for life quality and local economy in West Pannonia, at the border between Austria and Hungary. Intending the creation of a transboundary gateway to a sustainable nature experience, the project provides the development of tourism offers supporting nature while contributing to regional development.



Location

Lake Neusiedl, Austria and Hungary

Impacts

The project achieved the intended transboundary development of eco-tourism and environmental education to provide an improved nature experience to visitors. This contributes to a more sustainable tourism and a raised awareness of natural processes and conservation among visitors. The targeted cooperation of protected area administrations continues also after the end of the project. The project also raised awareness among regional stakeholders and policymakers regarding potential benefits of transboundary cooperation and enhancing personal contacts especially in the field of eco-tourism. Raising awareness enables further

coordination and thus improvement of eco-tourism and nature conservation in the area. This improved cooperation allows for the enhancement of the nature experience in an efficient way through creation of joint tourism activities. Furthermore, regional-development stakeholders in the West Pannonian region gained, for the first time, an insight in the characteristics of the ecosystems in the respective neighbouring countries. A better bilateral understanding of the administrative structures and decision levels in the respective neighbouring countries is an important added value of the project.



World-class annual mountain biking event for cross-border tourism in a transboundary protected area



Solution provider

Roland Vorwerk, Department of Environmental Affairs, South Africa



Summary

Desert Knights is a 7-day event that was designed to promote cross-border tourism activities in the |Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier Park. The event combines night-time mountain biking and a day of canoeing and aims to contribute towards unlocking the tourism potential of the park through staging of a world class annual multi-stage mountain biking event. Proceeds of the tour will support joint conservation activities of this unique Transfrontier Park.



Location

|Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier Park, Namibia and South Africa

Impacts

The event was initially piloted over two years (2011 and 2012) where logistics and market demand were tested, and journalists and operators were invited to participate and profile the event. As a result, for the 2014 tour, 100 tourists had signed up within 2 weeks of bookings opening, and from 2015 two events will now be held each year.



Following nature's design: A certification system for transboundary cooperation in protected areas



Solution provider Petra Schultheiss, EUROPARC Federation



Summary

EUROPARC's Transboundary Parks Programme is a special verification and certification system that aims to promote and facilitate transboundary cooperation between European protected areas. It includes: unique EUROPARC Basic Standards for transboundary cooperation; a verification process carried out by external verifiers; formal certification as "EUROPARC Transboundary Area" if the application is successful, and renewal of the Certificate every five years. Twenty three protected areas in thirteen countries are now certified.



Location Europe

Impacts

Protected areas participating in the EUROPARC Transboundary Parks Programme receive the following direct benefits:

- Acknowledged standards: identification of priorities and essential elements of effective transboundary cooperation;
- Internal and external assessment: receive valuable expert advice to improve the transboundary cooperation through the independent verification process;
- Awareness-raising opportunities: promotion of benefits and opportunities arising from the transboundary cooperation with politicians, communities, media and visitors at a local, regional and international level;
- Network of good practice examples: sharing experiences and learning from other European Transboundary Parks through an annual meeting and informal exchanges;
- Capacity building possibilities: participation in workshops and seminars on transboundary cooperation and development of the skills and knowledge of protected area staff;
- Added value of certification: evidence of the quality of transboundary cooperation to highlight when applying for funding.

Improved transboundary cooperation between protected areas is, in turn, expected to promote species and ecosystem conservation, international peace, enhanced nature experiences for visitors, and regional development.



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Transboundary Parks
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