

Regional Action Plan for Protected Areas in South Asia



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Cover Photo: A view of Sri Pada (Adam's Peak) and the Peak Wilderness Sanctuary, as seen from the Horton Plains National Park, Sri Lanka. Both areas provide protection to important watersheds and harbour a wide range of endemic species. Sri Pada has been revered as a site of special religious significance for over 1,000 years, and is the focus of an annual pilgrimage by Buddhists throughout the island. (Photo credit: D.B. Sumithraarachchi)

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Regional Action Plan for Protected Areas in South Asia

Bangladesh

Bhutan

India

Maldives

Nepal

Pakistan

Sri Lanka

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACAP	Annapurna Conservation Area Programme
ADB	Asian Development Bank
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Collaboration and Development
CEA	Central Environment Authority
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
DNPWC	Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation
DWLC	Department of Wildlife Conservation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GBRMPA	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
ICDP	Integrated Conservation and Development Programme
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IUCN	IUCN - The World Conservation Union
MAB	Man and Biosphere Programme (UNESCO)
NGO	Non-government Organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NWAP	National Wildlife Action Plan
RAP	Regional Action Plan
SAARC	South Asia Association for Regional Co-operation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Commission
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WCPA	World Commission on Protected Areas
WII	Wildlife Institute of India
WNPSS	Wildlife and Nature Protection Society of Sri Lanka
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240	241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256	257	258	259	260	261	262	263	264	265	266	267	268	269	270	271	272	273	274	275	276	277	278	279	280	281	282	283	284	285	286	287	288	289	290	291	292	293	294	295	296	297	298	299	300	301	302	303	304	305	306	307	308	309	310	311	312	313	314	315	316	317	318	319	320	321	322	323	324	325	326	327	328	329	330	331	332	333	334	335	336	337	338	339	340	341	342	343	344	345	346	347	348	349	350	351	352	353	354	355	356	357	358	359	360	361	362	363	364	365	366	367	368	369	370	371	372	373	374	375	376	377	378	379	380	381	382	383	384	385	386	387	388	389	390	391	392	393	394	395	396	397	398	399	400	401	402	403	404	405	406	407	408	409	410	411	412	413	414	415	416	417	418	419	420	421	422	423	424	425	426	427	428	429	430	431	432	433	434	435	436	437	438	439	440	441	442	443	444	445	446	447	448	449	450	451	452	453	454	455	456	457	458	459	460	461	462	463	464	465	466	467	468	469	470	471	472	473	474	475	476	477	478	479	480	481	482	483	484	485	486	487	488	489	490	491	492	493	494	495	496	497	498	499	500	501	502	503	504	505	506	507	508	509	510	511	512	513	514	515	516	517	518	519	520	521	522	523	524	525	526	527	528	529	530	531	532	533	534	535	536	537	538	539	540	541	542	543	544	545	546	547	548	549	550	551	552	553	554	555	556	557	558	559	560	561	562	563	564	565	566	567	568	569	570	571	572	573	574	575	576	577	578	579	580	581	582	583	584	585	586	587	588	589	590	591	592	593	594	595	596	597	598	599	600	601	602	603	604	605	606	607	608	609	610	611	612	613	614	615	616	617	618	619	620	621	622	623	624	625	626	627	628	629	630	631	632	633	634	635	636	637	638	639	640	641	642	643	644	645	646	647	648	649	650	651	652	653	654	655	656	657	658	659	660	661	662	663	664	665	666	667	668	669	670	671	672	673	674	675	676	677	678	679	680	681	682	683	684	685	686	687	688	689	690	691	692	693	694	695	696	697	698	699	700	701	702	703	704	705	706	707	708	709	710	711	712	713	714	715	716	717	718	719	720	721	722	723	724	725	726	727	728	729	730	731	732	733	734	735	736	737	738	739	740	741	742	743	744	745	746	747	748	749	750	751	752	753	754	755	756	757	758	759	760	761	762	763	764	765	766	767	768	769	770	771	772	773	774	775	776	777	778	779	780	781	782	783	784	785	786	787	788	789	790	791	792	793	794	795	796	797	798	799	800	801	802	803	804	805	806	807	808	809	810	811	812	813	814	815	816	817	818	819	820	821	822	823	824	825	826	827	828	829	830	831	832	833	834	835	836	837	838	839	840	841	842	843	844	845	846	847	848	849	850	851	852	853	854	855	856	857	858	859	860	861	862	863	864	865	866	867	868	869	870	871	872	873	874	875	876	877	878	879	880	881	882	883	884	885	886	887	888	889	890	891	892	893	894	895	896	897	898	899	900	901	902	903	904	905	906	907	908	909	910	911	912	913	914	915	916	917	918	919	920	921	922	923	924	925	926	927	928	929	930	931	932	933	934	935	936	937	938	939	940	941	942	943	944	945	946	947	948	949	950	951	952	953	954	955	956	957	958	959	960	961	962	963	964	965	966	967	968	969	970	971	972	973	974	975	976	977	978	979	980	981	982	983	984	985	986	987	988	989	990	991	992	993	994	995	996	997	998	999	1000
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FOREWORD

The World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) is an integral part of IUCN - the World Conservation Union. It is a world-wide network of 1300 experts drawn from nearly every country, working together to promote the better planning and management of protected areas of all kinds.

WCPA is organised around 15 regions. These differ from IUCN's eight statutory regions, because they respond to what we see as areas with shared ecological, social and other factors. Since 1994, there has been a separate South Asian region, and a Vice Chair for the region, Dr Kishore Rao, who not only leads WCPA's work here but is also the region's spokesperson in meetings of the global steering committee of WCPA.

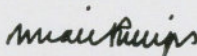
Many of WCPA's regions have found it helpful to develop their work around a regional action plan. The idea of such an action plan derives directly from the Caracas Fourth World Parks Congress held in 1992. The Caracas Action Plan adopted then was a statement of global priorities, and left the detail of what needed to be done to ensure the survival of the world's system of protected areas to be worked out by means of regional action plans to be prepared by WCPA.

Progress has been impressive. Action plans have been published for a number of regions, such as East Asia, Africa (2 regions), Australia, North America, and Europe. In other regions, plans are well advanced: Southeast Asia, North Eurasia, and North Africa and the Middle East.

WCPA's regional action plans make the bridge from the Caracas Action Plan to the national level of action, catalyse regional level action as well as national activities which are responsive to regional level initiatives, help secure funds and resources for protected areas, strengthen regional protected areas institutions and develop IUCN's protected areas work, including that of WCPA. Importantly, they are not an outside expert's view on who should do what in the region, but are developed by and through the WCPA members in the region itself.

The preparation of the South Asia Action Plan began at the members' meeting in Islamabad, Pakistan in September 1994. The plan was adopted at Colombo, Sri Lanka in May 1997. Members of the Commission from across the region made an input to its preparation. It therefore represents an agreed view of regional priorities, addressing such topics as training, trans-boundary protected areas and community involvement in protected area management. The plan was developed in dialogue with several key potential sources of funding to help ensure that the priorities can be acted upon.

I am delighted by the progress made, and congratulate all those concerned. The need now is to redouble the Commission's efforts in South Asia. If protected areas in this region are to have a worthwhile future, then the regional plan needs soon to be translated into action, building on the strong foundation of co-operation already established.



Adrian Phillips

Chair, World Commission on Protected Areas

5th April, 1998

The first of these is the fact that the majority of the population of the United States is of European descent, and that the majority of the population of the United States is of European descent.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

1911

I. INTRODUCTION

PROTECTED AREAS ARE ONE OF THE MOST WIDELY ACCEPTED AND PRACTICAL approaches to biodiversity conservation today. Virtually all countries across the world have designated protected areas for a variety of conservation objectives such as maintenance of the integrity and diversity of ecosystems, protection of flora and fauna, conservation of cultural heritage and unique landforms, and the facilitation of ecological processes such as water flows, soil regeneration and nutrient cycling. In many cases, protected areas are also home to communities of people with traditional cultures and irreplaceable knowledge of nature. In addition, protected areas have significant scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and spiritual value, besides providing direct and indirect benefits to local and national economies.

South Asia, comprising Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, covers an area of approximately 4,485,000 km² and supports a dense human population of about 1,207 million people. Some of the most spectacular natural sites of the world are to be found here: the mangroves of Bangladesh, the virtually untouched forests of Bhutan, the tiger reserves of India, the coral reefs of the Maldives, Sagarmatha (Mt. Everest) of Nepal, the Hindu-Kush region of Pakistan and Wilpattu in Sri Lanka, are but few examples. Conservation history in South Asia goes back thousands of years, mainly as a result of people's dependence on natural resources for their livelihood; this has led to the evolution of complex systems of resource conservation, utilisation and management.

Today, there exists an extensive system of protected areas across the South Asian region protecting diverse ecosystems and habitats of endangered and endemic species of wildlife. However, the current system is probably not comprehensive enough to secure the long-term survival of current biodiversity levels or the continuation of important ecological processes. Not all representative ecosystems are covered by the protected area network. Those that do receive protection are not free of being degraded by increasing isolation and fragmentation, development and commercial pressures, over-intensive resource extraction etc. Often, they are plagued by problems of weak legislation, low numbers of management personnel with inadequate training and motivation, insufficient funding, inappropriate equipment, absence of management plans and very little popular public support. However, it must be acknowledged that in the face of such odds, the relevant government departments in South Asia have done a remarkable job of keeping the protected area system intact and functioning.

IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)¹ was established to help remedy some of these very problems affecting protected areas world-wide. WCPA's position on protected areas has evolved through an extensive process of interaction over several meetings, and debate via a series of discussion papers and documents. In 1995, WCPA adopted its own Strategic Plan which was intended to act as a mission statement to guide WCPA and its protected areas programme into the next century. Some of these are briefly reviewed in the following section.

¹ Formerly the Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA), the Commission adopted its current name following the IUCN World Conservation Congress held in Montreal Canada, in October 1996.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE SOUTH ASIA REGIONAL ACTION PLAN (RAP)

The Corbett Action Plan (1985)

In 1985, the 25th Working Session of WCPA was held at Corbett National Park, India. At this meeting, the problems and experiences of protected area management in the Indo-Malayan realm were discussed. Participants from South and Southeast Asia suggested several actions for strengthening the protected area network in the region, and increasing the management effectiveness of existing protected areas. The recommendations of the Corbett Action Plan were proposed both as general guidelines for regional requirements and as country-specific actions.

The Indo-Malayan Realm Protected Areas System Review (1986)

The Indo-Malayan Review, completed by MacKinnon and MacKinnon in 1986, sought to examine in greater detail some of the issues raised in the Corbett Action Plan. The adequacy of the existing protected area coverage was assessed and major gaps identified; recommendations were also made for protected area management in each country. Subsequently, this Review was substantially updated, based on information from the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), Cambridge, other national reviews and action plans, and a series of workshops organised by the Asian Conservation Bureau, Canterbury. The Review now contains information on threatened species in each country, threats to biodiversity, policy and legislation, and a reassessment of the protected area system and its management.

The Caracas Action Plan (1992)

In 1992, Caracas, Venezuela, hosted the IVth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas, where over 1800 protected area experts from 133 countries met and conducted some 50 workshops. The resolutions adopted at this meeting are now known as the Caracas Action Plan, which among other things, seeks to support the implementation of priorities established in national systems plans for protected areas. The Caracas Action Plan is a major contribution to implementing Agenda 21, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Global Biodiversity Strategy. The objectives of the Caracas Action Plan are as follows:

- **Integration:** to integrate protected areas into larger landscape planning frameworks.
- **Support:** to expand support for protected areas.
- **Management:** to strengthen the capacity to manage protected areas.
- **International co-operation:** to expand international cooperation in the financing, development, and management of protected areas.

The 42nd Working Session of WCPA (1994)

Held in Islamabad, Pakistan, in September 1994, the 42nd Session of WCPA was called "Parks for Life". Representatives from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka participated, and it was at this meeting that the South Asia Region of WCPA was carved out of the erstwhile South and Southeast Asia Region. The meeting was primarily focused on the intimate connection between protected areas, local communities, and their livelihood. Each country was expected to undertake specific actions on key recommendations and help facilitate

the major proposals of the Islamabad Declaration. These were:

- Development of the WCPA network in South Asia.
- Preparation of a South Asia RAP.
- Sourcing resources for regional co-operation.

WCPA Strategic Plan (1995)

The objectives of the Caracas Action Plan, as well as recommendations of subsequent WCPA Working Sessions, have been incorporated in the form of a WCPA Strategic Plan. The Plan was made after extensive consultation with WCPA members and was formally adopted in November, 1995. The Strategic Plan identifies a definite role for the WCPA, examines its choices, sets out objectives, lists priority activities and states what needs to be done to implement them. The mission of WCPA is to *promote the establishment and effective management of a world-wide, representative network of terrestrial and marine protected areas, as an integral contribution to the IUCN mission.*

Further, as a result of the execution of its mission, the WCPA would like to view itself as the world's recognised source of guidance, support and expertise on protected areas. The four strategic objectives of the WCPA are:

- To help governments and others plan protected areas and integrate them into all sectors.
- To strengthen capacity and effectiveness of protected area managers.
- To increase investment in protected areas.
- To enhance WCPA's capacity to implement its programme.

WCPA activities have been identified at the global, regional and national levels. At the *global* level, WCPA will develop "best practice" guidelines for different aspects of protected area management, facilitate the global collaboration programme PARKSHARE, establish a clearing house for collection and dissemination of information, and implement its theme programmes. At the *regional* level, WCPA will facilitate the preparation and implementation of RAPs, and at the *national* level, provide advice and guidance to governments and assist them in reviewing and evaluating existing protected area networks. The implementation of these proposed activities will be undertaken through the development of membership, strengthening of WCPA's existing structure, development of partnerships with other agencies, effective marketing of the strategic plan, adopting a fund-raising strategy, and periodical monitoring and progress reviewing of the different activities undertaken.

The specific functions identified for RAPs are the following:

- To act as a bridge between the global Caracas Action Plan and national level action in protected areas.
- To catalyse regional level action and national actions which are responsive to regional initiatives.
- To provide a framework to secure and guide funding for protected areas from sources other than national governments.
- To strengthen regional protected area institutions.
- To develop IUCN's protected areas programme in the region.

1.2 THE DRAFT SOUTH ASIA RAP

The draft South Asia RAP has been prepared in keeping with the various IUCN/WCPA recommendations reviewed above. It comprises an overview of protected areas in the region, including numbers, coverage, policies and legislation, administration and threats. This is followed by a section on the proposals for action, presented in three parts. The first part reiterates official recommendations for each country made in public documents or other fora; the second lists general protected area-related recommendations; and in the third part, an attempt has been made to identify a clear role for WCPA South Asia.

The South Asia RAP has been prepared through a collective effort by all countries in this region. Extensive comments were made on an earlier version of the draft by both the WCPA Steering Committee and other members. This feedback - much of which came as personal communications to the Regional Vice-Chair - is gratefully acknowledged, and has been incorporated into the relevant sections of this document.

WCPA South Asia Regional Workshop 1997

A three day workshop was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 5-7 May 1997, under the aegis of the BMZ-funded Regional Programme to Build Capacity to Support Biodiversity Conservation in Tropical Asia, being implemented by IUCN Sri Lanka. The RAP was extensively reviewed at this workshop, with substantial inputs being provided by participants. The post-workshop draft of the RAP also received inputs from the larger WCPA South Asia membership.

2. STATUS OF PROTECTED AREAS IN SOUTH ASIA

2.1 PROTECTED AREA COVERAGE UNDER IUCN CATEGORIES

AN AREA OF ROUGHLY 211,000 KM² IS CURRENTLY UNDER PROTECTED areas in South Asia (see Table 1). These protected areas fall under the IUCN categories I, II, IV and V. However, there also exist other traditional forms of protection that communities have provided for species and habitats, such as sacred groves and landscapes. These have not been classified under the existing IUCN categories, and they often do not receive any form of protection under protected area legislation either.

Table 1: Protected Areas in South Asia by IUCN Categories I-II & IV-V

Country	Category I (km ²)	Category II (km ²)	Category IV (km ²)	Category V (km ²)	Total
Bangladesh	0	0	833	147	980
Bhutan	644	6,923	2,411	0	9,978
India	1,969	32,514	108,451	186	143,120
Maldives	—	—	—	—	—
Nepal	0	10,174	941	0	11,115
Pakistan	0	8,821	27,216	1,229	37,266
Sri Lanka	784	4,562	3,348	0	8,694
TOTAL	3,397	62,994	143,200	1,562	211,153

Source: IUCN (1998)

Notes: Minimum size for inclusion is 10 km². Only protected areas meeting criteria for IUCN management categories I-II & IV-V are included. Forest reserves with a nature conservation function are generally included. Category III sites (national monuments) are not considered as areas protected for biodiversity in any of these countries. No further information on protected areas in Maldives is currently available. There are a number of discrepancies between the data provided in Table 1 (drawn from the 1997 UN List of Protected Areas) and the information provided by the WCPA membership in the region. These differences are particularly large for category II and IV protected areas in Pakistan, for which the following figures have been provided: Category II: 26,733 km²; Category IV: 64,555 km².

The percentage of protected areas coverage varies greatly between countries (see Table 2). Bhutan has designated over 20% of its territory as protected areas, followed by Sri Lanka with 13%, Nepal with nearly 8%, Pakistan and India with over 4% and Bangladesh with less than 1%. It is important to note that while there may be a high percentage of area covered within the protected areas system, not all habitat types are adequately represented. In Bhutan, for example, despite its high coverage, protected areas are not entirely representative of the country's major habitat types while Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka have extensive protected area networks covering most representative habitat types. There also exists a range of nomenclatures for protected areas across the region corresponding to various IUCN Categories (see Table 3).

¹ IUCN (1998). 1997 United Nations List of Protected Areas. Prepared by WCMC and WCPA. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK.

REGIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR PROTECTED AREAS IN SOUTH ASIA

Table 2: Percentage of Total Land Area Allocated to Protected Areas in South Asia.

Country	Category I (%)	Category II (%)	Category IV (%)	Category V (%)	Total (%)
Bangladesh	0	0	0.6	0.1	0.7
Bhutan	1.4	14.8	5.2	0	21.4
India	0.1	1.0	3.4	+	4.5
Maldives	—	—	—	—	—
Nepal	0	7.2	0.7	0	7.9
Pakistan	0	1.1	3.4	0.2	4.7
Sri Lanka	1.2	7.0	5.1	0	13.3

Source: IUCN (1998)

Category III sites (national monuments) are not considered as areas protected for biodiversity in any of these countries. Minimum size for inclusion is 10 km². Forest reserves with a nature protection function are generally included. No information on protected areas in Maldives is currently available. Percentages are based on a country's total land area; they are, therefore, inflated by marine protected areas. There are a number of discrepancies between the data provided in Table 2 (drawn from the 1997 UN List of Protected Areas) and information provided by the WCPA membership in the region. These differences are particularly large for category II and category IV protected areas in Pakistan, for which the following percentages have been provided: category II: 3.3%; category IV: 8%.

Table 3: PA Nomenclature in South Asia and Corresponding IUCN Categories

Country	PA Nomenclature	Corresponding IUCN Categories
Bangladesh	National Park	V
	Wildlife Sanctuary	IV
	Game Reserve	VI
Bhutan	Strict Nature Reserve	I
	National Park	II
	Wildlife Sanctuary	IV
India	National Park	II
	Sanctuary	IV
Maldives	No areas listed	—
Nepal	National Park	II
	Wildlife Reserve	IV
	Conservation Area	VI
	Buffer Zone	VI
Pakistan	Wildlife Sanctuary	IV
	National Park	II & V
	Game Reserve	VI
Sri Lanka	Forest Reserve	Ia
	National Heritage	
	Wilderness Area	IV
	National Park	II & IV
	Nature Reserve	IV
	Sanctuary	IV
	Strict Natural Reserve	Ia

Source: IUCN (1998)

Notes: There are several discrepancies between this table and the information provided by the WCPA membership. Maldives: Marine National Park is given as a PA category, equivalent to IUCN category II. Nepal: Hunting Reserve is given as a PA category, equivalent to IUCN category V. Pakistan: IUCN category I status is accorded to Wildlife Sanctuaries; IUCN category IV status is accorded to Game Reserves. Sri Lanka: Conservation Forest and MAB Reserve are listed as PA categories, equivalent to IUCN categories I and IV respectively.

Countries in South Asia are also signatories to various international conventions/agreements (see Table 4) that have implications for their protected area policies.

Table 4 : Adherence to International Conventions in South Asia

Country	World Heritage Convention			Ramsar (Wetlands) Convention			Convention on Biological Diversity
	Date	No. of sites	Area (ha)	Date	No. of sites	Area (ha)	Date of ratification
Bangladesh	August 1983	1	139,700	May 1992	1	59,600	1995
Bhutan	—	—	—	—	—	—	1995
India	November 1977	5	281,012	October 1981	6	192,973	1994
Maldives	—	—	—	—	—	—	1992
Nepal	June 1978	2	208,000	December 1987	1	17,500	1994
Pakistan	July 1976	—	—	1976	12	62,908	1994
Sri Lanka	June 1980	1	8,864	June 1990	1	6,216	1994

Source: IUCN(1998) & WCPAMembership

2.2 IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS

Within the Indo-Malayan realm, there is a high degree of variation of biogeographical regions and habitat types. This makes it essential, yet difficult, to include unique and representative areas of endemism within the protected area network. Important areas of endemism and other biodiversity significance need to be protected, and any gaps in coverage identified. In the past, marine areas and wetlands have been neglected in protected area designation and remain under-represented in the protected areas network. The impacts of pollution, land reclamation, harmful extractive techniques and concentrated human settlements, have irreversibly damaged or destroyed these fragile ecosystems. Support for such areas has been provided under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, UNEP Regional Seas Programme, and other similar agreements. A series of South Asia Marine Reports has been completed and guidelines for establishing marine protected areas and marine biosphere reserves have also been developed by IUCN.

2.3 MARINE PROTECTED AREAS IN SOUTH ASIA

In 1995, WCPA, in collaboration with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), the World Bank and other organisations, completed a global assessment of marine protected areas, and identified the biogeographic and ecological characteristics of 18 marine regions of the

world. The report attempts to assess existing management of marine protected areas and identifies sectors where further support is required. Conservation priorities for each marine region have also been identified.

South Asia falls in the Central Indian Ocean Marine Region and includes Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka. The region has some of the richest marine diversity to be found anywhere in the world. Threats to marine areas include: population rise on islands, pollution, untreated industrial and domestic waste disposal, sediment and nutrient run-off, land reclamation and coastal construction, coral mining, over-fishing, destruction of mangroves, uncontrolled tourism and sea-level rise. In addition, damming of rivers for irrigation and power projects has reduced freshwater flows to the sea; this, in turn, has affected mangroves and their associated biodiversity, caused saline water ingress, and allowed the sea to encroach on coastal areas.

2.4 EXPANDING PROTECTED AREAS COVERAGE

The conservation challenge in South Asia, as in the rest of the developing world, is to devise strategies that will help meet the resource needs of local communities (before meeting urban-industrial demands) while protecting biodiversity as well. In order to meet the needs of a growing population and maintain current levels of biodiversity, it will be necessary to increase the amount of protected area coverage. Conserving biodiversity is a global priority today and called for in the Convention on Biological Diversity. While South Asia has 210,100 km² under protected areas, this coverage is disproportionate between countries and habitat types.

Many of the protected areas in South Asia can be classified in the IUCN management categories I (Strict Nature Reserve), II (National Park), and IV (Managed Nature Reserve), with a few in V (Protected Landscape/Seascape). However, with a rapidly expanding human population across the region and increasing commercial demand for natural resources, it will progressively become more difficult to enhance protected area coverage in the top-end of the IUCN categories. Future protected areas in South Asia could probably be in Category VI (Managed Resource Protected Area). This category advocates sustainable resource use to meet the needs of local communities, and can provide protected area managers the flexibility to involve local communities in meaningful protected area management strategies.

While there is a case for increasing the numbers and area of protected area coverage in most countries, there is simultaneously an urgent need to review the functioning of those that already exist. Several protected areas continue to remain largely ineffective due to inadequate management inputs, both technical and financial. There is a need to upgrade training of management staff at all levels, reliable equipment has to be made available for basic as well as specialised tasks, and research capabilities have to be built up to potentially involve staff and local communities besides other experts in the field.

2.5 PROFILE OF PROTECTED AREAS IN SOUTH ASIA

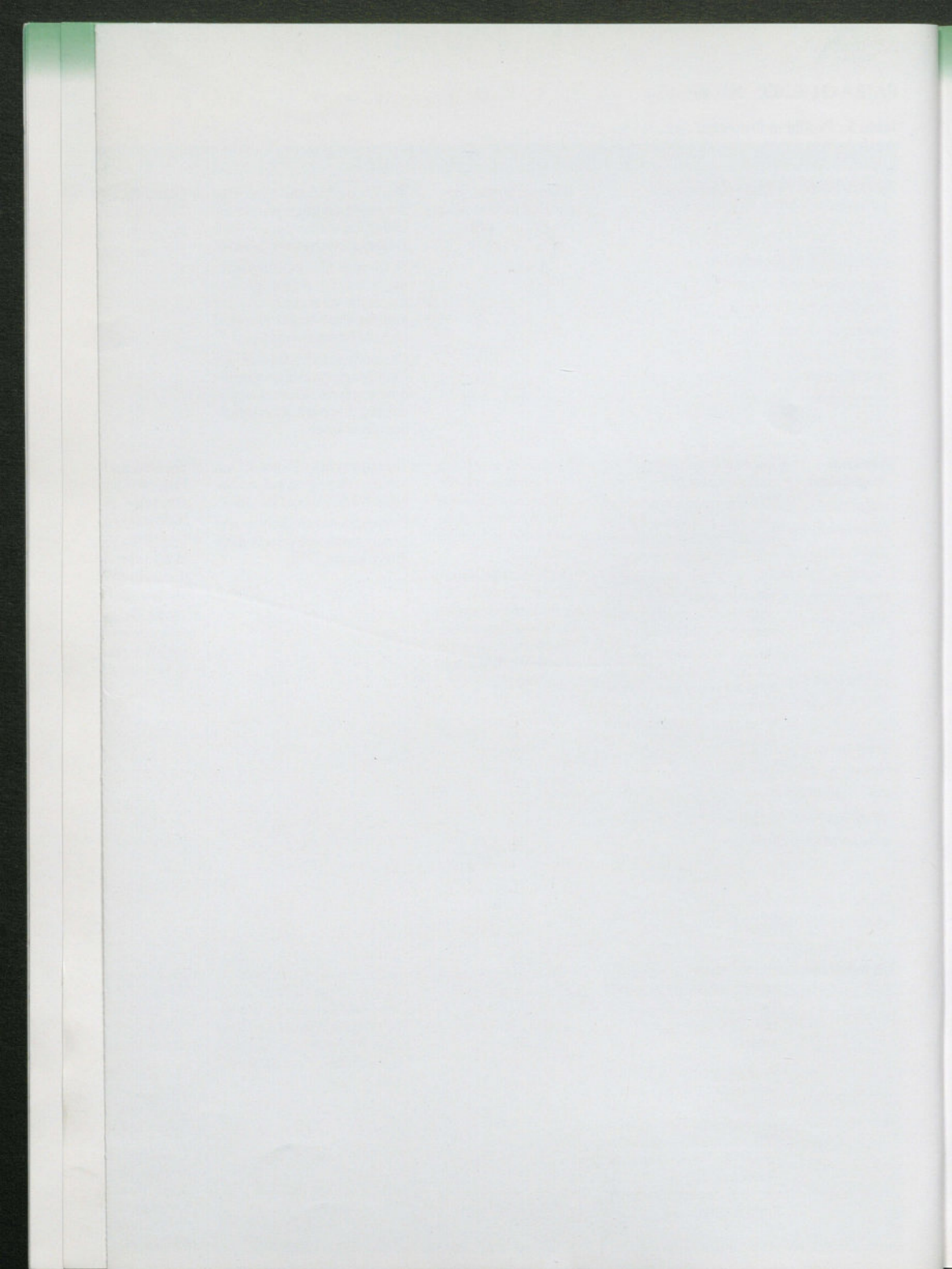
This section briefly reviews the current state of protected areas in South Asia by country, in the context of the following parameters: systems plans, threats, policies and legislation, administration, funding, research and monitoring and the role of NGOs. These profiles also form part of the basis for the country recommendations in the Action Plan section of the RAP. This information has been presented in Table 5.

REGIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR PROTECTED AREAS IN SOUTH ASIA

Table 5 : Profile of Protected Areas in South Asia

Source: WCPAMembership

	Bangladesh	Bhutan	India	Maldives	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Systems Plans	Under preparation.	Reported to exist. However, no further information is available.	- The Wildlife Institute of India has developed a systems plan for the country called <i>Planning a Wildlife Protected Area Network for India</i>. - It divides the country into biogeographic regions and assesses the appropriate number and size of existing or proposed protected areas in each region. - Currently, it forms the basis for identifying gaps in biogeographic coverage of protected areas and examining the potential for declaration of new areas.	- Currently, all protected areas are Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). - Proposals for terrestrial and other protected areas.	- Management plans have been prepared for a few areas but are outdated and require revision. - New plans need to be prepared for other areas. The guidelines for preparing Systems Plans are being drawn up.	Under preparation.	- A comprehensive National Conservation Review was completed in 1996, based on which systems plans for protected areas will be developed. - Management plans for some protected areas have been prepared, while others are currently under preparation.
Policies & Legislation	- National forest policy revised and adopted in 1995. - The Bangladesh Wildlife Act provides protection for the country's wildlife and management of protected areas. - The Act is in the process of revision to include biodiversity conservation; ecotourism development will be added. - A new Environment Act - Act 1 of 1995 - has been approved by government and will also provide for preservation of wildlife, forests and biodiversity.	- A National Forest Policy, 1974 (revised in 1985), addressed concerns of forest conservation, reforestation and wildlife protection. - The Forest and Nature Conservation Act, 1995 provides for expanded protected area categories and the involvement of communities in conservation.	- The country has a National Conservation Strategy as well as a National Wildlife Action Plan, 1983. - Protected areas are declared and administered under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.	- The National Environment Action Plan, 1989, lays out a conservation strategy for the nation's biodiversity. - The 1970s Fisheries Law of the Maldives imposed some regulations on exploitation of marine resources. The law was amended in the 80s. - The Environmental Protection and Preservation Act, 1993, empowers the government to designate protected areas and manage them.	- The Forestry Sector Policy emphasizes the conservation of forests, soils and biodiversity while at the same time meeting the needs of the local people on a sustainable basis. - Land and forestry resources will be managed according to their ecological status. - Representative examples of ecosystems unique to Nepal will be conserved and managed under Protected Areas Systems. - Protected areas are managed under the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act of 1973 and the rules made thereunder.	- The Pakistan National Conservation Strategy, prepared in collaboration with IUCN, covers all aspects of the environment including protected areas. - No central legislation is reported to exist for protected areas or wildlife conservation. However, each province has its own regional laws covering protected areas. These include: Sindh Wildlife Protection Act, 1996; Punjab Wildlife Protection (Protection, Preservation, Conservation and Management) Act, 1974; Balochistan Wildlife Protection Act, 1974; NWFP Wildlife (Protection, Preservation, Conservation and Management) Act, 1975; Islamabad Wildlife (Protection, Preservation, Conservation and Management) Ordinance, 1979-80; Northern Areas Wildlife Preservation Act, 1975; Azad Jammu & Kashmir Wildlife Act, 1975. Model wildlife legislation is being framed by the Federal Government which could be adopted by the Provincial Governments according to their own conditions and needs.	- The National Conservation Strategy, 1988; National Policy for Wildlife Conservation, 1990; National Environment Action Plan, 1991; National Forest Policy 1995; and the Forestry Master Plan, 1995 provide the overall protected area policy framework for the country. - Protected Areas are administered under three legal enactments by two Departments of Government. - The Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance of 1937, last revised comprehensively in 1993, under which new categories of refuges and marine reserves have been included. These are administered by the Director of Wildlife Conservation, who is in charge of 71 areas covering 821,871 ha or 12.4% of the total land area. - The Forest Ordinance of 1906, last amended in 1995, which provides for a new category of "Conservation Forests" for strict preservation, covers 55 areas totalling 111,099 ha. More areas will be declared as Conservation Forests when systems plans are prepared. - The National Heritage Wilderness Areas Act of 1988 provides for the protection of unique ecosystems, genetic resources and outstanding natural features. It is currently being applied over an area of 11,187 ha.
Administration	- The Forest Directorate in the Ministry of Environment and Forests is responsible for the administration of protected areas. - It is proposed to have a separate department responsible for wildlife. At present, it is the District Forest Officers who are responsible for wildlife. The revision of the Forest Act of 1927 will allow for peoples' participation in forest management.	The Forestry Services Division in the Ministry of Agriculture, is overall in-charge of protected areas.	The Ministry of Environment and Forests oversees the functioning of the State Forest Departments. The Wildlife Wing of the State Forest Department administers the management of protected areas.	- The Environment Division of the Ministry of Planning, Human Resources and the Environment oversees all matters related to conservation and protected areas. - There is also an independent advisory body called the National Commission for the Protection of Environment. - The Marine Research Section of the Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture is responsible for protecting marine species habitats, and sites under the Fisheries Law of Maldives.	- The Department of National Parks and Wild Life Conservation of the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation is the official agency for protected area administration. - MFSC also administers several areas at project level.	The Ministry of Environment, Local Government and Rural Development has a National Council for Conservation of Wildlife. There are separate Wildlife Departments in the provinces that administer protected areas.	- The Forest Ordinance and the National Heritage Wilderness Act are administered by the Ministry of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Plantation Industries and Parliamentary Affairs, which also oversees the functioning of the Dept. of Wildlife Conservation. The Ministry of Forests and Environment oversees the functioning of the Dept. of Forests. - Policy formulation and initiatives in framing legislation are responsibilities of the respective ministries, while planning, management and implementation of projects for conservation of protected areas and enforcement of laws are the responsibilities of the two Departments of Government.



Threats to Protected Areas

The following threats are common to protected areas across South Asia:

- Commercial-industrial pressures including mining, logging, development projects.
- Poaching and illegal felling and removal of timber.
- Human dependency for fuelwood, fodder, non-timber forest produce, grazing areas.
- Mismanaged tourism.
- Encroachment.
- Weak legislative control and enforcement.
- Drainage of wetlands.
- Lack of political commitment for conservation.

3. SOUTH ASIA REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

THE WCPA SOUTH ASIA REGIONAL ACTION PLAN WILL NOT ATTEMPT TO SET UP a parallel process on protected areas in the region. The Regional Action Plan recognises the ongoing and proposed activities of individual governments in the region with regard to their respective protected areas. WCPA will support, encourage and facilitate the implementation of recommendations that have been made in public fora and in official country documents, for the countries of the South Asian Region.

The *first* part of this section reiterates some of the specific recommendations made in national conservation strategies (e.g. Pakistan), or at regional meetings (e.g. 42nd Working Session of WCPA, Islamabad).

The *second* part is based on the profile of protected areas and the problems they face, and the existing limitations of managing those problems. The recommendations in this part are meant to be indicative and general for consideration by relevant implementation agencies when planning for protected areas.

The *third* part of this section identifies a role for WCPA in South Asia based on recommendations for action by the members of the WCPA South Asia network. It is important to note that many of the recommendations in the three parts of this section often overlap and are closely inter-linked. It will take a process of extensive information-sharing and consultation, possibly even implementation, before WCPA South Asia can clearly identify its jurisdiction, role and functions regarding protected areas in the region.

3.1 COUNTRY RECOMMENDATIONS

Bangladesh.

The proposals given below for Bangladesh are based on information presented at the 42nd Working Session of WCPA.

1. Given the density of population and pressure on land and forests in Bangladesh, it will be important for any protected area management initiative to consider the various inter-sectoral linkages of various aspects of land use.
2. Water and watershed ecosystems need to be given particular attention in protected area management.
3. Several existing wetlands across Bangladesh are proposed to be declared as protected areas, in consultation with local communities who use these areas to meet resource needs. These communities will also be involved in the management of the proposed protected areas.
4. The Bangladesh Wildlife Act is currently applicable only to protected areas that fall within existing reserve forests. This Act will have to be amended to provide coverage to areas that may be declared outside reserve forest areas.

5. The government intends to expand the existing protected area network of the country with the declaration of an additional 19 wildlife sanctuaries.

Bhutan

1. The collaborative programme between WWF and the Forestry Services Division will provide technical and financial assistance for protected area planning and institutional development.
2. The issue of shifting cultivation and seasonal grazing needs to be urgently addressed and viable alternatives found for those dependent on these activities.
3. All protected areas in Bhutan have considerable potential for tourism, for both domestic and foreign visitors. International assistance may be needed in developing the necessary infrastructure for sustainable tourism.

India

India has a National Wildlife Action Plan (NWAP) which was adopted in 1983. The NWAP is the country's most comprehensive policy statement on wildlife conservation and protected areas. The major recommendations of the NWAP related to protected areas are as follows:

1. Establish a network of scientifically managed protected areas, to cover representative and viable samples of all significant biogeographic sub-divisions within the country.
2. Develop appropriate management systems for protected areas, with due regard to the needs of local people and ensuring their support and involvement.
3. Provide adequate protection to wildlife in multiple use areas so as to form forest corridors linking protected areas and providing for genetic continuity between them.
4. Develop research and monitoring facilities which will provide a scientific understanding of wildlife populations and habitats essential to their proper management and, where appropriate, their utilisation.

At the 42nd Working Session of WCPA, Islamabad, the following were some of the major issues identified concerning protected areas:

1. Improving the policy making environment and promoting inter-sectoral linkages to achieve conservation.
2. Integrating conservation with development to ensure sustainable use of biological resources.
3. Increasing financial resources to reinforce protected area management, and launching more eco-development programmes so that local people are offered alternatives to lifestyles affected by the declaration of protected areas.
4. Designing human resource development programmes, which include not only the selection and training of suitable manpower for the management of protected areas, but also orientation training for local communities living in and around protected areas.

5. Encouraging public awareness programmes, which can develop people's commitment to the conservation of protected areas, by involving government agencies as well as NGOs.
6. Ensuring efficient enforcement of the law, not only by providing adequate infrastructure and personnel to protected areas but also by bringing together other enforcement agencies through regular meetings and consultations.
7. Developing international co-operation and harmony so that the policies of one country do not come into conflict with the policies of another.

The Report of the Working Group on Wildlife for the IXth Five Year Plan (1997-2002), has identified the following priority areas, specific to protected areas:

1. Control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products.
2. Development of a protected area network with expanded categories.
3. Eco-development around protected areas.
4. Welfare measures for staff working for protected areas and wildlife conservation.
5. Research and training in wildlife conservation and protected area management.
6. Special scheme for the conservation of Rhino in relevant protected areas.
7. Establishment of a second refuge for the Asiatic lion, other than Gir National Park.
8. Prevention and mitigation of damage caused by wildlife to life and property of local communities around protected areas and other forest areas.
9. Development and management of eco-tourism.
10. Wildlife conservation in habitats outside the existing protected area network.
11. Closing down or control of damaging development projects within protected areas.

Maldives

1. A comprehensive biodiversity assessment is urgently required to identify threatened habitats and species and demarcate potential protected areas.
2. An assessment of the two main economic activities, i.e. tourism and fishing, needs to be made to determine carrying capacity and possible conflict in future with conservation values.
3. Both government agencies and NGOs need strengthening in terms of capacity building, technical inputs, training and funding.
4. Development of management strategies and plans for the effective management of existing and future protected areas systems.
5. Strengthening existing legislative measures relating to protected areas.

Nepal

The following proposals were suggested at the 42nd Working Session of WCPA and are based on the ongoing work of IUCN-Nepal, as well as an analysis of the country's conservation policies and the Forestry Sector Master Plan.

1. Increasing representation in the protected area system of all physiographic zones, such as the middle mountains and wetland ecosystems, including the tropical mixed evergreen forests and temperate broad-leaved forests.
2. Autonomous users committees at NGO level need to be created around protected areas with powers to collect funds from different sources including the government, international agencies and tourism, for use in community development initiatives.
3. The Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) needs to be strengthened and recognized as the sole governmental agency for managing protected area systems. It also needs to be given the mandate and resources to work with local communities living adjacent to protected areas.
4. Biodiversity and wildlife management outside of existing protected areas need to be entrusted to the District Forest Officer of the Forest Department, reinforced where necessary with the expertise from the nearest national park or reserve.
5. Most protected area management plans are outdated and require updating, and new ones must be prepared where none exist currently. Guidelines for management plan preparation need to be drawn up. All management plan related tasks need be handed over to the DNPWC.
6. One important approach for consideration in protected area management is the concept of a strict protected core area surrounded by a sustainable use area with multiple use management on the periphery to ameliorate park-people difficulties.

Pakistan

The Pakistan National Conservation Strategy makes the following recommendations regarding wildlife and habitat:

1. Draw up a national Wildlife Utilization and Conservation Policy that will achieve the desired protection and conservation objectives as well as be broadly compatible with agricultural and other related land use policies.
2. Increase the numbers of national parks and game reserves so that comprehensive representation of all national ecosystems is achieved.
3. Control harvesting and cropping carefully to ensure that populations are sustained in perpetuity.
4. Introduce incentives (such as subsidies for captive breeding of wild animals or artificial propagation of medicinal and endangered plants) to safeguard conservation areas and divert pressures from threatened wildlife habitats and species.

5. Provide incentives to encourage the higher productivity of food and other goods in areas immediately outside existing or proposed national parks and protected areas wherever human settlements are located.
6. Promote community-based management systems so that local people participate in the protection and conservation of habitats and related wildlife species.
7. Enforce existing legislation strictly in support of ecosystem protection and wildlife conservation, and support it with appropriate, higher penalties.
8. Introduce new legislation to protect habitats in the wider countryside, protect particular species, and ensure that CITES is implemented.
9. Prepare management plans for all the main ecosystems and nature conservation areas, in particular national parks and game reserves, and prepare Nature Conservation Reviews.
10. Introduce a degree of institutional rationalization to avoid conflicts between timber and wildlife objectives, and between the professionals charged with achieving them - forestry and wildlife staff.

Sri Lanka

A comprehensive National Conservation Review of natural forests has been completed in 1996 with the objective of defining a national system of conservation forests. Protection of biodiversity is fully covered in addition to protection of watersheds, soil erosion, hydrology. This review provides a basis for a complete systems planning.

Forestry Sector

In systems planning for "conservation forests", the following activities, some of which are already ongoing, will be recognised and implemented.

1. Demarcate and map all conservation forests declared under the Forest Ordinance to protect biodiversity, unique eco-systems, habitats of rare and endemic species of flora and fauna, micro-organisms and watersheds.
2. Identify representative areas, including mangroves and wetlands, based on the National Conservation Review of 1996 and declare them as conservation forests in order to widen the protected area network.
3. Develop and implement conservation management plans for protected areas in collaboration with local communities and other stakeholders.
4. Educate and create awareness among local communities, government and non-government agencies and community-based organisations, on the conservation values of protected areas and elicit their support to implement conservation management plans.
5. Develop criteria for non-extractive uses of conservation forests such as nature-based tourism, scientific research and other such activities.
6. Undertake zoning of conservation forests, wherever feasible, for permitting controlled collection of non-wood forest products by people living adjacent to the forests in accordance with management plans that will be developed jointly with local communities.

7. Establish buffer zones for conservation areas and encourage collaborative management and development of such areas with the participation of local communities.
8. In view of their fragmented nature, support preservation of conservation forests through enforcement of laws; strengthen the protection arm of the Forest Department by providing trained persons, equipment and finances.
9. Ensure biodiversity conservation in protected areas; give priority for the implementation of management plans that have been developed; and generate necessary financial and other resources.

Wildlife Sector

System plans for protected areas under the Department of Wildlife Conservation will recognise and implement the following activities, some of which are already ongoing:

1. Demarcate and map protected areas under the Department of Wildlife Conservation to maintain the integrity of such areas.
2. Develop a representative network of protected areas; establish forest corridors to ensure genetic continuity between them; establish marine reserves and refuges as provided in the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance.
3. Prepare and implement management plans for protected areas with the participation of the Government, Provincial Administration, NGOs, local communities, and other stakeholders.
4. Develop and implement specialised programmes for the management of elephant populations that are subject to stress due to loss of habitat.
5. Implement programmes for the prevention and mitigation of damage to crops, property, life and limb of people living around protected areas and provide avenues for compensating losses caused by wild animals, particularly elephants.
6. Strengthen legal provisions to protect wildlife and enhance capacity of the Department of Wildlife Conservation for the enforcement of laws.
7. Develop plans for the management of tourism in protected areas, ensure provision of improved visitor facilities in keeping with conservation objectives, and develop criteria for the management of eco-tourism.
8. Implement education and awareness programmes for local community stakeholders on the value of protected areas and conservation objectives and involve them in the implementation of management plans, both in conservation activities and utilization.
9. Build the infrastructure of the Department of Wildlife Conservation by providing trained personnel, equipment, and funds with special emphasis on strengthening the regional management structure to be able to react quickly to localised problems.
10. Implement human resources development programmes to enhance capacities and skills of the personnel of the Department of Wildlife Conservation to address new management needs.

3.2 GENERIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposals and recommendations in this section of the RAP are broad and generic on aspects of planning and management of protected areas, policies and legislation, involvement of local communities, etc., for consideration by protected area planners and managers across the region. Many of these may already be part of existing plans and even under implementation in some form by the relevant government departments or NGOs concerned with the administration of protected areas.

Systems Plans

Systems plans assess existing protected areas and identify gaps in coverage within countries or regions. They are also expected to recommend proposed protected areas on a biogeographic basis. A systems plan is an essential building block for any country in developing a national biodiversity strategy, and is specifically called for under Article 8 of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Additionally, the need for comprehensive systems plans for terrestrial and marine protected areas was identified as a major priority in the Caracas Action Plan (Action 1.1). Beyond the scope of international conventions, systems plans provide a framework for action and consider various alternatives to achieving conservation objectives.

Systems plans are applicable to marine areas as well and are necessary to make sure that wetlands and marine areas are managed, keeping ecological processes and conservation objectives in mind. Management of marine areas and wetlands needs to be integrated with land use in the surrounding area with multi-level management and coordination with other agencies and involved parties, i.e. fisherfolk, coastal communities, etc. Within the South Asia region, Bhutan, India and Sri Lanka have detailed systems plans on a national level.

Recommended Actions

1. Encourage governments to develop a national systems plan where none exist at present, using an appropriate biogeographic classification system to help in gap analysis.
2. Try and integrate national systems plans with those of neighbouring countries by reflecting trans-boundary and regional concerns, in line with the World Conservation Strategy.
3. Promote protected area management with co-ordination among all natural resource management agencies.

Policies and Legislation

Most countries in South Asia possess a policy document in the form of a long term comprehensive master plan and a national conservation strategy, as well as a legal framework for the establishment and administration of protected areas. It is, however, critical that legislation be responsive to new initiatives in conservation; this can be achieved through periodic reviews of laws and policies. The problems of protected area managers, and other enforcement agencies, in the implementation of existing legislation need to be constantly monitored and reviewed.

Recommended Actions

1. Review national and other conservation legislation for appropriateness, flexibility, ease of implementation and potential to enable participation of local communities.
2. Encourage governments to create legislation that will be responsive to initiatives and changes concerning the protected area system.

3. Develop mechanisms to communicate clearly provisions of policy and legislation with local communities in and around protected areas.

Protected Area Planning and Management

Planning is an essential pre-condition to, and a necessary tool for, effective protected area management. Goals, objectives and tasks can only be defined on the basis of available and accurate information, knowledge of the current state of the protected area, an understanding of the financial implications of proposed activities, and an idea of future trends and developments. Within the context of land use, it is important that protected area management plans be integrated with other land use practices in the surrounding area. Protected areas are often seen as independent and isolated from their surrounding areas, leading to negative effects such as lack of co-operation and support from surrounding land owners, inability to regulate resource acquisition or allocation, and an overall diminished constituency. Biosphere reserves as a protected area category can help overcome some of these problems. Zoning has been effectively implemented in Nepal to incorporate planning of surrounding area activities within the management of the protected area itself. Another function of protected area planning could be to encourage government agencies to collaborate when planning conservation initiatives or development projects. Such co-operation would potentially reduce conflicts of jurisdiction and adverse impact of development projects on protected areas.

Protected area management requires the existence of a clear, time-bound, management plan with definite objectives, adequate resources to implement it, well-trained and motivated staff and a vision for the future. To be effective, protected area managers must have the authority to make decisions regarding activities within their area, and the ability to allocate resources and negotiate with other government agencies and institutions on an equal basis. The administrative structure of protected areas is sometimes in conflict with the protected areas' conservation objectives, especially in situations where the management is geared toward resource utilisation, i.e. conventional Forest Departments undertaking forestry operations, as against conservation of the same area. This disparity weakens the effectiveness of the protected areas and can produce difficulties in the long-term.

Recommended Actions

1. Encourage governments to adopt a wider range of protected area categories, using the IUCN system of classification, especially Categories V and VI, thereby making a wider range of options available for protected area managers. Review existing protected areas with a view to assigning more appropriate management categories.
2. Promote regional planning practices to integrate protected areas planning and management with surrounding land use. Variation in the categories of protected areas and regional planning will enable formulation of comprehensive conservation strategies to manage protected areas more effectively, including management of fragmented habitats and corridors linking protected areas.
3. Encourage the use of eco-development strategies, biosphere reserves and other ICDPs (e.g. the Annapurna Conservation Area Programme in Nepal) to integrate conservation with developmental concerns.
4. Establish closer working relationships between governmental agencies, NGOs, research/academic institutions and other national/international conservation bodies.

5. Encourage the preparation of innovative management plans that reflect both the conservation values of the protected area as well as the socio-economic concerns of local communities. Emphasis should be given to concepts such as landscape and bio-regional planning in protected area systems.
6. Develop guidelines for preparation of management plans which address the range of management problems affecting protected areas in the region.
7. Identify trans-boundary issues related to protected areas requiring co-operative management.
8. Explore the need for restructuring management authorities to meet new challenges.
9. Deter any development project that is in conflict with the conservation objectives of protected areas.

Research and Monitoring

Effective protected area management needs to be backed up by sound scientific research. Wildlife and protected area research related capability has progressively been developing in the South Asia region over the last several years. Research and training facilities exist in most countries and there has also been active collaboration between some of them.

Recommended Actions

1. Identify national research priorities for basic and applied research relevant to protected areas.
2. Develop capacity of research institutions to meet the requirement of research support for protected area management.
3. Generate wildlife databases for protected areas and share these with researchers across the region.
4. Publish research information and disseminate research findings to all concerned.

Funding for Protected Areas

It is crucial that protected areas operate on a sound financial basis. This includes maintaining accurate budgets, preparing short/long-term financial forecasts, and developing a simplified mechanism for accessing government funds. While protected areas generate substantial revenue from tourism, very little actually returns to the specific protected area itself. Conservation, in order to be meaningful and effective, requires reasonably large and regular financial inputs. Current expenditure on protected areas in most countries in the region continues at an inadequate level.

Recommended Actions

1. Invest protected area managers with adequate authority and financial resources to carry out their tasks.
2. Enable protected areas to develop long/short-term budgets and financial forecasts, which are integrated with funding available from other government departments.
3. Develop mechanisms to channel a reasonable proportion of tourism revenue, and returns from other sources related to the existence of the protected area, to the management of the protected area itself. This should include sharing of such revenue with local communities.

4. Raise income from internal sources, such as by adopting a realistic pricing structure for eco-tourism activities in protected areas.
5. Develop ecologically sustainable revenue-generating activities, compatible with the conservation objectives of the protected area, that will allow them to become more financially self-sustaining.
6. Develop the institutional capacity of protected area personnel, including grant writing and negotiating skills, to manage finances and access funding from bilateral and multilateral sources.
7. Encourage the development of "trust funds" or endowments to provide protected areas with a secure financial base.
8. Seek enhancement of budgetary allocations from governments by raising awareness levels among planners, decision makers and politicians.
9. Share fund-raising experiences among countries of the region to take advantage of available funds from bilateral and multilateral sources.

Protected Area Personnel and Training

Protected area personnel at all levels should be treated as an investment in the infrastructure of the protected area network, as they are a vital and dynamic part of its ongoing processes. In order to ensure professionalism in the field, personnel should be trained in administration procedures, and have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of the protected area. Professional growth among protected area managers needs to be encouraged, and opportunities provided through training programmes and workshops, staff exchanges with other departments within countries and across the region. Study tours are one way of coupling staff training and networking. The facilitation of staff exchanges will be part of WCPA's mandate in South Asia. In addition, motivation could be secured by providing appropriate salaries, welfare measures for families and a sense of job security.

Recommended Actions

1. Assess training needs and opportunities at national and regional levels.
2. Provide training in protected area management, both on-site and at specialised training institutions within the region and elsewhere.
3. Introduce protected area managers to a range of skills including communications, science and social science research methods, and financial management.
4. Encourage staff exchanges, mobile seminars and study tours at national and regional levels to widen understanding and learn from the experiences of other protected areas in the region.
5. Promote utilisation of institutional infrastructure and expertise available in the region, such as the regional training facility available at the Wildlife Institute of India.
6. Promote establishment or enhancement of national training institutions to meet the human resource development requirement for protected area management.

Involvement of Local Communities in Protected Area Management

Protected areas are often viewed as a mechanism of denying local communities access to much-needed resources on which their livelihood systems are based. As a result, there is little local support

for protected areas, and much time and effort is spent safe-guarding the area from so-called illegal uses. Local communities also have considerable knowledge of the resources and methods of sustainable utilization. By involving local communities in the management of protected areas, it will be possible to re-direct efforts into establishing a solid conservation foundation for the area. This will also provide an opportunity for protected area personnel to engage in mutual sharing and learning exercises, from which the protected area will ultimately benefit.

Recommended Actions

1. Involve local communities through local institutions such as village level committees and local advisory boards, as may be decided by the community.
2. Where possible, use existing people's institutions, rather than creating new ones.
3. Initiate socially sensitive programmes to build capacity of local level and other institutions to: ensure equity in benefit-sharing; promote the representation of communities and different kinds of resource users in partnership arrangements for management; and to handle conflict resolution, finances and process documentation.
4. Institute legal and policy changes, as necessary, to recognise those customary resource use practices which are in harmony with protected area conservation values.
5. Involve NGOs and other institutions in efforts to establish linkages between local communities and official departments in-charge of management of protected areas.
6. Document and share the experiences of the Eco-development Programme in India, and the ACAP and Parks and People Project in Nepal; these are strategies currently being implemented in the region that take into account some of the above concerns. Activities include (among others): enhancement of local skills for livelihoods; ecological regeneration of degraded areas outside protected areas in order to meet biomass needs; and the introduction of ecologically and socially appropriate development programmes.
7. Encourage the establishment of protected areas under IUCN categories V and VI, to enable protected area managers to involve communities in managing the conservation of the area.
8. Sensitise protected area managers to the need to understand, document, respect, reward and use local community knowledge and practices relevant to conservation.
9. Accord local communities priority for employment within protected areas, and develop enabling rules and regulations.
10. Make all protected area-related information public and freely accessible to interested persons or organisations.

Benefits of Protected Areas

It is important that protected area managers possess the ability to demonstrate and communicate the benefits of protected areas. Such benefits include: conservation of species, habitats and ecosystems; protection of sacred species, landscapes and other sites of cultural significance; maintenance and regulation of important ecological processes (such as water flows and nutrient cycling); sites for research and education; and recreation and tourism potential. Subsidiary benefits could include

economic returns from tourism, non-timber forest products and employment generation. Economic incentives often help in increasing the effectiveness of local participation and support for the conservation objectives of protected areas.

Recommended Actions

1. Develop methods to demonstrate the benefits of protected areas to local communities and other sections of society by encouraging their visits to protected areas.
2. Promote low-impact, sustainable activities and small-scale ventures around protected areas which are compatible with their conservation objectives.
3. Encourage governments to develop a systematic policy on tourism in protected areas and a methodology for the design and implementation of appropriate eco-tourism projects in and around such areas.
4. Determine the suitability of tourism with regard to the conservation objectives of the protected area and establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
5. Involve local communities in the development of tourism strategies for protected areas *after* ensuring their own resource needs are catered to.
6. Integrate basic concepts related to protected areas into formal and non-formal education programmes, to encourage awareness of conservation values.
7. Incorporate the interpretation of protected area-related concepts into training programmes for various professionals such as communicators and educators.
8. Target decision makers, politicians and the judiciary for special awareness programmes through appropriate fora and using different strategies of communication to develop a constituency for supporting conservation efforts.
9. Utilise all media agencies and means, with special focus on the local language media and methods such as folk theater, village fairs/markets, etc. and cinema.
10. Share available experiences in conservation education (such as those of the Centre for Environment Education in India) and training among countries, through regional workshops and exchange visits.
11. Improve the education and interpretation facilities at protected areas to communicate in innovative ways the importance of protected areas to visitors and local communities.

Negative Impacts of Protected Areas

Besides obvious benefits, protected areas also have several impacts that need to be addressed. These include physical displacement of local communities and restrictions on access to resources such as fuelwood, fodder and non-timber forest produce. Other negative impacts include injury/loss of livestock to predators, destruction of crops and other property. People are also often injured or killed protecting livestock and crops.

Recommended Actions

1. Develop mechanisms to mitigate the negative impacts of protected areas, through sensitively designed, voluntary rehabilitation programmes, simple compensation procedures, and provision of alternatives.
2. Encourage local participation in management and planning decisions through village level committees.
3. Set up a system of regular contact programmes between the protected area managers and local communities to discuss each others' problems.
4. Facilitate coordination between various government departments and enhance their involvement in the regions adjacent to protected areas.

Regional Co-operation

It is increasingly being acknowledged that wildlife and their habitats recognise no political boundaries. There are several instances of protected areas along international boundaries in the region, such as the Sunderbans across India and Bangladesh or the Manas region across India and Bhutan. There is an urgent need to try and develop common strategies for management of such protected areas, particularly to counter poaching of endangered species and enforce the wildlife laws of the respective countries. Further, there exists a wealth of experience on protected areas among practitioners, scientists, NGOs, and even interested individuals, that has so far been restricted to individual countries. A forum for sharing these experiences could have far reaching implications for the future of protected areas in the region.

Recommended Actions

1. Establish linkages to identify opportunities for collaboration in protected area management.
2. Encourage countries of the region to ratify relevant international conventions and ensure that their obligations are fulfilled.
3. Utilise research and training institutions on a mutual basis in a more systematic way.

3.3 ROLE OF WCPA SOUTH ASIA

WCPA South Asia has now been in existence for three years, during which period it has been able to develop an identity of its own. There are now over 60 individual members who are professionals working directly or indirectly on protected area related issues. Besides the preparation and circulation of earlier versions of this RAP, the IUCN/WCPA Newsletter has helped networking among members. The regional commitments made at the 42nd Working Session of WCPA, Islamabad, form the basis for the existing/proposed activities of WCPA South Asia.

Regional Recommendations of the 42nd Working Session of WCPA

1. Each country in the region is expected to review its national system of protected areas against the IUCN Guidelines for Protected Area Management Categories.
2. Identify opportunities for trans-boundary co-operation in the management of protected areas.
3. Undertake a detailed study to document the state of people-protected area relationships including: demographic status of local communities and their dependence on natural resources; the cultural, religious or other considerations for this dependence; attempts to involve local communities in protected area management; and relevance of concepts such as biosphere reserves and cultural landscapes, to harmonise people-protected area relationships.
4. Promote regional training programmes, using existing regional capacity and at the national level (e.g. WII, India; ICIMOD/SAARC, Nepal).
5. Review and publicise the experience of different countries in national, site-specific, administrative arrangements for protected areas.

Networking

WCPA provides a unique trans-boundary forum on issues related to protected areas, unlike any that exists at the moment. Individuals, NGOs and government agencies will be encouraged to link up with others working on similar issues or expressing opinions within their own country as well as with the rest of South Asia. The function of networking will be partially fulfilled by a WCPA South Asia Newsletter that will go out to all members and a selection of other interested organisations and individuals. In addition, it is also proposed to produce a directory of WCPA South Asia members giving profiles of their current association with protected areas and other related issues of interest, for distribution within the network.

WCPA will also attempt to establish linkages with country offices and representatives of IUCN in South Asia to involve them in WCPA activities and in the implementation of the RAP, besides establishing a forum for discussion and information sharing.

Information Collection and Dissemination

A documentation center will be identified and built up in each country, in order to make available information on protected areas in the rest of the South Asia region as well as from other parts of the world. Where possible, this documentation center will be housed within an existing library system of a government agency or NGO. The information and documentation will be available for reference by

all persons working on protected area related issues. There are already several environment/conservation related networks in the region that will be tapped to disseminate information on protected areas. The SAARC Committee on the Environment could perhaps assist in enhancing information exchange in South Asia.

Creation and Use of a Regional Data-base

A regional database on information on protected areas will be established. While the modalities of this proposal have yet to be worked out, it will also follow the precedent of the information collection and dissemination center, i.e. by using the infrastructure and systems of an established NGO or government agency in the region. Measures will have to be taken to try and ensure that information will also be made available in a form that is not computer-dependent. The success of the regional database will be entirely dependent on inputs from protected area managers, researchers and WCPA members.

ICIMOD, Nepal, has offered to co-ordinate the establishment of a Geographical Information System (GIS) database on protected areas in the Hindu Kush region of the Himalaya. Likewise, the DWLC in Sri Lanka has offered its facilities for establishing a database and documentation center. A marine areas database for the region has been established in Sri Lanka with support from the Australian Government.

National Conservation Strategies

WCPA will support and encourage the preparation/implementation of national conservation strategies, especially their component on protected areas and their management. Where such policies are unavailable, WCPA will lobby with governments to commission such exercises. The recommendations made in the first section of the action plan have highlighted the need for national conservation strategies. National conservation strategies in existence for over five years require review and updating.

Regional Meetings

Regional congresses and other fora provide the opportunity for protected area professionals to facilitate information exchange, identify funding sources, and discuss management strategies. These can be organized thematically, encouraging in-depth examination and discussion of critical topics such as: economics of protected areas, tourism management, education, and protected areas policies. WCPA will encourage the holding of such meetings within the region.

Awards for Protected Area Management

A system of rewarding best-practice in protected area management at the country and regional level will be explored by WCPA. A panel of experts representing all the countries, from fields such as management, research, government/non-government agencies, and eminent individuals could be set up to prepare guidelines for evaluation of protected areas, with the best ones being rewarded in different categories.

Monitoring Implementation of the South Asia RAP

It is anticipated that the South Asia RAP will be finalised and ratified by member countries by mid-1997. Attempts will then be made to monitor progress of implementing the RAP as per the provisions of the WCPA Strategic Plan.

Develop membership:

Efforts are already underway to expand the WCPA membership across the region. As of the next triennium, WCPA will have put in position a large network of members with a wide range of interests in protected areas and related issues. All attempts will be made to involve this membership in activities at both the country and regional-level.

Develop partnerships:

Besides WCPA, South Asia possibly has representatives from every other IUCN commission. One of the first tasks of the RAP will be to establish contact with these representatives and set up a system of sharing information and ideas. Stronger links will be established between WCPA and conservation NGOs such as WCMC and WWF. Countries will be encouraged to develop their own partnerships, specifically on protected area related initiatives, with regional fora, e.g. SAARC; with bilateral and multilateral funding organisations and donors such as ADB and the World Bank; with development organisations like UNDP, UNEP, FAO (which are also IUCN partners); and with country-organisations such as DFID, DANIDA, SIDA, and NORAD.

Monitor progress:

The South Asia RAP will be periodically reviewed, within an appropriate timeframe that will be decided by consensus within the network of members. Parameters for monitoring and evaluation will also be developed in consultation with the network. Proposed activities will be evaluated and amended as necessary, and new initiatives recommended. This will be a crucial exercise to ensure that the RAP goes beyond merely being a statement of intent, to a true "action plan".

Proposed WCPA South Asia Priority Projects

The WCPA South Asia Regional Workshop held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in May 1997, identified the following priority projects to be pursued by identified lead agencies within the WCPA South Asia network in the current triennium. A brief outline of the project ideas including background, objectives, methodology, timeframe, budget and outputs is given in Annex 1.

1. Capacity Building

To organize a regular training course for protected area managers in the region.

2. Implementation Mechanisms

To develop regional guidelines on protected area management planning

To develop guidance on protected area funding mechanisms based on a review of current practice in the region.

3. Public Participation

To organize:

- i. A regional workshop to learn from on-the-ground experience of community involvement in protected area management, and from that
- ii. Develop a network of demonstration projects on community involvement

To share and analyse comparative national experience with regard to legislation and policies relating to community involvement in protected areas

4. Systems Planning

To identify and promote case studies in South-Asia to illustrate the potential to develop protected areas across national boundaries.

Annex 1

Brief Project Proposals

SUB-GROUP I

CAPACITY BUILDING

Background

The sub-group on capacity building explored further one of the major issues identified in the plenary: that protected area managers lack adequate training for effective protected area management in the region. It was also recognised that while some of the countries in the region have training arrangements, this capacity is still inadequate in the face of the new and complex challenges that have to be faced by protected area managers. Further, it was acknowledged that the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) has specialised training facilities and provides a unique opportunity, but these are not being availed of to their full capacity by the various countries in the region.

The sub-group identified WII as the lead agency to organise a programme on "Training of Trainers" for protected area managers.

Aims and Objectives

- To develop the capacity of protected area managers through a "Training of Trainers" programme.
- To develop suitable curricula for competence - based training programmes for protected area managers.
- To encourage new teaching/training methods which use case studies, study tours and special focus training seminars.
- To promote the use of modern techniques for better protected area management. This will include the preparation of management plans for protected areas and their buffer areas.

Proposed Methodology

1. Assessment of the needs and areas of training in respective countries.
2. Curricula development.
3. Identification of external resource personnel and trainees.
4. Duration of the training

Introductory session	2 weeks
Field visits	1 week
Case Studies	2 weeks (including travel time)
Seminars/term papers, field reports and course evaluation by participants	6 weeks
5. Regular monitoring and evaluation of the project based on feedback from the countries during the duration of the project itself.
6. Evaluation of the entire project at the end of the project period.

Potential Output

One batch of 20 trainees per year, not exceeding three per country. The course will be run for three years and 60 trainers will be trained in all.

Tentative Budget (per course)

Activity	Approximate cost in US\$
1. Consultations to develop course curriculum	17,000
2. Trainers from the region @ US \$ 50/days for 42 days	87,000
3. Resource personnel	52,000
4. Administrative and management support	20,000
5. Contingency	15,000
TOTAL	191,000

The course will run over a period of three years. The course curriculum will need to be developed over an initial period of six months followed by a 42-day course that will be run each year. A review will be held after the first course and an evaluation conducted at the end of the three year period.

Lead Agency

Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, India.

SUB-GROUP II

REGIONAL GUIDELINES FOR PA MANAGEMENT

Background

Several categories of protected areas exist across this region. However, these are currently not scientifically managed due to the lack of adequate plans which include ecological and socio-economic aspects of management. Where guidelines do exist for protected area management and planning, they tend to be applicable only to local situations.

Aims and Objectives

- To develop guidelines for use as a basis for management planning in the region.
- To adopt a uniform planning system and improve management of protected areas.

Proposed Methodology

1. Collect information from countries in the region on existing guidelines.
2. Organise a workshop of planning experts in the region to consolidate such information with additional inputs to develop a draft for consideration by respective countries and their implementing agencies for comments and possible amendments.
3. Finalise the draft guidelines within a core group carved out from the larger group of experts as identified at the workshop.
4. Apply the guidelines to a few protected areas in the region to assess their validity and review them accordingly.
5. Incorporate such guidelines in the curriculum of the "Training of Trainers" programme (proposed by Sub-group I).

Potential Output

Availability of valid guidelines on management planning for protected areas in the region.

Tentative Budget

Activity	Approximate cost in US\$
1. Salary of project co-ordinator and support staff	30,000
2. Cost of workshop	
2.1 Larger workshop	35,000
2.2 Meeting of core group	20,000
3. Publication costs	10,000
4. Administrative and management support	20,000
5. Contingency	15,000
TOTAL	130,000

Time-frame of Activities

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. Preparatory phase to collect basic information and prepare the first draft for discussion by the workshop, to be held at the end of the six month period. | 6 months |
| 2. Preparation and holding the core group meeting | 5 months |
| 3. Miscellaneous activities | 1 month |

Lead Agency

IUCN Pakistan in collaboration with other training institutions and WWF Pakistan.

SUB-GROUP III

REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PA MANAGEMENT

Background/Justification

Community involvement in protected area management is essential, but current experiences are limited. However, there exist some initiatives in countries such as India and Nepal from which valuable lessons can be drawn.

Aims and Objectives

- To bring together involved people in different countries to share experiences/approaches and analyse successes and failures in: field experiences, policy/legal measures to enable implementation including funding, mechanisms of participation, institutions, capacity building, benefit sharing, information flow etc.

Proposed Methodology

1. Preparation/presentation of case studies from each country.
2. Analysis/presentation of policy and legal context in each country.
3. 3-day discussion on above at Chitwan, Nepal.
2-day field visit to buffer zone project in Chitwan.
4. 4-day field visit to Annapurna Conservation Area Programme (ACAP), Nepal.
5. 1-day round-up.

Proposed Participants

1. Protected area managers
2. NGO representatives working on protected area related issues
3. Decision makers, local administration, central/state government officials
4. Community representatives

Approximately 3-4 from each country, nominations for which can be made by WCPA, IUCN Country Offices and IUCN National Committees.

Potential Outputs

1. List of guidelines for studying demonstration sites (one per country).
2. Enhanced understanding of methods/processes of participation.
3. Greater linkages/networking in the region.
4. Recommendations for follow-up actions (national/regional).
5. Report of workshop.

Tentative Budget

Travel expenses of participants, field visits, workshop, etc. = US\$ 60,000

Lead Agency

1. WCPA South Asia
2. Department of Wildlife Conservation and National Parks, Nepal (through the Parks and People project.)
3. King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation

Linkages

Institutions working on participatory approaches/training; proposed WCPA South Asia collaborative management/training projects.

SUB-GROUP IV

CASE STUDIES OF TRANS-BOUNDARY PAs IN SOUTH ASIA

Background

There exists a need to maintain the ecological integrity of habitats. Wildlife tends to move regardless of international boundaries. Effective and consistent conservation management practices need to be facilitated and promoted. International co-operation needs to be encouraged in Chitwan (Nepal/India), Siachin (Pakistan/India), Maldiv Islands and Laccadive and Minicoy Islands (Maldives/India). Other areas include Kutch (India/Pakistan), Suklaphanta (Nepal) and forest divisions of Pilibhit district (India), Royal Bardia National Park and Katarniaghat Sanctuary (Nepal/India), Sohage Barwa and Valmiki Tiger Reserve and Royal Chitwan National Park (India/Nepal), Royal Manas National Park and Manas Tiger Reserve (Bhutan/India).

Aims and Objectives

- To identify opportunities for trans-boundary co-operation in protected area management.
- To promote awareness of the above.
- To facilitate bilateral and regional co-operation to achieve action.

Proposed Methodology

1. Document potential case studies for trans-boundary co-operation using resources of WCPA South Asia.
2. Organize a regional workshop to prepare case studies/proposals for trans-boundary co-operation.
3. Facilitate bilateral management between decision makers to approve Memoranda of Understanding.
4. Facilitate involvement of protected area communities and other conservation organisations.

Outputs, Time-frame, Budget

Phase I

1. Preparation of background document on opportunities for trans-boundary co-operation:

Time-frame: 4 - 6 months

Budget: US\$ 10,000

Lead agency: WCPA South Asia, WWF-India

2. Workshop proceedings/recommendations

Time-frame: 9 months

Budget: US\$ 100,000

Phase II

3. Drafting Memoranda of Understanding

Time-frame: 6 months

Budget: US\$ 20,000

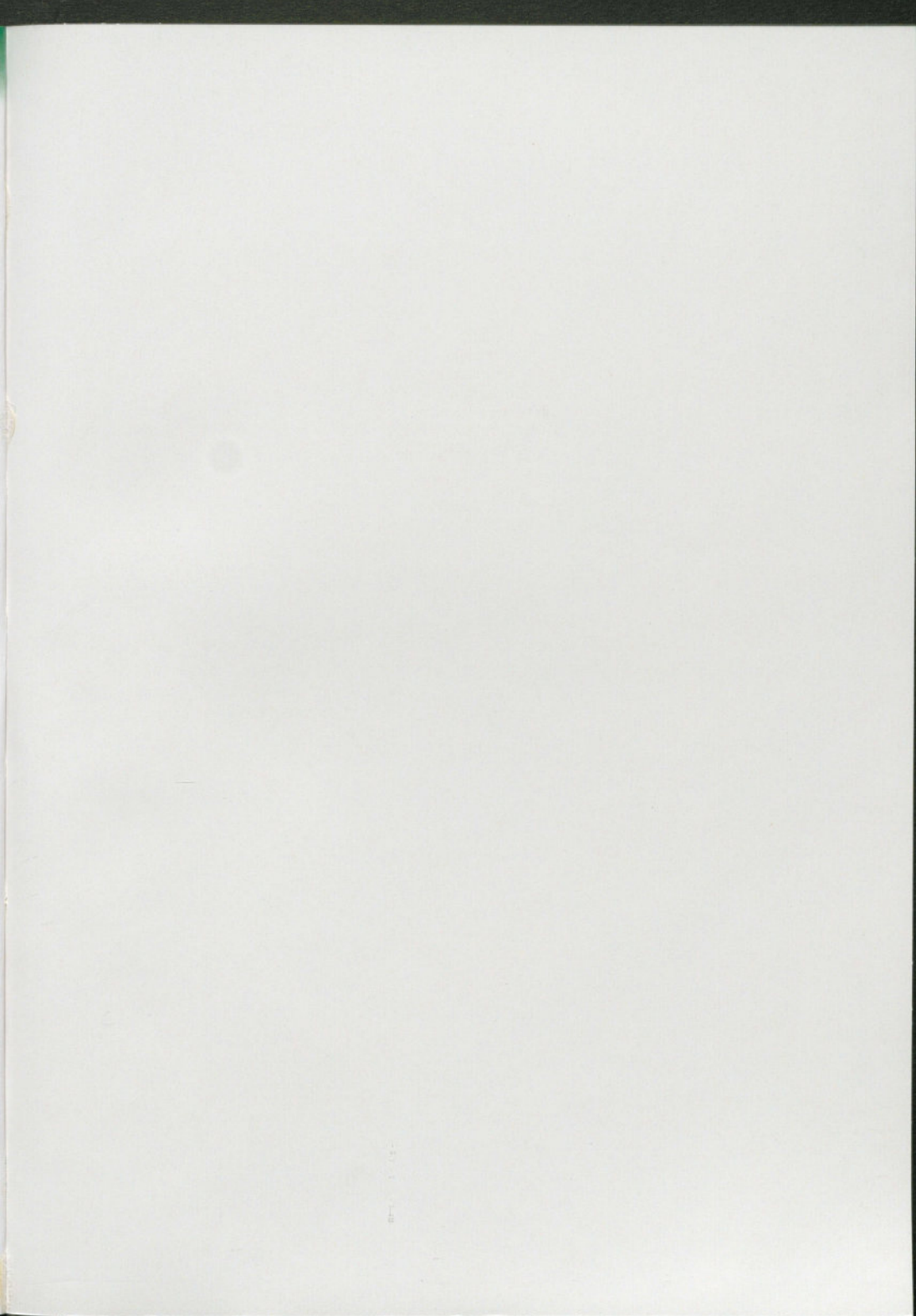
4. Trans-boundary management plans

Time-frame: 6 months

Budget: US\$ 10,000 per plan

Total Budget/Time: US\$ 110, 000 (Phase I)/ 13-15 months

US\$ 100-150,000 (Phase II)/12-14 months



IUCN-The World Conservation Union

Founded in 1948, The World Conservation Union brings together States, government agencies and a diverse range of non-governmental organisations in a unique world partnership: 913 members in all, spread across 138 countries.

As a Union, IUCN seeks to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable. A central secretariat coordinates the IUCN Programme and serves the Union membership, representing their views on the world stage and providing them with the strategies, services, scientific knowledge and technical support they need to achieve their goals. Through its six Commissions, IUCN draws together over 8,000 expert volunteers in project teams and action groups, focusing in particular on species and biodiversity conservation and the management of habitats and natural resources. The Union has helped many countries to prepare National Conservation Strategies, and demonstrates the application of its knowledge through the field projects it supervises. Operations are increasingly decentralized and are carried forward by an expanding network of regional and country offices, located principally in developing countries.

The World Conservation Union builds on the strengths of its members, networks and partners to enhance their capacity and to support global alliances to safeguard natural resources at local, regional and global levels.