

Implementation of an Exchange Programme for Protected Areas in East Asia

World Commission of Protected Areas

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- to increase investment in protected areas, by persuading public and corporate donors of their value; and
- to enhance WCPA's capacity to implement its programme, including through co-operation with IUCN members and partners.

Implementation of an Exchange Programme for Protected Areas in East Asia

Shelley Hayes and John Shultis

Adrian Phillips, Series Editor

World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)

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Foreword

During the past 10 years, the IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) has prepared a series of regional action plans for protected areas throughout the world. These plans highlight regional priorities for protected areas, help raise awareness and funding for protected area projects, and encourage different groups to work together to address critical protected area issues. The East Asia Action Plan, prepared by the WCPA's East Asia network after extensive consultation within the region, was one of the first to be completed (IUCN, 1996).

The action plan reviews key issues associated with protected areas in East Asia and identifies 13 priority projects. The Nature Conservation Bureau of the Japanese Government's Environment Agency generously offered support to implement five of these projects:

Priority Project 1:

Develop guidelines for sustainable tourism in protected areas in East Asia.

Priority Project 2:

Apply full-cost accounting to a protected area in the region with the aim of exhibiting the economic importance of protected areas.

Priority Project 4:

Compile a directory of funding and assistance sources for protected areas in East Asia, covering multilateral, bilateral and regional sources of funds.

Priority Project 10:

Develop an exchange programme for protected area staff of the region with other regions, e.g. Europe (perhaps through the partnership and technical programme of EUROPARC).

Priority Project 13:

Compile a directory of protected area personnel and organisations in East Asia.

The Nature Conservation Bureau asked IUCN to take the lead in carrying out these projects in close consultation with key agencies and individuals in the region. Support from Japan was provided over a three-year period commencing 1 October 1998¹. In response, four sub-projects were undertaken, each addressing one or more of the Priority Projects in the action plan. As a result, four publications are now being issued by IUCN:

- ***Guidelines for Tourism in Parks and Protected Areas of East Asia*** (Priority Project 1);
- ***Guidelines for Financing Protected Areas in East Asia*** (Priority Projects 2 and 4);
- ***Implementation of an Exchange Programme for Protected Areas in East Asia*** (Priority Project 10); and

¹ The Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan offered another voluntary contribution for an additional three years to support the further implementation of these Priority Projects.

- ***Directory of Protected Area Personnel and Organisations in East Asia*** (Priority Project 13).

This publication is therefore a response to Priority Project 10. It:

- analyses the different types of exchanges which might be set up in the East Asia region;
- reports on previous successful exchange programmes throughout the world; and
- distils the lessons learned from these past experiences to provide recommendations for the East Asia region.

It has been drafted by Shelley Hayes and John Shultis, with many inputs from within and beyond the region. Editing was by Adrian Phillips.

Readers of this publication are also referred to PARKS magazine, Vol. 10, number 3, October 2000, which is dedicated to Partnership and Exchange Programmes.

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Executive Summary

The East Asia Action Plan (IUCN, 1996) recommended exchange programmes as a means of improving protected area management capacity in the East Asia region. Exchange programmes were favoured because they can help share experience, expertise and information on critical management issues in a way that benefits all parties.

The objectives of this report are to: (1) establish the value and reasons for success in protected area-related exchange programmes by reviewing past experience world-wide; (2) summarise experience world-wide with exchange programmes, and review its relevance to East Asia; and (3) present recommendations for protected area exchanges in the East Asia region. This information will give protected area managers and policy-makers a better understanding of what is required to implement exchange programmes for protected areas in the East Asia region.

The experience of exchange programmes from round the world shows that they can bring great benefits. When executed and managed effectively, an exchange programme can:

- *build leadership and strengthen the capacity within institutions and individuals*, by providing new ideas, access to state-of-the-art management tools and strategies, and to shared experiences, and stronger connections to international networks;
- *advance new approaches to conservation and sustainable development*, including innovative legislation and policy, through a transfer of experience, and through mutual exchange among peers;
- *promote international links* between protected areas and communities in different environments to address common environmental and cultural issues;
- *encourage citizen diplomacy* by bringing together people of differing ethnic and geographic backgrounds to work together on areas of shared interest; and
- *improve the long-term prospects for co-operation* by expanding and strengthening global networks for protected area conservation.

There are many types of exchanges and they can bring many benefits (Part 1). There are a number of well-documented and often successful exchange programmes (Part 2). This experience, using a ten stage planning process for initiating and undertaking an exchange programme was developed (Section 3.1). The recommended planning process could be used by protected area managers (at the protected area site level) and administrators (at the protected area system level) to develop, and ensure the success of exchange programmes in the East Asia region. The process can be adapted for use at the local, national and regional scale.

A strategy (3.2) is recommended to introduce protected area exchange programmes into East Asia, as follows:

1. Create a favourable climate for exchanges, through action at the site, system and regional levels;

2. Develop innovative exchange programmes at site, system and region levels, by focusing on particular categories of protected areas, particular issues facing protected areas and the possible development of a regional “Parkshare” scheme;
3. Support this with information etc.; and
4. Secure the funding.

Finally, there is a task for WCPA in East Asia (3.3). A recommended action agenda for the Commission requires it to consider the setting up of a regional task force to progress work in this area, to develop a region-wide programme of exchanges between protected areas in the region, and to take other action in support of that aim.

PART 1

Exchange programmes – an overview



Aerial view of barren agricultural fields along the Po River, Italy. © WWF-Canon/Mauri Rautkari

Exchange programmes – an overview

1.1 The origins of this report: the Action Plan for Protected Areas in East Asia

The East Asia Action Plan (IUCN, 1996) stresses the importance of promoting the collection and exchanging of information about protected areas at local, regional, national and international levels. It concludes that some regional issues can only be resolved through increased co-operation between the nations of that region. A priority is to build co-operation within the East Asia region and enable experts in each country to learn from each other's experiences.

This report on exchange programmes is a step towards achieving the goal of improved protected area management in East Asia. It responds specifically to a key recommendation in the action plan – see Box 1. Its aim is to give protected area managers in East Asia a better idea of what is required to implement an exchange programme for protected areas in the region.

Box 1.1 Priority Project 10 from the East Asia Action Plan

Priority Project 10: *“Provide an exchange programme for protected area staff of the region with other regions, for example, Europe (perhaps through the partnership and technical programme of the FNNPE (EUROPARC)). Within the region, staff exchanges between agencies and organisations should be developed by a range of organisations including the Hong Kong Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency and the Taiwan National Park Department”* (IUCN, 1996).

1.2 Introduction

Protected areas around the world face continuing challenges; nowhere is this more true than in East Asia. The region is the most populous in the world (1400 million, or about 28% of the world's population). There is great natural, cultural and economic diversity among its countries. Many protected area systems suffer from inadequate funding. More than in most parts of the world, protected area managers in East Asia urgently require additional management resources, skills and knowledge.

Active management is needed to maintain the viability of most protected areas. Hence the importance of developing management capacities and competencies among protected area staff. However, this is becoming increasingly demanding: faced by complex and growing threats to protected areas, their managers require an expanding range of skills. Protected area managers are by no means alone in requiring additional training for their jobs. Indeed, all professions now require so-called “life-long learning” in order to adapt to the constantly and rapidly changing sets of skills and knowledge needed for

employment in the contemporary world. Thus whereas once, protected area managers needed to be skilled only in the traditional areas of forestry, biology, botany and zoology, now they require expertise in communications theory, conflict resolution and negotiation, business planning, tourism management, community involvement, multi-sectoral planning and so forth. Consequently, a broad spectrum of training is required to ensure that protected area managers have the skills to manage the conservation estate in the 21st century.

The training of protected area managers occurs throughout the world. A number of conservation departments, usually in wealthier countries, conduct training courses for conservation staff, often in co-operation with international organisations such as IUCN, UNESCO, FAO, WWF and UNEP. Also many education institutions, governments and NGOs offer courses, certificates and degrees in nature conservation and protected area management, but there are differing levels of funding available for this work. Within the region, for example, the Japanese Environment Agency organises several training courses for park managers and public sector personnel involved with nature conservation and protected area management. It also runs an international training course on nature conservation and national park management in co-operation with the Japanese International Co-operation Agency (JICA) and the Japan Wildlife Research Centre. To date, trainees from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe have participated in these courses.

Despite the existence of such training initiatives, training is often neglected, both globally and within the East Asia region. Managers in poorer countries are often further disadvantaged by the limited funds directly available to the protected areas in which they work – which have to compete with the need to address pressing social issues, e.g. poor education, poverty, ill health – and by language and cultural barriers. So it is no surprise that a lack of management capacity in parts of East Asia has been identified as a major issue (Li, 1993; IUCN, 1996; Jim and Li, 1996; Environment Agency of Japan, UNESCO-WHC, IUCN, 2000).

A key feature of training for protected area management is the exchange of experience between protected area managers engaged in similar tasks, both within a country and internationally. Notwithstanding the national and cultural diversity across the region, and the contrasts between East Asia and other regions, similar management problems are often encountered in different countries. The exchange of information and expertise amongst managers can help them deal with these problems.

Currently, most information on protected area management is exchanged between experts in different countries through informal arrangements, for example via publications, web-based information, training courses, and personal contact between managers. This form of exchange of information often has rather limited learning value, however, and has usually developed in an *ad hoc* way.

There have also been a few formal exchange programmes involving protected area managers within the region. Though limited in scope and number, they have been beneficial in building capacity amongst protected area managers. This gives encouragement to look beyond the region to see if lessons can be learnt from more ambitious exchange programmes elsewhere.

Examples of successful global exchange programmes include the European Commission-funded EUROPARC Partnership and Exchange Programme; the North

America/United Kingdom (UK) Countryside Exchange Programme; the United States-China Sister Reserve partnerships; and partnerships between individual protected areas, like that between Changbaishan national park in China and Great Smokey National Park in the US. Other governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have encouraged the exchange of information, for example, the IUCN/WCPA regional meetings held every three years since 1993, the WWF Mai Po marsh training centre and programme, and the Quebec-Labrador Foundation. Each of these programmes is described in greater detail in section 2 of this report.

1.3 What is an exchange programme?

An exchange means “giving and receiving reciprocally”, and programme means “a plan or system under which action may be taken toward a goal” (Webster’s Online, <http://www.m-w.com>). Therefore, an exchange programme would imply a system under which the action of mutual giving and receiving helps achieve the implementation of common goals.

For the purpose of this publication, an *exchange programme* is taken to mean:

a process that implements one or more exchanges, of various possible kinds, which involve protected area staff, managers, and/or administrators, at the site and system levels, as well as other interested persons or groups, undertaken for the purpose of improving the management of protected area(s).

An exchange programme will be made up of a number of individual exchanges, with activities such as formal agreements or partnerships between protected areas or protected area agencies, protected area staff exchanges (of both groups and individuals), training seminars, and international training courses for protected area professionals.

1.4 Types of exchange

Exchanges can range from those that involve an individual to those in which professional groups or local communities are involved. Activities may include group visits, training seminars and on-the-job learning. The framework for exchanges may include bilateral agreements, partnering and international collaboration. These aspects are described in greater detail below.

Each form of exchange, and the various activities undertaken within them, can help transfer different skills or knowledge. For example, exchanges may:

- stress general education (e.g. to familiarise visitors with new/different management approaches);
- provide training and on-the-job experiences or shadow work programmes;
- concentrate on technical training where one party is more “advanced” than the other (e.g. GIS);
- involve working exchanges (where those involved in the exchange work on common projects and issues); or
- relate to the monitoring or evaluation of activities or work plans.

1.4.1 Individual exchanges

An individual exchange involves one protected area staff member, manager, or administrator visiting one or more other protected areas and/or regional/national offices. This form of exchange is widely supported by many parks. It is easy and relatively cheap to plan and implement, and often provides an excellent training experience. As Table 1.1 shows, individual exchanges can take various forms.

Table 1.1 Principal variables in individual exchanges

Variable	From	To
Number of participants	One participant	Many
Level of participation	Park Director or system chief	Ranger(s)
Purpose of exchange	Acquisition or delivery of specific expertise	General education
Time period	A week or so	A year or more
Geographical scope	One protected area	Several protected areas
Subject focus	a) One issue addressed in depth (e.g. habitat management, tourism) b) Issues common to both areas	a) Many issues addressed more superficially b) Different in each area
Expertise involved	Experts exchanged	New expertise acquired
Frequency of exchange	A one-off event	A programme of several years

Long-term individual work exchanges and secondments can be very useful for bringing new skills to an organisation, but language barriers and lack of available funds can be a problem. If language is not an issue, and the cost of living in the two regions/countries involved are similar, then a true exchange of one worker for another may be possible. When this happens, it may be possible for each protected area to continue to pay the normal salary to the individual in the exchange; travel costs could be paid for by the organisation or the individuals, or shared between the two.

Individual exchanges may be in the form of a one-on-one arrangement, where one or two individuals are chosen to be the ambassador of the exchange between parks and protected areas. In some cases though, numerous staff members may participate in exchanges. In the EUROPARC experience (see 2.1), it was found that it was better to operate a continuing arrangement under which a large number of staff were involved, although some partners preferred to involve more staff than others. The option chosen will probably depend on the tasks assigned to the partnership and the desired outcome(s) of the exchange. Some Asian and Latin American partners involved in the EUROPARC exchange programme found the greatest benefit in sending as many different staff members as possible on an educational visit, while others saw a greater benefit in working on specific issues in greater depth. In both cases, however, the beneficial impact of exchange visits depended on participatory advance planning, organisation, evaluation and follow up.

Group visits

A group visit occurs when two or more protected area staff from one protected area visit another protected area. They are probably the most common type of exchange. According to EUROPARC experience, they can be organised relatively informally and simply, once initial contacts have been made. Characteristically, such group visits rarely last more than a month, usually only a week or two. Like individual exchanges, group visits can range from educational tours on a number of areas/topics, to training workshops or detailed research studies on one issue. Group visits are particularly useful for exploring whether future, more formal or longer-term links would be beneficial. They may also help identify topics of mutual concern and interest that can be followed up at a later date. Involving a large group can give an exchange the “critical mass” required to build a long-term partnership.

Group visits are a popular type of exchange in the North America/UK Exchange Programme (see 2.2) and the Italy/US Parks and Protected Areas Twinning/Partnerships (see 2.4). Under these two exchange programmes, delegations of experts comprising protected area staff, state officials, NGO representatives and members of the community (e.g. educators, artists) have made numerous visits to their partners in the US, Canada, UK and Italy.

Under the EUROPARC Partnership and Exchange Programme, park managers from Asia and Latin America visited their European partners for 1–2 weeks in order to familiarise themselves with the management objectives, policies and practices of their partner parks. These group exchanges, involving *in situ* experiences, can generate new ideas to solve existing challenges: for example, during their educational visit to Corsica, Vietnamese park directors discovered a possible way to solve problems related to communities living inside the boundaries of their own Cat Ba National Park. A reciprocal visit of community representatives of Tortuguero (Costa Rica) and Doñana (Spain), accompanied by the parks’ extension workers, strengthened park – community relations.

While in the past, group exchanges have normally involved only protected area personnel, it is becoming increasingly common to include government funding agencies, community leaders, members of NGOs, university staff and other scientists and experts, the media and other interested parties.

Training seminars

Unlike individual exchanges, a training seminar can benefit a large number of individuals. Since 1996, the EUROPARC programme has run 17 training seminars that directly relate to staff needs in protected areas participating in the Programme (Box 1.2). Seminar topics addressed common park management issues, including institutional arrangements for protected area management, legal frameworks, financial aspects, economic impacts, techniques for nature conservation, sustainable development approaches, cultural heritage stewardship, interpretation, and the place of protected area management in urban and regional planning.

Training seminars usually take one of two forms. They may be based in one location (e.g. a protected area, university or regional administrative office), in which case the participants must travel to that site; or they may be “mobile” seminars that travel to various parks, administrative offices or other locations. The choice will usually be

Box 1.2 Asian and Latin American training seminars

Three seminars organised in Vietnam, Hunan Province (China), and Indonesia addressed the needs that were identified and expressed by the partner organisations. All the seminars received counterpart funding from national government authorities and other donors. The European participants were park managers and experts drawn from partner protected areas of the EUROPARC network. All the European partners were highly regarded in Asian/Latin American countries for their professional knowledge and for being practitioners (i.e. experts working on the same level for the same global objectives).

The Changsha workshop on biodiversity conservation for Hunan Province, China was crucial in the elaboration of the Hunan Biodiversity Action Plan, and was part of the partnership co-operation between Finland and Hunan. The workshop raised the awareness of different staff levels of the Hunan Forestry Department and was the first official encounter between the research/academic institutions and the implementing Forestry Department. (see also Box 2.1). (Brüggemann, 1999).

determined by such considerations as the cost of the seminar, the technology required, the number of trainers involved, and the number of training sessions proposed.¹

Partnering/Twinning/"Sistering"

A partnership occurs when two or more protected areas enter into an agreement with each other and become, in effect, partners over a long term. This process is also referred to as twinning or "sistering". Partnerships, whether formal or informal, allow a working relationship to develop over time. Successful partnership programmes will encompass a broad range of activities and involve many types of people including, in some cases, key members from local communities.

A number of partnerships have been developed under the auspices of international programmes (such as the EC-funded EUROPARC programme). Typically, an agreement – normally a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – is drawn up to specify the approach taken, the type of activities that will take place, and the anticipated results of the exchange. Some concerns have been raised that formal partnerships can involve too much bureaucracy; this should be taken into consideration in the development of such programmes.

An example of a successful partnership is the twinning of Ojców National Park in Poland and the Peak District National Park in England, set up under the auspices of the EUROPARC programme. Initially, Ojców set up an environmental education programme with the Peak District, but it later developed into a formal partnership, involving both park authorities and local communities. Other successful partnerships include the MOU between the Indonesian Directorate General Forest Protection and Nature

¹ The WCPA Global Task Force on Training for Protected Areas web site contains additional information on the role of training in capacity building and exchange programmes, and lists the contact details for a number of academic and regional training centres throughout the world (see <http://www.trentu.ca/org/tfpa/>).

Box 1.3 WWF-Hong Kong Wetland Management Training Courses

Project summary: Wetland management training courses have been organised at Mai Po Nature Reserve since 1990. The aim is to promote good management within wetland reserves. So far, 28 courses have been organised for wetland reserve staff and government officials responsible for wetland conservation in a number of Asian countries, in particular from China.

Project background: Although there are many wetland nature reserves in Asia, there has so far been little communication and exchange of experience between these reserves. WWF Hong Kong has been managing the Mai Po Marshes Wildlife Education Centre and Nature Reserve since 1984. In 1990, Wetland Management Training courses were initiated so that the experience gained by local staff managing Mai Po could be shared with wetland reserve staff from other parts of Asia, particularly in the rest of China.

Project Objective: To promote good management within the wetland reserves, and proper vigilance of the neighbouring catchment area so that the reserve maintains its values.

Conservation (PHPA) and the National Parks of Commonwealth Australia, which led to the twinning of Kakadu National Park in Australia with Wasur National Park in Indonesia.

International collaboration

International collaboration can provide a framework for exchanges and related activities. It is thus an excellent tool for broadening and deepening the level and quality of training and capacity building. The Chinese Ministry of Forestry and WWF-Hong Kong, for example, had a collaborative agreement which illustrates the potential. WWF ran a wetlands management training programme for Chinese protected area staff at the Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve in Hong Kong SAR (China) (Box 1.3), which brought together protected area staff from all over China who shared similar experiences and training needs.

In principle, it is usually best to build on existing programmes, such as UNESCO's World Heritage and Man and Biosphere programmes, so as to take advantage of their networks and potential funding sources. A sister volume to this publication – *Guidelines for Financing Protected Areas in East Asia* (Athanas, Vorhies, Gheri, Shadie and Shultis, 2001) provides information on a number of international funding agencies. Further advice on funding is available in IUCN's guidelines on this topic (IUCN, 2000).

1.5 Functions and benefits of exchange programmes

An exchange programme should facilitate the sharing of experience, expertise and information in a manner which strengthens the ability to manage protected areas. Properly planned and run, such exchanges can bring a number of real benefits to protected areas and protected area managers. They can help to:

- *build leadership and strengthen the capacity within institutions and individuals, by providing new ideas, access to state-of-the-art management tools and strate-*

gies, and to shared experiences, and stronger connections to international networks;

- *advance new approaches to conservation and sustainable development*, including innovative legislation and policy, through a transfer of experience, and through mutual exchange among peers;
- *promote international links* between protected areas and communities in different environments to address common environmental and cultural issues;
- *encourage citizen diplomacy* by bringing together people of differing ethnic and geographic backgrounds to work together on areas of shared interest; and
- *improve the long-term prospects for co-operation* by expanding and strengthening global networks for protected areas conservation.

Each of these potential outcomes of exchange programmes is expanded on below.

Capacity building

Capacity building, or capacity development, is the strengthening of an individual's or an organisation's ability or potential to perform or produce. Capacity building is now recognised as essential in equipping protected area managers, community members, conservation groups, governments, scientists and other interested persons/groups to handle the various issues involved in protected area management, whether of a technical, biophysical, social, political or economic nature (IUCN/EC, 1999).

Capacity building begins with the individual. It is important for each individual to develop his or her own answers to the issues and challenges facing protected areas today. To do this, the individual should gain as much knowledge as possible; from such knowledge will come the necessary tools to find solutions to problems. Thus training courses, workshops and exchanges are all useful vehicles for capacity building. In the case of an exchange, capacity is built by exposing people to new ideas rather than simply imposing a predetermined set of views and solutions. This philosophy is an important ingredient in the success of any exchange (QLF, 1999).

Few protected area managers can hope to solve the complex issues and problems they are faced with unaided. Managers in many parts of the world suffer from: inadequate financial and staffing resources; the complex, interdisciplinary nature of many of the issues faced; a lack of basic ecological and social inventories of their protected areas; external threats (over which they have little or no control); geographical and administrative remoteness; and a limited technological infrastructure and knowledge base to address pressing issues. In many cases, using the expertise of external individuals or groups can be the best way to increase internal management capacity.

Capacity building is a crucial component of effective protected area management (QLF, 1999). Building and strengthening the capacity to manage protected areas should be a prime aim of most protected area projects. This will reduce the reliance on donors, ensure the success of management interventions, and thus allow protected areas to continue to provide their many benefits to society (IUCN/EC, 1999).

Advancing new approaches to conservation and sustainable development

Both the theory and practice of protected area management are changing fast. In such a situation, where cutting-edge experience is to be found in many countries, and among

many kinds of protected area agencies (public, private, voluntary, community etc.), a major benefit of exchange programmes is that they put managers in touch with more advanced thinking than is normally available to them at home. So exchanges can and should help generate new ideas. Learning from partners about different experiences and approaches can offer a different perspective on methods of working and open up new options for tackling management issues.

It should not be assumed that knowledge resides exclusively among developed countries and that exchanges are therefore just about sharing that knowledge with colleagues from less privileged nations. There are many aspects of protected area management, especially those that deal with managing relationships with local communities, where so-called developing countries have much to teach developed ones. But it is the case that North-South exchange programmes can give protected area managers from developing countries direct access to the latest technology and its application (the application of GIS for example). In any case, exposure to different situations often leads to a creative response – a seemingly impossible problem back home suddenly becomes tractable just because the exchange offers a wholly new perspective on a familiar problem.

While North-South exchanges are useful in highlighting the many different issues and approaches to common management issues, South-South partnerships, especially from the same region (e.g. within East Asia) can be even more valuable, as it is more likely that similar issues and solutions may be found. As Nelson Mandela noted:

“If South-South cooperation is about sharing expertise, then it also requires that we build a Southern knowledge and resource base. Ideas born out of our direct experience are more likely to be appropriate in helping us to overcome our unique problems” (cited in Clüsener-Godt, 2000, p. 15).

Promoting international links

By definition, international exchange programmes bring individuals and groups into contact with those from other countries, cultures and societies. Through such experience, it is commonly found that participants benefit by:

- broadening their understanding of the world,
- helping to see the “big picture” and appreciating the earth’s cultural diversity,
- better understanding their local context, and
- realising that what they share with individuals or communities far away is often more than what divides them.

Often, too, the exchange leads to a more enduring link between the host protected area and visitors to it. Indeed, from such contacts, friendships and professional partnerships can spring. The development of such international links is not only between the park professionals, but can also include the local communities living in or near protected areas thousands of miles apart. While the tangible benefits of such links are hard to measure, those involved often value such connections very highly, as several of the case studies in Part 2 confirm. They may indeed provide a strong foundation for co-operation extending way beyond the life of the exchange programme itself.

Encouraging citizen diplomacy

In some cases the exchange programme actively promotes a working partnership to address a problem confronting a protected area. Where this happens successfully, the exchange can claim to have developed a form of citizen diplomacy. Thus the North America/UK Exchange brings together groups of experts and community representatives to address real life problems and to work on these together – hosts and guests working in partnership. The benefits are considerable. Solving some kind of problems may be susceptible to this sort of approach, especially through the catalytic effect of introducing “outside” experts: local people will often accept advice from an outsider that they would not be able to accept from one of their own society. Moreover, all those involved learn social and diplomatic skills from the novel experience of working alongside people from very different cultures.

Improving long-term prospects for conservation

Finally, exchange programmes can help – in a modest way – to improve the prospects for conservation. One way in which this occurs is through the development of experienced staff, a better appreciation of the global nature of many threats to protected areas, and fuller awareness of the value of international institutions and ways of working, all of which can result from a good exchange programme. There should be domestic benefits from this, but also stronger links can be built with international networks (such as WCPA) which can be exploited for conservation purposes in future.

PART 2

Global experiences with exchange programmes



Enforcement boat in Sanya Coral Reef Nature Reserve, China. The Sanya Coral Reef Nature Reserve and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary have been linked through the US-China Sister Reserve partnerships since 1998. © NOAA

Global experiences with exchange programmes

The programme's worth can be justified if even one new idea is brought home from a visit and has helped turn a problem into a solution. And from there, things are bound to spread. It is a cumulative thing. The more exposure there is, the more ideas are exchanged and built upon. This is why it takes so long. In fact, it is probably more time-consuming than it is expensive (QLF, 1999, paraphrased).

Part 2 reviews a number of case studies involving recent exchange programmes around the world. Five exchanges in particular are described and reviewed: the EUROPARC Partnership and Exchange Programme; the North America/UK Countryside Exchange Programme; the United States-China Sister Reserve Partnership; the Italy-United States Park and Protected Area Twinning/Partnership; and various National Park Service sister park relationships. Emphasis is placed upon gleaning the critical success factors from each of these exchange programmes. The lessons learned are drawn upon in preparing the recommendations in Part 3 of this report.

2.1 EUROPARC Partnership and Exchange Programme

Introduction

The EUROPARC Federation (formerly the Federation of Nature and National Parks of Europe, FNNPE) is an independent, international voluntary organisation that represents Europe's national parks and nature parks. It is a member of IUCN and works closely with the WCPA, with which it has a Memorandum of Understanding.

EUROPARC has long recognised the importance of protected area staff exchanges. It aims to use these to encourage practical co-operation and the exchange of experience among its members. Between 1994 and 1998, EUROPARC implemented a project, financed by the European Commission, entitled *Partnerships and Exchange Programme: Technical Cooperation Between Protected Areas in Europe and Asia and Latin America*. The project was aimed at “strengthening the capacity to manage protected areas in developing countries” which, in turn, contributed to the overall EC objective of “conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests”.

In EUROPARC's final review of this exchange programme, the achievements were considered to be very encouraging: 15 partnerships were signed between protected areas agencies, over 280 staff were involved in one or more exchanges, and an equal number of individuals participated in 17 training seminars.

How the programme worked

The EUROPARC Partnership and Exchange Programme used a range of approaches. Rather than select one specific type of exchange, EUROPARC preferred to tailor the

Box 2.1 Finland/China Partnership (EUROPARC)

The Partnership Agreement between protected areas in the Province of Hunan and National Parks in Finland was signed on 4 August 1995, with the aim of improving the professional skills of park managers and reserve managers in both countries. The Finns were interested in China's rich biodiversity, largely unfamiliar to them, and which they believed should be protected as a key element in global biodiversity. The Hunanese were mostly interested in learning about ecotourism, visitor management and interpretation techniques.

Senior and technical staff took part in staff exchanges and training seminars on both topics. Staff exchanges on biodiversity issues started rapidly. A two-day workshop on the jointly drafted Biodiversity Conservation Action Plan in Hunan Province was organised in April 1997 in China by the Forestry Department in Hunan, with the participation of three Finnish experts. EUROPARC provided an additional financial contribution. Issues relating to visitor centres were dealt with in 1998 and several exchanges between China and Finland were organised. Finnish experts were able to share their knowledge in this field and give technical advice for the construction of the planned visitor centre in Changsha, the capital of Hunan Province.

During the Co-operation Committee Meeting organised in Hunan in May 1998, all sides agreed that the partnership had been successful and had achieved excellent results in line with the 1995-98 workplan. The co-operation has not only improved the capacity to manage nature reserves in Hunan, but also promoted scientific exchange and strengthened the friendship between two partners. In addition to these technical and professional benefits, a project proposal on Subtropical Forest Biodiversity Conservation in Hunan has been submitted to the European Commission for funding. A new workplan for 1998-2001 was agreed upon, which will continue and expand the work already started. The workplan specified the following lines of action:

1. Organisation of exchanges concerning visitor centres, and the completion of a visitor centre and exhibition in Changsha;
2. Implementation of the Subtropical Forest Biodiversity Conservation project;
3. Publication of the Biodiversity Conservation Action Plan and the Proceedings of the Seminar; implementation of the Biodiversity Conservation Action Plan; and
4. Training of staff and a Co-operation Committee Meeting each year.

This description would be incomplete without mentioning the social and cultural dimension of the exchanges. The three years of co-operation took place against a backdrop of important changes in China, with rapid economic growth and the gradual opening of the People's Republic of China to Western and South East Asian countries. As a result, the Hunanese protected area managers were faced with novel problems, such as waste management in areas with many visitors. Public awareness of protected areas and environmental issues is gradually increasing and remains the key to successful nature conservation (EUROPARC Federation, 1998).

design of the exchange to meet the needs and circumstances of the protected area agencies, organisations and individuals involved and to the priorities and issues to be addressed. Constraints, such as time, location and funding, played a major role in determining the type of exchange chosen.

Establishing a partnership

While many partnerships in the EUROPARC programme involved two or more individual protected areas, some were set up between two systems of protected areas or managing institutions. For example, an agreement was signed between the National Parks System of Finland and the Protected Areas System of Hunan Province, China (Box 2.1). This type of partnership provides an opportunity to focus on important strategic issues relevant to particular protected area systems as a whole, and on being able to draw on the most appropriate staff working on issues within the entire protected area systems.

Conditions

It was agreed that partnerships should, wherever possible, be set up only where the following conditions could be met:

- a *formal exchange agreement* was in place, with clear legal status, government endorsement, and staff employment security. (In fact the highest government authorities responsible for protected area management endorsed all the partnership agreements established by EUROPARC, between protected areas in Asian and Latin American countries on the one hand and European countries on the other. For the most part they have been long lasting and binding contracts.)
- *basic infrastructure, staff resources and budget* were available in order to host visitors and send staff on training exchanges;
- efficient means of *communication* and park administration were in place;
- *key contact person(s)* had been nominated, who would be devoted to ensuring the success of the partnership;
- *issues* of importance to both areas, and upon which co-operation would be focused, were identified and agreed upon, so that the partners perceive mutual benefits from joint activities;
- there was agreement on *cost-sharing arrangements*.

Several issues affected the success of the partnership, including:

- the perception of mutual benefits;
- the level or seniority of those taking part;
- the degree of public recognition accorded to the exchange;
- the willingness of those taking over the partnerships (e.g. after changes brought about by elections) to recognise and support commitments made by their predecessors;
- the ability to maintain good communications between partners over time;
- staff concerns about employment security;
- changing financial/ budget prospects, especially restrictions; and
- changes in the prevailing social and economic contexts of protected areas.

Experience suggest that risks can be reduced if there are strong support organisations. Indeed the main reason for the success of the programme was probably the existence of an EC-funded dedicated team working at EUROPARC HQ to promote, support, co-ordinate and manage it. This team contacted new protected area managers and enlisted the support of representatives in ministries and national authorities to ensure the continuation of the partnership. This worked well, underlining the crucial importance of effective communication to successful partnership co-operation.

Steps

The EUROPARC Partnership and Exchange Programme employed the following steps when establishing a partnership:

1. Survey key stakeholders with potential interest in designing and implementing a partnership, including relevant protected area authorities.
2. Assess protected areas according to criteria, such as the existence of a legal basis for conservation, adequate levels of staff resources, infrastructure and communication, as well as a willingness to assume some of the responsibility (including costs) of activities in a long-term co-operation.
3. Ensure that relevant government authorities are fully aware of, and engaged in the process, including the drafting and signing of long-term partnership agreements.
4. Establish a joint co-operation committee consisting of relevant protected area managers, in order to develop and review work plans for partnership activities, maintain communication links between partners, and evaluate the programme.
5. Establish and implement a partnership.

Organising staff exchanges

Based on its experience, EUROPARC developed a ten-point guide to assist in establishing and organising staff exchanges (Table 2.1). Drawing on the results of a survey completed by participants in the exchange programme, EUROPARC stresses that the highest priority should be given to good preparation and clear objectives. Steps 1 to 5 in particular were seen as essential in building a strong proposal.

Deciding which individuals should participate and the ideal length of exchange time depends on various factors, including the resources available, the objectives and theme of the exchange, the level and amount of deliverables desired from the exchange, and the ease of communication between partners.

After a formal MOU has been signed by all parties, most of the organisation can be left to the individuals or leaders. A work programme or itinerary is needed, together with travel, accommodation and, in some cases, visas and interpreters. The organisation, employer and host should decide on who will be responsible for the salary, travel expenses and any other costs.

EUROPARC also suggested the following practical tips:

- Agencies taking part in the partnership should draft an outline programme of activities that will achieve the objectives of the exchange. Ideally the programme should focus on a limited number of topics. Once this has been achieved, a more detailed plan should be prepared for each aspect of the exchange.

- Exchanges tend to bear more practical results when formalities and bureaucracy are kept to a minimum and the contact between participants is maximised. In some countries, local protocol means that some formalities are unavoidable, especially at the start. Involving politicians and high level officials can be tactically important for getting the exchange programme accepted.
- Field-based visits, joint projects and round table discussions are the best methods for information and experience exchange.
- Background information should be prepared **before the participants arrive**.
- Any required translation (written) and interpretation (oral) needs should be considered and arranged before the visit: language can be a daunting obstacle.

Table 2.1 EUROPARC’s ten-point checklist to planning staff exchanges

Action	Comment
1. Set clear objectives	This is by far the most important step and should be undertaken first. Once the objectives have been defined, they act as the basis for future decisions concerning the partnership. A well-organised set of objectives will act as a good framework to help select the type of exchange and suitable partner.
2. Decide on the type of exchange and find a suitable partner	This will entail a good deal of communication and comparative analysis between protected areas and systems. The focus should be on mutual benefit sharing.
3. Justify the need	This must be clear and concise. The arguments will be used when seeking financial and political support.
4. Assess resource needs	Exchanges can be very draining in terms of time, energy and finances. Assessment of financial and human resources is crucial: such factors can limit options for selecting an exchange.
5. Generate political support and seek funding	This is important: lack of political backing is often a stumbling block for potential partnerships.
6. Nominate an exchange co-ordinator	It is important to be clear to whom participants should turn, when they need assistance, information etc.
7. Draw up the exchange agreement and programme	It is useful to have a formal or informal agreement setting out the basis for the exchange and outlining the type of activities.
8. Organise the exchange	Develop and follow a plan of action.
9. Communicate results	Feedback is essential for the success of the exchange. It is important to review and publicise the results. Internal reports are useful for highlighting the benefits of an exchange for an organisation and providing the basis for further development. Exchange participants can also give talks and offer advice to others.
10. Review the results and plan further action	Look at the exchange as an ongoing process, not a one-off project.

Source: EUROPARC information package (unpublished).

Finding a partner

EUROPARC found that most exchanges are developed *ad hoc* rather than through a systematic method of selection. One reason for this is absence of an accessible central source of information which would assist in choosing appropriate partners. Finding out which protected areas might be most appropriate as partners can be quite difficult. The

best global source of information published by the IUCN is the *UN List of Protected Areas 1997* (IUCN, 1998)¹. One approach to looking for a partner is for a protected area manager to summarise the characteristics of his or her own protected area and decide what type of partner would serve the needs best. Criteria to be considered in selecting a partner are set out in Box 2.2.

Box 2.2 Criteria for selecting an appropriate partner

- similar landscape and ecosystem type (e.g. tropical forest, wetland)
- similar protected area management categorisation (e.g. IUCN Category VI)
- similar problems and management issues (e.g. endangered species protection, community-park interactions or tourism management)
- language spoken
- geographical location
- social and cultural similarities

N.B. The Appendix lists the questions that EUROPARC used in order to assess exchange potential.

Certain requirements should also be filled to ensure the partnership will be effective (see Box 2.3):

Box 2.3 Five key criteria for success

- a commitment to long-term cooperation
- the willingness to sign a partnership agreement
- government endorsement of the partnership
- an ability to invest staff time and financial resources
- a commitment to publicise support and results of partnership activities

Language and communication

The question of language will often play an important part in the success of exchanges. Exchanges require good communication. While translation and interpretation will facilitate communication, full language interpretation is often a constraining factor and inhibits spontaneous communication. Also the high costs associated with translation and interpretation services prevent many staff who lack the relevant language skills from participating. If interpreters are present, they should have familiarity with the topic: ineffective interpreters can be a major hindrance. Staff participating in partnership programmes should be encouraged to learn relevant languages and be given support for this activity,

¹ This publication can be ordered from the World Conservation Bookstore web site (<http://www.iucn.org/bookstore/index.html>).

for example they should be given time to attend in-house or external courses. Some exchanges explicitly aim to improve language skills and taking part in an exchange of this kind can be a good way to achieve this and may stimulate staff learning at home.

EUROPARC's programme was run during a period in which the use of email became much more common. It now offers a cheap and efficient means of communication, and its greater use should be encouraged in future exchanges.

Getting support

EUROPARC found it was crucial to have the support of relevant colleagues and local politicians. Sometimes, professional visits outside one's own country tend to be seen as "fun", despite the hard work involved. This attitude can make it difficult to get permission and funding for travel. It is important to clarify the rationale for an exchange visit at an early stage so as to demonstrate cost-efficiency and practical results. It can be useful also to include local politicians in the process as well. It is also important that partners communicate the benefits of the programmes to their superior authorities and to the general public. NGOs and other key partners can also elevate the public recognition of partnerships and provide support.

Monitoring and evaluation

EUROPARC exchanges were always evaluated. Participants submitted a report on the results of their involvement in the exchange, detailing activities undertaken and key issues raised.

For a more immediate response, EUROPARC distributed a short questionnaire directly after the visit to both visiting parties and to their hosts. This quick feedback helped to orient future exchange visits. This was especially true in the case of initial visits, where the participants planned to develop a follow-up technical exchange. In such a technical area, it was helpful if partners knew a little more about each other and their respective expertise.

The preparation of these evaluation questionnaires and reports was time-consuming, but added enough value to the process to be well justified. EUROPARC also found it helpful to hold meetings and workshops to evaluate all partnerships in the programme, doing so once or twice a year.

Exchange activities

The EUROPARC Partnership and Exchange Programme represented an exchange programme under which most of the components listed under the section on types of exchanges (section 1.4 above) were executed, including group visits, individual exchanges, partnerships and training seminars.

Funding

Cost-sharing

In the EUROPARC Partnership and Exchange Programmes, the partners agreed to a cost-sharing scheme, whereby the host country provided accommodation, meals and local transportation and the visiting country covered the cost of travel to and from their partner's country. This arrangement covered the costs of the visits only, however, and

did not take into the account the staff time and funds needed to prepare and follow-up on these visits.

Other sources

Adequate funding, whether from international funding sources, national funding sources, or commercial sponsorship, is essential for exchange programmes to work. However, in many countries there is limited government funding available for sponsoring staff exchange visits abroad. EUROPARC found that even European parks could not sustain the programme themselves and the need for additional funding was evident.

EUROPARC suggests that one option to counter this lack of funding may be to integrate exchanges with other conservation initiatives, for example to include exchanges as components within the capacity building parts of protected area projects. This calls for protected area managers to develop good contacts with donors, which may in practice be difficult when protected areas are far from the capital city where the donors usually have their office.

Lessons learned

Several **key lessons** can be drawn from EUROPARC's experience with their ambitious exchange programme:

- it is important to have continuity with the people involved (as opposed to allowing different people to participate at each stage of an exchange);
- effective planning is vital, and so is good follow-up;
- other requirements are to invest effort in communications between partners, concentrate the partnership on a few topics, and demonstrate and communicate the benefits of co-operation to the public and politicians;
- the best results come from participatory problem identification, availability of appropriate expertise and cultural sensitivity in the conduct of the exchange;
- an active co-operation committee is needed to generate a work plan, agree cost-sharing arrangements and identify contact persons;
- the perception of mutual benefits is crucial for the continuation of co-operation activities and needs to be conveyed to relevant government authorities (Brüggemann, 1999).

The main **problems** were found to be:

- the difficulty of obtaining adequate, secure and long-term funding;
- the scarcity of human resources available;
- the time commitment and the financial cost of exchanges;
- the lack of ownership (few people want the responsibility to plan and run it);
- language barriers.

Besides conservation **benefits**, partnerships brought positive social, economic and cultural spin-off effects:

- social benefits, in that they emphasised the need for better co-operation between protected areas and local communities;

- economic benefits, because additional project funding for parks was secured through exchange programmes; and
- cultural benefits, such as the ties of mutual understanding and friendship developed through exchange visits and training.

2.2 North America/United Kingdom Countryside Exchange Programme

Introduction

The North America and United Kingdom (UK) Countryside Exchange grew from a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 1986 between the United States (US) National Parks Service and the UK's Countryside Commission to promote co-operation in the field of countryside protection. The memorandum has been renewed twice, most recently in 1997.

In 1987, the first Countryside Exchange was held with a group of professionals from the US, England and Wales who wanted to share their experience of countryside issues. 40 conservation professionals participated. Five international teams were created and each visited a different site in rural parts of New England in the north east of the US. After spending several days at their designated site, each team made specific recommendations to local residents and other interested parties at a public presentation. In 1989, a reciprocal exchange was held at six sites in England and Wales. Since 1996 there have been exchanges in both directions every year. By the end of 2001 more than 700 individuals from the US, the UK and Canada, (plus a few from other European countries and Australasia) will have participated and 92 protected or distinctive areas, together with those who live there, will have benefited.

The core of the programme remains up to six visits to sites (known as 'case studies') in the United Kingdom, and up to six in North America (the USA and Canada) each year. In recent years however the US organising partner has initiated a number of initiatives involving other countries (e.g. Japan and elsewhere in Europe).

In the basic (transatlantic) model each team has eight members: half from the host country and half from elsewhere – chiefly but not exclusively the other side of the Atlantic. The team spends four or five days following a programme designed and arranged by the local organisers, makes a public presentation of their observations and recommendations and writes a report elaborating these. The report then passes to the local organisers for discussion and implementation.

The objectives of the Exchange Programme are:

- To address specific problems faced by rural and peri-urban communities and provide new ideas and solutions through concentrating a variety of fresh expertise on case study areas involving local people;
- To encourage exchange of expertise between professionals and volunteers concerned with the well-being of the countryside, its communities, environments and economies, and with their development and conservation;
- To contribute to the development of communities' capacity to sustain longer-term action to manage their environment;

- To develop participants' skills and confidence in working in diverse teams within rural and semi-rural communities to address complex stewardship problems;
- To encourage the practical implementation of the ideas and recommendations resulting from exchanges and case studies; and
- To publicise the results of the programme so that experience and recommendations can be disseminated widely. (CEI, 2000)

Benefits accrue in three distinct areas:

- The process of proposing and preparing the case study develops cooperation, infrastructure and capacity in the host location. Local organisers have to: identify and convene appropriate representation; agree issues to be addressed; encourage community participation; plan and share tasks; and fund and manage the logistics of the team's visit.
- The interaction between the team and those they meet, culminating in the public presentation and the report, articulates and reappraises local concerns, validates and revitalises existing initiatives, introduces new ideas and provokes fresh thinking.
- Working together, under pressure of time and in an unfamiliar context, team members gain: confidence in applying their own expertise; new understanding of the breadth and interrelation of responses required in addressing countryside issues; new ideas; and new skills in teamworking and collaboration. For many it is also a new and powerful experience to work outside their normal formal position of authority, to an agenda entirely set by local stakeholders and residents, and many report an increased emphasis on listening and building consensus as the most significant positive impact on their working style.

How the programme works

Structure

The transatlantic exchange has managing bodies in the USA and the UK. Participation from other countries operates through one or other of these bodies. The Glynwood Center, a non-profit organisation in the USA concerned with training and advice for rural communities, is the focal point for the Exchange Programme in North America. The Center orchestrates regional support and funding for case studies in North America, selects the individual host locations, and provides guidance and some financial assistance. At the same time, it identifies and selects half the team members for case studies in both North America and the UK.

In the UK there is a national steering committee consisting of representatives of a group of funding bodies (national and regional agencies and other bodies statutorily or constitutionally concerned with the countryside, cultural heritage and the rural economy) and chaired by the Countryside Agency (successor to the Countryside Commission). This Steering Group sets policy and strategic guidelines and assures core funding for a contracted executing agent, currently CEI Associates Ltd. CEI identifies case study locations in the UK, guides their development and recruits the other half of the team members. Thus while there are differences in structure dictated by the respective national contexts, the key operational axis lies in the close cooperation between CEI and the Glynwood Center.

In North America the involvement of regional partners to build support, engage commitment and identify possible funding for a number, or series, of Local Organising Committees and case studies (see below) within an area has been a key part of the programme's development. (An interesting example of a co-operative framework is described in Box 2.4) In the UK the emphasis has been on engaging the backing of national agencies for which the case studies offer opportunities for effective practical contributions to their own local agendas while team membership offers valuable professional development for members of their staff.

Box 2.4 Regional partnerships in the Chesapeake Bay watershed

Cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay is not a simple matter. Its watershed covers more than 64,000 square miles, reaches into six states and has a population that is expected to exceed 20 million by 2010. Countless tributaries and streams from hundreds of small sub-watersheds in the region feed into the Bay. Development – construction of homes, businesses, shopping centres and highways – is occurring rapidly throughout the watershed, adding sediment and nutrients to the waterways. Other pollution from industries and agriculture is also washed into the streams and carried ultimately to the bay. The result is a seriously degraded water body.

Governance of the land within this watershed varies from state to state. In some jurisdictions, land use issues are a matter for local government, while in others those decisions are the responsibility of the county. Since 1983, the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) has been working to improve the water quality of the Bay. This program is a voluntary partnership involving the state governments of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia, the District of Columbia, the Chesapeake Bay Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency. In the early 1990s, the CBP recognised the need to work more closely with communities throughout the watershed and approached The Countryside Institute (forerunner of The Glynwood Center) about hosting an exchange in the region. As Bill Matuszeski, director of the Chesapeake Bay Program recalls, “The exchange was the best way for us to work with these communities. We couldn't simply march in and tell them what to do. We had to figure out a way to help them help themselves”.

Four sponsors worked with the institute to bring the exchange to the region: the Chesapeake Bay Program, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, the Center for Rural Pennsylvania and the National Park Service. They were joined by many other regional government agencies, foundations and not-for-profit organisations and a 30 member steering committee that was formed. Working with TCI staff, this regional steering committee was responsible for defining the goals and objectives for this exchange, reviewing applications from communities that wanted to participate and providing technical and financial assistance for post-exchange implementation projects.

This partnership model was designed to provide benefits to both member organisations and exchange communities. Through the exchange process, regional partners become more familiar with the needs of the communities and develop relationships that help them pursue their individual missions more effectively. The implementation process provides an opportunity to target technical and financial assistance to communities that are clear in their goals and receptive to this support.

Funding

A key feature of the exchange is the financial arrangements for the individual case studies. On both sides of the Atlantic, the local organisers are responsible for meeting the local costs (i.e. accommodation, food and transport within the area) of their team's visit. This is achieved in a wide range of ways, from applications to funding bodies to local fundraising, sponsorship and contributions in kind. However it is done, it is a significant test and guarantee of commitment, but it does mean that the ability to find the funding is effectively a pre-qualification for participation. Hitherto this has been a greater concern in the USA than in the UK, where public funding seems to be more readily available and where many of the case studies are run with financial support from existing projects or programmes. Policy in this area is kept under review.

All participants volunteer their time and either meet their own travel costs from and to their homes, or are sponsored by their employers.

Establishing a partner

Those wishing to participate in an exchange are not responsible for finding their own partners. Indeed there is no planned reciprocity between either case study locations or individual team members. Instead, would-be case study hosts and team members both apply to the organising bodies, which together control both selection and placement.

The Local Organising Committee

Case study hosts are screened for actual and potential leadership and capacity, the range of problems and opportunities that they wish the exchange team to address, and the likelihood that the catalytic impact of the case study will stimulate lasting results. To qualify for an exchange, the proposers must create an inclusive and representative Local Organising Committee (LOC) to plan the project and oversee post-exchange implementation of team recommendations.

The success of any case study depends in large part upon extensive preparation by the LOC, which creates new coalitions and strengthens established partnerships. This foundation allows the community to move forward and implement the team's recommendations. The LOC represents a cross section of local professional, statutory and community interests ('stakeholders') and is responsible for identifying and refining local issues, developing the itinerary, arranging logistics for the exchange week and spearheading implementation activities. There is no standard prescription for the constitution, size or membership of an LOC. It will reflect the character of the locality, the origins of the proposal and the range of issues.

An illuminating contrast between the two national contexts lies in the typical provenance of case studies, and the respective implications for their subsequent character and direction. Thus:

- in the USA, proposals tend to come from, and be led by, the residents and representatives of local communities, who constitute the bulk of the LOC. What the exchange does is to add expert opinion and shape recommendations for action.
- in the UK, most case studies are proposed by professionals working for local government, NGOs or the local offices of national agencies. Accordingly, British LOCs tend to have a higher proportion of professional members, representing

bodies already active in the area. Here a major aim of the exercise is often to raise the level of community engagement, thereby contributing to the long-term viability and sustainability of new or existing initiatives.

It is a measure of the robustness of the basic model that it works equally effectively in either context.

The teams

Individuals are selected to fit the requirements of a particular case study, the aim being to assemble a team that can bring an appropriate range of complementary knowledge, skills and experience to bear on the issues previously identified by the local organisers. Applicants cannot express a preference for the location to which they might be allocated – even for which side of the Atlantic it might be. The national organisers guarantee only that nobody is placed where they have current or previous connections. If appropriate expertise is not available among existing applicants, one or other national organiser will actively recruit ('head-hunt') from an appropriate source.

Team members are carefully selected both by discipline and by their ability to work with community leaders, citizens and experts from other disciplines. On both sides of the Atlantic, the national organisers encourage participants from a wide range of backgrounds: from national, regional and local government; park agencies, NGOs, private sector organisations, academic institutions and individual consultants. Usually participants are mid-level managers, but some senior people are involved as well.

The national organisers provide a short initial orientation and briefing event at a central point in their respective countries, during which the team members are encouraged to begin to understand one another and assisted in developing a team approach to the intensive working conditions they will experience once they reach their case study locations.

Exchange activities

Exchange case studies are very varied. Some examples are:

- the preparation or review of a conservation plan for a valley;
- the development of an ecotourism strategy for a distinctive rural area;
- the preparation of a rescue plan for a threatened wetland;
- the design of a strategy for economic and environmental recovery in a depressed area;
- the promotion of greater community involvement in coastal management; and
- the preparation of an interpretative plan for an island of high nature conservation and scenic value.

They have ranged in scale from developing recommendations for balancing economic survival with preservation of historic character in coastal communities with populations as small as 500, and reviewing the future relationship of recreation, landscape, conservation and regeneration on a river estuary at the centre of a major post-industrial port. Whatever the size and character of the area under focus, the challenge is to take as comprehensive an approach as possible, capitalising on the team's unique combination of understanding, freshness and objectivity.

Box 2.5 Integrated landscape management in Sherwood Forest, UK

Sherwood Forest in the English Midlands is famous for its connection with Robin Hood and internationally important for its historic monuments and landscapes and its special wildlife habitats, a number which have protected area status. Conservation priorities have to be balanced with the needs of agriculture and tourism in an area that is economically depressed following the virtual demise of the longstanding coal mining industry whose communities are interspersed with the open spaces. In 1999, the Sherwood Forest Trust invited an Exchange team to provide an overview of the area and to recommend an integrated approach to sustainable management.

The Trust assembled an LOC to bring together representatives of the local authorities covering the region, the local wildlife trust, the manager of a large historical park owned and managed by the National Trust, the editor of the local community newsletter and representatives of local farmers and landowners. This group, the members of which had never assembled in the same room before, developed a set of leading questions to be addressed, and planned a programme of visits and discussions for the team.

Meanwhile CEI Associates analysed the issues that had been identified in terms of the knowledge, skills and experience that would be required to address them, and then worked with counterparts at the Glynwood Center to assemble the team. Team members came from national agencies, local government and NGOs in the UK, the USA and Canada.

At the end of the visit the presentation and report were immediately welcomed for the team's firm resolution of a long-standing debate over the conflicting priorities of historic landscape restoration and the creation of wildlife corridors in heathland and woodland areas. Other recommendations covered: tourism and visitor management; alternatives to private car transport; links with schools and public education; agricultural diversification and developing local outlets for local produce; employment and development opportunities; and management and conservation of the natural environment. The team, coming new to the area, were struck by the absence of a coherent presentation of a local 'brand' and urged that steps be taken to establish a clear, recognisable identity for Sherwood Forest that would strengthen marketing of tourism and of local produce and underpin a local sense of unique and special identity.

The Sherwood Forest Trust reports progress with a number of the recommendations. Its own status was enhanced locally. Considerable interest was generated within local communities, reflected in increased volunteer numbers. Related issues that had become bogged-down were revitalised.

Box 2.5 provides one example of a case study under the exchange programme.

Group visits

During their exchange week, the team makes site visits and participates in community discussions. Although the programme is planned and supported by the LOC, the team acts independently. As far as possible, meetings are facilitated by the team members

themselves. Time is built in to each day to allow the team members to discuss amongst themselves what they have heard, and space is allowed for additional meetings or visits that the team might request. After an intensive examination of the issues facing the community, the team members make a public presentation of their observations and recommendations. These events often provoke lively discussion, and provide a valuable opportunity for the team to test their ideas.

Reports and follow-up

Each team produces a written report before it leaves its case study area. The use to which it is put lies with the LOC to decide but usually it is distributed widely within the local community and to other appropriate bodies and individuals. The underlying principle – that initiative and responsibility lies with the local organisers throughout – is maintained but experience has shown that the longer-term benefit of hosting an exchange can be enhanced if some support is provided to the LOC or its successor in translating the team's report and recommendations into an action plan. The form this support takes varies both between North America and the UK and between individual case study sites, but the minimum tends to be the convening, and sometimes facilitation, of a meeting at which the report is digested and action points identified.

Copies of the full reports from North American case studies are published on the Glynwood Center's website (<http://www.glynwood.org>). In the UK, where the copyright position is somewhat different, CEI produces and distributes a single-volume summary of the year's case studies. These summaries are also available on Glynwood's website.

Unpredicted outcomes and additional benefits

In addition to the planned outputs of each case study (the conclusions and recommendations) and the eventual outcomes from their implementation, and the informal contacts that are sometimes sustained for years between team members and their former hosts, other, unpredictable benefits sometimes emerge. Box 2.6 describes one example. More recently a whole team published a joint report on their experience of “managed retreat” (an ecological management technique for dealing with rising sea levels) in a

Box 2.6 Extending the relationship beyond the visit, Lawrence Walters – English Nature, UK, and Jim Ellsworth – Environment Canada

The learning and sharing occurring during the organised exchange week is not limited to that time and place, but has the potential of continuing well beyond. In this particular example, Lawrence Walters learned of new ways of working to build the capacity of communities and invited Jim Ellsworth of Canada to England to train his staff at English Nature in a facilitation technique termed “platform building”. In exchange, Jim learned of multi-disciplinary teams and invited Lawrence to speak at Environment Canada's annual conference where he shared his ideas about the use and benefits of multi-disciplinary teams. Jim and Lawrence have pooled their ideas to produce an innovative guidebook and training workshop about community building. They will share these with other leaders from exchange communities at Glynwood Center, North American home of the Countryside Exchange Programme.

British tidal estuary, while an American member of another team in the UK is currently arranging for the whole team to go and do a similar job in his home area.

The Glynwood Center underpins and facilitates ongoing contact between former team members by maintaining a contacts register in a restricted area of its website, access to which comes with participation in a team.

Monitoring and evaluation

Periodic reviews and follow-ups by Glynwood and CEI staff track the progress of former case studies. In 1993, an independent review was undertaken in the US by a private consulting firm, which found that the exchange programme had been successful as: “a catalyst of community process, motivating community planning for the future; an effective “capacity builder” for developing local community leadership; a unique professional development programme that energises leading professionals working in fields that relate to community stewardship; and a significant event along a chain of events through which communities can begin to shape their own futures”. In 1998 CEI contacted and interviewed the local organisers of eight case studies run in the UK in 1993 and found that in most there were identifiable specific outcomes that could be traced to the teams’ visits and reports. Most local organisers also identified increased local capacity, confidence and commitment as further, less tangible, benefits.

CEI has recently introduced systematic evaluation of the impact of all UK case studies over the subsequent three years, against a baseline description of the case study area established before the team’s visit. Results will begin to emerge during 2003.

Lessons learned

The North America/UK Countryside Exchange Programme has been successful as a result of its task-focused approach and its insistence on retention of local ownership and leadership. It deals with real world issues and promotes direct contact with and between people. It stresses integration in approaching solutions to complex countryside problems and promotes cross-linkages between specialist agencies and public bodies. It has also been shown that host communities are often prepared to listen to experts from other countries when they would ignore their own. For example, a UK farmer might well be less likely to respect the advice of a British expert than an advisor (or better still, a farmer) from Canada (Phillips, 1999).

While there is no single “recipe for success”, there are some common ingredients. A successful exchange requires:

1. The commitment and active support of the widest possible range of stakeholders – by residents, business and not-for-profit organisations, government agencies and financial institutions;
2. Collaboration and leadership at the local level;
3. Commitment of time and effort, and a willingness to work hard;
4. Early investment in planning and co-ordination (this includes financial and human resources);
5. Integration of the three ‘legs’ of sustainability – social, economic and environmental – in considering problems and proposing solutions;

6. A willingness to seek shared interests and discourage parochialism within the region;
7. Recognition that a case study is one event in a long-term process;
8. A determination and the capability to carry forward the outcomes of the team's visit into subsequent implementation.

Further evolution of the exchange programme

Building on the experience of the transatlantic exchange, the Glynwood Center recently undertook an interesting pilot exchange between the United States and Japan. There have also been exchange links with communities in Italy. Currently the Center is working with a former team member from the Netherlands to develop one or more case studies in his home area.

2.3 US-China Sister Reserve partnerships

Introduction

The US-China Marine and Fisheries Science and Technology Protocol was established in 1979 as part of the US-China Science and Technology Agreement between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the National Ocean Service (NOS) in the United States and China's State Oceanic Administration (SOA). The Marine and Fisheries Protocol is an ongoing co-operative relationship in the field of Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) and has led to a series of exchanges of scientists, coastal management specialists, and materials between the two countries.

A NOAA/SOA "sister sanctuary" arrangement was established to facilitate mutually beneficial co-operation between marine protected areas with similar physical properties and environmental challenges. In 1997 and 1998 three sister marine reserve partnerships were established:

United States	China
1. Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary	Sanya Coral Reserve
2. Rookery Bay National Estuary Research Reserve	Shankou Mangrove Reserve
3. Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve	Tianjin Paleocoastal Wetland Reserve

In May 1997, a team from NOAA travelled to Beijing to help design a series of co-operative projects with their Chinese colleagues. 16 individual projects were proposed, which called for the following actions:

1. designing comprehensive site plans for the three US-China partner marine protected areas;
2. demonstrating the utility of geographic information systems (GIS) and Internet technology in coastal management; and
3. providing guidance in the implementation of a national ICM case study for China.

The following year, representatives from NOAA and SOA met in Washington, DC to exchange views on a broad range of issues concerning the US-China marine and fisheries science and technology co-operation. In order to promote the implementation

of the joint ICM projects, both sides agreed to establish a Marine and Coastal Zone Management Joint Co-ordination Panel. The Panel is staffed by federal and state coastal managers from each country.

How the programme works

Establishing a partner

The establishment of the three marine reserve partnerships was based upon a set of common core interests, primarily marine protected areas management, GIS, and use of the Internet in management, land use planning and marine pollution. NOAA found that Asia's coastal nations shared certain characteristics with the US: dynamic economic growth, exploding coastal populations, international transportation and shipping dependencies, an urgency to improve coastal management capacity, and a shared stake in effective management of marine resources. At the same time there were profound cultural, political, economic and societal differences that required flexible approaches tailored to meet these special circumstances.

The aims of the partnership were "to build and strengthen the strategic partnership at regional and national levels to enhance the capabilities for coastal stewardship through integrated coastal management; and to do so through the exchange of relevant ideas, experiences, information and technologies" (NOAA web site).

The exchange agreement

Each of the three marine reserve partnerships was consolidated with a formal, signed agreement. Within the agreement, specific focus was given to the reasoning behind the partnership and the overall objectives the partnership wished to achieve. For example, the agreement between Chesapeake Bay and Tianjin recognised the importance of maintaining wetland ecosystems in order to sustain biological diversity and the availability of natural resources for this and future generations. It allowed for the transfer of technological knowledge that would benefit both countries. The hope is that the long-term result of this action will further human understanding of these complex coastal ecosystems and their protection through research, monitoring, education and stewardship.

Exchanges

The NOAA and SOA sponsored several exchanges between managers from each partner facility to their respective sister reserves as a means of enhancing research collaboration and management dialogue. For example, in June 1999, three Chinese marine protected area managers visited American marine protected areas for a period of two weeks. The Chinese representatives met with many professionals in the US to discuss and witness issues first-hand, including reserve administration and management, techniques to protect natural resources and their enforcement or regulation, fish population and coral reef studies, and recreation and tourism management within the reserves.

These visits were used to develop action plans and strategies for the future. For example, after the first visit of the Shankou representative to Rookery Bay, four projects were identified as next steps in their sister reserve partnership programme. One such project focused on the need for ecotourism education of Shankou staff. A co-operative project was proposed to train Shankou staff in ecotourism practices, develop a site plan for managing ecotourism, create an agreement with ecotourism parties in the nearby city

of Bei Hai, and evaluate the effectiveness of the ecotourism plan. In addition, they identified that there was a need to establish a marketing plan for ecotourism at Shankou, to help direct tourists from Bei Hai to the reserve. Rookery Bay staff's experience in training ecotourism operators and developing and implementing site management plans would support this effort.

Workshops

Workshops were felt to be beneficial because they could bring together a much larger number of participants than basic exchanges. 35 to 40 Chinese participants attended a workshop held in China in March 1999. In addition to the exchange of knowledge and information, a significant benefit of the workshop component has been the further strengthening of relations among US and Chinese participants. This has resulted in increasingly productive meetings over time. Workshops advance the participants' understanding of the issues, concerns and priorities of their own reserves as well as those of their partners.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Integrated Coastal Management Panel, formally known as the Marine and Coastal Management Joint Co-ordination Panel, meets annually to review the programme's progress, renew commitments and discuss future steps. Through these relationships, NOAA feels that management capacity has been improved for the targeted reserves.

Funding

Cost-sharing

The primary funding agreement for the US-China Sister Reserve partnerships is a cost-sharing principle written into all partnership agreements, including the US-China Marine and Fisheries Protocol and the umbrella US-China Science and Technology Agreement. This cost-sharing principle implies that the host country agrees to pay in-country costs, such as accommodation, meals and local transportation, and the visiting delegates agree to pay their transportation to and from the country to be visited.

Other projects such as data collection and monitoring do not have explicit costs associated with them and are for all intents and purposes considered "no cost" tasks. Occasionally a project will carry implied material costs, which are shared in some way if the host country cannot carry the entire burden. Although the payment principle to share costs with each other is in place, there can be flexibility in specific cases.

Funding of workshops is dealt with case by case. In April 1999 the Chinese hosted a workshop on Marine Nature Reserves in Hainan, and paid for in-country costs. In other cases however, such as the marine natural disasters workshop held in 1998, the NOAA helped pay for workshops in China.

In addition, the NOAA seek to partner with others as much as possible in order to use the best experts and hopefully leverage resources, including financial costs. Sometimes, they are able to work with a partner (state government, other NOAA or US Government offices, or universities) where costs are shared in an effort to pool resources. For example, if two Americans were to go to China, one might be funded by NOAA and the

other by the agency, office or university that employs this person. This technique has allowed NOAA to stretch the limited funds available.

Core programme funding

Both NOAA and SOA devote staff time and expenses to support the partnership. The NOS office has three permanent staff working in China, Korea and Japan. The NOS International Program Office has a budget of \$40,000. The money is pooled with other partners to build the overall programme and is also used for administrative costs for planning meetings with the Chinese. NOS consider the \$40,000 to be core funding, but it is not a fixed amount every year. Budget allocation priorities change from year to year and cannot be guaranteed.

The programme hopes to involve other potential donors like the World Bank and the GEF in the future. They also hope to work more closely with groups such as IUCN, WWF and the China Environment Fund to help access further expertise in the region and additional funding from corporate donors and other sources. They are also working more with other governmental organisations in the Environment Protection Agency and the Department of Interior to co-ordinate efforts and investment in areas of common concern.

Lessons learned

NOAA considers this agreement with China to be the strongest bilateral agreement they have, enabling them to build strong relations with the Chinese ocean and coastal community based now on over 20 years of collaboration. If one conclusion can be drawn from this experience, it is the importance of continuity. To maintain the partnership it is vital for the two sides to continue communicating and to continue to work together on partnership objectives. To this end, after their visit, the Chinese worked as a team back in China to continue implementing the planning process begun in the US.

2.4 Italy-United States Park and Protected Area Twinning/Partnership

Introduction

American interest in Italy's parks dates back as far as the 1930s, when American experts travelled to Italy to observe Italian land management, reforestation, erosion control methods and the successes of their conservation corps (Bray, 1998). The idea of twinning Italian and American protected areas was first recommended by Italian individuals in the 1990s. Over time, interest in partnering intensified in both countries.

Italy	United States
1. Abruzzo National Park	Adirondack Park
2. Po Regional Nature Park	Hudson River Valley Greenway
3. Pisa Regional Parks	Long Island Pine Barren
4. Parco Val d'Orcia	Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor
5. Parco Litorale Roman	Hudson Mohawk Urban Cultural Park

In 1997, a roundtable discussion was held on the linking of Italian and US parks and protected areas. This initiated the twinning/partnership process. Since then the partner-

ship has evolved on many levels, mainly park-to-park, but also from one academic consortium to another, NGO-to-NGO, and person-to-person (Bray, 1998). Five partnerships were proposed in 1997 (see above).

The overall goal of the partnerships was to protect the natural and cultural heritage of Italy and the United States for present and future generations. While it was noted that Italy had a richer cultural patrimony and focuses more on the restoration of cultural landscapes², the United States had greater areas of wilderness and wild lands and concentrated more on the preservation of more pristine natural landscapes (Bray, 1997). The challenges and opportunities, however, in designating, managing and protecting these areas are becoming increasingly similar. In essence, the relationship is largely based on learning from each other about preservation and restoration and the development of an appreciation of both wild and cultural landscapes (Bray, 1998).

How the programme works

Establishing a partner

Twinning begins with the initial identification of two protected areas or parks that share a common circumstance. In the Italy-US experience, Abruzzo and Adirondack parks were seen to have striking similarities. Both had villages within their boundaries, were located close to metropolitan centres, were faced with major development pressures in the 1970s, and developed park zoning systems to manage parkland. Also, an endangered wolf population had been restored to a healthy level in Abruzzo, while the much vaster Adirondack Park was just beginning to address the social and biological feasibility of wolf restoration. Park managers found there was a great deal to discuss, as did municipal officials and other park stakeholders (Bray, 1998).

Exchange activities

Many activities have taken place since the beginning of the partnership(s). These include agreements, visits, workshops and externships, and are briefly noted below.

Agreements

Currently, of the five proposed partnerships between US and Italian parks, there is progress towards three twinning agreements. The Abruzzo National Park in Italy and the Adirondack National Park in the US have signed a formal agreement (Box 2.7). The agreements between Long Island Pine Barrens Commission and Pisa Regional Parks, and between the Po park and the Hudson River Greenway are progressing toward completion.

Visits

In this case, a group visit refers to visits by delegations to and from Italy, including two 10 person US delegations from Adirondack who visited the Abruzzo Park. All came away from the experience inspired and energised by the integrated environmental and economic mission and programme of Abruzzo Park.

² A cultural landscape “embraces a diversity of manifestations of the interaction between humankind and its natural environment” (UNESCO, 1999).

Box 2.7 Abruzzo/Adirondack Partnership Brief

Community involvement and economic rejuvenation: Park Centres in Adirondack hamlets are viewed as strategic points in the economic revitalisation and improvement effort of the region. They have strong state support and a tradition of “bottom-up problem solving”. The development of Park Centres in hamlets is a step towards “smart growth” in the Adirondack Park. This idea is to focus development in established settlements and away from other land. Having seen the success of the increasingly nature-based economy in the Abruzzo National Park, delegates from the Adirondacks wish to see more park centres set up in their park, so as to help rejuvenate the local economies of towns in the area. It is felt that this will assist in educating the next generation of local people to be stewards of the park’s environment.

Ecotourism project: The APA and *I Love NY* Tourism have organised an ecotourism initiative for the Adirondack Park inspired by the Abruzzo Park. Abruzzo is one of ten ecotourism demonstration projects in Europe. This project could greatly benefit some of the poorer Adirondack communities.

Cultural links: The twinning has also had an influence on the links between artists and protected areas. The arts and art centres have flourished in the Adirondack Park in recent decades, and the presence of artists on the first delegation heightened the awareness of their value to the parks for policy-makers.

Two significant factors concerning the delegations were highlighted. First, it was critical that high-level State officials were in attendance and that people from the community were involved. Second, the delegations also included educators, artists and representatives from NGOs, such as the Wildlife Conservation Society, to interact to a shared commitment. All expressed the desire to apply what they had learned.

Workshops

Workshops and fora have been held periodically in Italy and the US. For example, in 1997 Abruzzo Director Franco Tassi participated in a Forum on Wilderness Education in the Adirondack Park and discussed conservation issues in Abruzzo National Park. The forum was sponsored by the Association for the Protection of the Adirondack Park (APA).

Externships/academic consortia

To complement the Abruzzo/Adirondack partnership, externships³ were established for Landscape Architecture students from the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry in the Piedmont section of Po Park, Italy. The twinning has also been a positive force for expanding the role of Paul Smiths College as the “College of the Adirondacks”, providing educational resources to support the objectives of the park. Paul Smiths College sponsored a training programme for 12 Abruzzo park staff in the summer of 1999.

³ Defined as a training programme that is part of a course of study of an educational institution and taken in private/public business.

A proposal has been drafted for a European/US Twinning Project of Parks and Protected Areas under an EU/USA co-operative programme in higher education, vocational education and training. Over ten colleges, universities and professional schools in the US and Europe have been involved in exploring consortia relations to further the twinning process. The consortia are intended to support multidisciplinary, intercultural, community-based graduate and undergraduate student experiences, using the twinning of protected areas as living laboratories.

Other activities

Other activities include the publication of numerous articles about the exchange (see for example Bray, 1997 and 1998), the creation of the George Perkins Marsh International Visitor Project I and II which has supported the exchanges, and a revived NPS agreement with the Italian Nature Conservation Service.

Funding

The Italy-US parks and protected areas twinning/partnership primarily operates on grants from a variety of sources. Participants draft their own proposals for funding. For example, on one return flight from a visit in Italy, a US delegation worked together to draft a proposal for an Environmental Protection Agency Sustainable Development Grant and initiated two other proposals.

The Glynwood Center has directly and indirectly provided valuable assistance to the twinning effort. For example, it provides on-going support to its Regional Coordinator in Italy. The centre has been sponsoring stewardship exchanges between the UK and the United States and Canada for over ten years and is interested in maintaining connections with the Italy-US twinning/partnership programme (see Section 2.2 for more information on the Glynwood Center).

The Italian Fulbright Commission offers grants each year to one Italian and one American specialising in environmental management to participate in the Italy-US park and protected area twinning/partnership. Applicants include students, artists, lawyers, journalists, government officials and scientists (Bray, 1999).

Lessons learned

For the most part, it was found that the Italy-US Park and Protected Area Twinning/Partnership initiative has helped to build conservation ties between the two countries. Such ties are very valuable to both nations; and other nations facing similar challenges can learn from their successes and failures. The following points were considered necessary to ensure a successful partnership:

- The partnership must be viewed as a long-term process;
- The process must be seen as mutually beneficial; and
- There must be support from the community and park staff involved. In the Adirondack park, the twinning has been a remarkable unifying force for the diverse interests in the region and has given many who live in or near the park their first real sense of what a park of nature and people can achieve.

2.5 National Park Service Sister Park relationships

Introduction

Many US national parks have sister parks in other countries. Examples of links include: Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore with the Kampinoski National Park in Poland; Badlands National Park with the Vashlovani Nature Reserve in Georgia; Mount Rainier with a protected area in Japan; the Voyageurs National Park, Cape Cod National Seashore, and Yukon-Charles Rivers Nature Preserve with three protected areas in Russia; the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area with a protected area in Slovakia; Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument with a protected area in Mexico; Big Bend National Park with Mexico; and the Everglades National Park with a protected area in the Bahamas.

In 1998, a US National Park Service (NPS) Technical Advisory Team was asked by the President of Georgia to assist their protected area managers. Subsequently, several NPS managers went on a scoping visit to Georgia. The primary purpose of the visit was to provide consultative services to the Government of Georgia on ways to improve the Protected Areas Department. This was needed as recent legislation had broadened their responsibilities and created a new system of national parks and protected area designations. Revenue generation through ecotourism was also of interest. An MOU was signed between the NPS and the Georgian Protected Areas Department during a US visit in 1999. Sister park relationships have been established between four US parks (including Badlands) and comparable sites in Georgia ranging from the Black Sea to the Caucasus Mountains. Recently, Georgia applied for a multi-year grant from the World Bank and Global Environment Facility (GEF) to implement the recommendations that have evolved from US visits, so as to plan their new protected areas system, develop employee capacity, and improve facilities in existing parks and reserves.

The sister parks of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and Kampinoski National Park, Cuyahoga Valley and protected areas in Slovakia, and the Badlands and Vashlovani are all fairly active. Other sister park relationships tend to be more ceremonial.

The remainder of this section focuses on perhaps the most productive of these partnerships, that between Indiana Dunes and Kampinoski in Poland.

How the programme works

Establishing partners

Discussions concerning a co-operative relationship between the NPS and the Board of Polish National Parks (KZNP) began in 1988 during a visit by a delegation of NPS staff to Poland. Nothing substantive developed out of this meeting until 1997, when another small delegation from NPS visited Poland, this time at the request of the US Ambassador to Poland.

Mainly as a result of this second meeting, NPS and KZNP agreed to develop a working relationship and began to develop an agreement. One year later, an MOU for a sister park relationship was signed between officials from Indiana Dunes and Kampinoski.

Although they are not identical, the two parks have many biological characteristics in common. The primary plant communities and soils of each are analogous. Although they

are of different types and origins, both are dominated by upland dunes and those are intermixed with marshes and wetlands. Both sites are rich in floral species and diversity. Due to its greater size, Kampinoski supports more and larger mammal species but the parks are comparable in numbers and diversity of birds. In addition, the parks have other things in common: both are close to major urban centres, i.e. Warsaw and Chicago. Also the outstanding natural resources of both parks face many common threats, including air and water pollution, changes in ground and surface water hydrology, ecosystem fragmentation caused by past land uses and growing urban encroachment, and the adverse impacts of excessive visitation and illegal human activities.

Staff in both parks share a common ideal of stewardship and preservation of the resources in their care. Their priority goals are to preserve and increase natural biodiversity; to restore altered ecosystems, habitats and forests; to create corridors and connections between their parks' fragmented and isolated ecological islands; and to implement the research, inventory and monitoring programmes necessary for preservation and restoration efforts.

Both parks also wish to strengthen their efforts to educate school children and the general public on environmental issues relating to protected areas, and thus increase public support for conservation. The Indiana Dunes Environmental Learning Center is being developed now at the site of Camp Good Fellow and Kampinoski is hoping to develop an environmental education camp in the future.

Exchange activities

Group visits

Various group visits have taken place between the US and Poland under the MOU established between Indiana Dunes and Kampinoski, including a three-week visit to Kampinoski by two staff and visits by a resource management and an interpretation/education expert from Indiana Dunes. Each park has developed and provided quarters for visitors from the sister park to stay during exchanges.

Two exhibit design specialists from the NPS's Harper's Ferry Center and other technical assistance visited Kampinoski for one week to assist with interpretative exhibit design. Two additional trips to Georgia were conducted in 1999. The NPS conducted training sessions for employees of the Georgian Protected Areas Department and provided assessments on possible strategies for park improvements. They also met NGOs, other Georgian Government offices, parliamentarians and conservation groups to seek input and gain support for the protected area projects. Funding was provided through the NPS and the World Bank. Future visits might involve interpretative specialists who will assist in the development of information brochures, agency and park identification (logos, signs, uniforms); and in training people in resource protection, law enforcement, administrative skills and infrastructure maintenance. The next step depends upon World Bank funding for the project.

Joint projects

Indiana Dunes and Kampinoski participate in joint projects. For example, Indiana Dunes developed a Polish-language version of the sister park web site, including information about the relationship on this web site and a link to the web site of Kampinoski. Such joint projects were deliberately selected by the partners because they did not need

face-to-face contact, and teams could work independently. This saves money and reduces the need to travel.

Monitoring and evaluation

There is no institutionalised monitoring for evaluating the successes and failings of the partnership, and each park is responsible for its own activities. The evaluation process is informal and involves the preparation and review of trip reports for exchanges as well as regular consultation via email and fax. Periodic conference calls between staff to discuss how things are progressing in their respective parks and to solicit suggestions for improvements are important.

Funding

Modest funding only was required to maintain communications and provide park facilities when the visitors arrived, but much more was required to fund the actual visits and the implementation of joint projects. The US estimates expenditure of approximately US\$8,500 per year. The Co-ordinator for the NPS, Dale Engquist, hopes to secure up to US\$10–15,000 annually to keep the programme going and provide for more regular staff exchanges (pers. comm.).

Core funding

No specific source of funding or “core funding” is available in either country. The NPS Division of International Affairs (DIA) has funded expenses for US travel to Poland. Originally, DIA provided approximately US\$25,000 as seed money for the project, most of which was used for travel in providing technical assistance for Kampinoski’s exhibit centre. These funds have been spent and Indiana Dunes is using their own park funds to continue the programme until other funds can be identified.

Cost-sharing

The NPS/KZNP agreement simply states that activities are “subject to the availability of funds”. In other words, both parties of the sister park agreement recognise the need for reliable funding to sustain the agreement and agree that they will assist each other to find funds. It also states that “it is generally understood that when personnel of one park visit or are detailed to the other, the park sending the employee will be responsible for the cost of travel to and from the receiving country and the receiving park will generally be responsible for travel and living expenses in their country” (note that this arrangement is common to all the exchanges summarised in this report). For example, Kampinoski housed the US visitors in sleeping facilities in the park, provided all travel within Poland and assisted with meal expenses; US visitors paid their own travel expenses to Poland.

Private grants

Private grants are provided to support the Indiana Dunes-Kampinoski partnership (as well as that between the Badlands and Vashlovani partnerships). The US-Poland Maria Sklodowska-Curie Joint Fund II (MCS II), named after the pioneering Polish scientist Madame Curie, offers a special fund for environmental projects between the US and Poland. Approval for a grant requires applications to be submitted from both countries.

Through the NPS/KZNP partnership and co-operation, the KZNP was successful in obtaining two MCS II grants, for bison research and for hydrological studies.

Other sources

The US Embassy in Warsaw provided support for a visit by five Polish park personnel to the United States in August 1997. The NPS also hopes to obtain assistance from the large Polish-American community in the nearby city of Chicago to help in the future.

Lessons learned

From the experience of the Indiana Dunes-Kampinoski sister park relationship, a number of important lessons have been learned:

- Continued **communication** is very important in maintaining a partnership. Language and distance are potentially large barriers, but they can be eased with even the briefest of notes, phone calls or emails. For example, Dale Engquist of Indiana Dunes sends his counterpart Jurek from Kampinoski a note on Polish Independence Day, which Jurek reciprocates on US Independence Day. They also find it useful to exchange their respective park newsletters, magazines and calendars.
- Both partners must continually seek out **funding** sources. While Kampinoski can and does apply much of their existing resources and staff to the programme, they are in need of new funds. While the US seed funding has been exhausted, Indiana Dunes has more budget flexibility which allows them to continue the project, albeit perhaps not with as many opportunities for travel.
- A **mutual respect** between the two parks is a crucial component of the success of the exchange to date. Each partner recognises the professionalism of the other, and values its contributions. This includes respect for the other country's culture and history.
- **Language** is a critical component in effective communications. Without a common language, communication is very difficult. Currently, the exchange relies on the Polish partners speaking English, as no one from the US park speaks Polish, with the exception of a bison biologist. A language translation computer programme was used, but did not work well and was abandoned.

2.6 Other exchanges

Staff exchanges between Canada and Chile

The exchanges between Chile and Canada involved visits from protected area personnel in Chile and Canada to each other's country. The idea developed as a by-product of an international meeting, when two senior level managers from Parks Canada and the National Parks System of Chile agreed on the need for an exchange programme to advance both systems' knowledge and understanding of different management approaches. An MOU was drawn up between the two agencies stipulating what types of activities would take place, who would sponsor what activities, and when they would take place.

All exchanges took place between 1995 and 1996. To begin with, each partner had to review each other's park management systems. Once this research phase was complete, a visit was planned. The first involved two Chileans visiting Canada. The Chilean delegation toured several parks in western Canada and met staff at Parks Canada Headquarters in Ottawa. In the same year, two Canadians visited Chile to review Chilean park management systems and toured several Chilean parks.

Other than the actual visit, a second aspect of the exchange involved on-the-job training and mentoring skills training. This was a more one-sided approach, but still reflected partners working together to solve a problem. Chilean Park Wardens expressed an interest in having Parks Canada train them, and specifically in "training the trainer". In 1996 two delegates from Parks Canada went to Chile to deliver a five-day workshop in Puyahuae National Park for Chilean Park Wardens from all over Chile.

As in most of the other global experiences, a cost-sharing agreement was arranged. When Parks Canada visited Chile, they paid for their own airfares and Chile covered accommodation and meal expenses whilst in Chile. The Chileans paid their own flights to Canada and, once in Canada, Parks Canada covered the costs of their accommodation and meals. Staff were allowed the time within their own agencies to prepare for visits, etc. Their other work, however, was not to be compromised.

Several lessons were learned from this brief yet useful exercise:

- **Publication and promotion** of the exchange programme within the agencies were crucial. Park and agency staff in both countries knew little about the MOU signed between the two agencies. It is difficult for staff to support something they know little to nothing about. Exchanges operate on the infusion of new ideas. If agency and park staff are not fully involved, the resource base for these new ideas is greatly diminished and the exchange suffers.
- It was found that only the people who were directly involved actually benefited from the exchange. In fact, very little information about the exchange was widely distributed. It is important to **spread the knowledge** and lessons learned around to gain further support throughout the system, as well as to improve effectiveness of the programme.
- **Communication** between partners was crucial. Once the MOU activities had been achieved, the partnership basically concluded. Continued communication would have been necessary to keep the partnership alive. Certain individuals kept in contact, but very few. Language was found to be a barrier and made follow-up communication difficult and rare.

Quebec-Labrador international exchanges

The Quebec Labrador Foundation (QLF)/Atlantic Center for the Environment's International Program has two components:

1. a fellowship programme that brings conservation professionals from Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East to New England and eastern Canada to learn about current conservation trends; and
2. a technical assistance programme.

The focus of the QLF's international work is on the theme of stewardship; more specifically, on creating, nurturing and enabling a responsible approach by landowners and resource users to the management of land and its natural and cultural heritage. Stewardship taps the basic human instinct to look after "homes". By fostering individual and community responsibility, the stewardship approach puts conservation in the hands of the people most affected by it.

Ways in which the exchange programme is said to be making a difference are very similar to those already identified as the benefits of exchange programmes generally:

- Building leadership and strengthening institutions: local leaders who have participated in exchanges have reported that the exchanges have provided them with new ideas, access to tools and strategies, increased confidence, professional revitalisation, and a connection to an international network;
- Advancing new strategies for conservation and community development through a transfer of innovations and mutual exchange among peers, and by the cross-fertilisation of ideas drawn from experience in diverse areas;
- Promoting citizen participation in environmental problem solving;
- Helping practitioners develop effective ways to shape public policy;
- Encouraging citizen diplomacy by bringing together people of differing ethnic and geographic backgrounds to work together on areas of shared interest. This has worked particularly well in the Middle East programme, which has brought together Arab and Jewish peers over the past seven years and is widely recognised for its contribution to co-existence efforts in the region; and
- Fostering long-term co-operative links by growing and strengthening networks.

Other programmes

- Parks Australia has an MOU with the Indonesian Directorate General Forest Protection and Nature Conservation (PHPA) to provide co-operation between the two countries in matters of mutual conservation interest. One such project is the twinning of Kakadu National Park in Australia and Wasur National Park in Indonesia. Staff from Wasur have visited Kakadu and a Kakadu officer attended a Wasur planning workshop in Jakarta.
- A partnership agreement between Changbaishan National Park in China and Great Smokey National Park in the US has been signed.
- Protected area staff exchanges have occurred between New Zealand and Nepal, organised by the New Zealand National Parks Association.
- The US National Parks Service has a long-standing relationship with the US Peace Corps. The NPS has provided assessment teams, assisted in recruiting volunteers for park-related assignments and conducted training for volunteers bound for protected areas and parks. The effort continues today and is active in Central Europe, Africa, and Latin America.

PART 3

Recommendations for protected area exchanges in East Asia



View of Gurvan Saykhan National Park, Mongolia. © *Shelley Hayes*

Recommendations for protected area exchanges in East Asia

3.1 Proposed planning process for exchange programmes

The final section of this report draws on the lessons learned from the evaluation of previous exchange programmes in Part 2. It sets out a suggested planning process to help develop exchange programmes in East Asia. It includes recommendations on a strategy for exchange programmes within the region. It concludes with a brief action agenda for WCPA in East Asia.

Several common success factors can be identified from the global review of exchange programmes in Part 2. The key to success is to be found in the planning process used to develop the programme. As the EUROPARC experiences have been the longest-term, busiest and perhaps most successful exchange programme, their planning model has been particularly scrutinised. When combined with other experience, it provides the basis for the following recommended planning process.

This planning model has been developed to work at different scales. In particular it is relevant to **protected area managers working at the protected area or site level** (e.g. individual protected area staff members or park directors), and **protected area administrators working at the protected area system or policy level** (e.g. senior staff in government agencies or ministries, university staff, or heads of conservation NGOs). Throughout the text, tips for both types of these potential users are provided.

There are ten stages in the proposed planning process described in this section:

- Stage 1 Plan well in advance
- Stage 2 Set clear objectives
- Stage 3 Review and identify potential partners
- Stage 4 Identify type(s) of exchange(s)
- Stage 5 Generate political and community support
- Stage 6 Finalise the exchange agreement and programme
- Stage 7 Obtain funding
- Stage 8 Undertake the exchange(s)
- Stage 9 Monitor and evaluate the exchange(s)
- Stage 10 Post-exchange activities

Of course, this planning process is provided as a general guide only. It will need adaptation to the needs of different individuals, protected area agencies and countries. However, previous experience has shown that pursuing each of the activities contained in the ten planning stages will improve the chances of creating a successful exchange programme.

Stage 1. Plan well in advance

Before an exchange can take place, it is necessary to:

- assess the need for an exchange, and
- determine if the required resources are available to the individual(s) or agency to initiate an exchange.

Experience suggests that a felt need for an exchange may arise in one of three, equally valid, situations:

- when there is a particular issue or problem facing the protected areas which cannot successfully be addressed internally. An exchange programme may or may not be the best method of dealing with the identified issue(s) or problems(s). Therefore the staff or agency should first consider all potential approaches, such as in-house training, consultancy advice or commissioning an independent study, before opting for the exchange route.
- when a protected area develops expertise in dealing with one or more park-related issues, which it feels it wishes to share with other protected areas facing issues of the same kind. It may wish to offer this experience in return for the partners' expertise in another issue.
- when a protected area feels the need to strengthen its international links, perhaps out of a sense of altruism, in order to demonstrate to a local audience the international significance of the area, or as part of some international programme with which the area is associated (e.g. as a World Heritage site).

In terms of the resources required to initiate an exchange, financial resources are paramount. However, at this first stage, the only resources required are personnel hours diverted from “normal” duties to begin considering whether an exchange is feasible, and what protected area or agency objectives might be met through a possible exchange. Often, however, protected area staff are so overwhelmed with day-to-day duties that it may be difficult to divert staff onto work relating to a possible exchange.

If possible, one or more persons should be assigned to examine the feasibility of an exchange and – if this is positive – to develop plans for it. Experience suggests that this person, or persons, need to be highly enthusiastic, efficient and able to work independently. It is best if the staff are allocated a specific amount of time to work on this project. This may require dropping other tasks from their schedule. Those selected to work on the project need to feel that they – as well as the park itself – will benefit from a potential exchange. Certainly employees are unlikely to participate in exchanges if they feel that employment status would be adversely affected in any way.

It is desirable to nominate an *exchange co-ordinator* at an early stage of planning, (though the specific person(s) may change as the process progresses). **Choosing the right member(s) and leader(s) to create an exchange programme is absolutely critical to the success of the programme.** Nothing destroys potential exchanges as quickly as individuals who lack communication or language skills, are not able to “get things done”, or are not fully committed to the success of the programme. In deciding which individual(s) should lead the planning work, the following are most relevant:

- first and foremost, the personal and professional qualities of the individuals concerned;

- the resources available to commit to the exchange;
- the objectives and theme of the exchange;
- the level and amount of deliverables desired from the exchange;
- communication/language skills.

At this stage, the planning is being done *within* one protected area or agency. However, once an agreement has been established (Stage 6), a *joint* co-operation committee composed of relevant protected area staff or managers from each partner should develop and review work plans for partnership activities, maintain communication links and periodically evaluate the programme.

Assessing resource needs – both personnel and financial – will probably be considered during each of the remaining stages. Funding may suddenly disappear or (more rarely) appear, or personnel may quickly become available or unavailable: if so, co-ordinators will have to adjust their plans accordingly.

Stage 2. Set clear objectives

While the objectives of an exchange programme were probably informally discussed throughout the first stage of the planning process, once it is agreed that an exchange is desirable, it is essential to define the desired “deliverables”. The more specific one can make the statement of the *need* for the exchange and the *goals* and *objectives*, the more likely it is that an exchange will succeed (i.e. meet these goals and objectives).

The *need* for the exchange – the underlying reasons or rationale as to why an exchange is felt to be necessary – should be clearly expressed as this will lead logically on to the statement of goals and objectives. The three kinds of need are set out in Section 3.1 above. The statement of need can be important in terms of gaining the necessary financial and political support for the project. In particular, it may be useful to identify if there is an external threat acting as the trigger for calls for an exchange. For example, it might be felt that an exchange is needed to help address a threat to the protected area caused by a proposed new road or dam that affects the site. This can help identify constituents who should be invited to participate in, or help fund an exchange.

There is a difference between *goals* and *objectives*. “Goals” are general statements of a desired end product or result, while “objectives” are more specific, *measurable* statements of a desired end-state. For example, a goal of an exchange programme might be to improve the managerial capacity of a specific protected area or, more specifically, to discover innovative methods of dealing with a particular issue (e.g. erosion of trails or wildlife disturbance by tourists). Examples of objectives would be “to ensure that at least 80% of park visitors are satisfied with their visit”, or “to increase (or decrease) tourist visits by 20% over the next three years”. Often, a set of goals is generated, with a number of objectives relating to each goal. Being as specific as possible, even at this early stage of the process, is critical to the success of an exchange programme.

Finally, even at the outset, it is important to begin thinking about how the exchange programme would be monitored and evaluated. Thinking about these essential tasks should become automatic at every stage.

Stage 3. Review and identify potential partners

There are several methods of finding potential partners. Most commonly, partnerships arise in an *ad hoc* manner through existing relationships with administrators, managers or staff from other protected areas. These relationships may be fostered through contact at conferences, workshops, staff meetings or email or “hard copy” correspondence, and may range from local to international contacts. It is often easiest to begin the search for possible partners by approaching these friends or acquaintances working in other parks. However, if existing contacts are not interested, or are unsuitable as partners, then the search must be broadened.

If the individual has access to the Internet, identifying potential partners throughout the world should not be a problem. Many nations now have information on their protected area-related ministries, park systems and individual parks on the Internet. By using a search engine, these can be relatively easily found. Indeed, many examples of protected area legislation, policies, research findings and descriptions of management techniques can now be found on the Internet. Such information is exceedingly valuable in increasing internal capacity within protected areas around the world. However, access to the Internet is not yet common in all countries and parks in East Asia.

Other sources to help identify potential partners include:

- A *Directory of Protected Area Personnel and Organisations in East Asia* has been prepared by IUCN as sister volume to this publication (Hayes and Egli, 2001). It will include the contact names, addresses and areas of expertise of WCPA East Asia members, a list and description of international and national organisations and NGOs in each country of the region, and the names of all protected areas in East Asia.
- Global lists of protected areas include the *UN List of Protected Areas 1997* (IUCN, 1998), which can be ordered from the World Conservation Bookstore web site (<http://www.iucn.org/bookstore/index.html>) or may be available at protected area head office locations or through WCPA East Asia members.
- The lists of World Heritage sites and Biosphere Reserves held by UNESCO, and Ramsar sites held by the Ramsar Secretariat are especially relevant as potential partners for East Asia protected areas which are part of those international networks or expect to be so in future. All these sites are also to be found in the UN List.
- Sometimes opportunities to create a partnership can be found through a chance article in a newspaper, a radio or television broadcast, which helps identify other protected areas with similar biophysical characteristics or shared issues.

In searching for and selecting a partner, it is often useful to summarise the characteristics of one’s own protected area. Points to emphasise are:

- landscape or ecosystem type (e.g. tropical forest or mountain park);
- protected area categorisation (e.g. using IUCN protected area management categories I–VI, see Box 3.1 below);
- comparable problems or management issues (e.g. endangered species protection, community-park interactions or tourism management);

- language(s) spoken;
- geographical location; and
- social and cultural similarities and differences.

The amount of time that can be spent on the planning process (identified in Stage 1) will also help determine who might be appropriate partners. For example, if limited time, funding and personnel are available, it might be best to stick to local or regional partners, as distance often has a relationship to the amount of time and energy required to establish and maintain a partnership. However, communication advances such as e-mail and fax machines, have lessened the tyranny of distance for park managers – but only *if they have access* to these technologies.

Two additional variables appear to be critical when selecting potential partners. First, a mutual respect for each other's culture, language, expertise and contribution to the partnership is essential. Second, it must be clear that each partner will benefit from the exchange. It may therefore be useful to include a statement within the MOU or other documentation (Stage 6) of exactly how *each* partner will benefit from the exchange activities.

Stage 4. Identify type(s) of exchange(s)

Section 1.4 of this report identified a variety of possible types of exchange programmes: individual exchanges and partnering, twinning or sistering, training seminars, group visits and international collaboration. In general, these types of programme are listed in increasing order of effort and funding required. Thus individual visits are normally the easiest and cheapest to arrange, while international collaboration with agencies such as IUCN or the World Bank are the most time-consuming and expensive to establish and maintain. However, it is also true that this list generally reflects increased levels of benefits: the greater the effort required and the greater the number of people involved in the project, the greater the impact it will have.

Each type of exchange programme has its distinct characteristics, and its own strengths and limitations. The particular issue or problem faced by the protected area, and the objectives of the exchange will have a significant effect on the type of exchange that should be chosen – though the choice is also likely to be determined by the funds and staff time available.

It might be best for individual parks or park managers to begin with the most basic kind of exchange. The results from this initial partnership may or may not lead to more complex relationships, depending on the outcome of the initial partnership, the ease with which communications are maintained between the partners, the funding available and the institutional support for further exchanges. Of course, if, during Stage 3, a large number of willing partners from a variety of regions and nations are identified, then a large-scale proposal may be in order. Similarly, protected area system administrators at the national level will probably benefit most from utilising the greater amount of resources and contacts they have available, especially at the international level (e.g. through programmes supported by IUCN, WWF and the World Bank).

Stage 5. Generate political and community support

Generally, without support from senior administration (either within the agency or in the ministry), the exchange programme will not be approved, no matter how clear the need or noble the objectives. Individual protected area site managers and system administrators will themselves know best how to develop support for an exchange programme at the required senior level. Generally, senior decision-makers are most likely to be persuaded by evidence that the exchange is cost efficient and practical, and will produce measurable results.

The support of the local community is often essential. Whenever possible, local decision-makers and key supporters of the protected area should be brought into the process, particularly if they will directly benefit from the objectives of the proposed exchange. For example, if a programme's objective is to ensure the sustainable harvest of a specific natural resource or to increase visitor numbers, then users of the resource and tourism operators respectively could be asked to provide support for the project. Their aid may include (optimally) financial or "in kind" contributions, but also letters of support for the project. Any indication of community support – particularly, but not only financial support – will tend to increase the chances of approval. Getting local politicians behind the project, particularly if they have regional or national clout, can also be extremely helpful.

Stage 6. Finalise the exchange agreement and programme

Most organisations involved with exchange programmes have found it useful to have a formal agreement (often an MOU) in place that specifies the basis for the exchange, outlines the proposed activities that will take place, and sets out how the success or failure of the exchange will be assessed. An agreement should state:

- the need for the exchange
- the aims and objectives
- the specific types of exchange which will take place, when, where and for how long
- the timelines for any deliverables (e.g. reports or workshops) agreed upon
- who will be responsible for specific tasks and who is to be the lead and/or contact person at each partners' site
- the plans for monitoring and evaluation
- the plans for cost sharing
- the plans for publicity
- the way in which the agreement may be modified if necessary

The agreement should be signed off by relevant senior officials and authorities in order to ensure their awareness and support for the exchange. The signing event itself may take a ceremonial form, involving local and national dignitaries, so as to give strong public and political impetus to the launch of the exchange. The signed agreement should be distributed as widely as possible within the agencies and communities involved, so maximising the awareness of the new partnership.

Stage 7. Obtain financing

Exchanges can be very demanding on the limited financial and personnel resources available to most parks, particularly large-scale or long-term exchange programmes. Normally, some kind of additional funding will be required to initiate an exchange. A grant proposal usually needs to be written to obtain funding. These proposals can range from brief to lengthy documents, according to the complexity of the proposal and the requirements of the funding agency. The preparation of complex proposals may require assistance from head office or other external assistance. This is especially the case when the granting agencies or foundations are based outside of the East Asia region, and require submission in English or another foreign language.

In preparing a bid for funds, care should be taken to ensure that the objectives of the proposed exchange directly relate to the objectives and geographical focus of the funding agency. As noted, a number of potential financing agencies, both within and outside the East Asia region, are listed in *Financing Protected Areas: Guidelines for Protected Area Managers* (IUCN, 2000), and *Guidelines for Financing Protected Areas in East Asia* (Athanas *et al.*, 2001).

If access to the Internet is available, the following web sites are useful:

- <http://www.biodiversityeconomics.org/finance/topics-38-00.htm> (the IUCN web site for financing of protected areas)
- ‘www.foundationcenter.org’ (which focuses on US-based granting agencies)
- ‘www.oingo.com/topic/49/49394.html’
- <http://dmoz.org/Science/Environment/Organisations>

Stage 8. Undertake the exchange(s)

By this time, all the planning required for running the exchange should be in place, and the plan detailed in the MOU or other agreement should be activated. The exchange itself may take as little as a few days to several years, depending on the type and scope of the exchange programme created. Particularly for medium to long-term programmes, the exchange should be viewed as an ongoing process rather than a “one-off” project with a start and end date.

In addition, if the exchange has a medium to long-term time frame, it is critical that the interim results of the exchange be communicated internally throughout the protected area or protected area agency. Without this communication, it is likely that only the actual participants in the exchange will benefit from their activities. It is also important to inform the community of the ongoing results, reporting whether the exchange activities are going smoothly, and the objectives of the programme being met.

It is also helpful to arrange periodic feedback from exchange participants, and any associated interest groups, to assess whether the time lines and deliverables in the agreement are being adhered to. If progress is being made, it is appropriate to tell all members of the exchange team – if not a wider audience – of this success. If progress is not being made, it is even more critical that this be discussed, and that ways to maximise the chances of success are developed before it is too late to salvage the programme.

Stage 9. Monitor and evaluate the exchange(s)

To provide the data for such feedback, and generally to ensure that the programme is evolving on the right lines and that its result can be objectively assessed, *it is vital that monitoring and evaluation should form an integral part of the programme's execution.* The costs of this exercise should therefore be written into the budget. Evaluations may be of several kinds:

- feedback via questionnaires administered to all those involved in the exchange programme, including where appropriate the host community;
- formal evaluations at various stages in the implementation of the programme, with the results fed back to the joint co-operating committee to help them in the further development of the programme; and
- an end-of-programme evaluation, with recommendations to the partners and sponsors for further action to build on the foundations laid by the exchange.

Different kinds of monitoring and evaluation will involve asking the views of different people, e.g. the participants themselves, the local community, colleagues in the protected area and/or agencies, senior officials. Moreover different kinds of evaluations will need to be undertaken by different people – the participants themselves, their employers or perhaps consultants or experts, who may be provided by the funding agencies. Most funding agencies now attach great importance to this aspect and many will be ready to advise on how monitoring and evaluation should be undertaken.

Stage 10. Post-exchange activities

Each partner needs to individually and critically assess whether the exchange programme achieved the goals and objectives first formally expressed in Stage 2 of the planning process – hence the importance of monitoring and evaluation. If the programme was successful, the factors that ensured its success should be noted: if some objectives were not met, the reasons for this failure should also be noted. These assessments should be communicated to the partner(s), and a further, joint analysis undertaken. For example, one partner may have felt that one aspect of the exchange was not as successful as they would have hoped, but this feeling may not be shared by the other partner. Often one partner can provide the other partner with different perspectives on why the exchange did or did not achieve success.

Financing the publication of the results of the exchange should be written into both the funding proposal (Stage 6) and the final agreement and programme information (Stage 7). If possible, innovative ways to communicate the results widely should be attempted. The traditional “internal memo” or e-mail messages may be functional, but are unlikely to fire the hearts of employees. Rather, such methods as workshops (both internal and public workshops), public meetings, brochures, newsletters and media reports might be used to ensure that staff and community members are convinced that their efforts to help arrange the programme were not wasted.

Future requests for exchange programmes are unlikely to be supported either at the administrative or community level if these groups are not clearly and periodically notified of the progress of the exchange (Stage 8) and the final results of the completed exchange. The funding bodies often require a final report, based upon a thorough evaluation (Stage 9); even if they do not, they would certainly appreciate hearing of the

success (or failure) of a project they have funded. This may increase the chances of obtaining future funding from this source.

The partners should also review the need for any future exchanges. If the programme was a success, then perhaps new partners could be brought into the project, or the project could be expanded and new funding and funding agencies could be sought. If the programme was not a success, new plans, involving new partners perhaps, could be developed after reviewing the apparent reasons for failure. If communication between the partners ends immediately after the exchange, then it is likely that no future relationships will develop.

3.2 A strategy for exchange programmes in East Asia

The scope and need to develop exchange programmes in the East Asia region is considerable. But there is no single prescription for making this happen. Instead a strategy is required, which needs to be followed at the level of the individual protected area, the national and sub-national protected areas system, and region-wide.

The strategy is in four parts:

1. Create a favourable climate for exchanges
2. Develop innovative exchange programmes at site, system and region levels
3. Support this with information etc.
4. Secure the funding

Creating a favourable climate

The evidence in this report suggests that a vital ingredient for success is a management and policy climate that favours exchanges. This needs to be created at the local, national, and regional levels within East Asia.

Local (site) level

It is appreciated that the authority and resources given to protected area managers will vary a great deal. In some countries it may be possible to act only at the system level. But where powers are delegated to the site level, protected area managers should be encouraged to see exchanges as a potential part of staff development and as an innovative way to tackle problems that the protected area faces. Ideally site managers should be allowed some scope to develop a limited number of small-scale, local exchange programmes. The sums of money required can be quite modest, especially if exchanges are short, local and combined with other previously scheduled events such as periodic meetings or workshops. Where managers are responsible for drawing up staff training programmes, they should consider exchanges as part of staff development. It may also be possible to encourage exchanges through the management plan for the protected areas in question.

National (system) level

More commonly in many parts of East Asia, the authority to initiate exchanges will be held by system managers (e.g. heads of parks agencies). They are well placed to help

create a favourable climate for protected area exchanges, and are often able to get access to sources of international support for such programmes. A clear declaration that they recognise the importance of this approach in developing staff capacity and tackling protected area problems in the country will help greatly to bring about successful exchanges. It would help to adopt an internal policy that encourages exchanges. In this way, staff will be made aware of the agencies' support for exchanges, and in some countries it may then be possible for keen employees themselves to find the funding for an exchange. Exchanges should be included as an item to be funded under staff training programmes. Special attention should be given to involving protected areas in remote regions in such programmes.

Regional level

At the regional level, the WCPA should adopt a specific policy to support and encourage all protected area systems in the region to follow the guidance given in this publication. To give this work an impetus, they might consider setting up a task force to oversee the development of exchange programmes, devote part of their regional sessions to this topic and offer their expertise to other parts of the world via the WCPA newsletter and web site (see also 3.3).

Developing innovative exchange programmes

The experience reported on in this publication provides a fund of interesting ideas on how to get a partnership programme launched and what to achieve through it. In order to ensure the best outcome in the region, exchange programmes might be developed around one or more of the following themes:

- Develop them around particular categories of protected areas
- Develop them around particular issues facing protected areas
- Develop a regional "Parkshare" scheme

Exchanges based on the categories of protected areas

Basing the exchange on the type or characteristics of protected area involves partnering, for example, those sites which:

- share the same IUCN protected area management categories; or
- are members of the same family of internationally-recognised sites (*see example below of World Heritage sites*, but also Ramsar sites, Biosphere Reserves etc.).

IUCN protected area management categories

The IUCN system of protected area management categories is now well understood in many countries (see IUCN, 1994). However, for ease of reference it is reproduced in summary form in Box 3.1 below. Since the system is based on the objectives of management, it means that protected areas in the same category are managed for broadly the same purpose. That would provide a good basis for a partnership. The categories of individual sites are to be found in the *1997 UN List of Protected Areas* (IUCN, 1998) and on the UNEP-WCMC web site (see below).

Box 3.1 Definitions of the IUCN protected area management categories

CATEGORY I Strict Nature Reserve/Wilderness Area: protected area managed mainly for science or wilderness protection

CATEGORY Ia Strict Nature Reserve: protected area managed mainly for science

Definition: Area of land and/or sea possessing some outstanding or representative ecosystems, geological or physiological features and/or species, available primarily for scientific research and/or environmental monitoring.

CATEGORY Ib Wilderness Area: protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection

Definition: Large area of unmodified or slightly modified land, and/or sea, retaining its natural character and influence, without permanent or significant habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural condition.

CATEGORY II National Park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation

Definition: Natural area of land and/or sea, designated to (a) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations, (b) exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation of the area and (c) provide a foundation for spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible.

CATEGORY III Natural Monument: protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features

Definition: Area containing one, or more, specific natural or natural/cultural feature which is of outstanding or unique value because of its inherent rarity, representative or aesthetic qualities or cultural significance.

CATEGORY IV Habitat/Species Management Area: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention

Definition: Area of land and/or sea subject to active intervention for management purposes so as to ensure the maintenance of habitats and/or to meet the requirements of specific species.

CATEGORY V Protected Landscape/Seascape: protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation

Definition: Area of land, with coast and sea as appropriate, where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant aesthetic, ecological and/or cultural value, and often with high biological diversity. Safeguarding the integrity of this traditional interaction is vital to the protection, maintenance and evolution of such an area.

CATEGORY VI Managed Resource Protected Area: protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems

Definition: Area containing predominantly unmodified natural system, managed to ensure long-term protection and maintenance of biological diversity, while providing at the same time a sustainable flow of natural products and services to meet community needs.

Source: IUCN, 1994a

Internationally-recognised sites

As an **example**, we include a short section here on Natural World Heritage sites:

Natural World Heritage sites in East Asia could be targeted in an exchange programme. Such an exchange could address the range of management issues facing natural and mixed World Heritage sites within the region, and encourage site managers from World Heritage sites to work together to find common solutions. The specifics of the project would need to be developed through further consultation with those responsible for the management of World Heritage sites in the region, WCPA and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre.

In terms of potential funding, the United Nations Foundation (UNF) has approved a Biodiversity Programme framework that specifically targets World Heritage Sites that contain globally significant biodiversity as priorities from 2000 to 2004. Other funding sources include the World Heritage Fund and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (Environmental Agency of Japan), (Athanas *et al.*, 2001).

Molloy (1999) suggested there was a need for a more strategic approach to consolidate the management of existing World Heritage sites in China, which has seven natural and mixed World Heritage sites (listed in Table 3.1). Most sites were listed on the grounds of criteria iii (outstanding universal value of superlative natural phenomena or exceptional natural beauty) (UNESCO, 1997). An exchange programme between these sites could focus on how to maintain scenic values in the face of increasing visitor pressures.

Table 3.1 World Heritage Sites in East Asia

Natural World Heritage Sites (signatory date)	Inscription date	Criteria
China (1985)		
Huanglong Scenic and Historic Interest Area (S&HIA)	1992	N (iii)
Jiuzhaigou Valley (S&HIA)	1992	N (iii)
Mount Emei and Leshan Giant Buddha	1996	NC (iv)
Mount Huangshan	1990	NC (iii, iv)
Mount Taishan	1987	NC (iii)
Wulingyuan (S&HIA)	1992	N (iii)
Mount Wuyi	1999	N (iii)
<i>Mt. Qincheng/Mt. Dujiangyan Irrigation System</i>	<i>(deferred 2000)</i>	NC
Japan (1992)		
Yakushima	1993	N (ii, iii)
Shirakami-Sanchi	1993	N (ii)
Mongolia (1990)		
Uvs Nuur Basin	(deferred 1999)	NC (ii, iii, iv)
Korea (1988)	no sites	
DPR Korea (1998)	no sites	

Key: N: natural site; C: cultural site; NC: mixed site.

(i) outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history; (ii) outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals; (iii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty; and (iv) contain the most significant natural habitats for *in situ* conservation of biological diversity; "deferred": sent back to State Party for revision of nomination.

Exchanges based on common issues facing protected areas

Examples are:

- sites with similar political or natural characteristics (*see example below of transboundary protected areas*, but also marine or mountain parks etc.).
- sites that face the same management challenge. An exchange programme could be built around such themes. An obvious example (*see below*) is tourism. biodiversity is another theme, and one which probably has the greatest funding potential from international agencies. Other issues examples of issues are improving park-community links, creating co-management agreements, combating poaching, wildlife management or endangered species protection).

Sites with similar characteristics

As an **example**, we include a short section here on Transboundary Protected Areas:

An example of an exchange programme between protected areas with similar characteristics is that of Transboundary Protected Areas (TBPAs). IUCN has defined these as follows:

An area of land and/or sea that straddles one or more boundaries between states, sub-national units such as provinces and regions, autonomous areas and/or areas beyond the limits of national sovereignty or jurisdiction, whose constituent parts are especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed co-operatively through legal or other effective means. (Sandwith, 2001)

Table 3.2 lists many of the TBPAs in East Asia. Increasing interest is being placed on transboundary sites for their value in conflict resolution and peace initiatives (Zbicz and Green, 1997; Brunner, 1999; Sandwith, 2001). A global list of transboundary parks (as of 2001) is available on the Internet (http://www.unep-wcmc.org/protected_areas/transboundary/adjoining.pdf).

Two kinds of exchange programmes could be developed between TBPAs:

1. exchanges between the two (or more) areas involved in the TBPA itself. IUCN has recently published advice on this (Sandwith, 2001). The main purpose of such an exchange would be to strengthen the TBPA.
2. exchanges between one or more of the protected areas involved in one TBPA with those in another. The main purpose of this kind of exchange would be to learn more about TBPAs and their potential.

Table 3.2 East Asian Transboundary Protected Areas¹

China (Tibet)/ India (Sikkim) / Nepal	Kanchenjunga	Extension of Qomolangma (Jiang Cun)/ Kangchenzonga National Park/ Kachanjunga Conservation Area
China/ N. Korea, (DPR)/ Russian Federation		Jingpo Lake Nature Reserve (Jing Bo Hu) Mudan Peak Nature Reserve Changbaishan Nature and Biosphere Reserve/ Mt. Paekdu Natural Reserve (Baeku) Mt. Paekdu Natural Monument/ Kedrovaya Pad Zapovednik
China (Xilingol)/ Mongolia/ Russian Federation	Dauria International Protected Area (1994)	Dalai Lake Nature Reserve (Dalai Hu)/ Mongul Daguur Strict Protected Area (Nomgrog)/ Daurskiy State Nature Reserve (Zapovednik)
China (Tibet – Xizang)/ Myanmar		Cha Yu Nature Reserve (Zayu) Ba Ji Nature Reserve Nu Jiang He (River) Nature Reserve/ Ka Kabo Razi National Park (Hkakaborazi)
China (Tibet)/ Nepal	Mount Everest	Zhu Feng Nature Reserve (Zhangmukoan) Jiang Cun Nature Reserve (Qomolangma)/ Sagarmatha National Park Langtang National Park Makalu-Barun National Park Makalu-Barun Conservation Area
China/ Pakistan	Taxkorgan (1995)	Ta Shi Ku Er Gan Nature Reserve (Taxkorgan)/ Khunjerab National Park
China/ Russian Federation	Khanka Lake (1996)	Xing Kai Lake Nature Reserve/ Khankaiskiy Zapovednik.
China (Heilongjiang)/ Russian Federation	Amur River Basin	Fenglin Nature Reserve, Biosphere Reserve Khinganskiy Zapovednik
China (Heilongjiang)/ Russian Federation		Hong River Nature Reserve (Hong He)/ Bol'shekhkhtskiy Zapovednik
China (Guangxi)/ Vietnam		Gu Long Shui Yuan Lin (Qing Long Mountain) Xia Lei Shui Yuan Lin Nature Reserve/ Trungkhanh
China/ Vietnam		Guan Yin Shan Nature Reserve Fen Shui Ling Feng Nature Reserve/ Hoang Lien Son #2
Mongolia/ Russian Federation		Uvs Nuur Basin Strict Protected Area/ Ubsunurskaya Kotlovina Zapovednik
Mongolia/ Russian Federation		Khovsgul Nuur National Park/ Tunkinskiy National Park (Tunkinskiy)

Source: (Zbicz, 2001)

¹ Dorothy C. Zbicz, PhD., “Global List of Transfrontier Project Area Complexes”. In Sandwith, T., Shine, C., Hamilton, L. and Sheppard, D. *Transboundary Protected Areas for Peace and Co-operation*. IUCN, 2001. ©2001 Dorothy C. Zbicz, PhD

Sites facing similar problems

As an **example**, we include a short section here on Tourism:

In September 1998, a joint UNESCO-China systematic monitoring mission was undertaken to five natural World Heritage sites in China at the invitation of Chinese authorities. Among other things, the mission concluded that (Feng and Molloy, 1998), in view of the rapid development of tourism in China, a programme of education and training for sustainable tourism practices should be developed. Particular attention should be paid to establishing policies to make tourism compatible with site conservation, and meeting other countries' standards in this respect. Indeed this topic is also the subject of recent IUCN advice based on recommendations in the East Asia Action Plan (Eagles, *et al.*, 2001).

The mission found that, in general, management is committed to the protection of the World Heritage sites' natural values and that the main problem they are all facing, with the exception of Mount Huanglong, is tourism management. For example, managers at the Mount Taishan World Heritage site felt they would benefit from the advice of other World Heritage site managers who had to manage similarly high numbers of tourists. Similarly, Mount Huangshan has been considered a good model for managing large numbers of visitors to a complex scenic landscape in Asia. Recreation pressures on Jiuzhaigou, however, are becoming a serious issue, and radical management measures may be needed. Wulingyuan World Heritage site is reported to be overrun with tourist facilities. It is not clear if these are having an adverse effect on the biodiversity values of the wider site area, but the aesthetic impact is considerable and management is in need of assistance (Feng and Molloy, 1998).

Thus, for China at any rate, tourism management could be a central theme of an East Asian exchange programme. For example, site managers from throughout East Asia could visit Chinese World Heritage sites where tourism is a management concern, and be invited to analyse the situation, draw on experience elsewhere in the region and beyond, and make recommendations. Another approach would be to use the North America/UK exchange approach (section 2.2), in which several groups of external experts would visit an area for a short period of time, discuss the issues with various regional stakeholders, and write a final report with recommendations.

A Regional "Parkshare" programme

The most ambitious approach to exchange programmes would be to develop an East Asia version of the proposed IUCN/WCPA Parkshare Programme. Such a programme would draw on the EUROPARC exchange (2.1) and the North America/UK Countryside Exchange Programme (2.2). It would link all countries in the region and be developed perhaps under the auspices of WCPA East Asia. It would aim to facilitate exchanges and partnerships between protected areas in different countries in the region – and between the region and other parts of the world. It would be designed to build capacity.

While an East Asia Parkshare programme could be developed at various levels of sophistication, the elements might include:

- Using the WCPA network to compile a register of those potential partners who would particularly benefit from participation in an exchange and partnership programme, and be willing to make the organisational commitment to take part in such a programme. ("Partners" would be individual protected areas, protected area system administrations at the national and local levels, NGOs with a pro-

tected area management role, community groups, indigenous groups and private sector bodies directly involved in protected areas management).

- Using the WCPA regional, and perhaps global, network to identify suitable international partners who would benefit from a partnership under the Parkshare Programme;
- Establishing formal agreements between individual partners involving the exchange of personnel (short familiarising visits and longer hands-on exchanges) and other joint actions;
- Providing regional training courses for a number of participants in the partnerships;
- Producing and disseminating reports arising out of partnerships for wider distribution beyond the partners themselves;
- Establishing an advisory partnership and exchange board from within the WCPA membership (regionally or globally) to provide overall guidance of the programme;
- Establishing a management board to supervise operations and approve individual partnerships and expenditures under the programme;
- Appointing an Exchange Co-ordinator or Joint Co-ordinators.

Such a programme would be relatively expensive and call for strong leadership. However, funds and time permitting, a WCPA East Asia Regional Exchange Programme would be an ideal way to increase management capacity in East Asia's protected area systems. Possible funding agencies include IUCN, World Bank, GEF, perhaps some governments in the region and various NGO organisations (see Athanas *et al.*, 2001).

Providing the supporting information

The planning of exchange programmes of any kind requires access to good background information, for example:

- lists of the protected areas in each nation, within the East Asia region, and globally;
- evidence of the major issues facing each park;
- contact addresses;
- possible source of funding;
- publications and other sources of advice;
- information on training opportunities.

Some such information is available in published form, e.g. in the *1997 UN List of Protected Areas* (IUCN, 1998). It would also help if agencies in the East Asia region were to translate into national languages of the region the following four reports (all arising out of the East Asia Action Plan) and distribute them widely:

- this present report on exchange programmes;
- the *Directory of Protected Area Personnel and Organisations in East Asia* (Hayes and Egli, 2001);

- the *Guidelines for Financing Protected Areas in East Asia* (Athanas *et al.*, 2001); and
- the *Guidelines for Tourism in Parks and Protected Areas in East Asia* (Eagles *et al.*, 2001).

A great deal of information about other protected areas can be found by those with access to the Internet. There is a global source of protected area data at the UNEP-WCMC web site (see Reference section), and much other Internet-based information is available from other park systems. Such information can provide new ideas and tools to help address local issues. Indeed, access to Internet information on protected areas may be sufficient to avoid the need to set up an exchange altogether.

It is a priority for WCPA in East Asia to help its members, and protected areas managers generally, to have better access to such information.

Finding the funds

The financing of a protected area exchange can be costly, depending on the number and complexity of activities and tasks engaged in and the location of the partner(s). Many protected area agencies in East Asia have little or no available funds for such a project and a few are struggling simply to stay operational. Mongolia, for example, is able to allocate only about US\$1 million to the management of their entire growing protected area system. There is definite need here, and in other nations, to identify potential funding sources.

Protected area managers wishing to engage in an exchange or exchange programme should first seek what available funds there might be from their respective agencies, but more realistically should actively seek external sources of funding. Another option is to develop an exchange with minimal costs, focusing perhaps on information and experience exchanges via the Internet. Such relatively simple kinds of contacts may help form the “critical mass” of interest that is required to develop more complex (and expensive) exchange programmes. As interest and enthusiasm grows, so it should become easier to identify funding sources.

The account below is a summary only. The reader is recommended to seek more detailed advice from two other IUCN publications:

- *Financing Protected Areas: Guidelines for Protected Area Managers*, (IUCN, 2000).
- *Guidelines for Financing Protected Areas in East Asia*, (Athanas *et al.*, 2001) – which provides additional, regionally-relevant information on financing projects such as exchange programmes.

Both reports provide detailed descriptions of funding sources that may be accessed and the financial mechanisms that may be used to develop one or more exchange programmes.

Core funding/protected area agency budget allocation

The starting point should be the protected area management agencies themselves, although this type of core funding is often difficult to obtain, as governments may not have big or flexible enough budgets to support such an initiative. Even if the support is

modest, it is an indication of the importance attached to exchanges and this may help to persuade other sources of funding to support the programme.

Grants from public donor agencies

Multilateral donor agencies, such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, as well as bilateral donor agencies – such as the EU, USAID, DANIDA and JICA – provide a significant amount of financing for conservation and are often particularly interested in financing protected site activities. These types of agencies would be potentially suitable to support large-scale, multi-national exchange programmes.

In general, multilateral bank funding is available only to governments. Typically a development bank grant or loan for the establishment and maintenance of national parks and protected areas would come in the context of support for implementation of a national conservation plan. Projects submitted to development agencies, especially multilateral banks, must usually have the backing of the appropriate government agencies, and can generally be submitted by or with those agencies.

Grants from private foundations and NGOs

Private philanthropic foundations also provide significant amounts of financing for global conservation activities. Foundations usually have specific missions, areas of focus, or geographical interests that guide which projects and activities are funded. Thus, it is important to identify foundations that have compatible missions, goals and objectives with the protected areas involved in any exchange.

Foundations are usually interested in activity or project-based financing. This means that the funds offered by an organisation or foundation are often earmarked for a specific project and are usually short-term. Funding bodies are also often interested in seeing the projects or activities that they assist become self-supporting or financing. Thus, they may be a source of revenue for start-up costs or one-off projects such as infrastructure development. For example, the Fulbright Grant for the Italy-US Parks and Protected Area Twinning/Partnership provides funds for the exchange of one Italian and one American each year.

Making use of established funding programmes or partnerships

By taking advantage of an ongoing project, it may be easier to find the funds for an exchange programme. For example, there are a number of such international projects ongoing in East Asia, such as the Eastern Steppe Biodiversity Project in Mongolia, sponsored by the GEF through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and executed by the Ministry for Nature and the Environment and the United Nations Project Office. The Wetlands Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use in China project is also sponsored by the GEF through the UNDP and executed with the help of Wetlands International. Applying for technical assistance from the World Heritage Fund, UNESCO, the GEF, and the World Bank are all viable options.

Self-financing mechanisms

The self-financing option applies only to wealthier participants and countries. An example of this is the North America/UK Countryside Exchange, where each participant must pay his or her own way. It can be quite costly, although if travel is only inter-regional, then cost may not be a limiting factor.

Cost-sharing principle

Cost-sharing refers to an arrangement between the partners whereby each partner agrees to share the costs of the exchange programme or components of an exchange programme. Such is the case of the US-China Sister Marine Reserve Agreements. The host country pays all in-country expenses during a partner's visit, while the visiting partner agrees to pay all expenses to and from the site. Even if the protected area agencies have limited funds to finance the exchange, the cost-sharing principle is an important aspect of any exchange.

3.3 An action agenda for the WCPA in East Asia

The guidance in this publication is intended to be used by a whole range of organisations and individuals with responsibilities for, or an interest in, the planning and management of protected areas in East Asia. However, the work arises directly from the IUCN/WCPA East Asia Action Plan and WCPA in East Asia has a special interest in ensuring that action is taken on its recommendations.

We conclude therefore with a short action agenda for WCPA in this region. We recommend that WCPA East Asia should:

- devote a full session at its next meeting to the formal consideration of the advice in this report;
- consider the setting up of a regional task force to progress this work;
- encourage all national protected area agencies to make statements or adopt policy positions in support of exchanges;
- encourage the development of a region-wide programme of exchanges between protected areas in the region, and beyond, including defining a regional co-ordinator post to lead this work;
- open discussion with potential funders of what aspects of the regional exchange programme they would be ready to support;
- secure support to have the text of this report (and its three sister volumes) translated into the languages of the region and have them widely distributed;
- develop information systems in support of the exchange programme (web site and published data).

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Other sources of information include:

- EUROPARC information package (unpublished paper in IUCN files)
- NOAA information package (unpublished paper in IUCN files)
- NOAA web site – <http://www.nos.noaa.gov/ipo/projects/us-china>
- UNESCO web site – <http://www.unesco.org>
- WWF web site – <http://www.panda.org>
- UNEP-WCMC web site – <http://www.unep-wcmc.org>
- Glynwood Center web site – <http://www.glynwood.org>

Appendix

Draft EUROPARC questionnaire

Name:

Full address:

.....

.....Post code:

What type of exchange are you looking for:

Twinning with another area/organisation

Exchange of individual member of staff

Group visit to another area

Help needed from a specialist/specialists from another area

Other (please specify)

.....

How long would you like it to be?

What dates or time of year is preferred?

How many people from your park/organisation would be involved?

What languages could be used?

What type of exchange partner are you looking for? (e.g., type of park, type of landscape/bio-type, country or special geographic location, special skills/experience needed, languages preferred and other requirements)

.....

.....

.....

Would the exchange be formal or informal?

Details about your park/organisation

.....
.....
.....
.....

IUCN Category:

Area:.....

Location:

Number of staff:

Other designations (World Heritage, Biosphere, Ramsar):.....

.....

Aims of the organisation:.....

.....

Main problems/issues (5):

.....

What skills or experience does your park/organisation have from which others can learn?

.....

.....

.....

Details of individuals/groups seeking to participate in the exchange (where this is relevant)

.....

.....

Personal details.....

.....

.....

Experience (main experience/tasks)

.....
.....
.....

Previous training and work experience

.....
.....
.....

Languages (which and how well it is spoken or written)

.....

Why do you want to participate in the exchange?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Do you have any special requirements?

.....
.....

Is there any other information which might be helpful?

.....
.....
.....