

Conclusions from the workshop on Governance in Protected Areas: the role of institutions in the Mediterranean context.

Castelldefels (Barcelona). 30th Nov/ 1st Dec. 2002

As most Mediterranean Protected Areas do not typically cover extensive areas and if we consider both their specificity as IUCN Category V entities and their importance as a cultural asset, then the concept of governance must necessarily go beyond mere participation (i.e. Governance is not only participation).

Along the same lines, in the southern and eastern Mediterranean basin, there is a need for projects where co-operation plays a major role in enhancing know-how and good practices on governance issues.

The main points discussed by the meeting are as follows:

- Governance processes should include a working programme from an integrated and complementary standpoint, and should pursue models for shared management.
- Governance means processes where the various sectors involved have a role to play and engage in pro-active work in contrast to decision-making policies based on traditional approaches; where there is little feedback and lack of freely circulating information which leads to watertight compartments.
- Good governance involves all levels and scopes of power.
- Land management must integrate the conservation of both ecological processes and cultural values, strengthening legal frameworks, as well as institutional and administrative structures to enable co-ordination between institutions and with the various economic sectors involved.
- Cultural values should be an essential benchmark in governance policies, particularly in areas where these values have been best conserved.
- There are certain elements, such as environmental or natural quality that are considered as intangible and that may come into conflict with other elements of land management, such as the creation of infrastructure (tangible). Governance should assist in ensuring that such elements are included in the assessment as well as in the management of natural areas.

- Even though initially a particular scheme adopted by a higher administration may further the process of PA declaration and shared management (top-down), the setting up of management bodies where responsibilities are shared between local town corporations and other public bodies may enable greater participation (cross-cutting).
- There are several different management models for natural areas. However, only a few really promote effective management, for example those that entail joint participatory bodies and shared management models i.e. steering committees, participatory structures or interdisciplinary teams.
- Protected natural areas are scenarios where social participation models can be tried out.
- An experienced NGO with full understanding of both the territory, protected areas and the social situation could foster positive synergies among all social stakeholders for the management of the natural area, e.g. APE Programme by Legaambiente.
- The human factor must be taken into account if we are to achieve full integration of management models for habitats and species with new and/or traditional social and economic activities. Effective co-operation requires the local population's trust and participation in management.
- Factors that can assist management include: strengthening local civil society; the existence of a data base of small-scale projects (ecological adaptive loans) that enable the terms for co-operation to be specified.
- Understanding cultural issues and acquaintance with local personalities enable the positions between managers and the local community to be more closely linked. Users should also be considered, placing particular importance on programmes targeting specific sectors within the population, e.g.: co-ordination between administrations, sectoral participation, mechanisms for co-operation with existing bodies and capacity building through experience conveyed to the remaining stakeholders involved in managing the area.
- PA connectivity requires new, or at least the adaptation of existing governance models to address new realities that involve linkage between areas.
- Legislation should acknowledge social participation so as to confer legitimacy with respect to the management bodies. PA management bodies should also reflect political, territorial and social plurality.
- Governance must respond to certain complex processes and may be subject to sudden changes; however, realistic solutions must always be sought.

- Governance in PAs must always be based on legitimacy and the effective capability of managers and all sectors involved.
- Sound training for managers may simplify procedures. Today implementation of new technologies and assessment models enable training to go beyond simple conservation management in APs, in favour of governance of these natural areas.
- Governance provides an opportunity for exchange of experiences eg.. Parks for Life or IUCN's Transboundary Protected Areas Programme.
- Governance must act as a means of generating trust among the population.
- EU funding must be a further tool for co-operation on sustainable development in protected areas throughout the Southern and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean basin.
- Funding for the implementation of programmes in the Southern Mediterranean must build on previous work achieved through contacts between different bodies (governments, NGOs, scientific committees, civil society and so on) and based on preparatory studies.
- Participatory and administrative management may be enhanced by the implementation of twinning and network schemes, such as the Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance set up for the marine environment.
- Governance should be pivotal during the planning stage and in setting up management plans.

Experiences from other organisations where different bodies are represented should also be taken into account, such as the Barcelona Convention Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development or specific working meetings such as the Medforum Conference on Protected Areas held in 1999.

Emphasis was also placed on examples of best practices or successful cases, including:

- Programme for participation and co-operation at the Sous-Massa National Park (Morocco) between government and NGOs (SEO¹/Birdlife)
- Land stewardship in Catalonia.
- DANA Project in Jordan.

¹Spanish Society for Ornithology]

- APE Programme by Legaambiente.
- The Mediterranean initiative as an example for strengthening cultural values within protected areas.
- The Nature Park of the Garrotxa Volcanic Area.
- Land conservation can also be supported by traditional economic activities as seen in the Baix Llobregat Agricultural Park .
- The linking of historical, cultural and natural values in the Apennine Region from Liguria to Bologna. Or the CHIP and ITACA programme, APEN in Italy.
- The Alboran Sea Declaration may stand as a participatory model for setting principles for the Mediterranean area.
- On the topic of shared management: the Merja Zerga reserve (GEF/WWF) and the Mamora forest in Morocco.
- As for structuring a participatory body, Maremma is an example of how to set up the various sectors to act as mechanisms for control, monitoring and assessment.

Lastly, participants raised issues of priority interest for the Murcia 2003 meeting, within the workshop on governance:

- Governance beyond participation
- Governance in administration and management
- Governance beyond PAs.
- How to ensure participation in planning and/or management of protected areas
- What should be done where there are not enough legal tools available for sustainable area management
- How to encourage active participation