



## WPC Recommendation 17

### Recognising and Supporting a Diversity of Governance Types for Protected Areas

Conservation and sustainable management of areas for biodiversity, ecosystem services and cultural values are dependent on the actions of society as a whole.

Many protected areas are declared and managed by governments. However there is a diversity of additional governance types delivering conservation and addressing other objectives throughout the world, including:

1. Decentralised governance by state/provincial or local/municipal government units;
2. Co-managed arrangements with local communities and other stakeholders;
3. Indigenous or traditional territories governed or managed for livelihood, cultural and conservation purposes by indigenous or traditional communities;
4. Protected areas managed by private sector entities under long term contract or outright private ownership; and
5. Transboundary conservation areas.

"Governance types" in this recommendation refers to who holds management authority and responsibility and is expected to be held accountable. This authority may be derived from legal, customary or otherwise legitimate rights.

The world is experiencing rapid and profound social, technological, cultural, demographic and environmental changes and governance arrangements that were appropriate in the last century may no longer be appropriate or sustainable in the face of the trends and challenges that countries and civil society will have to contend with in this century. There is also a worldwide trend towards decentralising authority and responsibility for the management of protected areas, including increasing efforts to develop partnerships among different sectors of society and to provide for greater engagement of civil society in decision making related to protected areas.

The Ecosystem Approach endorsed as a basic framework by the Convention on Biological Diversity (*Decision V/6*) supports a diversity of governance types since it recognises the centrality of social, cultural, economic and institutional factors in promoting conservation, and calls

for decentralising management to the lowest appropriate level and stakeholder involvement in conservation.

Recognition of different types of governance is important to help fulfil the requirements of national protected area systems as called for under Article 8a of the Convention on Biological Diversity and in particular to ensure the bio-physical connectivity essential to conserve biological diversity. Thus, protected area systems combining different governance types are likely to be more resilient, responsive and adaptive under various threats to conservation, and thus more sustainable and effective in the long run.

*Therefore, PARTICIPANTS in the Stream on Governance: New ways of working together at the V<sup>th</sup> World Parks Congress in Durban, South Africa (8-17 September 2003):*

1. RECOMMEND governments and civil society:
  - a. Recognise the legitimacy and importance of a range of governance types for protected areas as a means to strengthen the management and expand the coverage of the world's protected areas, to address gaps in national protected area systems, to promote connectivity at landscape and seascape level, to enhance public support for such areas, and to strengthen the relationship between people and the land, freshwater and the sea; and
  - b. Promote relationships of mutual respect, communication, and support between and amongst people managing and supporting protected areas under all different governance types;
2. REQUEST the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) to refine its Protected Area Categorization System to include a governance dimension that recognises the legitimacy and diversity of approaches to protected area establishment and management and makes explicit that a variety of governance types can be used to achieve conservation objectives and other goals;
3. RECOMMEND that this "governance dimension" recognise at least four broad governance types applicable to all IUCN protected area categories:
  - a. Government managed;
  - b. Co-managed (i.e. multi-stakeholder management);
  - c. Privately managed; and
  - d. Community managed (community conserved areas);

4. URGE the Chairs of IUCN's Commissions to establish an inter-Commission working group on protected area governance with membership especially from the WCPA, the Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP) and the Commission on Environmental Law (CEL), to advance a comprehensive programme of work, including:
  - a. Research that supports, improves and evaluates the management effectiveness and the good governance attributes of all protected area governance types (especially including participatory research approaches);
  - b. Analysis of the type and extent of support required in terms of legislation, policies and practices to improve protected area governance;
  - c. Compilation, analysis and sharing of relevant experiences and best practices; and
  - d. Capacity building initiatives;
5. ENCOURAGE the UNEP/World Conservation Monitoring Centre to expand its data collection and dissemination programme to recognise all governance types, particularly areas of conservation value established and managed outside government protected area networks, such as community conserved areas and private protected areas;
6. CALL on the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to:
  - a. RECOGNISE the legitimacy of all these governance types;
  - b. ADOPT legal and policy measures to reinforce the management effectiveness and good governance attributes of these governance types; and
  - c. UNDERTAKE initiatives to strengthen relevant institutional and human capacities, particularly mutual learning among protected area institutions and sites engaged in similar efforts.

**Stream:** Governance: New ways of Working Together

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