

Report to 3I-C

Title: SCENARIOS FOR PROTECTED AREAS
Project leader: Jeff McNeely
Project number: 32094-200
Budget: CHF 34,000

In March 2003, the 3I-C fund agreed to support the preparation of scenarios for protected areas. This report summarises progress to date.

1. Summary, overall assessment and next steps

The future is uncertain, and scenario planning provides a way to address such uncertainties. The intention of scenario planning is to highlight the major forces that may push the future in alternative directions, as a way of preparing for uncertainties.

The 3I-C project “Scenarios for Protected Areas” has applied the scenario planning technique to think about alternative futures for protected areas. Protected areas are designed to exist in perpetuity, but we know that future conditions will certainly be different from those that prevail today; but we have very little certainty about exactly what those changes will be.

A workshop was organised where protected areas experts were asked to identify drivers determining the future of protected areas, and prepare draft scenarios on the basis of these drivers. The workshop was facilitated by Ged Davis, head of the Scenario unit with Shell International. The draft scenarios were further edited in the following months. The final scenarios were published (see reference list in Annex I), and an automated PowerPoint presentation was screened during the opening plenary of the World Parks Congress in Durban.

The exercise was useful, innovative and stimulating. A similar process will be used to craft scenarios for IUCN, to be presented and discussed at the 2004 World Conservation Congress.

2. Challenge and response

Scenario planning as used in this project is a tool to make the future more manageable and to help strategic positioning for an uncertain future. The use of IUCN’s network has proven to be an excellent means to get expert input.

3. Outputs and results

The project achieved the 3I-C objectives as follows:

Innovation

IUCN had not previously used scenario planning in any serious way. The process was innovative, as were the products resulting from the initiative, including an innovative form of automated PowerPoint (see further discussion below). Many participants at

the World Parks Congress felt that the scenarios presented at the opening plenary provided the most innovative element of the plenary programme at the Congress.

Integration

Participants in the workshop on protected area scenarios came from all parts of the IUCN secretariat, including Corporate Strategy, Biodiversity and International Agreements unit, CEESP, CEC, Species Programme, Social Policy, WESCANA, Protected Areas, the Business Unit, and the regional office for Central Africa. Collaborating organizations included Wildlife Conservation Society, the Ramsar Bureau, Duke University, WWF International, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, European Mountain Forum, Grupo Ecologico Sierra Gorda, CARE, The Nature Conservancy, and the World Institute for Conservation and Development. Shell International provided two senior individuals as workshop facilitators. Eleven of the 31 participants were women. The result of the workshop was a document that integrates perspectives from all these individuals in three scenarios, applying them to the future of protected areas.

Information and Communication

The activity led to a presentation at the opening plenary of the World Parks Congress in the form of an automated PowerPoint with narration and music, supported by a booklet entitled “Protected Areas in 2023: Scenarios for an Uncertain Future”. Twenty-five hundred copies of the final report were distributed, with 500 copies retained for subsequent distribution. The PowerPoint will be further modified for other applications.

4. Organisation and management

The 3I-C Fund provided CHF 34,000 for the project. Counterpart funding was provided by the Protected Areas Programme (USD 10,000 from the WPC GEF Funds), and Shell International (in-kind support).

The funds were used to organise a workshop at HQ, and to produce two communication products for the Parks Congress: an automated PowerPoint presentation, and a printed booklet discussing the planning process and the resulting scenarios.

The contribution from the Protected Areas programme was not used entirely. I was used to pay the per diem of the workshop attendants, money that had been paid out of Cost Centre 31051.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

The scenario planning exercise for protected areas has demonstrated the utility of this approach in helping to generate new thinking about alternative futures. The scenario approach is being proposed as part of the World Conservation Congress to be held in Bangkok in November of next year. The approach could well make significant contributions to a wide range of IUCN programmes, as well as to IUCN as a whole, with specific applications at regional and national levels. The individuals involved are

well aware of the potential of this approach and anxious to have further opportunities to convert their learning into more regular practice.

The “scenarios for protected areas” exercise on the one hand showed participants’ enthusiasm to think creatively about future uncertainties that influence our work. At the same time it showed that a thorough understanding of the scenario development process is required in order to come up with stories that can be productively used for planning. It is proposed to apply the scenario process in regional workshops in Asia-Pacific, Africa, Latin America, and OECD countries in early 2004, leading to the presentation of a set of consolidated scenarios at the 2004 World Conservation Congress. These would form the basis of a new synthesis of conservation thinking in the early 21st century. Issues that might be covered include the future impact of biotechnology on conservation; alternative futures for different wildlife conservation strategies; alternatives to regionalization and decentralization; alternative sources of funding for IUCN; alternative approaches to membership structure; and so forth. Another approach would be to focus on the major proposed themes for the Bangkok WCC.

This 3I-C pilot project has shown that scenario planning is a useful tool that can help people and organisations to “be prepared” in a changing world. This is essential to IUCN and its members, and the approach will be further developed and applied in the coming months through a separate 3I-C project for the Bangkok WCC.

ANNEX I. Reference list

1. McNeely, Jeffrey A. and Frederik Schutyser (eds.). 2003. Protected Areas in 2023: Scenarios for An Uncertain Future. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland. 56 pp.
2. Protected Areas in 2023. Scenarios for Protected Areas. Automated PowerPoint presentation.

ANNEX II. Report of workshop held at IUCN HQ 24-26 April 2003

Scenarios for Protected Areas : a workshop

IUCN Headquarters, Gland

Thursday 24th – Saturday 26th April 2003

Workshop report

1. Introduction

A “Scenarios for Protected Areas” workshop was held at IUCN Headquarters from 24 to 26 May 2003. A number of Protected Areas (PA) experts were invited, and about 20-25 were present throughout the workshop (see the list of participants, attached as Annex 1 to this report). Some IUCN HQ members of staff were present during the complete workshop, while others attended parts of it. The workshop was facilitated by Ged Davis, head of the Scenarios Unit of Shell International, and Roland Kupers, also of Shell. The agenda of the meeting is attached as Annex 2 to this report.

This report is a brief summary of the workshop. Participants will a more detailed report.

2. Aim of the workshop

Scenarios are possible alternative futures, and scenarios can be described as a planning but also a communications tool to help formulate policies for the future. Scenarios are not visions of the future, nor necessarily preferred future states. Instead, they try to describe possible futures depending on how a limited number of uncertainties evolve.

For this workshop, the key question was “What is the future of PAs across the world over the next 20 years?” The aim was to come up with a number of scenarios that would describe the situation of PAs in 2023, as well as the turning points that would lead PAs to those situations.

3. Process

Thursday 24 April

After a welcome message from Achim Steiner and an introduction by Jeff McNeely, Ged Davis described the use and methodology of scenario planning, and outlined the aims, rules and process of the workshop. A video was shown describing the scenario planning process within Shell. Ged Davis then outlined the roadmap for the workshop.

Participants were split in two groups. Throughout the workshop, the working groups were coached by Ged Davis and Roland Kupers. The groups were first asked to look back in time and describe 5 key events that occurred in the past two decades and have shaped our current thinking about PAs. All ideas were grouped in several themes and perspectives on sheets of paper, and stuck on the walls.

After lunch, Jeff McNeely presented the results from a questionnaire that had been circulated to about 40 PA experts. The questionnaire contained seven questions about the past, present and future of PAs. Jeff McNeely distilled about 5 rough scenarios from the questionnaire responses:

- “Hanging On”

Conflicts are a basic fact of life. PA situation: a status quo, doing the best we can with the ebb and flow of political support. Some systems are doing great, others are declining.

- “Community-based Conservation”

Local people are given priority/ownership and there is a wide variability in PA management. Development is given priority over biodiversity. PAs are vulnerable to external factors.

- “Island Fortresses”

There are serious conflicts with local people, PAs require strong protection and become isolated from surrounding lands. High costs mean that wealthy visitors are favoured. Many PAs are over-run by the rural poor.

- “Conservation Concessions”

Governments provide the regulatory framework, and the private sector takes over management of PAs. Charismatic sites receive disproportionate investment. NGOs are accused of “green imperialism”.

- “We Win”

PAs are valued for the services they provide, so all have enough funding. There are many different kinds of PA to cater to many different interests. There is strong global support for training, education, outreach, research.

The key issues from the questionnaires appeared to be funding and economics, governance, training and capacity building, values, science and threats.

Within the 2 working groups, participants were asked to note the three most critical issues for the future of PAs. The groups were then asked to each select 8 issues. Those issues would then later be further explored.

Ged Davis then presented 2 scenarios for 2020 (“Business Class” and “Prism”) that have been developed by Shell in 2000. The public summary of these scenarios is on

the Shell website. In “Business Class”, a globally connected elite is the main player, whereas “Prism” is a world of multiple regional values and models. Working groups were asked to think about and formulate the impact on PAs of each of these two scenarios.

The result was again noted on flipcharts and attached to the wall. The first day closed with a discussion of these results and a group dinner in Nyon.

Friday 25 April

Ged Davis reminded participants of the focal question of the workshop - the future of PAs across the world over the next 20 years - and asked working groups to now record and discuss the eight issues most critical to this question. Also, groups had to rank these issues according to which are most or least predictable.

The following eight issues were proposed:

- social/personal/cultural values
- governance and political will
- poverty
- global economy
- civil instability
- distribution of costs and benefits
- climate change
- tenure

A discussion then followed about which issues were most uncertain or unpredictable, since such issues determine the differences between various possible futures. As a result, smaller working groups were asked to each work on one of the following 5 issues:

- values and civil instability
- poverty
- global economy and distribution of costs and benefits
- demand for alternative land uses and climate change
- tenure, governance and political will

Each group had to discuss one of these key uncertainties, trying to answer a number of questions:

- Where are we today and what are the implications for PAs?
- How might it play out in the future (different alternative end points, range of possibilities)?
- How do we get from where we are today to each different future? What are possible shocks or turning points?

Groups then discussed the outcome of this.

Then participants were invited to think about possible sketch scenarios:

- How do key uncertainties combine with each other?
- Create story fragments that illustrate these interactions.
- What would be the outcome of such interactions?
- Create 2-3 scenario stories which emerge.
- What are the possible branching points?

Ged Davis then proposed to synthesize and pull all this together. From the discussion it seemed that there were two well defined storylines where the evolution in a number of critical issues aligned well.

In one such scenario poverty would be reduced, growth would gradually increase, and values would be uncertain.

In a second scenario, the economy would be more volatile, poverty would increase overall and less value would be put on nature. A third possible scenario could be considered, starting from a bottom-up process in society, where poverty would remain somewhat stable.

The group also identified some possible catastrophic outcomes in the global economy and climate change. It was decided to develop these separately as “wild cards.”

The participants were asked to split in three groups, each working on one possible scenario, discussing where each of the critical issues would go in the next twenty years, and what the final impact would be on PAs. One participant worked on the two wild cards.

Saturday 26 April

Work continued on the three scenarios and the wild cards. They were presented to the plenary. Three scenarios were developed (the names are working titles):

1. “Buy your Eden”

The economy is volatile, middle class grows and the gap between rich and poor widens. Social instability increases. Nature and biodiversity are not main concerns, and the relationship with “nature” is volatile. The private sector becomes more important. The constituency for PAs is more urban. Land use pressure increases on “poor” parks. The result is a series of “bicycle” parks, next to shiny “jumbo jet or Rolls Royce” parks.

2. “Arco Iris – Rainbow”

The world’s economic system collapses in the early years of the 21st century. A new world system is built, based on a bottom-up approach. Local communities are both much more socially, economically and politically active and responsible of their own surroundings and of their environment. Civil society is at the centre of this new model. Biodiversity conservation has taken a different dimension. As a consequence,

Protected Areas are understood differently now compared to the situation 20 years ago. A diversity of management systems coexist without conflict.

3. “G ∞ local”

There is steady global economic growth, patchy at local/regional level, so there is continued polarization. Survival pressures (e.g. water, fire, AIDS, invasive species) lead to action in enlightened self-interest. Roots are valued: earth, culture and indigenous roots are respected. There is a global commitment to implement the Millennium Development Goals in response to repeated crises. Corporate responsibility for environment and society is the normal way of doing business and there is a multiplicity of partnership models (government, civil society, business) that test ways of relieving poverty. Governments are held accountable and become more responsive to organized civil society. International mechanisms are being put in place to make the global community pay for global benefits.

Science helps in unexpected ways. There are new skills, attitudes are oriented, regionally, to conservation. PAs become engines of growth for rural development, and restoration becomes a major focus and a major source of jobs.

Separately, the two wild cards were summarised as follows:

1. Economic recession. A depression from 2010-2020. Impact for PAs: Protected areas in the developing world, now left to their own devices as funding from the developed world has stopped flowing, undergo a fundamental transformation. Some are overrun and stripped of their biological riches by local people and migrant workers displaced from closed down export industries. Other protected areas benefit from a surge in local support. Local pride and recognition of the value to local communities of their nearby protected areas results in effective local policing and resource management. Protected areas system plans are ignored. International standards become irrelevant. International NGOs wither and die.

2. Climate catastrophe. Europe freezes while the rest of the world burns. By 2020 the temperature has risen 3 degrees Celsius worldwide. Worldwide, the enormous loss of species and the climatic damage to protected areas makes the current protected areas framework irrelevant.

There was some discussion on what would be the branching point that would determine whether we move towards one of the two related “G ∞ local” or “Arco Iris – Rainbow” scenarios.

Roland Kupers schematically summarised the outcome. Ged Davis concluded that we should take more time to develop the stories, and to decide on whether to merge “G ∞ local” and “Arco Iris – Rainbow” or instead to explain with clarity where they differ. The majority of participants proposed to keep them as separate scenarios.

4. What next?

Jeff McNeely led a discussion on what would happen next. As a first step it was agreed that the scenarios would be further refined, fleshed out with facts and more sharply differentiated (and made more dramatic – as a tool to make people think). Jeff McNeely would be responsible for overall coordination.

Each scenario has one focal person who will coordinate:

1. “Buy your Eden”: Mohammad Rafiq.
 2. “Arco Iris – Rainbow”: Sonia Peña Moreno.
 3. “G ∞ local”: Konrad von Ritter.
- Harvey Locke will continue work on the wild cards.

The scenarios would also be circulated to a limited number of people (perhaps the questionnaire respondents) for review. It was agreed that wide circulation would not be realistic given time constraints. Also, we don't pretend to tell the truth, just provocative stories.

It was then discussed how the final scenarios would be presented in Durban, in a 20 minute time slot at the opening plenary. A number of ideas were floated, e.g. animated cartoons, graphic / visuals / PowerPoint, one person or a theatre group, three “ambassadors” each explaining or defending a scenario etc. It was agreed that a simple, clear and provocative text should be prepared by July. A decision would then be made on the format of presentation in Durban.

Finally, it was proposed not to stop after Durban. Rather, scenarios could become a useful tool e.g. at the CBD COP 8. All present agreed and also proposed to develop scenarios planning as a tool within IUCN, and specifically for the 2004 WCC. The scenario planning process during this workshop managed to mould a lot of ideas and uncertainties into a small number of sound and workable stories that allow people to think about and plan more clearly for the future of PAs. A similar process could be used more generally in IUCN.

Annex 1: List of participants

Participants list: Scenarios for Protected Areas workshop
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Annex 2: Agenda of Scenarios Workshop Meeting, 24-26 April 2003, Gland.

Agenda
IUCN -- Scenarios for Protected Areas
IUCN Headquarters, Gland
Thursday 24th – Saturday 26th April 2003

Thursday 24th April:

- 09.00 Introduction
- Workshop objectives and background
- How do we view the last 20 years?
- Interviews
- 12.00 Lunch
- 13.00 A global overview
- Critical Issues, scenario drivers and focal question
- 17.00 Close

Friday 25th April:

- 09.00 Review
- Examining Drivers
- Branching Points and sketch scenarios
- 12.00 Lunch
- 13.00 Feedback and agree in plenary a common set of scenarios
- Develop scenarios in teams and report back
- 17.00 Close

Saturday 26th April:

- 09.00 Deepen scenarios
- Review scenarios and agree next steps

What do we take to Durban and other things?

12.00

Close

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Sar/Durban/3I-C Scenarios/07Oct03