Protected Areas & Ecotourism
IUCN Best Practice Guidelines, tools & protected area/ecotourism highlights from around the world

Kathy Zischka, Director
Australian Committee for IUCN

Annual General Meeting
2 November 2018, Sydney
IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature

- **Largest and most diverse global environmental network** and the global authority on the status of the natural world.

- **Unique membership Union:** governments, NGOs + Indigenous Peoples’ Organisations (+1,300 Members)

- Advised by six **Commissions of volunteer experts** to guide best practice policy (+13,000)

- **Best Practice Guidelines & tools** – IUCN provides the unique apolitical space for collegiate discussion to develop best practice environmental policy & tools based on science.

- **Independent Advisory body** to UNESCO on natural World Heritage Areas
IUCN in Oceania

Map © IUCN Oceania / Hans Wendt
ACIUCN – The Australian National Committee of IUCN

- The Australian National Committee for IUCN Members
  - +30 Members & Associates (GA/NGO/IPO)

- To provide the unique apolitical convening power of IUCN for collegiate discussion – using science to develop best practice environmental policy.

- Convenes events, publishes best practice policy documents, connects members with global IUCN conservation priorities.
Protected Planet -
Global Protected Areas

Terrestrial PAs:
15% of the Earth
Protected areas coverage in 2018

Marine PAs: 7% of the Earth

15,354

7.45%

26,964,896km²
Nature-based tourism and recreation is on the rise in parks, protected areas and other biodiversity hotspots across the planet. Tourism is included in the Sustainable Development Goals and plays a role in at least 12 of the 20 CBD Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Responsible tourism promotes environmental education, sustainable development, conservation finance, and community and visitor engagement in conservation.

Challenges of tourism: many examples of nature-based tourism demonstrate that operations and destinations are exceeding carrying capacity and/or do not have the right infrastructure, programmes and controls in place to prevent severe negative impacts to nature and local communities.

IUCN has realised that more efforts to reduce anthropogenic impacts on wildlife and ecosystems from tourism are essential.
Global trends: World Heritage & Tourism

2017 IUCN World Heritage Outlook Report

- **Top 3 threats to WH:**
  - Invasive species, climate change and tourism impacts.

- **Trend:** ~10% increase in # sites where tourism impacts are *high or very high* (2014-17)
Potential threats to WH

- Tourism in top 10
- Climate change is #1

2017 IUCN World Heritage Outlook Report

![Graph showing potential threats assessed as high or very high in 2017 and 2014. Numbers are based on the number of sites where these threats occur.](image)
Management effectiveness

2017 IUCN World Heritage Outlook Report

Number of WH sites where protection and management were assessed as ‘highly effective’
IUCN Global Programme

Target: Supporting Ecotourism standards –

By supporting the oversight and improvement of ecotourism standards, guidelines and best practices, through collaboration with Members and other key organisations, IUCN can create new incentives and resources for public and private protected areas, private operations, and other ecotourism destinations to work towards achieving a net-positive impact for people and nature.
IUCN, Best Practice Guidelines & Ecotourism

- IUCN Global Programme
- IUCN Best Practice Guidelines
- Platform to share Best Practice solutions
- ACIUCN publications
IUCN Best Practice Guidelines relating to Tourism

Sustainable tourism in protected areas - Guidelines for Planning and Management

Sustainable tourism and national World Heritage

2002

2011
IUCN Best Practice Guidelines relating to Tourism

Protected Area Governance and Management

Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas

Guidelines for privately protected areas

Sustainability on Tourism & Visitor Management in Protected Areas

2015

2016

New – Nov 2018

Coming soon
Tourism & Visitor Management
(ch. 23)

- The Conservation Imperative
- Tools & guidance:
  - Effective visitor management for operators & PA managers
  - Public-private collaboration
  - Experience branding
  - Impact management
  - Best practice
Strengthening public private relations

1. Manager needs from tourism operators:
   - Communicate importance of PAs to visitors & work of managers to protect special areas
   - Identify special actions from visitors to support the natural values (e.g. look don’t touch)
   - Identify how their business is positively contributing to improved management
   - Respect requests by managers for protection.
2. Tourism operator needs from managers:

- Safe, reliable, clean, accessible, well-managed and customer-friendly tourism destinations.
- Effective administration & operations (e.g. leases, licencing, pest&weed control, etc.)
2015 IUCN Protected Area Governance and Management

Benefits of well-managed tourism to PAs:

- **Raising the profile** of PA - local, national & international
- **Attracting visitors**
- Interpreting the **values, conservation issues & management issues** for visitors
- Provide:
  - **economic justification** for declaring & managing the PA
  - **financial support** (fees & lic)
  - **HR support** through tourism activity
  - **political support** for PA conservation and resourcing

PAGM – Tourism fundamentally unperpinned by the Conservation Imperative
IUCN Best Practice Guidelines relating to Tourism

Protected Area Governance and Management
- 2015

Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas
- 2016

Guidelines for privately protected areas
- New – Nov 2018

Sustainability on Tourism & Visitor Management in Protected Areas
- Coming soon
Certifying Best Practice Management –

IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas: Global Standard

- 2016 - First global standard of best practice for area-based conservation.

- A programme of certification for protected and conserved areas – national parks, natural World Heritage sites, community conserved areas, nature reserves and so on – that are effectively managed and fairly governed.
IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas: Global Standard

4 themes:

- Good governance
- Sound design and planning
- Effective management
- Positive conservation outcomes.
### Effective management & Tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.6 MANAGE ACCESS, RESOURCE USE AND VISITATION</th>
<th>MANAGEMENT FOR VISITORS AND TOURISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| When permitted, **tourism and visitor management** is compatible with, and **supports the achievement of the site’s conservation goals** and objectives. | Visitor services and facilities:  
- meet **standards of design, environmental sustainability and safety** and are **appropriate to the character, values and use of the site**  
- Interpretive, educational and information services for visitors **meet appropriate visitor needs and support management**.  
- Where access is permitted, **consideration has been given to the use of the protected area by people having varied physical ability**, and their needs have been adequately and appropriately taken into account, **considering the context of the protected area**.  
- **The tourism industry within the site is managed to support the Protected Area goals and objectives.** |
IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas: Global Standard

- 25 areas in 8 countries
- Australia
  - Montague Island Nature Reserve
  - Arakwal NP & Cape Byron State Conservation Area
- NEWS: 15 new areas at CBD CoP (24 Nov)
Case study: Montague Island Nature Reserve

Excellent management of PA values is key to tourism industry

- 350 kilometres south of Sydney, 1.5km x 500 m.
- Designated as a nature reserve (IUCN Category IV). **Critical seabird breeding site** with more than 25,000 pairs from 12 species.
- Around **2000 fur seals** visit the island during the breeding season.
- Montague Island has **great cultural significance** to **Aboriginal people** who call it Barunguba - the elder son of Gulaga (Mt Dromedary).
- **Historical/cultural** - The restored lighthouse and keepers cottages date back to 1881 and are now used as **tourist accommodation**.
Case study: Montague Island Nature Reserve

Excellent management of PA values is key to tourism industry

1. **Sound planning** - Strategic documents to guide management – these identify the values, threats, and management strategies that provide long-term protection and opportunities for sustainable tourism, education & scientific research.

2. **Equitable governance** – Managed by NSW NPWS; Public consultation in designating, reviewing and managing the reserve. Stakeholders, Aboriginal groups and the public engaged via regular RACs.

3. **Effective management** – Strategic management of key threats (pests, weeds, fires) – vertebrate pest free since 2009. Strict controls of visitation have protected natural, Aboriginal and historic heritage values and developed an award-winning ecotourism business that offers a unique wildlife experience and contributes to the costs of running the reserve.

IUCN Best Practice Guidelines relating to Tourism

Protected Area Governance and Management

Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas

Guidelines for privately protected areas

Sustainability on Tourism & Visitor Management in Protected Areas

2015

2016

New – Nov 2018

Coming soon
Ecotourism as part of the PA system –

New IUCN Guidelines for Privately Protected Areas

- Private Protected Areas include:
  - *individuals* and *groups of individuals*; *non-governmental organisations; corporations*, including commercial companies and small companies established to manage groups of PPAs; *for profit owners such as ecotourism companies*; research entities such as universities and field stations; or religious entities.

- 34 Best Practice Principles
  - Establishing PPAs
  - Managing PPAs
  - Incentives for PPAs
  - Ensuring *permanence* of PPAs
  - Coordination with national protected areas systems
  - Networks of PPAs
  - And more……

- Learning & Sharing - Case studies from around the world

Launched November 2018
CASE STUDY: Ecotourism & conservation success

Case Study 8 Private conservation networks in Peru

Christel Scheske and Bruno Monteferrí, Sociedad Peruana de Derecho Ambiental

PPAs in Peru receive relatively little support from the government and there is currently no national-level organisation or association for all PPAs in the country. As a result, in several regions across Peru, networks have been formed, usually with the help of an NGO such as the Sociedad Peruana de Derecho Ambiental (SPDA) or Amazónicos por la Amazonia (AMPA) that bring together the PPAs into a network. Despite the lack of an official national PPA network, NGO-led initiatives link PPAs at the national level. Over the past decade, many insights have been gathered regarding the strengths, weaknesses and challenges of these PPA networks which are discussed here and reflected in the principles and best practices in Part B, Section 8.
IUCN Best Practice Guidelines relating to Tourism

Protected Area Governance and Management
2015

Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas
2016

Guidelines for privately protected areas
New – Nov 2018

Sustainability on Tourism & Visitor Management in Protected Areas
Coming soon
New Best Practice Guidelines for Sustainability on Tourism & Visitor Management in Protected Areas

- Coming soon….

- Developed by IUCN WCPA & the Tourism and Protected Areas Specialist (TAPAS) Group.

- Provide guidance on key aspects of tourism and visitor management in protected areas.

- Case studies from +45 countries around the world.

- Intended to:
  - foster professionalism and capacity in tourism in a ‘community of practice’ by incorporating contributions from protected area practitioners and academics who share experiences and learn collaboratively. The contributors care about integrating tourism into protected areas to achieve and scale up its net benefits to global conservation goals through meaningful experiences, enhanced knowledge and stewardship values, improved communities, incentives for resource protection, funds for conservation, and political support.
Case study - Ecotourism networks:

**IUCN/MEET/WCPA Ecotourism partnership in the Mediterranean**

- **Partnership:** IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation, IUCN WCPA & MEET Network

- **MEET** - The Mediterranean Experience of Ecotourism (MEET) is an EU-funded initiative, designed to **harness the potential of ecotourism in the region.**

- 3-year project (2012-15) - involved 25 protected areas in 8 countries

- MEET’s goal is to continue **integrating new protected areas to expand the conservation and economic benefits of sustainable, respectful and nature-oriented tourism** across the Mediterranean Basin.
BOX 1
The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (ECST)

Created to increase awareness and support for Europe’s protected areas and to improve the sustainable development and management of tourism in protected areas, taking account of the needs of the environment, local residents, local businesses and visitors.

The principles of the charter are:
1. To involve all those implicated by tourism in and around the protected area in its development and management.
2. To prepare and implement a sustainable tourism strategy and action plan for the protected area.
3. To protect and enhance the area’s natural and cultural heritage, for and through tourism, and to protect it from excessive tourism development.
4. To provide all visitors with a high-quality experience in all aspects of their visit.
5. To communicate effectively to visitors about the special qualities of the area.
6. To encourage specific tourism products which enable discovery and understanding of the area.
7. To increase knowledge of the protected area and sustainability issues amongst all those involved in tourism.
8. To ensure that tourism supports and does not reduce the quality of life of

Marketing, branding, sustainability

Protected areas as a tourism development opportunity

Around the world visitors are increasingly traveling to destinations where they can experience unique natural attributes and authentic cultural manifestations. This phenomenon has the potential to generate significant economic benefits for communities living in and around parks and other protected areas. These areas are typically places that represent a country’s most significant flora, fauna, landscapes and geological formations and, in the Mediterranean case, among the last examples of balanced relationship between Man and territory. They provide opportunities for visitors to experience powerful manifestations of nature and culture and to learn about the importance of biodiversity conservation and local cultures enhancement. When these opportunities are managed sustainability:

1. Give economic value to ecosystem services that protected areas provide.
2. Generate direct and indirect income for local stakeholders, creating incentives for conservation in local communities.
3. Diversify conventional tourism models to include ecotourism.
4. Attract new market niches, with higher spending capacities.
5. Stimulate new business opportunities in and around protected areas (e.g., food, handicrafts, rentals, outdoor shops and wildlife guides).
6. Strengthen destinations, with stakeholders collaborating in the development or consolidation of local clusters, increasing economic benefits.
7. Gain the attention of local, regional and national government agencies as destinations worth promoting and supporting.
8. Generate incentives locally to educate about protected areas and natural resources and to learn new skills — like guiding techniques, customer service or new languages.

These and more opportunities illustrate the potential of protected areas for local communities, particularly in less developed regions. A MEET tourism initiative, a Mediterranean Experience of EcoTourism (MEET), provides an example of a well-managed protected area.

SECTION 1
Developing a MEET Ecotourism Product
Science Informing Policy Symposium Series

ACIUCN publication series

- High level conservation expertise
- Produced in partnership with Australia’s conservation experts - Australian GAs, NGOs, acad.
- Best practice policy - Key Directions Statements bringing global best practice into the Australian context.
- Download: www.aciucn.org.au
Tools: sharing best practices globally

PANORAMA – Solutions for a Healthy Planet

- A partnership initiative to document and promote ... inspiring, replicable solutions across a range of conservation and sustainable development topics, enabling cross-sectoral learning and inspiration.

- PANORAMA allows practitioners to share and reflect on their experiences, increase recognition for successful work, and to learn with their peers how similar challenges have been addressed around the globe.
PANORAMA – Solutions for a Healthy Planet

A partnership initiative to document and promote examples of inspiring, replicable solutions across a range of conservation and sustainable development topics, enabling cross-sectoral learning and inspiration.

PANORAMA allows practitioners to share and reflect on their experiences, increase recognition for successful work, and to learn with their peers how similar challenges have been addressed around the globe.
38 Ecotourism Solutions

**Empowering artisanal fishermen in manta ray ecotourism**
by Kerstin Forsberg
Planeta Océano

**Establishment of a financially sustainable model of private MPA management through ecotourism**
by Sibylle Riedmiller
Chumbe Island Coral Park Ltd (CHICOP)

**Communities leading sustainable Fisheries Management**
by David Chacón
COOPE Tárcoles R.L.

**The impact of ecotourism on changing perceptions about a PA**
by Dilya Woodward

**Restoration of degraded mangrove ecosystems**
by Patricia Santos González
CONANP

**Zanzibar Urban/West Region, Tanzania**

**Integrated approach for sea turtle conservation**
by Lucia Garcia
Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Association

**Linking conservation and ecotourism in North**
by Daniela Johana Hill Piedra
Subsecretaría de Gestión Marino y Costera – Ministerio del Ambiente del Ecuador
Government and business must come together on the interlinked issues of conservation, economic development and renewable energy. There are literally thousands of businesses, many in the tourism industry, that depend on an intact marine environment for their long-term survival.

— Richard Branson —

https://youtu.be/g2cAVcgHjic
If all else fails – when your best practice policies as an ecotourism operator are ignored.....
Australia as a world leader in Tourism and Protected Area Conservation

- Nature based tourism is growing
- Provides enormous economic, social and environmental benefit to Australia and its people when it is managed effectively
- The Australian community of ecotourism operators, national park managers and partners has the opportunity, capacity & responsibility to show world leadership – through best practice management, collaboration opportunities & information sharing
- Harness best practice tools & share experiences with colleagues globally to continue best practice.