

A person wearing a green cap and dark clothing is walking away from the camera on a dirt path that winds through a dense, lush green forest. The trees and bushes are vibrant and appear to be in full bloom. The scene is captured from a high angle, looking down the path.

# **When protected areas support local and national economies**

Nigel Dudley  
Natural Solutions, WCPA



The Dyfi  
Biosphere  
Reserve in Wales,  
UK





The floodplain prevents downstream flooding – a ecosystem service from the protected area ...

... only a handful of people in the valley would see it that way





Bogota gets 80% of its drinking water from Chingaza National Park, worth millions of dollars every year, but most residents have no idea of this link

Governments know the value of ecosystem services in principle but seldom prioritise them over new roads, mines and agricultural development in practice...





Knowing that protected areas are not just “wasted space” but have their own economic benefits can be an important way of gaining support ...

... although it is dangerous to link all protected areas to economic benefits

The value of a penguin on the Great Coast Road in Australia



Some people  
have profound  
ethical  
misgivings  
about putting a  
value on  
nature.

For that matter  
so do I; but I  
have become  
convinced that  
sometimes it  
can be a very  
useful tactic





With support from the CBD, we are collecting a set of case studies of immediate economic benefits from protected areas...

...ignoring potential benefits, such as possible value of genetic materials from biodiversity



Economic values from protected areas vary in scale, security, sources of funding and particularly in who benefits



Iceland – nature-based tourism now  
the largest contribution to GDP



Tanzania – tourism largest source of foreign exchange



However, far fewer people benefit from this money in Tanzania than they do in Iceland

*Principles for Justice and Equity in Access to and Distribution of Benefits from Ecosystem Services in Protected Areas*

In 2013, Finland's national parks earned €115.5 million total visitor spending and supported 1,484 jobs; of which €56.2 million and 716 jobs were the result of visitors solely or mainly attracted to the area because of the national park



This secured support from an otherwise unsympathetic government



Total revenue from Ranthambore National Park in India was estimated at US\$3,163,753 in 2011



Lake Skadar National Park in Montenegro produces over €4 million (US\$4.6 million) a year from fish production and honey alone.



In 2014, the pine nut harvest in Bikin National Park and surrounding reserves in Russia earned villagers around US\$60 million. Verified Carbon Standard funds to compensate for the Sochi Olympics' emissions earned over US\$550,000



A lush, green forest scene. In the foreground, there are various types of trees and dense foliage. In the middle ground, a large, flat-topped acacia tree stands prominently. The background shows a dense canopy of trees under a bright sky. The overall atmosphere is vibrant and natural.

Revenue earned from Bwindi National Park in Uganda supports the rest of the country's national system



▶ There are undoubtedly major economic benefits from many protected areas

▶ These often come in places where there are few other economic options

▶ They can build support from otherwise unsympathetic governments...

▶ ... but only build long lasting support for conservation if the values reach the people living in or near protected areas

▶ Not all protected areas can “pay their own way” and we must not over-emphasise economic values



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