

Protected areas

Cornerstones of biodiversity conservation

Goal 3.2: To build capacity for the planning, establishment and management of protected areas

Target: By 2010, comprehensive capacity building programmes and initiatives are implemented to develop knowledge and skills at individual, community and institutional levels, and raise professional standards.

Suggested activities of the Parties

3.2.1 By 2006 complete national protected area capacity needs assessments, and establish capacity building programmes on the basis of these assessments including the creation of curricula, resources and programs for the sustained delivery of protected areas management training.

3.2.2 Establish effective mechanisms to document existing knowledge and experiences on protected area management, including traditional knowledge in accordance with Article 8 (j) and Related Provisions, and identify knowledge and skills gaps.

3.2.3 Exchange lessons learnt, information and capacity-building experiences among countries and relevant organizations, through the Clearing-house Mechanisms and other means.

3.2.4 Strengthen the capacities of institutions to establish cross-sectoral collaboration for protected area management at the regional, national and local levels.

3.2.5 Improve the capacity of protected areas institutions to develop sustainable financing through fiscal incentives, environmental services, and other instruments.

Suggested supporting activities of the Executive Secretary

3.2.6 Cooperate with IUCN and other relevant organizations to compile and disseminate available information.

3.2.7 Cooperate with initiatives such as the Protected Areas Learning Network (PALNet-IUCN) and explore lessons learned from those experiences, in collaboration with relevant organizations.

Learn more about Goal 3.2:

Key activities include:

- Complete national protected area capacity needs assessments and establish capacity building programmes
- Establish mechanisms to document existing knowledge on protected area management
- Exchange lessons learnt among countries
- Strengthen the capacity of institutions to establish cross-sectoral collaboration for protected area management
- Improve the capacity of protected areas institutions to develop sustainable financing

What is protected area capacity?

Capacity is generally defined as the ability and means to achieve an objective. Protected area capacity is therefore the ability and means of the protected area staff to achieve the objectives within a protected area.

What is an assessment of protected area capacity needs?

Capacity is generally defined as the ability and means to achieve an objective. An assessment of protected area capacity, therefore, is an evaluation of the degree to which the protected area system (including protected area administrators, staff and volunteers) has the skills and resources needed to achieve the individual objectives of each protected area.

What is cross-sectoral collaboration?

Cross-sectoral collaboration means involving experts from sectors that are related to protected area management. Examples include involvement of the business sector in developing protected area business plans, involvement of the tourism industry in the development of ecotourism options, and involvement of social scientists in developing communication strategies with local communities.

What steps are involved in assessing protected area capacity needs?

Typical steps involved in assessing capacity needs include:

- a) Begin with the prioritized results of protected area management effectiveness assessments. Such assessments identify the range of threats and weaknesses within the protected area system, and should form the basis of a capacity needs assessment.
- b) Develop and prioritize strategies needed to improve critical management weaknesses and abate key threats. For example, if a key threat is invasive species, strategies might include improving the ability to prevent the spread of invasive species, and improving the ability to eradicate existing invasive species. These strategies should be prioritized according to their feasibility, urgency and likely impact.
- c) Identify the specific actions and capacities needed to implement these strategies. For example, given the two strategies above, specific actions and capacities could include: a) improving the ability of staff to correctly identify potentially invasive species, to monitor existing invasive species, and to eradicate invasive species within problem areas; and b) increase the number of staff allocated to invasive species eradication.
- d) Develop a detailed action plan that includes responsible actors and agencies, timelines, priority actions, likely costs, and indicators of success. Some emerging best practices in developing this plan include emphasizing a self-assessment approach, including multiple stakeholders from a variety of different sectors, and ensuring that there are resources in place to follow through with the results of the assessment.
- e) Monitor key indicators to determine trends, and the effectiveness of specific actions.

What are some key documents that can help in the implementation of Goal 3.2?

Resources to build capacity for the planning, establishment and management of protected areas can be found at: <http://www.cbd.int/protected/tools/>