

## Management of protected areas – participation and acceptance as key factors





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## Main objective

- Overview of recent research (gaps) concerning
  - Participation
  - Acceptance
  - Local identity
  - Cooperation
- to identify and address perspectives for research in the wide field of protected areas (and similar such as ICCAs) and regional development and make contributions to the identification of new research themes
- to analyse how applied research can contribute to higher participation / acceptance
- to give input for a fruitful discussion among us

## My approach

Professional background:  
Geographer with focus on protected areas (people and conservation)

Approach as a researcher:  
PhD“ about the issue of generating “value” of protected area and the role of local people” (Univ. of Innsbruck)



Approach as a practitioner:  
Ex-manager of UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Grosses Walsertal (2000-2006)

Approach as somebody organizing excursions to PAs always with focus on the interaction of people and conservation

Approach as somebody working with and about PAs (Association ecoResponse):  
Consultative and research projects with different partners

## Personal Overview (1)

Which topics have I addressed so far and what are the major issues / findings of my research?

- PAs as a chance for local people – benefit in the sense: to improve livelihood, to value resources to protect them, to become sensitive, to work with a label, to be active and foster sustainable development and identity (PhD) (ongoing): main issues: participation, acceptance, valorisation of PAs in 4 international case studies using participatory research methods
- REPA Regional Economic Perceptual Analysis in the BR Gr. Walsertal Part I (Coy and Weixlbaumer) (2005/2006): main issues: perception, acceptance, economic impact of the PA (contributed as manager of the BR)

## Personal Overview (2)

Which topics have I addressed so far and what are the major findings of my research?



- **PART b**: Participation in Biosphere Reserves, 3 case studies in Austria (2007-2009): main issues: participation, PAs as intervention
- **CheckKid** – kids explore the core area in 2 BRs (2009-2010): main issues: Adaption of the allosteric learn model, zones of BRs, involvement of young local people in nature conservation issues

## Other examples / issues

- Which **methods of participation** are appropriate to involve stakeholders and „important actors“ in management issues and decision making processes (e.g. Simmen and Walter 2007).
- What are the **potential, the concrete forms** of application and also the **limits** of increasing participation of local stakeholders in the planning and management of PAs (e.g. Lockwood et al 2006, Hammer 2003; Jungmeier et al 2010)
- etc. (e.g. GOBI project Stoll-Kleemann: Governance, Social Monitoring; Stockholm Resilience center / participation in BRs; Wallner: comparison participation / acceptance of BRs in Ukraine and Switzerland, Pollock, Schmid, Hammer, Mose,...)

## Research demand

Which topics and questions should be in the focus of future research and why?

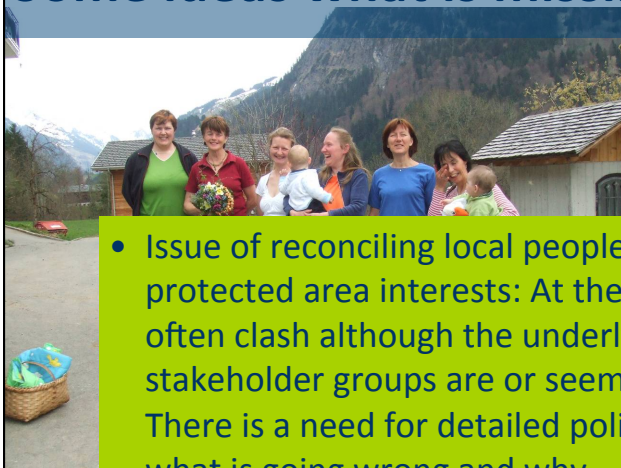
- Regarding **participation**, the CBD programme of work on PAs asks for participatory planning and the involvement of all relevant stakeholders. It stresses the **appreciation of local knowledge and sustainable uses of natural resources**, and the need to better **understand the needs, priorities, practices and values of indigenous and local communities**.



Call for studies, constructive dialogue, exchanges of information and experiences, and joint research among local and non-local experts (transdisciplinarity).

1\_ <http://www.cbd.int/decision/cop/?id=7765>

## Some ideas what is missing



- Issue of reconciling local peoples' interests with protected area interests: At the moment they all too often clash although the underlying aims of the two stakeholder groups are or seem to be the same. There is a need for detailed policy analysis to show what is going wrong and why...
- Research about the integration of protected area management into regional and local processes and the benefit created by PAs

## Some ideas what is missing

- More research on **Monitoring social and economic processes** as well as attitudes / acceptance of local people to assess how the well-being of the society develops, and how local people perceive the implementation of the PA in their region
- **Research about evaluation and improvement of the acceptance of PAs** (from both inside and outside perspective in an accompanying way)

## Some ideas what is missing

- Which **role** does the „**institution**“ and - linked to this - the **level of participation** play in designing, implementing and managing PAs – what is the impact, is there a stimulus towards sustainable development?
- **Potentials** and **limits** of participation in different contexts of PAs – what are reasons for success, what are barriers?
- How **flexible** are participative processes in PAs considering various **cultural backgrounds**?

## Some ideas what is missing

- **scientific analysis of instructions** how to implement PAs by considering the „best“ ways of participation forms
- **Issue of community conserved areas (ICCA)**, i.e. strong participation issues (workshop Sept 2011 Gerace, Kothari et. al. 2006):
  - extent of CCA coverage of different kinds of ecosystems and wildlife communities is an area in need of urgent research and documentation (number of factors, such as size, ecosystem types, key wildlife, motivations for conservation, origins and history, kind of managing institutions and rules, type of ecological and social benefits, legal status and so on)

## Some ideas what is missing

- More research and analysis is needed on the **relationships between ‘community conserved areas’ and ‘formal protected areas’** (different forms of management and governance)
- Little **research about transition of PAs and changing values**: How are PAs and similar to be sustained during the transition between PAs/ICCAs driven by traditional lifestyles (particularly agriculture) and those driven by other motivations including more general interest in nature, aesthetic, cultural values – issue of changing values, trying to maintain traditions, same areas can be sustained even when traditional lifestyles have changed (*personal communication N. Dudley*)



## What do local stakeholders need?

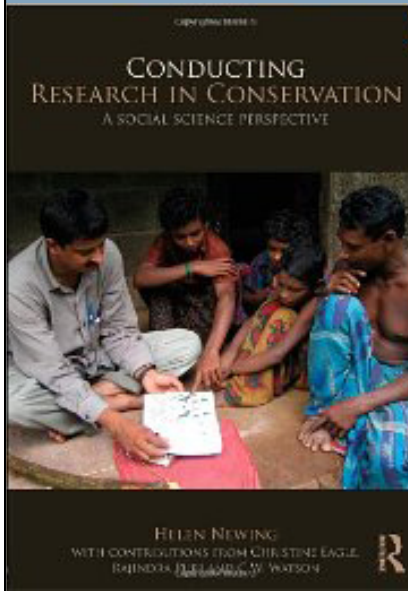


- A pure scientific approach is not enough to do research about participation and sustainability issues, it needs a site based, integrative, interdisciplinary / transdisciplinary and participatory research approach
- Research concept in cooperation also with local people, considering their ideas and needs for research

## How to do research about participation that managements / people can take use of it?

- **Participatory research** by strong **involvement of local people**
- **Visible, understandable results** which can be practically used
- Be aware of the **local context**
- Logistic support of management for research in the PA must be **feasible** and „cost efficient“
- **Demand oriented research**: produce comparable data (concerning acceptance, perception and socioeconomic effects) and involve the local population in the survey
- **To do research, communicate** in the language of the people, make **visible the results** and **act** (further concrete steps, not (only) paper)

## Book recommendation



Newing, Helen (2011):  
Conducting Research in  
Conservation: A Social  
Science Perspective.  
Routledge. 376 pages.  
ISBN 978-0-415-45792-7



## Vorgaben

- Which topics have I addressed so far and what are the major findings of my research?
- What are obvious research deficits regarding the topics I am familiar with?
- What are topics and questions beyond my own competence which have been neglected or overlooked so far?
- Which topics and questions should be in the focus of future research and why?
- Which topics and questions could I imagine to address myself? What are my personal research interests?
- Which theoretical aspects of the regional development debate are of major relevance and should be addressed also with regard to protected areas?
- To which topics and questions of research would I like to make personal contributions? In which networks am I involved and what kind of perspectives could yield from these?

## Vorgaben Praxis

- What are major findings of research in the prospect of practice work? What are research deficits?
- Which topics and questions should receive major attention in the prospect of practice?
- Which topics and questions and which kind of research are important for politics and the media?
- According to which topics and questions am I prepared to make own contributions? Which kind of resources could I provide?
- Which protected areas are most suitable to function as case studies for selected areas of research?

## Vorgaben generell speakers

- Which relevance do protected areas have for sustainable regional development?
- What kind of sustainable (land-) use is compatible with the targets of protected areas?
- How can sustainable forms of (land-) use contribute to the promotion of protected areas (e.g. regarding finance, education, policy)?
- How can forms of economic use and nature conservation be optimized as to prevent protected areas from any sort of damages and to maintain a balance between protection and use?
- What are appropriate models of governance to support the aims of protected areas?
- What are suitable tools to avoid that regional development and protection are played off each other