

Managing Protected Areas: Global Perspectives

Introduction to the Special Issue

Volume I

Special Issue Guest Editor
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The establishment of the world's first national park (Yellowstone National Park) in 1872 in the United States has been the foundation for the global protected area movement for biodiversity conservation. This legacy is evident with the significant global growth in the protected areas network among terrestrial as well as marine ecosystems. The substantial increase in the designation of new protected areas has occurred over the past three decades with considerable growth in developing countries. However, with expansion, the concept of protected areas has evolved beyond the traditional model of strict biodiversity conservation, to incorporate improvement of local livelihoods.

Protected areas are generally managed by government entities to safeguard the natural, ecological, and cultural values. However, this model of management has also diversified to incorporate alternate approaches such as co-managed protected areas, indigenous and community conserved areas, private protected areas, etc. Given the various types, multiple-use, and management structures in protected areas, the need for effective management to meet respective objectives is critical. The challenges vary among different types and location of protected areas. For example, protected areas in developing countries have a more pronounced requirement to engage and improve local community's needs, while visitor management and experience quality issues may be of concern in developed countries. Contemporary protected area management is complex as managers will need to find the optimal balance with respect to an integrated approach towards environmental, socio-cultural, and economic issues within and adjacent to the management area. Overall, the sustainability of protected areas is now dependent on participation, involvement, and support from a diverse set of stakeholders to achieve biodiversity conservation, visitor management, and sustainable development goals.

Since management of protected areas continues to evolve globally, this offers an opportunity to examine managerial issues and challenges in a contemporary context, and subsequently provide implications and recommendations. This special issue theme,

Managing Protected Areas: Global Perspectives was formulated to contribute to the discourse leading to the 6th International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Parks Congress to be held from 12-19 November 2014 in Sydney, Australia. The IUCN World Parks Congress is the largest global forum on protected areas that is held once in every decade. Each Congress assists to establish the agenda for parks and protected areas for the next 10 years. The event is also a catalyst to influence national governments to promote policy development for biodiversity conservation, resource allocation, as well as create new protected areas.

Besides the timeliness of the topic, this special issue also emerged to further promote international perspectives of parks and protected areas management in the *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration (JPRA)*. This journal is the official publication of the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration, and given its historical roots, it was recognized to expand to incorporate global issues that impact management of parks and protected areas. While international perspectives have been published intermittently in *JPRA*, it is envisioned that this special issue would galvanize additional submissions in the future.

The theme of this special issue was kept broad enough to encourage myriad topics related to the management of parks and protected areas based on conceptual and empirical research, case studies, and comparative analysis. The call for papers included but not limited to the following topics:

- Planning and management
- Sustainable use and practices
- Collaboration and partnership
- Values and benefits
- Policy and governance
- Conservation finance and economics
- Natural and cultural heritage management
- Capacity building and institutional development
- Community-based conservation
- Transfrontier conservation
- Emerging trends and contemporary issues

Manuscripts that detailed research, concepts, and practices relevant to current understanding and management of protected areas were given priority. Also, given the *JPRA* audience, it was important that research implications should have relevance for managers of protected areas and policy makers. This special issue generated a lot of interest among academics and practitioners as evident of 28 submissions based on research conducted in 23 countries that represented: Australia, Austria, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Germany, Ghana, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Kenya, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (alphabetical order). The papers related to the various aforementioned topical areas, and given the number of submissions and acceptance following two rounds of peer reviews, it was determined that two volumes were needed. Following peer review, eight manuscripts were accepted as part of this Volume 1 edition, and each is briefly summarized below.

Buta, Brennan, and Holland examined local communities' relationship toward Retezat National Park, which was designated in 1935 as the first National Park in Romania. This park is considered as a model within the protected area system in the country. Since participatory management based on stakeholder representation was introduced in the country, the effectiveness of implementation in Retezat National Park was still ambiguous. As stakeholder input is essential in a participatory model, the lack of local residents' opinions and perspectives were noted. Buta et al.'s study investigated local residents based on their sociodemographic characteristics and identified differences to explain pro-environmental civic engagement, connections to nature and attachment to the park. Among

the sociodemographic characteristics, age, level of education, and length of residence were found to be important variables towards understanding differences. Overall, young adults identified less connection to nature as well as attachment to the park; higher levels of education resulted in increased levels of personal environmental responsibility and also being more critical about conservation management; and longer length of residence was related to more perceived accrual of conservation benefits. Research findings highlighted that management needed to formulate initiatives for involvement of younger adults. Also, a more concerted approach and strategy was needed to target various sociodemographic groups in order to promote pro-environmental civic engagement, stronger bonds and connection to nature, as well as attachment to the park.

Wyneen, Conally, and Kyle explored residents' pro-environmental behaviors in marine protected areas. The global network of marine protected areas (MPAs) is comparatively small in comparison to terrestrial protected areas. However, in recent years there has been a growing consensus to increase the number and effectiveness of MPAs globally in order to mitigate significant social, economic, and ecological impacts. Given the influx of visitor use in MPAs, there is a paucity of research with respect to the human dimensions of MPA management, especially in the examination of stakeholders' attitudes and concerns. To address this need, Wynveen et al. examined a major stakeholder group (i.e., residents) about their environmental worldview, awareness of consequences of human impacts, ascription of responsibility, personal norms toward reducing impacts, and intention to behave in a pro-environmental manner within the context of two internationally renowned sites—Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (Australia) and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (United States). The study was conducted among residents in the two countries to assess for similarities and differences based on value-belief-norm theory as the guiding framework. Results identified differences among residents in both countries and associated managerial implications were offered for managers. This study was unique in its comparative assessment of residents that lived in close proximity to major marine protected areas in two countries, and likely one of the earliest research to have examined antecedents to pro-environmental behavior in marine protected areas.

The concept of sustainable tourism was operationalized and empirically measured among visitors within the context of protected areas in Zambia by Thapa. Globally, sustainable tourism initiatives have been promoted for parks as well as communities that are within and adjacent to protected areas. Also, visitors are an important stakeholder segment and their input is necessary to promote and maintain sustainability of destinations such as parks and protected areas. In Zambia, since the country's policy is related to accomplish the dual goals of increasing visitor arrivals as well as integrating conservation and development initiatives via protected areas, Thapa's research examined visitor profiles, frequency of visits, and attitudes towards sustainable tourism in protected areas. Differences were identified based on domestic and international visitors with respect to gender, age, household size and annual income. Respondents were generally well traveled in the east and southern Africa regions; and there were notable differences with respect to attitudes (environmental, sociocultural, and economic) towards sustainable tourism in protected areas. The results contributed to understanding of visitors as well as their attitudes with respect to sustainable tourism in protected areas, which aids in the development of specific objectives and implementation measures for park management.

Serenari and Leung wrote a reflection piece that outlined and expanded on the lessons learned in regard to the application of an environmental initiative in India – Leave No Trace (LNT). LNT is a popular program to promote low impact on natural and cultural resources. While LNT has been promoted to minimize impacts via acceptable visitor behavior, the program is largely concentrated in developed countries given its conceptualization and promotion. Based on the cross-cultural transfer of LNT, Serani and Leung did not present new research but rather provided an assessment based on their earlier research, field observations, and long-term engagement with adventure guides in the study site–

Garhwal. The site is home to numerous protected areas in the Himalayas. Based on their earlier research, the authors noted that while adventure guides subscribed to a western environmental consciousness, there were other factors such as societal norms, internal beliefs, and external influences that influenced their guiding behavior. In addition, five overarching lessons were explored with respect to their overall assessment of cultural transfer of LNT. Overall, the authors deduced that while LNT had emerged in various destinations, however it was critical to understand the host population and perspectives of such programs for protected area management during application.

Protected area finance in three Latin American countries was analyzed by Montalvo Mancheno, McLaughlin, Courrau, and De Urioste Fuentes. Since financial sustainability for a nation's protected area system is a desired outcome, unfortunately, lower budget appropriations and funding sources have been systematically a major managerial issue. As there has been a lack of major funding priority toward parks and protected areas, it has been imperative for managers to seek alternative sources of revenues. However, there is a dearth of research with respect to knowledge and application of conservation finance among managers. This lack of information led to Montalvo Mancheno et al.'s research to examine knowledge needs of conservation practitioners in Ecuador, Peru and Colombia. An expert panel of conservation professional from the three countries was solicited for a Delphi study. The research was conducted in three rounds and information from the panel was used to identify how protected area finance was defined and associated funding mechanisms needed to implement initiatives. In addition, thematic knowledge and about finance and funding of protected areas as well as constraints to information access and awareness were formulated to achieve consensus among the experts. Results identified differences between central office-based system level administrators and field-based protected area managers. Also, thematic constraints related to training oriented barriers, institutional structural barriers, as well as process and policy oriented barriers were identified with regards to implementation of human capacity building programs. Overall, this study provided new information about awareness and knowledge of professionals with regard to conservation finance, funding mechanisms, and constraints.

Similarly, von Ruschkowski, Burns, Arnberger, Smaldone, and Meybin conducted a Delphi study among conservation experts in three countries to comparatively examine management priorities and planning processes for protected areas management. In order to compile knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned from country specific valuations, von Ruschkowski et al. conducted a comparative analysis among resource managers' perceptions in Austria, Germany, and the United States. The research was conducted among 28 experts representing parks and protected areas. Based on the results, differences in specific values, management practices, and priorities were identified for the respective countries. A major highlight finding was that European countries (Austria and Germany) prioritized conservation of ecosystems and landscapes with less consideration for social issues such as recreation management. However, in the U.S., while ecological issues were important, recreation management (e.g., social carrying capacity, satisfaction, crowding, conflict, etc.) was also emphasized as a key management priority. The differences in management priority, approach, and implementation between the European countries and the U.S. were attributed to various issues such as international agreements, size and scale of protected areas, visitor use, and so forth. This research offered a contribution in understanding international perspectives as well as potential synergies for cross-cultural information sharing and partnership for improved management of parks and protected areas.

Weiler, Moore, and Moyle advanced a conceptual framework about the importance to sustain benefits and enhance visitor experience in order to build general public support as well as combat associated threats to national parks. The authors noted that societal values were fundamental for support of national parks which provides biodiversity conservation as well as numerous recreation opportunities. However, contemporary societal changes, demographic trends, competing recreational activities, visitor type, and use frequency

dictate the need to adapt to maintain visitation and sustain experiences. Weiler et al. highlighted and provided supporting rationale with respect to protecting and enhancing visitor experiences, followed with threats to visitor experience quality and diversity, and subsequent management strategies along with research recommendations. Overall, the authors provided a narrative that offered discussion points regarding the future of national parks discourse.

The final paper, in the *Programs that Work* section by Teel, Don Carlos, Mangredo, and Mathur, focused on a case study to illustrate a multi-institutional partnership to build capacity for protected areas management. Building and strengthening human capacity and institutional development is critical for protected area management systems. The need is critical for developing countries that lack resources including skilled human capability to effectively manage protected areas that comprise of complex socioecological systems. There is generally a paucity of interdisciplinary training programs that integrates social and ecological dimensions of park management. Given this need, Teel et al. offered a model case study of a partnership between Colorado State University, U.S., and the Forest Service of India. The case study covered details about the partnership program objectives, content, training methods, and impact assessment. Overall, this program was successful and was an avenue to build, strengthen, and enhance human capacity based on partnership's institutional knowledge and expertise. Such programs are much needed and can be mutually beneficial for two or more institutional partners to promote global thinking and local action in parks and protected areas management.

Collectively, these eight manuscripts comprised the first of two editions of the special issue and examined key issues and provided managerial implications based on conceptual and empirical research. While these papers are not exhaustive of the contemporary issues and challenges, they do provide insights and opportunities to develop managerial objectives and implement action plans. The second volume will further contribute to our understanding based on additional questions and managerial challenges.

Finally, given the overwhelming number of manuscript submissions, it was critical to engage a variety of scholars to assist with the review process. It is important to acknowledge and offer thanks to these scholars (in alphabetical order) for their time and commitment in the peer review process. This first volume of the special issue would not have been a reality without the assistance of the following individuals: Jim Absher, Seth Appiah-Opoku, Stanley Asah, Erik Backlund, Jim Barborak, Barbara Bischof, Ralph Buckley, Megha Budruk, Steve Burr, Stuart Cottrell, Jinyang Deng, Dan Dustin, Paul Eagles, Alan Graefe, John Jett, Andy Lepp, Kreg Lindberg, Zhong Linsheng, Steve McCool, Wayde Morse, Nathan Reigner, Taylor Stein, Luis Suau, Christopher Wynveen, and Chaozhi Zhang. In addition, James Busser (*JPra* Editor) was instrumental in guiding this process, and his assistance is much appreciated.