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| **WWF DAP: Information sheet on using the protected areas benefits assessment tool number 3** |

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|  | Using the PA-BAT in communication strategies  Introduction  The PA-BAT can be implemented as part of a process to develop a communication plan for a protected area or group of protected areas. Such a plan should aim to increase the understanding and awareness amongst (target) audiences about specific ecosystem services and related goods provided and supported by protected areas. Communication plans are often aimed at influencing policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic and social systems and institutions, or at increasing local support for the protected area and it management.  Using the PA-BAT Results  As noted in Sheet 1, the PA-BAT can highlight areas where stakeholder perceptions of values and benefits do not align with a management plan’s objectives. In some cases this may require managers assessing if adaptations to the management plan are required, but in others the response will be more usefully aimed at developing communication plans to increase awareness of specific values and benefits; (e.g. local people in terms of supporting biodiversity conservation and decreasing illegal resource use; government departments in terms of understanding wide values and benefits of protected areas and ensuring suitable resources allocated for management; resource users beyond the boundaries of the protected area who benefit from conservation activities but do not contribute to them; etc). Communications plans usually are time-specific (e.g. a few months or one or two years) and focused on a specific achievable and measurable objective. This differs from interpretation, and educational programmes (see information sheet 5) which are long-term, ongoing management processes.  Communication activities should focus on those actions which are most likely to reach audiences critical for achieving the goals and objectives of management. A number of different communication tools used to build advocacy and develop awareness depending on the audience and area of interest are outlined in the table below.   | **Audience** | **Interest in PAs** | **Use of PA-BAT** | **Communication tools** | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Local community | Extractive use, recreational use, harvesting, derived economic benefit (e.g., tourism). | Increase in knowledge about the value of the protected area. Demonstrate need for sustainable use of natural resources. | Local outreach, including one-off community education campaign, community meeting, local news story, local radio. Exchange visits with communities in/near protected areas (if specific objectives can be shown to have been achieved in these communities). | | Nearby cities and/or towns | Possibly very low interest. Lack of awareness of uses and services provided by PA and associated economic benefits. | Increase awareness of the role protected areas provide in provision of water, disaster mitigation (flood, avalanche control etc.), recreation, support for tourism trade etc. | Local outreach (local news stories in newspapers, radio, TV etc.), open days, guided tours. | | Service sectors (water authorities, tourism boards etc.) | Possibly low interest with benefits of the protected area taken for granted. | Increased understanding that many sectors depend directly or indirectly on natural resources management undertaken by protected area. | Site visits, individual meetings and well-focused (innovative) presentations, evidence-based research (well presented summaries with full reports available for technical review). | | Local business (fishers, farmers, hoteliers etc.) | As above; benefits (such as protecting spawning grounds or sources of water) are often taken for granted. | Increased understanding that businesses can depend directly or indirectly on natural resources management undertaken by protected area. | Local outreach of evidence-based research e.g. through presentations at individual meetings, local news stories, site visits focused on specific benefits and research results. | | Politicians and national policy makers | Possibly very low interest. Lack of awareness of uses and services provided and associated economic benefits. | Increase awareness of the use of the ecosystem. Describe national and local social and economic benefits associated with protection, potential costs if ecosystem degrades, links to external processes (e.g. Natura 2000, CBD). | Presentation, maps, policy brief, poll results, site visits, short film, story placement in high profile media, backing from public figures. | | Local and international NGOs | Awareness usually quite high but may not be aware of all benefits. | Provides all parties with the same data on which to reach consensus about the economic benefits of protected areas | Policy brief and full report, presentation, side event at regional or international conservation meeting. | | Multilateral and bilateral donors | Often focused on specific agendas such as development and climate change adaptation/mitigation | Increase in awareness of the link between protected areas, climate change, poverty reduction, economic and social development etc. | Site visits, policy brief, presentations at high level international meetings, individual meetings, international high profile media etc. |   Adapted from: Kettunen, M and ten Brink, P. 2013. *Social and Economic Benefits of Protected Areas: An Assessment Guide*, Routledge, Oxon, UK  Checklist and action plan for communication strategies  The assessment form below draws on the discussion above and can help manager and staff in discussions related to using the PA-BAT results.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Issue for discussion** | **Developing action plans** | | Developing a communications strategy to help address ‘gaps’ in communications | 1. When thinking about developing a communications strategy a first step should be to research any similar activities carried out by other protected areas in the same region/biome, which can provide useful lessons. 2. The PA-BAT can help highlight communication needs. When developing communication plans the following questions should be considered:  * What is the reason for developing the communication plan (the objective)? * Who is the target audience? * What would you wish this audience to learn/understand? * What information and evidence base helps the audience to form an informed decision or/and what kind of information is needed to motivate the target audience? * How can you reach the target audience in an effective way? * Who will benefit from the assessment? * How will these benefits be communicated to the different beneficiaries? * What resources (financial and capacity) are needed to develop a communications campaign? | |