

WWF SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

In line with WWF's commitment to strengthen the social dimensions of its projects, programmes and policy work, the following principles are fundamental to creating effective, lasting and equitable solutions to today's environmental challenges. These principles are intended to strengthen our conservation results and ensure their sustainability into the future:

- 1. Respect people's rights** in accordance with customary, national and international human rights laws;
- 2. Promote equity** within the scope of our projects, programmes and policies at multiple levels, and promote these principles in policy fora and advocacy work at national and global levels;
- 3. Aim to enhance the natural assets of local communities**, particularly the poor, and ensure that our conservation work does not harm vulnerable people;
- 4. Address weak governance**, taking into account cultural and political contexts, through improvements in tenure and income security and decision-making procedures, devolution of environmental management and empowerment to ensure that the rights (and access) of local people to natural resources, which are the basis of their livelihoods, are exercised and enforced;
- 5. Address the inequitable distribution** of environmental costs and benefits and unsustainable production and consumption patterns at multiple levels whenever possible by influencing local policies and practice, global markets, the private sector, national, regional and global policies and processes.

These principles are captured, along with five major areas of work to mainstream social dimensions in WWF activities, in "The Social Dimensions of Conservation and Natural Resource Management: WWF's Principles, Policies and Implementation Framework", endorsed by the Conservation Committee in February 2010.

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Indigenous Peoples

WWF's Statement of Principles on Indigenous Peoples and Conservation was prepared in 1996 and updated in 2008. It reflects our dedication to respecting indigenous and traditional peoples' human and development rights and recognizes the importance of conserving their cultures. In 2007, WWF completed a review and recommendations on Strengthening Partnerships with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, including a reaffirmation of our Statement of Principles and identification of actions to strengthen its implementation and monitoring.

Poverty and Conservation

WWF's Policy on Poverty and Conservation was adopted in 2009. WWF defines poverty as encompassing not only physiological deprivation (non-fulfilment of basic needs, lack of income, ill-health, etc.), but also social deprivation and vulnerability (lack of access to natural resources, discrimination, lack of voice and power, gender inequities, etc.). WWF therefore sees its work on poverty as wide-ranging and requiring coordinated action at all levels, from the field to the global policy arena. This policy reaffirms WWF's commitment to embrace a pro-poor approach to conservation to strive to find equitable solutions for people and the environment and making special efforts to enable local people to play a key part in crafting solutions for sustainable development.

Conservation Initiative on Human Rights Framework

WWF is a founding member of the Conservation and Human Rights Initiative and signed the Conservation Initiative on Human Rights Framework in 2009. WWF recognizes human rights as central to achieving effective and equitable conservation and development outcomes. The Framework states WWF's commitment to respect human rights and to promote rights within the scope of conservation initiatives. This endorsement also commits WWF to implementation measures contained in the framework and their application across all of our relevant social policies.

Gender

WWF agreed its Gender policy in 2011. WWF understands that gender refers to the socially constructed roles and opportunities associated with women and men and recognizes differences and inequalities between women and men in access to and control over resources and decision-making opportunities, in particular in relation to environmental resources. WWF understands that gender is part of the broader socio-cultural, economic and political context, which also takes into consideration factors such as class, status, ethnicity and age. This policy signifies WWF's ongoing commitment to equity and integrating a gender perspective in its policies, programs, and projects, as well as in its own institutional structure.

Other policies and discussion papers under development

The Social Development for Conservation team is currently developing policies on Community Rights and Resources and on HIV/AIDS, and two discussion papers on Population and Conservation and Civil Society.

Many of the world's ecosystems and areas of high biodiversity under threat are also home to rural communities and indigenous peoples whose livelihoods and cultures are closely dependent on the natural environment. As such, much of the success of our work depends on the degree to which conservation contributes not only to the maintenance and preservation of biodiversity and ecosystems but also to equitable and sustainable development for the well-being of the people that rely on them.

About the SD4C

Growing out of earlier initiatives on poverty, equity, indigenous peoples, and regional network experiences (LAN), the Social Development for Conservation (SD4C) team was established in 2009 to address social and development dimensions in conservation and to build our capacity as a network to effectively and pro-actively engage in these processes. The cross-cutting scope of the SD4C team, and its global reach, are based on strong collaboration between colleagues working in various capacities from offices across the network. An engagement at multiple levels (national, regional, global), and in all regions, enhances local-to-global-to-local linkages and allows the team to provide critical support, tools and services for WWF to become an effective player and partner in establishing more equitable and greener development pathways.

WWF Social Principles and Policies

For more information on WWF's Social Principles and Policies and our work on people and conservation please visit our website at:

wwf.panda.org/people



Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

panda.org

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POLICY

2013

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