



10th Living Lakes Conference

15-19 May 2005

Tagaytay City, Philippines

Stewardship, Participation, and Co-management: Strategies for the Conservation of the World's Rapidly Dwindling Natural Resources

Prof. Dr. Manfred Niekisch

Vice President

German League for Nature and Environment (DNR)

University of Greifswald

Bachstrasse 11-12

17489 Greifswald

Germany

E-Mail: niekisch@uni-greifswald.de

The IV. World Congress on Protected Areas, organized by IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas in the year 2003 in Durban, sent out a strong message to the world: Protected areas have to bring benefits to local people, even beyond boundaries. Otherwise they are not likely to be able to withstand the pressures coming from the surrounding areas which very often show signs of overexploitation and where natural resources are decreasing rapidly. At the same time it is impossible to put under protection all those areas which are still left in natural conditions.

Consequently ways have to be found to manage protected areas in such a way that they contribute to human welfare and to the reduction of poverty, and at the same time to manage nature and its resources outside protected areas so that they can fulfil their functions for the human society without losing their autochthonous biodiversity. In both cases, inside and outside protected areas, such an integrated approach needs the cooperation of government authorities, the civil society and increasingly also the corporate sector.

Stewardship, participation, and co-management are multi-faceted terms and can be interpreted in many ways. It depends very much on the social, cultural and ecological context how they can be designed and implemented successfully although of course certain global standards have been identified. Co-management and participation have also proven to be valuable instruments for

the resolution of conflicts related to restrictions imposed by governments on the use of land and other resources.

A relatively new instrument is the payment for environmental services. It can generate income when for example an organisation of inhabitants of a water catchment area receives money from those benefiting from the water further downstream. Case studies from different parts of the world show the positive results that can be achieved when local people are given responsibility and the capacity to manage the resources in their surroundings. On the other hand there are responsibilities and duties on the government's side which cannot be delegated to private organisations and groups, such as law enforcement or the creation of a legal basis for participation and co-management. Flow charts have been elaborated and will be presented which show the different perspectives and levels of participation (participation as a means/ participation as an end), as well as the main factors influencing participation.