

Protected Areas Management Effectiveness Information Module

Methodology Description

Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool

Written with assistance and comments from Sue Stolton

1.1 Organisation

World Bank/WWF Alliance

1.2 Primary methodology reference

Stolton S, Hockings, M, Dudley, N, MacKinnon, K, Whitten, T and Leverington, F (2007) 'Reporting Progress in Protected Areas A Site-Level Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool: second edition.' World Bank/WWF Forest Alliance published by WWF, Gland, Switzerland.

The Tracking Tool is available in a number of languages.

1.3 Brief description of methodology

The methodology is a rapid assessment based on a scorecard questionnaire. The scorecard includes all six elements of management identified in the IUCN-WCPA Framework (context, planning, inputs, process, outputs and outcomes), but has an emphasis on context, planning, inputs and processes. It is basic and simple to use, and provides a mechanism for monitoring progress towards more effective management over time. It is used to enable park managers and donors to identify needs, constraints and priority actions to improve the effectiveness of protected area management.

1.4 Purposes

- ✓ donor / treasury evaluation
- ✓ to improve management (adaptive management)
- ✓ for accountability / audit

1.5 Objectives and application

The tool's objectives are stated as:

- Capable of providing a harmonised reporting system for protected area assessment;
- Suitable for replication;
- Able to supply consistent data to allow tracking of progress over time;
- Relatively quick and easy to complete by protected area staff, and thus not reliant on high levels of funding or other resources;
- Easily understood by non-specialists;
- Nested within existing reporting systems to avoid duplication of effort.

(Stolton *et al.* 2007)

The Tracking Tool has been applied in at least 85 countries, primarily by donor agencies and NGOs. It is being used by the World Bank, WWF and the GEF as a mandatory monitoring tool for areas in which they are involved.

'The Tracking Tool has been used to survey the effectiveness of the WWF portfolio of 206 forest protected areas, in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America, initially in 2003/4 and then repeated during 2005/6. The World Bank has time series data for project sites in several countries, including Bolivia, India, Philippines, Indonesia and Central Asian republics. The

Source: Leverington *et al.*, 2008. 'Management Effectiveness evaluation in protected areas – a global study. Supplementary Report No1: Overview of approaches and methodologies.' The University of Queensland, Gatton, TNC, WWF, IUCN-WCPA, AUSTRALIA.

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Global Environment Facility (GEF) has adopted the Tracking Tool as a simple impact monitoring indicator, and recently China and India have adopted the tool as part of their national protected area monitoring systems. To aid adoption the tool has been translated into many languages' (MacKinnon and Higgins-Zogib 2006).

The methodology can also be adapted and used by other development programs, protected area management agencies or national governments as a tool to assess protected areas across a group or system, as has been done in Korea (Young 2005) and Namibia (Jonathon Smith *pers. comm.*) and for 150 forest reserves in Tanzania (Neil Burgess *pers. comm.*). An adaptation is also being used in the Brazilian Amazon (Ronaldo Weigand *pers. comm.*).

1.6 Origins

The World Bank/WWF Alliance for Forest Conservation and Sustainable Use ('the Alliance') was formed in April 1998. As part of its programme of work the Alliance set a target relating to management effectiveness of protected areas: 50 million hectares of existing but highly threatened forest protected areas to be secured under effective management by the year 2005. To evaluate progress towards this target the Alliance developed a simple site-level Tracking Tool to facilitate reporting on management effectiveness of protected areas within WWF and World Bank projects. The Tracking Tool has been built around the application of the IUCN-WCPA Framework.

After being tested and modified over a three-year period, the Tracking Tool has been operational since 2003. A revised version released in 2007 is compatible with the previous version but clarifies some questions and is more consistent in its descriptions of scores.

1.7 How the methodology is implemented

The Tracking Tool is designed to be simple and implemented with minimal costs. Ideally, the questionnaire should be completed as part of a discussion between, at a minimum, the project officer or task manager, the protected area manager and a representative of local stakeholders. Wider discussions with a number of managers and stakeholders are beneficial where possible. A useful part of the questionnaire for the purpose of project oversight and management improvement is the section on "comments" and 'agreed next steps'.

'The Tracking Tool has been designed to be easily answered by those managing the protected area without any additional research. However, it is useful to review the results of existing monitoring and to spend sufficient time discussing each aspect of management being assessed to arrive at a considered judgement. In most cases, a group of protected area staff from the reserve, project staff or other agency staff should be involved in the assessment; where possible additional external experts, local community leaders or others with knowledge and interest in the area and its management can be involved in completing the assessment' (Stolton *et al.* 2007).

When repeat assessments are undertaken it is advisable to use at least some of the same team members who undertook previous assessments. Where this is not possible the information provided by previous assessors in the text fields of the Tracking Tool will be particularly valuable in guiding the assessment and ensuring consistency in the evaluation being made.

1.8 Elements and indicators

After introductory questions, 30 questions are asked. The tool has been adapted slightly by different countries and has given rise to other systems including the wetland and marine

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Tracking Tools. As discussed earlier, some organisations have adapted the Tracking Tool to better suit their needs. It is best if this can be done by adding questions to the end, so that answers to other questions can be analysed in a wider data set if desired.

Note: the indicators shown are from the new version of the Tracking Tool, released in 2007.

Indicators for the Tracking Tool methodology (2007 version)

Data sheet 1: Details about the protected area and its management objectives, administration, staffing and funding
Data sheet 2: Threat assessment (high, medium, low, not applicable) based on the Conservation Measures Partnership threat hierarchy ¹ under the following major headings:
1. Residential and commercial development within a protected area: Threats from human settlements or other non-agricultural land uses with a substantial footprint
2. Agriculture and aquaculture within a protected area: Threats from farming and grazing as a result of agricultural expansion and intensification, including silviculture, mariculture and aquaculture
3. Energy production and mining within a protected area: Threats from production of non-biological resources
4. Transportation and service corridors within a protected area: Threats from long narrow transport corridors and the vehicles that use them including associated wildlife mortality
5. Biological resource use and harm within a protected area: Threats from consumptive use of "wild" biological resources including both deliberate and unintentional harvesting effects; also persecution or control of specific species (note this includes hunting and killing of animals)
6. Human intrusions and disturbance within a protected area: Threats from human activities that alter, destroy or disturb habitats and species associated with non-consumptive uses of biological resources
7. Natural system modifications: Threats from other actions that convert or degrade habitat or change the way the ecosystem functions
8. Invasive and other problematic species and genes: Threats from non-native and native plants, animals, pathogens/microbes or genetic materials that have or are predicted to have harmful effects on biodiversity following introduction, spread and/or increase
9. Pollution entering or generated within protected area: Threats from introduction of exotic and/or excess materials or energy from point and non-point sources
10. Geological events: Geological events may be part of natural disturbance regimes in many ecosystems. But they can be a threat if a species or habitat is damaged and has lost its resilience and is vulnerable to disturbance. Management capacity to respond to some of these changes may be limited.
11. Climate change and severe weather: Threats from long-term climatic changes which may be linked to global warming and other severe climatic/weather events outside of the natural range of variation
12. Specific cultural and social threats
Assessment
1. Legal status: Does the protected area have legal status (or in the case of private reserves is covered by a covenant or similar)?
2. Protected area regulations: Are appropriate regulations in place to control land use and activities (e.g. hunting)?
3. Law enforcement: Can staff enforce protected area rules well enough?
4. Protected area objectives: Is management undertaken according to agreed objectives?
5. Protected area design: Is the protected area the right size and shape to protect species and habitats of key conservation
6. Protected area boundary demarcation: Is the boundary known and demarcated?
7. Management plan: Is there a management plan and is it being implemented?
7a. Planning process: The planning process allows adequate opportunity for key stakeholders to influence the management plan
7b. Planning process: There is an established schedule and process for periodic review and updating of the management plan
7c. Planning process: The results of monitoring, research and evaluation are routinely incorporated into planning
8. Regular work plan: Is there a regular work plan and is it being implemented

¹ IUCN – Conservation Measures Partnership (2006) 'IUCN – CMP Unified Classification of Direct Threats Version 1.0 – June 2006.' <http://www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/sis/classification.htm>.

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9. Resource inventory: Do you have enough information to manage the area?
10. Protection systems: Are systems in place to control access/resource use in the protected area?
11. Research: Is there a programme of management-orientated survey and research work?
12. Resource management: Is active resource management being undertaken?
13. Staff numbers: Are there enough people employed to manage the protected area?
14. Staff training: Are staff adequately trained to fulfil management objectives?
15. Current budget: Is the current budget sufficient?
16. Security of budget :Is the budget secure?
17. Management of budget : Is the budget managed to meet critical management needs?
18. Equipment: Is equipment sufficient for management needs?
19. Maintenance of equipment: Is equipment adequately maintained?
20. Education and awareness: Is there a planned education programme linked to the objectives and needs?
21. Planning for land use : Does land use planning recognise the protected area and aid the achievement of objectives?
22. State and commercial neighbours: Is there co-operation with adjacent land users?
23. Indigenous people: Do indigenous and traditional peoples resident or regularly using the protected area have input to management decisions?
24. Local communities: Do local communities resident or near the protected area have input to management decisions?
24 a. Impact on communities: There is open communication and trust between local and/or indigenous people, stakeholders and protected area managers
24b. Impact on communities: Programmes to enhance community welfare, while conserving protected area resources, are being implemented
24c. Impact on communities: Local and/or indigenous people actively support the protected area
25. Economic benefit :Is the protected area providing economic benefits to local communities, e.g. income, employment, payment for environmental services?
26. Monitoring and evaluation :Are management activities monitored against performance?
27. Visitor facilities: Are visitor facilities adequate?
28. Commercial tourism operators: Do commercial tour operators contribute to protected area management?
29. Fees: If fees (i.e. entry fees or fines) are applied, do they help protected area management?
30. Condition of values: What is the condition of the important values of the protected area?
30a: Condition of values: The assessment of the condition of values is based on research and/or monitoring
30b: Condition of values: Specific management programmes are being implemented to address threats to biodiversity, ecological and cultural values
30c: Condition of values: Activities to maintain key biodiversity, ecological and cultural values are a routine part of park management

1.9 Scoring and analysis

In the main assessment form, 30 questions are asked - each with a four-point scale (0, 1, 2, and 3). The intention is that the scale forces respondents to choose whether the situation is acceptable or not. Generally 0 is equivalent to no or negligible progress; 1 is some progress; 2 is quite good but has room for improvement; 3 is approaching optimum situation. A series of four alternative answers are provided against each question to help assessors to make judgments as to the level of score given. In addition, there are three groups of supplementary questions which elaborate on key themes in the previous questions and provide additional information and points. Where questions are not relevant to the protected area, they are left out and the scores adjusted accordingly.

The scores are totaled and the percentage of the possible score calculated. It is noted that ‘the whole concept of “scoring” progress is however fraught with difficulties and possibilities for distortion. The current system assumes, for example, that all the questions cover issues of equal weight, whereas this is not necessarily the case. Scores will therefore provide a better assessment of effectiveness if calculated as a percentage for each of the six elements of the IUCN-WCPA Framework (i.e. context, planning, inputs, process, outputs and assessments)’ (Stolton *et al.* 2007).

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Some analyses have been conducted to discover overall trends and correlations between management strengths and weaknesses. Analyses of repeated surveys have also begun.

1.10 Further reading and reports

(Dudley *et al.* 2004; Dudley *et al.* 2006; Stolton *et al.* 2003b)

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