



Darwin Initiative Workshop
Livelihoods and Conservation

3 October 2007

Natural History Museum
London

Proceedings

Introduction

The Darwin Initiative Workshop on Livelihoods and Conservation took place on 3 October 2007. The livelihoods of local people and communities were presented as being both major opportunities and challenges to the conservation of biodiversity around the world. Participants were welcomed by Professor David Macdonald (Chairman, Darwin Advisory Committee) and Eric Blencowe (Darwin Secretariat, Defra). A message to participants from Joan Ruddock, Minister for Climate Change, Biodiversity and Waste highlighted that sustainable livelihoods have been shown to be a key ingredient in the long-term success of Darwin projects contributing to the tremendous reputation that the Initiative has for quality and legacy.

Eric Blencowe stated that livelihood issues are one of the most important keys that can unlock long-term and sustainable approaches to the conservation of biological diversity. He noted the strong commitment of the UK Government to support the Initiative as a major component of the UK's obligation to the CBD. He also noted that the Initiative's very significant legacy continues to grow with every year and that it had now developed a new paradigm that other developed countries should consider adopting.

David Macdonald reiterated the importance of work on livelihoods suggesting that this topic represents one of the most important workshops held by the Initiative. He also noted that livelihood issues are inherently difficult and need to be addressed by research that adopts interdisciplinary approaches. He posed a challenge to participants to help define mechanisms that will deliver benefits to both people and ecosystems using transparent processes. He concluded that whilst it is unlikely that there are easy win-win solutions, the research on livelihoods by Darwin Initiative projects was exactly where conservation research needed to be in the 21st century.

A series of presentations challenged participants to consider using livelihood-based approaches to support the objectives of the CBD. These then fed into lively discussion in three workshop sessions in the afternoon

Summary of presentations¹

Conservation and the management of human-wildlife conflict

http://www.darwin.gov.uk/events/2007/oct/1_human_wildlife_conflict.pdf

Professor Bill Adams (University of Cambridge) presented an overview of the way that attitudes have changed in relation to human-wildlife interactions and conflict since the 19th century. Early approaches were presented as being focuses on "Fortress Conservation" with a need to protect wildlife and wilderness from people who were often seen as "intruders" in the landscape. Local communities and their traditional uses of resources were often treated as damaging the resource. The growth in networks of protected areas initially tended to ignore the needs of communities and, in extreme cases, this resulted in displacement of communities, harassment by park officials crop raiding and loss of access to traditional resources such as grazing or water.

The need to share the benefits of conservation was expanded through a series of examples illustrating changing views relating to conservation activities. Approaches, including linking conservation and development (through the Millennium Development Goals) and Community-Bases Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) were highlighted, but led to the conclusion that simple solutions are unlikely and that the most important change required is to shift towards a paradigm based around the concept of "*conservation by the people*". This was illustrated with reference to Project 15-040 "Building capacity to alleviate human-elephant conflict in North Kenya".

¹ Presentations are available on the Darwin Initiative website <http://www.darwin.gov.uk/events>

The presentation concluded that there is a need to act to identify and mitigate potential conflict suggesting three ways to move forward:

- Conservation needs to address the needs of society (communities);
- Development and conservation goals need to be linked;
- Market-based approaches should be used to promote sharing of the benefits of conservation.

[Can the bush meat trade be sustainable and support livelihoods?](http://www.darwin.gov.uk/events/2007/oct/2_Gabon.pdf)

http://www.darwin.gov.uk/events/2007/oct/2_Gabon.pdf

Dr Kate Abernethy (University of Stirling) made a presentation based on work in Gabon through Project 12-002 "Capacity building for monitoring and managing the bushmeat trade in Gabon". It was noted that, in Gabon, bushmeat is a part of everyday livelihoods both in rural and urban areas. The low average population density combined with extensive areas of natural ecosystems in Gabon combined to create the potential for the bushmeat trade to be sustainable.

Current characteristics of the trade were presented to show that whilst rural communities had the highest dependency on bushmeat for protein and income, urban populations still represented the largest area for consumption. This urban/rural split illustrated how important internal trade is with the commercial flow into urban areas being a very significant source of income for rural villages. It was noted that a limited number of species were exploited to meet demand, with porcupine being the most popular.

The Government of Gabon has made a commitment to make the trade in bushmeat sustainable and the Darwin project is providing research results to support this process. Preliminary results are suggesting that sustainable livelihoods are possible, but that there needs to be effective management practices and these need to be responsive to trends in consumption and trade. Potential risks were presented including population growth, growth of cross-border trade and potential public health issues associated with bushmeat. The importance of government regulation to support sustainability was highlighted but within the context that regulations will only be effective if they are both evidence-based and enforced.

[Sustainable use: Tangible community benefits via certification](http://www.darwin.gov.uk/events/2007/oct/4_Good_Woods.pdf)

http://www.darwin.gov.uk/events/2007/oct/4_Good_Woods.pdf

Dr David Hoyle (WWF-UK) made a presentation based on work in Kenya through project 11-004 'Conserving Kenya's indigenous forest through certification of sustainably sourced wood carvings'. This project responded to threats to local livelihoods and biodiversity resulting from overexploitation of the coastal forests to provide wood for Kenya's important carving trade. This trade currently employs around 60,000 carvers and supports up to 350,000 dependents and requires up to 50,000 trees *per annum* which traditionally have been hardwood species.

The project has helped carvers to develop products based on farmed wood (Good Woods), helped to build social networks and provided training to support this process. The project worked with FSC through the Small and Low Intensity Managed Forest (SLIMF) scheme to produce revised certification standards that could be promoted as a tool to help create market-based incentives suitable to carving. It was reported that the process had produced limited success in reducing the pressure on the forest resource (around 50-60 m³ year⁻¹) and the impact on livelihoods had also been minimal.

At this time the balance between financial costs and benefits or incentives are not favourable. The full cost and time required for certification and ongoing costs required to maintain certification means that this process would be currently impossible for other communities to replicate without external assistance. A higher return was observed in terms of social benefits through the creation of a social enterprise leading to improvements in health and safety and training.

Supporting livelihoods in conservation projects: Experiences from the field

http://www.darwin.gov.uk/events/2007/oct/5_livelihoods.pdf

Ms Lizzie Wilder (Fauna and Flora International - FFI) presented a summary of lessons learnt from analysis of livelihood components of FFI's portfolio of projects. It was noted that consideration of livelihoods needs are becoming increasingly important in conservation projects with around 85 % of FFI's current projects addressing this theme

Livelihood approaches were presented as a way to link conservation and human needs. The lessons emerging from FFI's projects stressed the need for demand-driven approaches based upon an understanding of communities and their needs. Successful interventions were seen to result from long-term partnerships which often required the establishment or strengthening of social institutions and considerable training or other capacity building. One of the key changes resulting from this approach was considerable to be changing attitudes towards promoting livelihoods-based conservation through enhanced awareness and human capacity.

Planning for sustainable pro-diversity businesses

http://www.darwin.gov.uk/events/2007/oct/3_Traidcraft.pdf

Mr Alistair Leadbetter (Traidcraft) shared experience derived from the market access team at Traidcraft to consider how business can contribute to the conservation of biodiversity. It was stressed that business-based solutions need to be successful and sustainable and that every business opportunity needed to consist of *both* a product *and* a market. One of the key questions when developing community-based businesses is then to determine how much control they have over the necessary resources.

Developing a market was presented as a significant challenge. It was noted that customers demand a quality product which is competitively priced and, most importantly, the price must cover the costs of production. The nature of supply chains also means that the local producers or resource owners often get a small proportion of the final price, making it very important to have realistic expectations about potential income.

The presentation concluded with two important steps that are required together in order to deliver business-based approach to the conservation of biodiversity:

- Market research needs to be used to define what customers want; and
- A business plan then helps to formulate the way that the products that your customers want will be developed and delivered.

Workshop sessions

Three parallel workshop sessions in the afternoon expanded issues explored in the presentations.

Using and controlling wildlife – field level conservation making livelihood sense

The group highlighted the need to build livelihoods into the design of projects from the early design and implementation stages. The need to engage local stakeholders in this process was highlighted, to get an appropriate balance between approaches supplied by UK institutions and the demand from local institutions and communities. It was noted that the DI's scoping awards do not make provision for planning workshops which could be beneficial in many situations. Where this is not possible, it was suggested that an inception workshop should be held soon after projects commence implementation. A number of participants suggested that it would be helpful if the DI developed a toolkit based on best-practice with particular emphasis on socio-economic tools.

The need to move away from traditional protected area based conservation approaches was discussed, given that most biodiversity existed outside protected areas. More creative work could be achieved with communities and livelihoods in other contexts. Better use of the full range of IUCN protected area categories was suggested as one solution, especially categories V & VI.

Best practice on livelihoods: brainstorm on the Darwin Initiative's Livelihoods Guidelines

The discussion highlighted that biodiversity has an ambiguous relationship with livelihoods and asked what kinds of skills are needed for developing successful biodiversity-related businesses. It was noted that biodiversity can be a threat to livelihoods (direct from problem animals or from protective conservation) or an asset through sustainable (or non-sustainable use). When considered from a livelihood perspective, it was felt that livelihoods can support biodiversity (by providing an economic incentive for conservation), but can also damage it (through unsustainable use).

The role of communities in business was discussed. Communities themselves do not often make good business operators. It is therefore important that different institutional roles are carefully assigned. It was also noted that relevant policy and institutional frameworks will play an important role, with agreement that it is important to have or develop policy that supports business development.

It was recognised that a considerable number of Darwin Initiative projects aim to achieve livelihood outcomes through business approaches. Attention was drawn to the guidance to existing materials and resources recently developed and posted on the DI website: <http://www.darwin.gov.uk/field/sme/index.html> . Participants noted that it would be helpful for Darwin to collate materials on other aspects of livelihoods approaches. The development domain was suggested as being especially relevant.

Trade and certification – taking a market approach: challenges for DI projects

The discussion of market-based approaches to conservation started with the reiteration of key points that came out of the earlier presentations, but also illustrated some of the challenges and tensions associated with such an approach. It was stressed that businesses need to be profitable in order to be sustainable. Four points were suggested as being necessary to develop sustainable businesses:

- Understand the potential market and any competing products.
- Develop appropriate business plans and models. Aim to build resilient businesses.
- Plan to change and diversify. One product is unlikely to be enough for long-term survival.
- Invest in people - they will need personal development. Be aware of what they can (and cannot) do.

There was discussion on the moral acceptability of profit from biodiversity-based business. It was agreed (albeit reluctantly by some) that profit, or at least financial viability, is necessary for sustainability and it is equally important to balance financial returns against non-monetary costs and benefits. This statement led usefully into the discussion of the role of regulation and certification in promoting sustainable biodiversity-based businesses.

The experience from the Good Woods project in Kenya was used to illustrate the challenges of applying certification as a tool to promote the conservation of biodiversity by communities. It was stated that whilst certification works for large enterprises, the associated transaction costs are often prohibitive for communities. The need to link certification with other environmental regulation and enforcement was stressed, leading to the conclusion that good environmental governance is an essential prerequisite to develop sustainable business solutions for the conservation of biodiversity.

Finally, it was noted that many DI projects have experimented with market-based approaches to the conservation of biodiversity. There was a strong view that this should be collated, interpreted and shared to develop a community of practice within the Initiative.

Annex 1: Workshop programme

Darwin Initiative Workshop
Wednesday 3 October 2007

Natural History Museum
Cromwell Road
London
SW7 5BD



Time	Session	Activity	Prospective Speakers
0930 - 1000	Registration	Tea and coffee	
1000 - 1015	Introduction and Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction and overview of the workshop • Welcome 	<i>Prof David Macdonald</i> Chairman, Darwin Advisory Committee <i>Eric Blencowe</i> Defra
1015 - 1215	Plenary I	'Conservation and the management of human-wildlife conflict'	15-040 'Building Capacity to alleviate Human- Elephant conflict and promote tolerance of elephants in Laikipia District, Kenya <i>Professor Bill Adams</i> <i>University of Cambridge</i>
	Plenary II	Can the bush meat trade be sustainable and support livelihoods?	12-002 'Capacity building for Monitoring and Managing the Bushmeat trade in Gabon' <i>Dr Kate Abernethy</i> <i>University of Stirling and</i> <i>Ms Anne Marie Ndong Obiang</i> <i>Gabonese Darwin Fellow currently in the UK</i>
1215 - 1315	Lunch	Participants network over lunch	
1315 - 1415	Plenary III	Planning for sustainable pro-diversity businesses	<i>Mr Alistair Leadbetter</i> Business Services Coordinator Traidcraft
1415 - 1445	Plenary IV	Sustainable use: tangible community benefits via certification	11-004 'Conserving Kenya's indigenous forests through certification of sustainably sourced wood carvings' <i>Dr David Hoyle</i> WWF
1445 - 1515	Plenary V	Supporting livelihoods in conservation projects: experiences from the field.	<i>Ms Lizzie Wilder</i> Fauna and Flora International

Time	Session	Activity	Prospective Speakers
1515 - 1615 (inc tea break)	Seminars	<i>Participants break into discussion group to debate issues presented during the Plenary sessions. Participants are encouraged to join their preferred discussion group.</i>	
	Seminar a)	Using and controlling wildlife – field level conservation making livelihoods sense.	<i>Rob Wild</i> Facilitator ECTF
	Seminar b)	Best practice on livelihoods: brainstorm on the Darwin Initiative's Livelihoods Guidelines	<i>Kerry ten Kate</i> Facilitator
	Seminar c)	Trade & certification - taking a market approach: challenges for DI Projects	<i>Paul van Gardingen</i> Facilitator ECTF
1615 - 1630	Seminar Feedback and Wrap Up		Defra
1630 – 1645	Concluding remarks		Defra