

## Report: main decisions

### Indicators of Management Effectiveness workshop

16-18 March 2011 –Marbach (Switzerland)

#### 1. Introduction

ALPARC, in collaboration with the Swiss Parks Network and the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, is developing an instrument for use in all Alpine protected areas. Obviously, it is difficult to create an instrument that will be valid for all protected areas. For example, Switzerland does not recognise European Union programmes (such as Natura 2000). Equally, as nature conservation falls under the remit of the cantons, the Swiss parks focus on sustainable development.

- ⇒ Nevertheless, **some common data is required** in order to simplify analysis and provide a broad overview. The aim of the workshop was therefore to develop a simplified, non-exhaustive catalogue of indicators. The instrument will be flexible and can be adapted to local circumstances by adding extra indicators.

#### 2. Existing tools

- ⇒ RAPPAM - Rapid Assessment and Prioritisation of Protected Area Management

This tool requires input from a wide range of individuals and organisations and has to be compiled by experts. RAPPAM identifies questions about how systems are working, but does not give definitive answers. The advantage of this tool is that it forces decision-makers to have a round table discussion in order to assess system effectiveness.

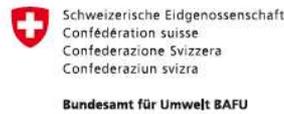
RAPPAM is available as a database, but can be applied using printouts.

In most cases, the RAPPAM methodology is provided to protected areas by local governments, so it represents a top-down approach.

- ⇒ SARA - Sistema Aree Regionali Ambientali: putting a monetary value on protected area products and benefits

Participant feedback: giving a financial value to protected area products and benefits could belittle their importance. In addition, people could be led to believe that protected area products and benefits could be replaced by other products and benefits, which could be very harmful.

SARA was developed as a **decision-making tool**. It identifies the hypothetical financial damage that would be caused by eliminating the protected area. The tool is intended to show that protected areas offer considerable added value, although it is important to bear in mind that not all features can be assigned a monetary value.



**Of course, protected area products and benefits are invaluable, but a financial value can be useful in decision-making, especially in western countries where the links between the importance of conservation and economic development are not fully appreciated.**

As the only structures capable of preventing changes in land use, protected areas clearly offer added value. The SARA project seeks to promote mature ecosystems and to raise awareness among decision-makers about the importance of protected areas.

Most people said that they would prefer to be able to demonstrate how economic considerations were an integral part of protected areas, rather than giving abstract statements about the value of protected areas.

### **3. Glossary**

The glossary was primarily intended to establish standard definitions and to help participants to understand what was being discussed **during the workshop**.

#### ***Impact***

There was a lot of discussion surrounding the definition of impacts, notably with reference to how it was used in the indicator tables. Only positive impacts were referred to in the sample case study, but impacts could be also negative – the result of poor choices or unforeseen consequences. Participants also felt that collateral damage should be classified as an impact generated by an outcome.

In the catalogue, *impact* is generally used to indicate a change in the situation with reference to a broad goal. As the impact will only become apparent 10 years down the road, obviously no one can predict what will happen, but managers can state what their targets and intended goals are.

=>A decision was taken to **replace the term "impact" with "vision"**.

#### ***Input and costs***

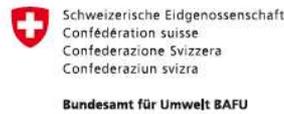
Some people argued that *costs* could constitute an *input* – the money spent to implement an action. In this case, an *input* is an action undertaken to obtain an outcome, while the *costs* are used to evaluate whether an action is feasible.

The *costs* in the table are therefore a mean of assessing whether the planned action is feasible. *Costs* can also be used to measure efficiency.

### **4. Measuring effectiveness or efficiency?**

It is hard to identify where effectiveness ends and efficiency begins. For example, most "Città slow" towns have promoted walking, thereby reducing pollution. However, this has resulted in job cuts. The measure is effective, but not efficient. Consequently, we need to distinguish between:

- Conservation activities
- Measuring effectiveness and



- Measuring efficiency.

The purpose of the CIME (Catalogue of Indicators for Management Effectiveness) is to evaluate whether protected area management is effective – **there is no reference to efficiency**.

## **5. Methodology**

In the methodology proposed during the workshop, the *outcome* was divided into three sections. The division was made in order to compare the results (*real outcome*) and the intended results (*expected outcome*). In other words, change is measured by comparing the past and the present.

*Indicators* can also evaluate actions taken in the past, provided that enough data are available.

Protected area management effectiveness indicators need to be combined with qualitative and quantitative decision-making tools in order to improve protected area performance. Protected areas managers are advised to use various decision-making tools.

Since natural phenomena and ecosystem functions cannot always be quantified or expressed in monetary terms, qualitative multi-criteria decision-making tools are more suitable for helping decision-makers, park managers and stakeholders to improve transparency and target activities.

Each protected area can use existing indicators but also create new ones, building on the examples given in the CIME.

## **6. Protected areas and the public**

Do *impacts* and *outcomes* always match the objectives?

Sometimes protected area activities are at odds with the local population's needs. For example, reintroducing bears is a positive action in terms of preserving biodiversity, but local residents may be opposed to the reintroduction because bears are dangerous and might eat farm animals. Protected area managers need to take these factors into account. It may be advisable to include some indicators to cover negative situations.

The choice of indicators is another problem – defining the scope of the measurement exercise. For example, what should be taken into account when assessing renewable energies? The environmental impact and/or sustainable development? In general, decision-makers are left free to make these choices.

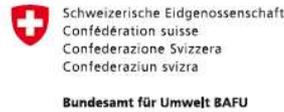
## **7. Next steps**

- ⇒ Each **recommended indicator will come with a factsheet**, which will be more informative than a table.
- ⇒ Having agreed to **simplify the catalogue**, we need to decide how best to proceed: is it only the number of *indicators* that needs to be reduced or also the number of *objectives*?

- ⇒ Some participants pointed out that **the number of indicators is not the main problem for protected areas, but rather the difficulties in producing answers for each indicator**. It should be possible to obtain the data relatively easily without unnecessary costs (money and resources).
- ⇒ **It is important to establish whether an indicator actually measures the outcome**. Only then can broad trends be identified. Even if it is easy to produce values for a given *indicator*, that does not automatically make it valid. Consequently, **each indicator needs to be tested in the field to assess indicator quality**.
- ⇒ Participants suggested that **pilot regions could test 50 indicators** in order to assess how many *indicators* were viable and to evaluate *indicator* quality.
- ⇒ Another suggestion was that **each pilot region should choose one objective and test all the associated indicators**.

### **Reducing the number of indicators and objectives**

- ⇒ The catalogue needs to be streamlined by reducing the number of *indicators*.
- ⇒ Participants suggested **having one indicator per objective**. The latest version of the CIME would be reduced to **25 indicators**. However, new *indicators* can always be added, as the CIME is intended to be a dynamic instrument.
- ⇒ **Establishing a list of 25 recommended indicators**; reports will still be submitted for the remaining *indicators*, but possibly in less detail. Each protected area will be free to choose which *indicators* to use. By maintaining the full list of *indicators*, we will be able to replace the *indicators* that do not fully describe a given *objective*. The 25 *indicators* will be described individually in a special factsheet.
- ⇒ When selecting the *indicators*, it also makes sense to define a set of *objectives* and *outcomes*. It is worth bearing in mind that some *objectives* could also be grouped together.
- ⇒ **Grouping objectives**: it is hard to find an *indicator* which measures multiple *objectives*. An *indicator* that gives different answers for different *objectives* is not a good indicator.
- ⇒ **It is difficult to match one objective to one indicator**. Participants therefore suggested reducing the number of *objectives* whilst retaining more *indicators*.
- ⇒ **It would be better to reduce the number of indicators after field tests**. The first priority has to be checking terminology, and then verifying whether the *indicators* are easy to measure on the ground and if they work well. It should then be easy to reduce the number of *indicators*. NB. The *indicators* will never perfect.



### ***Selection of recommended indicators***

The recommended *indicators* would be selected based on each participant's rating. **The most popular indicators will be classified as recommended indicators.** The remaining *indicators* will be listed elsewhere in the catalogue.

It is important to remember that **not all indicators will be suitable for a specific protected area.** We recognise that each protected area has its own priorities. Each protected area is therefore free to customise the measurement method.

**Recommended indicators are a tool for obtaining comparable data in order to have an overview of the situation in protected areas. The goal is not to compare different protected areas.**

### ***After the Workshop***

Proposals:

- Establish an association or a group of protected areas in the Alps that will use at least 50% of standard indicators taken from the workshop catalogue.
- Encourage collaboration and research between different Alpine protected areas on the indicator project with the aim of improving indicator performance and practical use of indicators.

Task Force Protected Areas

Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention

Attended by: Guido Plassmann, Elena Maselli and Laura Savio, June 2011