

## Participatory Threats Assessment Workshop



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### 1. What is the tool?

**Participatory Threats Assessment:** A workshop held with the purpose of identifying, prioritizing and mapping human activities that are threats to species and their habitats within the landscape/seascape, with the participation of local stakeholders.

### 2. What will this tool do for your project (or what conservation challenges will using this tool help you solve)?

#### Direct benefits

- ◆ An opportunity to meet all the local stakeholders, building a day-to-day relationship with them.
- ◆ Identification and classification of the stakeholders in your landscape.
- ◆ A threats-based focus for your project's conservation work.
- ◆ New information gained as the result of the workshop.
- ◆ Agreement among stakeholders about the main human activities that threaten species in the landscape/seascape.
- ◆ The process encourages you to build trust and cooperation between your project and stakeholders.

#### Indirect benefits

- ◆ Information exchange between all stakeholders.
- ◆ Promotion of “ownership” of the project among stakeholders.
- ◆ Building relationships among stakeholders.
- ◆ A simple visual representation of the human activities maps, available to all stakeholders.
- ◆ Provides materials that can be useful when reporting to donors and/or communicating with decision makers (in the government, etc.).

#### Material products

- ◆ A list and description of each human activity occurring in your landscape.
- ◆ An evaluation and ranking of the human activities.
- ◆ Geographical description, maps, and location of the human activities.
- ◆ A list of stakeholders, and historical information about the landscape/seascape.

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## The Landscape Species Approach

The Landscape Species Approach is a wildlife-based strategy to define ecologically meaningful conservation areas, recognizing the complexity of the biological and social landscape in which conservation occurs (see **Living Landscapes Bulletin 2**). The Landscape Species Approach depends on selecting a set of species with complementary ecological needs (a suite of Landscape Species which collectively represents the biodiversity of the landscape as a whole) (see **Living Landscapes Bulletin 3**). The goal of the approach is for conservation of the suite of Landscape Species to lead to conservation of not only those species, but of all biodiversity in the landscape.

### 3. What will this tool NOT do for your Project?

- ◆ This workshop is unlikely to provide precise activities maps, rather they will result in general approximations which can later be refined.
- ◆ This tool cannot lead to a map of all threats present in the landscape. Some threats cannot be mapped, (e.g., stakeholders may not be able to map threats such as climate change or pollution from run-off).
- ◆ Provide quantitative estimates about the impacts of threats– the workshop evaluation is mainly qualitative, not quantitative.
- ◆ The workshop process will not be able to engage all local stakeholders in all landscapes.

### 4. What are the requisites for using this tool?

#### Project type and stage of development

Any project, at any stage of development, could benefit from this exercise.

#### Information and data

- ◆ Knowledge of the main stakeholders.
- ◆ Knowledge of the culture and tradition of the different communities in the area.
- ◆ Base maps of the landscape or seascape.

#### Technical staff skills

- ◆ No specialized skills are required to run a workshop.
- ◆ An experienced, objective, and external facilitator can be useful.

#### LLP tools

A Conceptual Model can be helpful, but is not required.

### 5. How to use the tool:

- ◆ Read LLP Technical Manual 1.
- ◆ Read related LLP Technical Manuals, Bulletins, papers, case studies, video tutorials and other documents to learn about how to use the tool.
- ◆ Consider contacting people who have already built threats maps, and ask them for advice on how to do it and how to deal with different types of stakeholders.



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## Field examples

The *Madidi* team in Bolivia is working very well with municipalities and indigenous organizations as a result of the stakeholder meeting.

In *Glover's Reef* in Belize, information on the fishing locations was obtained thanks to the participation of fishermen in the stakeholders meeting.

In the *Eastern Steppe* of Mongolia, climate change was identified as a threat through this process, but was unable to be mapped; similarly, the threat from mainland pollution run-off could not be mapped for *Glover's Reef*, although it was noted as a threat to the landscape.

## 6. Who should be involved in using the tool, and why?

- ♦ Anyone starting a new conservation project. The workshop can help the project be more objective and transparent and ensure the participation of local people.

- ♦ Projects that are already underway. In this case, it will help you to evaluate the effects of the project, lead to adaptive management, and allow for inclusion of new human activities.
- ♦ All stakeholders directly involved in the project. (Recognize that you need to be strategic in choosing participants and engage constructive– not destructive– stakeholders).

## 7. How long will it take?

Plan to spend one to three months gathering and preparing all the information needed prior to the workshop (of course, it will take less time if this information is already available). The actual workshop itself should proceed over one or two days. The process can occur as a series of small meetings (bilaterally) or in larger workshop fashion.

Results can be very useful to use for reporting to donors and communicating with local decision-makers. Remember to repeat this process during the life of the project in order to consider the changing effects of activities in your landscape/seascape.

## Living Landscapes Program Manuals

WCS-International saves wildlife and wildlands by understanding and resolving critical problems that threaten key species and large, wild ecosystems around the world. Simply put, our field staff make decisions about what causes the needs of wildlife and of people to clash, and take action with their partners to avoid or mitigate these conflicts that threaten wildlife and their habitat. Helping our field staff to make the best decisions is a core objective of the Living Landscapes Program.

We believe that if conservation projects are to be truly effective, we must: (1) be explicit about what we want to conserve, (2) identify the most important threats and where they occur within the landscape, (3) strategically plan our interventions so we are confident that they will help abate the most critical threats, and (4) put in place a process for measuring the effectiveness of our conservation actions, and use this information to guide our decisions. The Living Landscapes Program is developing and testing, with our field programs, a set of decision support tools designed to help field staff select targets, map key threats, prepare conservation strategies, and develop monitoring frameworks.

We describe the application of these tools in a series of brief technical manuals which are available by email from [llp@wcs.org](mailto:llp@wcs.org).

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