**The view from Gran Paradiso**

More than 80 participants from 35 countries met in the Gran Paradiso National Park, at Cogne in Italy from 24-28 June 2019 under the auspices of the BIOPAMA Programme, supported by the European Development Fund through the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States. The European Commission’s DG-DEVCO, IUCN, and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, convened the meeting as an opportunity to share and exchange lessons for the implementation of the BIOPAMA programme – a programme that aims to strengthen protected and conserved areas in 79 countries and ensure that they contribute towards sustainable development. We were hosted graciously by the Fondation Grand Paradis, and the Gran Paradiso National Park.

Participants were conscious that the world is at a crossroads as we approach 2020. Biodiversity has never been more threatened, while systems of effective protected and conserved areas provide hope and inspiration for the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services and as a foundation for sustainable economies and livelihoods. A suite of keynote presentations started the process of deliberating progress, challenges, opportunities and direction across five streams of interest, with the ultimate aim of bringing these streams together in a clear way forward that will ensure that protected and conserved areas can play their role.

Key messages from the five intersecting streams were:

1. **Management Effectiveness Assessment (PAME)**

The systematic assessment of protected and conserved areas is a powerful tool to ensure that their management is enhanced and outcomes for biodiversity and society are achieved. It was therefore recommended that:

* Universal application of management effectiveness assessment to cover all relevant components, including outcomes is required.
* PAME should be regarded as a diagnostic approach to identify how management can be enhanced towards achieving outcomes; it should encourage managers and not place them under scrutiny.
* The process is as important as the findings, and so it should be embedded in the management institutions involved.
* It should involve all relevant stakeholders and knowledge; data, knowledge and understanding should be shared appropriately.

1. **Governance and Equity Assessment (PAGE)**

Good governance and achieving equity are determinants of conservation success, whether at the system or site scale. Participatory governance assessment can identify how the legitimate interests of rights-holders and stakeholders can be enhanced. Poor governance must be addressed. It was therefore recommended that:

* Governance and equity assessment should be incorporated into all protected and conserved area effectiveness assessments , as an entry point for wider conversations, and processes, e.g. Green List, and global database is needed (UNEP-WCMC/RIS)
* A multi-agency, diverse stakeholder process will allow integration into wider governance processes and embrace diversity.
* Specific efforts should be made to develop capacity and competence through learning programmes, for undertaking and responding to governance and equity assessment.
* Case studies be collated for learning and understanding the role and power of good governance, and develop “state of the art”

1. **Monitoring biodiversity**

Understanding how biodiversity outcomes are being achieved is fundamental to effective governance and management programmes, and monitoring of biodiversity needs to be properly resourced, standardized and applied consistently. It is therefore recommended that:

* A monitoring system needs to be defined, including identifying the relevant questions related to the desired objectives and outcomes, and the decisions to achieve them.
* The monitoring system should be integrated across scales of species, ecosystems and landscapes, and focused on specific outcomes.
* Project level monitoring should be institutionalized into the ongoing roles of the relevant authorities.
* A range of actors, including staff, citizens, and agencies should be involved and that results should be shared and communicated.

1. **Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool (IMET)**

IMET allows for the integration of site level assessments with contextual information as a basis for decision-making both in systems and sites. It has great potential to be further developed and refined and to complement PAME and PAGE where these are applied, and be a foundation for Green Listing. It is therefore recommended that:

* IMET and the information contained in Digital Observatories should be integrated closely, and the accessibility of IMET data made available appropriately/reported
* The application of IMET can be markedly expanded, across different kinds of PAs and made more accessible through training and other capacity development.
* IMET can be closely integrated as a foundation for information gathering and analysis feeding into the Green Listing Process
* IMET can support planning, monitoring and evaluation and facilitate capacity development processes, including beyond ACP countries. Communicate!

1. **The IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas**

The Green List is a sustainability standard allowing for the strengthening and recognition of sites that achieve their conservation and social outcomes, but also as a process for diagnosing strengths and weaknesses and addressing these through appropriate investment.

* The Green List process builds on other diagnostic tools, such as PAME, PAGE and IMET and does not replace these; it is possible to translate findings from these tools into the GL process, and translate info back.
* The GL can be institutionalized and embedded into the regional institutions and observatories across BIOPAMA, increasing efficiencies, as well as with other programmes such as World Heritage, Biosphere Reserves, State of Parks.
* A balance has to be achieved between the costs of implementing processes and the benefits of being engaged, and a business plan should reflect this/support this.
* GL resources, communications and processes should be accessible in more languages, and GL mentors and IMET coaches could be cross-trained.

**The road from Gran Paradiso**

As the participants took stock of the insights and understanding achieved collectively in Gran Paradiso, they embraced and committed to:

* Building bridges between the different tools and methods, finding and exploiting synergies to achieve greater understanding and impact at scale.
* Using the Action Component to align with and support the broader Vision of BIOPAMA.
* Documenting lessons learned and communicating these through PANORAMA
* Using PAME and PAGE, IMET and enhanced monitoring as stepping stones towards successful protected and conserved areas as exemplified by the IUCN Green List
* Expanding reference to the Green List Standard and commitments towards listing.
* Working together across regions and partner institutions including within the BIOPAMA partnership to build on strengths and strive for sustainability into the future.
* Use the powerful platforms in regional congresses, the IUCN World Conservation Congress and the CBD COP15 in Kunming, China, to put BIOPAMA “on the map” as a powerful integrator that supports successful conservation as a foundation for sustainable development.