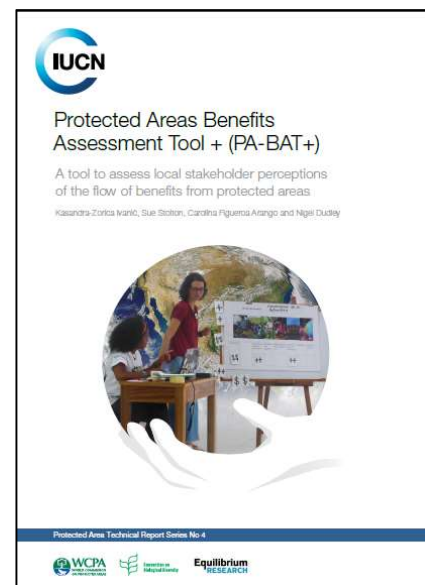


## IUCN WCPA Technical Note Series No. 2 PROTECTED AREAS BENEFITS ASSESSMENT TOOL +

This Technical Note provides a summary of the following publication in the IUCN WCPA Technical Series, which can be downloaded from the IUCN library by clicking on the following link:

[Protected Areas Benefits Assessment Tool + \(PA-BAT+\): A tool to assess local stakeholder perceptions of the flow of benefits from protected areas](#)

**The Protected Areas Benefits Assessment Tool+ (PA-BAT+) collates and assesses information on the benefits from protected areas (PAs) and other conservation sites. The tool allows users to assess local stakeholders' perceptions of these benefits and the flow of these benefits to stakeholders. Implementation of the tool relies on consensus-building to develop learning and discussion around benefits, and to encourage legal and sustainable use of benefits where this is possible within conservation objectives. This briefing summarizes the main challenges the tool addresses, target audiences, its methodology and how to use and communicate results.**



### Introduction

As the PA estate continues to expand and the threats to biodiversity multiply, the resources required to manage and protect these areas effectively are also increasing. Furthermore, to ensure biodiversity conservation, PAs need to balance a complicated range of practical and ethical issues; the most complicated of all being to balance the survival of “wild nature” with the rights, needs and support of people who live in natural habitats. Understanding the full range of values, and any associated benefits, available from natural ecosystems coupled with strong governance structures and rule of law that ensures local participation in decision making, can result in PAs that are good for both people and nature.

The PA-BAT+ has been developed as a tool to increase the understanding of how values turn into benefits and how the distribution of these benefits flow from PA to stakeholders near and far, working with and based on the experiences and perceptions of local communities. The tool allows stakeholders to understand the values and associated benefits of the PA, network with other resource users and make direct contact with PA management.

Local resources, if sustainably managed, can provide a more secure and sustainable future for economic development than relying on donor funds. The PA-BAT+ results highlight where PA managers can work with

local communities and other rightsholders and stakeholders to enhance sustainable resource use and development, always noting that these should be aligned with the areas' conservation objectives.

**Box: from PA-BAT to PA-BAT+**

The original PA-BAT was conceived as part of the WWF International project 'Arguments for Protection'. Developed in 2007, the tool was designed as a series of assessment forms around 24 possible values from PAs that could produce benefits (economic and non-economic) to a range of stakeholders. As implementation of the tool has increased it has developed to include a stakeholder workshop approach, use of mapping and visualisation techniques and data management systems. This IUCN-WCPA technical guide focusses on this implementation process; with a detailed description of the process and case studies from around the world on a variety of uses of the original PA-BAT and PA-BAT+. The PA-BAT+ (the plus being added to distinguish this version of the tool, which involves a detailed explanation of the implementation process) has thus evolved into a unique methodology for PA practitioners who wish to collect quantitative and qualitative information from stakeholders on the range and spread of PA benefits across stakeholder groups.

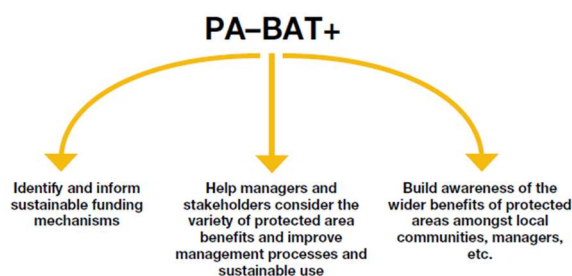
**Target audiences**

The main audience for this technical series is PA management staff. The tool enables gathering direct and valuable data from stakeholders on their perceptions of values and associated benefits of a given PA. It can also be used in any other conservation site. Identifying these values allows staff to understand current active and passive uses of benefits and take actions necessary to safeguard biodiversity conservation and human well-being while encouraging increased engagement of local communities in management. Furthermore, the analysis envisions possible future uses of the benefits, supports future planning and the adoption of measures that prevent degradation and biodiversity loss.

There are additional target audiences that could use the PA-BAT+ such as local businesses, local organizations and other government institutions dealing with land planning to ensure any resource use linked to PAs meets local needs and does not damage conservation objectives. The implementation of the PA-BAT+ has shown that 95% of participants meet at least one new person during the implementation process and almost 40% make more than five new acquaintances, creating new opportunities for collaboration.

**Background**

The PA-BAT+ is embedded within the concepts of ecosystem services and equity for the governance of PAs. Biodiversity conservation in PAs aims to maintain natural values ranging from endangered species and habitats to wider ecosystems that are under threat due to ever-expanding human influence. Furthermore, biodiversity conservation provides multiple benefits to different types of stakeholders, which are commonly referred to as the provision of ecosystem services or, more recently, nature's contribution to people.



**Figure 1: Summary of major aims of the PA-BAT+**

The PA-BAT+ tool starts by recognizing local people's perceptions as the first and foremost step in understanding the role that a PA, or any other conservation site, plays in terms of the provision of benefits and their distribution.

The Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) voluntary guidance on effective governance models for PA management, defines the concept of equity as one of the elements of good governance. The CBD's guidance breaks down equity into three dimensions: recognition, procedure and distribution. Recognition being the acknowledgement of and respect for the rights and the diversity of identities, values, knowledge systems and institutions of rights holders and stakeholders; procedure refers to the inclusiveness of rule- and decision-making; and distribution implies that costs and benefits resulting from the management of PAs must be equitably shared among different actors. The PA-BAT+ can contribute to all three dimensions by providing a *procedure* which helps *recognize* stakeholders' perceptions of use and benefits from a PA resulting in better information on *distribution* of benefits.

## Summary of key elements of the Technical Series publication on PA-BAT+

### 1. Why use the PA-BAT+?

Carrying out a PA-BAT+ exercise can contribute to PA management in many ways.

- To better align delivery, or possible delivery, of benefits with a site's conservation objectives.
- To improve or strengthen relationships with local stakeholders.
- To contribute to the development of interpretation and education programmes.
- To help improve management effectiveness.
- As a contribution to rural development projects (e.g. communicating the role of PAs, linking nature conservation and development, adding value to local resources, overcoming 'market failures', strengthening local capacity, facilitating stakeholder involvement in PA management).
- To help develop business plans and marketing strategies for a specific set of goods or services from which financial benefits can be gained sustainably.
- As a starting point to identify major benefits for further research.

The PA-BAT+ can be implemented at any time during the management cycle. However, results can specifically enrich processes such as the revision/update of management plans.

### 2. Overview of the PA-BAT+ methodology

PA-BAT+ aims to identify three main elements:

- **Benefits:** A list of benefits likely to come from the PA.
- **Flow of benefits:** A list of stakeholders who could receive or use the benefits (local people, government, local organizations, business, etc.).
- **Value of benefits:** The assessment of each benefit and who it flows to in terms of three criteria: *economic*, *non-economic* (e.g. subsistence, aesthetic, cultural or religious benefit) and *potential* benefit.

The assessment is made during discussion that develops during a facilitated workshop guided by a set of questions about the benefits: e.g. *Is the area an important source of food from fish and other aquatic animals? Or Is the area important for agriculture/ agroforestry?*

Benefit	Local people living in the PA	Local people living near PA	National population	Civil society organisations	Business sector	Local government
Is the area an important resource for pollination of nearby crops?						

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**Figure 2: Example of the PA-BAT+ assessment template (top) and completed (bottom)**

The assessments are recorded when a consensus is reached amongst all those present about the level of importance and flow of benefits. A detailed write up of the workshop is important to capture discussion, areas of disagreement and any issues with resource use that are not legal or conflict with the conservation objectives of the area. Key ideas can be presented on posters or PowerPoint, translated into local languages. Optional extras include use of maps to identify exactly where particular ecosystem services are situated.

### 3. Running a PA-BAT+ workshop

A facilitator runs the PA-BAT+ during a day-long workshop through group discussions with local communities, local organizations, PA and NGO staff and other stakeholders. Facilitators need to be fully familiar with the methodology and should ensure the best language and processes are used for the local context to guide the discussion. After this familiarization process, the PA-BAT+ is relatively quick to use: 1-2 days preparation for the first time use of the tool, 1 day workshop, 1 day write-up, with costs associated to staff time (2-3 people per workshop, travel and workshop expenses). Follow-up time will depend on the aims behind carrying out the PA-BAT+ and how the results are planned to be used. Detailed guidance on running the workshops is provided in the full technical series.

### 4. Linking sustainable resource use and effective conservation

The PA-BAT+ only assesses legal resource use in PAs. The level of importance of resources, both economically and for subsistence, may raise issues of sustainability. In this case, it is important that managers and stakeholders continue the dialogue after the PA-BAT+ assessment to develop resource use plans (e.g. memorandums of understanding on the level of resource use) to ensure long-term sustainability and effective conservation of resources. Baseline data for monitoring usually only goes back at best to the declaration of a PA – and stakeholders may have a much longer view of resource use and information on sustainable practices, or sometimes traditional practice, which may inform current management. The assessed values and benefits can inform decision making, spatial planning, Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs), etc. Under the right circumstance, PAs can become significant drivers of

local economies. Development initiatives should be planned gradually, with special attention to a fair distribution of benefits among all stakeholders and, of course, the area's conservation objectives.

The PA-BAT+ encourages a three-way direct link between PAs, business and local communities. For example, a business which relies on resources from the PA might have a memorandum of understanding with the PA and either directly employ local people or provide support for local development (e.g. financial support or training related to business management) with full engagement and participation of local people (e.g. through involvement in management structures or other decision making bodies). All parties are engaged in the management and governance of the benefit. This option is likely to produce the most equitable flow of benefits and positive results for all parties concerned, and to ensure the sustainability of both PA values and businesses reliant on these values.

## 5. Using the PA-BAT+ to build a work programme on PA benefits

The concept of assessing ecosystem services to make the case for greater support for PAs has become the focus of many methodologies and projects. Developing dialogues with service providers, government departments, industry and other stakeholders can result in increased support for PAs – but should only be undertaken as part of a planned process, and with the understanding that it may take many years and considerable effort to develop this wider recognition of PA benefits. The PA-BAT+ results can be used as a scoping study when planning future ecosystem service valuation exercises to identify which benefits should be further studied, for example by focusing on those seen as most (or potentially most) economically important. Other research could include, for example, biophysical measurement of ecosystem services (e.g. water quality, carbon sequestration), spatial mapping of ecosystem services, social science surveys to get a broader and more representative assessment from a larger number of people or work on developing more equitable distribution of benefits.

## References and further reading

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