

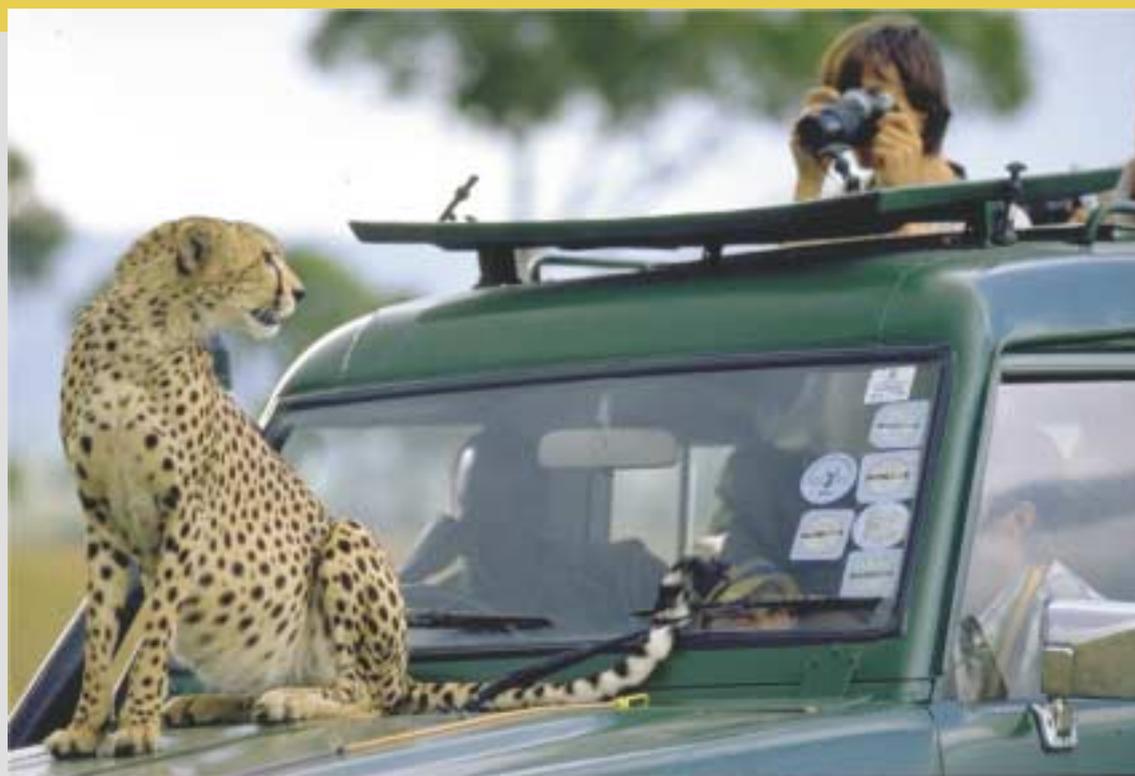
World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)

Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

Guidelines for Planning and Management

Paul F. J. Eagles, Stephen F. McCool
and Christopher D. Haynes

Adrian Phillips, Series Editor



Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 8

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Economic Values of Protected Areas: Guidelines for Protected Area Managers. No. 2. Task Force on Economic Benefits of Protected Areas of the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) of IUCN, in collaboration with the Economics Service Unit of IUCN, 1998, xii + 52pp.

Guidelines for Marine Protected Areas. No. 3. Graeme Kelleher, 1999, xxiv + 107pp.

Indigenous and Traditional Peoples and Protected Areas: Principles, Guidelines and Case Studies. No. 4. Javier Beltrán, (Ed.), IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK and WWF International, Gland, Switzerland, 2000, xi + 133pp.

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Financing Protected Areas: Guidelines for Protected Area Managers. No. 5. Financing Protected Areas Task Force of the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) of IUCN, in collaboration with the Economics Unit of IUCN, 2000, viii + 58pp.

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Transboundary Protected Areas for Peace and Co-operation. No. 7. Trevor Sandwith, Clare Shine, Lawrence Hamilton, and David Sheppard, 2001, xi + 111pp.

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Prepared for the
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and IUCN – The World Conservation Union

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2002**

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Foreword by the United Nations Environment Programme

Tourism is good business, as it produces 4.4% of the world's GDP, and employs around 200 million people globally. It can also help the sustainable management of protected areas, as a market-based alternative catering to the growing number of discriminating travellers trying to find, understand and enjoy a natural environment. Tourism can support the protection of natural resources, as local residents realise the value of their asset and want to preserve it.

At the same time, our global heritage of living species is threatened as never before, as the protected areas that harbour so much of our biodiversity are exposed to the pressures of unsustainable development. The precautionary approach urges us to be especially concerned about tourism in protected areas, given the risk of damage and destruction to this unique natural resource.

Visitor impact management is ever more important as the number of tourists increases, and their distribution is often concentrated in major tourism destinations in ecologically vulnerable areas. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has been actively supporting protected area managers, working with WTO, UNESCO and IUCN, for over 12 years, through technical assistance to key stakeholders, and capacity building in projects and publications. This publication is the latest in this series, and UNEP is proud to be a partner in this milestone reference work.

Ensuring that tourism follows a truly sustainable path, and that it contributes to the sustainable management of protected areas, whether public or private, will require enhanced cooperation and concrete partnerships among the tourism industry, governments at all levels, local communities, protected area managers and planners, and the tourists themselves. This book describes how this can be done, and UNEP is happy to present it to all interested parties, especially protected area managers, on the occasion of the International Year of Ecotourism 2002.

Jacqueline Aloisi de Larderel
Assistant Executive Director
Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
United Nations Environment Programme

April 2002

Foreword by the World Tourism Organization

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) is pleased to present to the international community, and especially to public administrations and private sector businesses directly involved in tourism activities, this new publication containing guidelines for the sustainable development and management of tourism in protected areas.

Tourism has become a major sector of economic activity since the latter part of the twentieth century and all indications are that it will continue growing in the years to come. With this growth, a diversification of tourism products and destinations is taking place, with increased demand for nature-related tourism, including ecotourism, visitation to national and natural parks, rural-based tourism, and the like. The tourists themselves are becoming increasingly sophisticated in their demands; this is not only in terms of luxury at the various establishments they use, but especially in terms of having a meaningful travel experience, including such aspects as cultural authenticity, contacts with local communities, and learning about flora, fauna, special ecosystems and natural life in general, and its conservation.

The expected growth and the new trends observed put tourism in a strategic position to make a positive contribution to, or to negatively affect, the sustainability of natural protected areas and the development potential of surrounding areas and their communities. Tourism can in fact be a major tool for the conservation of such areas and for raising the environmental awareness of residents and visitors. These objectives can be achieved through the generation of financial resources from tourism that can be dedicated to conservation measures, and through appropriate information, interpretation and education programmes for visitors and residents. Additionally, tourism operations within protected areas need to be carefully planned, managed and monitored in order to ensure their long-term sustainability. Otherwise, negative impacts will be generated and tourism will instead contribute to the further deterioration of these areas.

WTO has been producing know-how and specific guidelines for the sustainable development and management of tourism in different types of destinations. It has also been disseminating good practices observed throughout the world, and supporting governments and the private sector with the necessary tools and technical advice to continuously raise the level of sustainability of the industry.

In presenting this publication to all types of users, WTO would like to emphasise the need for tourism managers, be they public or private, to work closely with those responsible for nature conservation and protected areas. Their joint cooperation should ensure that the twin objectives of conservation and development are suitably balanced and that tourism effectively contributes to safeguard the planet's precious resources. This book, coming out during the International Year of Ecotourism, can be a useful instrument for achieving this goal.

*World Tourism Organization
Madrid, March 2002*

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As a result, these new Guidelines are the product of the co-operative effort of many people in UNEP, WTO and the IUCN. The funding for the project came from UNEP, WTO and Environment Australia. The authors and other content contributors came from the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) of IUCN.

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The authors thank their wives and children for years of patience and assistance.

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From left to right: Paul Eagles, Chris Haynes and Steve McCool.

He went on to work as a planner in many areas, with planning projects in parks, tourism, highway design, electrical power line placement, subdivision design, environmentally sensitive areas, mine and pit opening, wetland creation, urban design, watershed planning and government policy development. He has worked in over 20 countries, with substantial experience in North America, Africa and Central America. Since 1996 Dr Eagles has been the Chair of the Task Force on Tourism and Protected Areas of IUCN's WCPA.

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Preface

The link between protected areas and tourism is as old as the history of protected areas. Protected areas need tourism, and tourism needs protected areas. Though the relationship is complex and sometimes adversarial, tourism is always a critical component to consider in the establishment and management of protected areas.

These guidelines aim to build an understanding of protected area tourism, and its management. They provide a theoretical structure, but are also intended to help managers in practical ways. The underlying aim is to ensure that tourism contributes to the purposes of protected areas and does not undermine them.

While protected area planners and managers can do much to build a more constructive relationship with the tourism sector, they operate within legal, political, economic and cultural contexts that greatly limit their freedom. Moreover tourism itself is driven by many forces that are beyond the influence of park managers. Therefore the success of these Guidelines depends in part on action taken by governments and others, for example in updating legislation relating to protected areas and tourism, or introducing economic incentives to encourage sustainable forms of tourism.

Nonetheless, managers can and do play a critical role. By working with a broad range of stakeholders, and notably the industry and local communities, they can do much to ensure that tourism works for their park and for the people living in it or nearby. These Guidelines contain numerous practical suggestions about how this can be done, based not only on sound theory but also on practice from around the world. In order to draw out practical advice, a number of sections are highlighted thus: **Guidelines**.