RUGU NATIONAL PARK, NIGERIA
EVALUATION OF ITS BENEFITS USING PROTECTED AREA BENEFIT ASSESSMENT TOOL. (PA-BAT)

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays protected areas are increasingly expected to deliver so many benefits ranging from social, economic and environmental benefits in addition to conserving biodiversity. However, in most developing nations, local people who reside at the vicinity of the protected areas expect that it should also contribute to the social and economic well being of the people. Assurances that protected areas will supply these benefits are fundamental to attracting the support needed for their creation. Unless we comprehend and broadcast the full range of benefits from protected areas we risk not only reducing the possibility of new protected areas being but even of seeing some existing protected areas being degazetted and their values lost. This research evaluate the various contribution of Rugu National Park, Nigeria to the provision of various types of benefits and values ranging from economic, social and environmental benefits using the Protected Area Benefits Assessment Tool (PA-BAT). Personal interviews were conducted with 92 respondents in seven settlements within and around the Rugu National Park. The study shows that the park has contributed immensely in the provision of economic, social and environmental benefits to the local population, national population and the global community at large. Finally the project suggested a series of recommendations.

ABSTRAK

Pada masa kini, kawasan-kawasan perlindungan yang diwartakan sebagai dilindungi semakin diharapkan dapat memberikan banyak manfaat dari segi sosial, ekonomi dan alam sekitar di samping dapat melestarikan persekitaran biodiversiti. Namun, di kebanyakan negara-negara membangun, penduduk tempatan yang tinggal di sekitar kawasan yang dilindungi ini mengharapkan bahawa seharusnya ia dapat menyumbang kepada pembangunan sosial dan kesejahteraan ekonomi rakyat. Jaminan bahawa kawasan yang dilindungi ini akan turut menyediakan pelbagai manfaat sebagaimana yang diharapkan. adalah sangat penting untuk menarik sokongan yang diperlukan daripada penduduk bagi memelihara kepentingan kawasan tersebut. Sekiranya kita tidak memahami kepentingan wujudnya pelbagai manfaat daripada kawasan yang dilindungi ini, ia bukan sahaja mendatangkan risiko mengurangkan kemungkinan dalam mewujudkan kawasan perlindungan yang baru, malahan boleh menyebabkan kepupusan nilai-nilai keistimewaan di kawasan pemeliharaan sedia ada. Kajian ini menilai penglibatan Taman Negara Rugu, Nigeria dalam menyumbang kepada pemeliharaan kawasan perlindungan taman negara tersebut dari segi ekonomi, sosial dan persekitaran dengan menggunapakai analisis Protected Area Benefits Assessment Tool (PA-BAT). Satu kajiselidik telah dijalankan terhadap 92 responden di tujuh petempatan di dalam dan sekitar Taman Negara Rugu. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa kawasan perlindungan taman negara ini telah memberikan sumbangan yang sangat besar dalam pembangunan ekonomi, sosial dan persekitaran kepada penduduk tempatan khususnya serta penduduk nasional dan komuniti global secara umumnya. Beberapa cadangan telah dikemukakan di akhir kajian ini.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

International commitments to the development of networks of protected areas dates from 1972, when the Stockholm declaration from the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment endorsed the protection of all major ecosystems types as a fundamental requirement of national conservation programmes. Since then, the protection of ecosystems has become a core principle of conservation biology, supported by key United Nations resolutions including the World charter for Nature 1982, Rio Declaration at the Earth Summit 1992, and the Johannesburg Declaration 2002 (Marrie, 2004).

Protected area is defined as an area of land or sea especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity and of natural and associated cultural resources, managed through legal or other effective means (UNEP, 2004). A protected area, as defined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature "A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values" (I U C N, 1998). There are over 108,000 protected areas in the world with more added daily, representing a total area of 30.43 million km^2 (11.75 million square miles), or over 12 percent of the worlds land surface area greater than the entire land mass of Africa (IUCN, 1998).

In Nigeria, regional game laws were enacted for the protection of protected areas. In 1982, the Federal Natural Resource conservative Council (NRCC) was created to provide coordination for the conservation of natural resources, develop policies, and to take direct measures to protect species and sites and also to provide funds for conservation and research work. The Federal Department of Forestry in the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources is responsible for Protected Areas development and extension. There are over 966 protected areas in Nigeria (WDPA, 2005).

1.2 Statement of Research Problem

Under funding is a major problem facing protected areas, protected areas are only really protected if they receive funding which allows them to achieve their objectives. While the U.S. spends $2 billion on protected areas, most of the developing countries spend less than $500,000. In a survey of 98 national parks, 73% reported that they were understaffed and many protected areas don't have enough funds for equipment and supplies (John, 1992). Protected areas are also extremely small compared with the original extent of the type of habitat being preserved.

Over the last decade, the challenge of reducing levels of global poverty has rocketed up in the priorities of politicians, development organisations, with good cause: despite the optimism of economists in the 1980s and 1990s, differences between the rich and the poor have in some respects continued to increase. In Nigeria extreme poverty has actually deepened. As of now, around 50 million of the population are estimated to live in abject poverty, living on less than one US dollar in a day (UNEP, 2004). Moreover, protected areas can play a vital role in poverty reduction. A survey of protected area managers at the 5th World Parks Congress in 2003 found that 78 per cent believed that economic benefits of protected areas benefits were significant to the broader community (Nigel et al, 2008). As stores of

environmental assets, protected areas can potentially play an enormous role in reducing poverty levels.

Protected Areas are often mistakenly undervalued. Few people realize the range of benefits derived from Protected Areas habitats, food such as fish, and, medicinal plants, peat for fuel and gardens, poles for building materials, and grasses and reeds for making mats and baskets and thatching houses. These complex habitats act as giant sponges, absorbing rainfall and slowly releasing it over time. Protected Areas are like highly efficient sewage treatment works, absorbing chemicals, filtering pollutants and sediments, breaking down suspended solids and neutralizing harmful bacteria (World Wildlife Fund, 2005). Yet many of the world's Protected Areas have already been destroyed in the past 100 years alone (World Wildlife Fund, 2005). Conversion of swamps, marshes, lakes and floodplains for large-scale irrigated agriculture, ill-planned housing and industrial schemes, toxic pollutants from industrial waste and agricultural run-off high in nitrogen and phosphorous pose some of the main threats to Protected Areas. Among threatened species are several river dolphins, manatees, fish, amphibians, birds' plants and animals. (World Wildlife Fund, 2005).

Rugu National Park reflect a variety of habitats with fascinating landscape, the Protected Area support an incredibly high species biodiversity with a high level of endemism. It has been a major source of attraction to visitors from all over the world.

In view of these problems Protected Area Benefit Assessment Tool (PA-BAT) can be regarded as a powerful tool used in assessing the benefits of Rugu Protected Areas

Protected Area Benefit Assessment Tool (PA-BAT) is a powerful tool used in assessing the benefits of Protected Areas, it is designed to fill an important gap in the toolbox of protected area agencies and conservation institutions by providing a methodology to collate and build information about the overall benefit from protected areas (Nigel et al, 2008). Therefore the (PA-BAT) will be used in evaluating and assessing the benefits of Rugu national park situated in Katsina State

in Nigeria to the people and more importantly in assessing how the Rugu National Park help in the reduction of poverty within the study area.

Benefits here refers to a resource that is being used to provide direct gains which could be in terms of money earned, or subsistence resources collected or less tangible gains such as spiritual peace or mental well-being to stakeholders. The resource of the protected area becomes a benefit when they are successfully used to provide such gains (Sue and Nigel, 2008).

1.3 Aim

The aim of this project is to evaluate the benefits of the Rugu national park in Katsina state of Nigeria using Protected Area Benefit Assessment Tool. (PA-BAT)

1.4 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this project are as follows.

1. To study the concept of protected area and Protected Area Benefit Assessment Tool.
2. To evaluate the benefits of Rugu National Park, using Protected Area Benefit Assessment Tool.
3. To proffer possible recommendations towards improving the sustainable use of the Rugu National Park.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is going to focus only on the evaluation of the economic, social and environmental benefits provided by Rugu National Park using Protected Area Benefit Assessment Tool (PA-BAT). They study is also going to cover the whole

National Park and some selected settlements and sampled stakeholders directly involved in one way or the other with the Park.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Recent research has shown that well managed protected area can potentially be successful in achieving a wide range of objectives, from conserving endangered species to delivering economic, environmental, and social benefits that contribute to the well being of local people which will subsequently reduce poverty (Nigel et al, 2008). So this study will explore in details the types of benefits offered by Rugu National Park and their potential contribution to poverty reduction.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This project will be restricted to evaluating the economic and environmental benefits and values in Rugu National Park only. Due to time constraint, not all the settlements will be covered in the protected area, household interview will only be conducted within seven (7) settlements in the protected area.