Healing the Rift: mitigating conflict over natural resources in the Albertine Rift

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Conservation and conflict

- Conservation biologists focuses on this
- Protected area managers focus on this

Photo: J.B. Bizumuremyi
Types of conflict in Conservation

- Armed conflict – war, rebel groups, undisciplined army/police
- Human-wildlife conflict – crop or livestock loss
- Access to natural resources for harvesting/over-harvesting
- Lack of consultation and involvement
- Benefits from conservation unequally shared
Conflict and Industry

- Override conservation interests
- Pollution
- Destruction of natural habitat
Management of Natural resources is often conflictual

- Conservation practitioners recognise that they need to manage conflicts
- Not often recognised that conservation policies and practice can create or exacerbate conflict
  - By restricting access to key livelihood resources
  - By increasing/adding new economic burdens and risks
  - Conservation leading to the unequal distribution of benefits
- Conservation in times of armed conflict can increase the risks of conflict over natural resources or add new conflicts
Conservation in armed conflict areas

- Conservation activities can contribute to violent conflict
  - Traditional conservation activities can escalate to violence
  - What conservationists do and how they do it can support active conflicts
- Conservation activities can be negatively affected by violent conflict
- Conservation activities can help address and mitigate conflicts
  - Root causes can be addressed
  - Can mitigate some of the impacts of conflict
  - Can create an enabling environment for peace building
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conservation-conflict category</th>
<th>Specific conservation-conflict links</th>
<th>Response approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **CATEGORY 1** | Conservation can create or exacerbate grievances that lead to conflicts with, between and within communities  
These traditional conservation-related conflicts can escalate into violent conflicts  
Conservation can sustain (violent) conflicts | **Minimize risks** of creating or exacerbating conflict |
| **CATEGORY 2** | Violent conflict can directly impact conservation activities  
Violent conflict can indirectly impact conservation activities | **Mitigate impacts** of conflict through appropriate operational response, collaboration and finance strategies |
| **CATEGORY 3** | Conservation can address some of the causes of violent conflict  
Conservation can address some of the impacts of violent conflict  
Conservation can support an enabling environment for peacebuilding | **Maximize opportunities** for conflict prevention and peacebuilding |
Tools to help maximize opportunities for conflict prevention (IISD)

- Identify conflicts affecting a target area
- Prioritise identified conflicts
- Select which conflicts to focus upon
- Analyse the selected conflicts
  - Conflict tree
  - Conflict map
  - Stakeholder profiling
- Design and implement solutions
- Monitor conflict sensitivity
Identifying and prioritizing conflicts

Brainstorming and clustering identified conflicts into groups

Prioritise by:
- Identify impacts on people
- Identify impacts on conservation
- Rank by severity of impact

Assess your organisation’s feasibility to address conflicts
Selecting which conflict to focus upon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prioritized conflict</th>
<th>Impacts</th>
<th>Feasibility</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encroachment into the park for agriculture</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low risk to staff, within mandate, building on existing partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal resource extraction by armed groups in the park</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High risk to staff, requires too many resources, need more strategic partnerships (e.g., military, police)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Select conflict to address which have high impacts but where feasibility is also high
- Assess what partnerships may be possible for conflicts you cannot address
Analyze Conflict: Problem tree

- Identify effects of the selected conflict – branches
- Identify Root causes of selected conflict - roots
Analyze Conflict: Conflict map
### Analyze Conflict: Stakeholder Profiling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uganda Wildlife Authority</th>
<th>Basongora pastoralist lobby group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Positions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PA boundaries must be respected</td>
<td>• A politically marginalized group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No settlers should be allowed in the PA and any encroachers should be resettled outside the PA</td>
<td>• The protected area is situated on their ancestral land and should be returned to them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interests</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interests</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Protection of biodiversity</td>
<td>• Political representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Existence value of the PA</td>
<td>• Sustainable livelihoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Needs</strong></td>
<td><strong>Needs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Preservation of the ecological value of the PA</td>
<td>• Their identity to be recognized and respected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Income from tourism</td>
<td>• Access and rights to land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacities and Capacity Gaps</strong></td>
<td><strong>Capacities and Capacity Gaps</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Existing legal mandate</td>
<td>• Networking at the national level – political and civil society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Technical know-how</td>
<td>• Strong lobbying skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pro-people management approach</td>
<td>• Ability to appeal to international human rights groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wealth (cattle)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Understand underlying interests**
- **Look for common ground**
- **Move from public positions**
Always link analysis to your work

- For each analysis refer back to your work and its potential impacts to exacerbate the conflict or promote peace.
Identifying interventions

Using the three analyses try to identify where you can intervene and reduce conflict

Implement and monitor its impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict analysis tool</th>
<th>Where can we intervene?</th>
<th>How to address?</th>
<th>Description, suggested activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict tree</td>
<td>Insufficient natural resource base (cause)</td>
<td>Modify to enhance</td>
<td>Could increase productivity of existing NR base → look into supporting high-value agriculture (e.g., coffee wet processing).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community-park tensions (effect)</td>
<td>Modify to enhance</td>
<td>Move beyond awareness-raising, promote dialogue between community and park through informal forums.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human-wildlife conflicts (effect)</td>
<td>Modify to enhance</td>
<td>Expand awareness raising and training activities, establish participatory monitoring and response systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict map</td>
<td>Pastoralists and local government (blocked communication)</td>
<td>Develop new activity</td>
<td>Doing nothing but important to addressing encroachment → Dialogue forums?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Close relationship with pastoralist justice group but not to cultivators (alliance)</td>
<td>Modify to reduce negative impact</td>
<td>Organization may be seen as supporting only pastoralists, reinforcing divisions. Explore appropriate links to cultivators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder profile</td>
<td>Park needs tourism income, pastoralists need identity recognized and respected (needs)</td>
<td>Develop new activity</td>
<td>Doing nothing but could explore options for linking tourism opportunities with pastoralist culture?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Albertine Rift
Addressing conflict in the Albertine Rift
Phase 1

- Conflict project in Virunga Park (2006-2007 – 18 months)
- Build capacity of ICCN to address conflicts in Virunga Park
- Tackle 4 pilot conflicts after analyzing them using IISD’s method
Developed a conflict resolution strategy for Virunga Park

- Assessed existing conflicts
- Analyzed each one
- Identified where ICCN and its partners could act now and where partnerships needed to be developed
- Selected 4 conflicts to address:
  - Overfishing on Lake Edward
  - Involvement of military in poaching
  - Encroachment of Park
  - Conflict with pastoralists from Uganda
Conflict with pastoralists

- Pastoralists from Uganda had settled in Virunga Park during war – been there 6-7 years
- Transboundary collaboration between DRC and Uganda with WCS support led to agreements for them to peacefully return to Uganda
- Unfortunately they were resettled in Queen Elizabeth Park for 8 months before they were settled outside the park
Settlement of encroachers during wars

Resettlement of encroachers in Congo
Conflict over encroachment

- Mapped park with aerial photography
- Digitized all settlements and mapped farmed areas within the park – 140 km² being farmed with 3,750 houses on western coast of Lake Edward
- Established process to get agreements to peacefully resettle people
Conflict with military poaching

- Military involved in poaching in park – threat to ICCN safety
- Held high level meetings with Governor of North Kivu
- Meetings were also held in military camps to educate soldiers about conservation
- Military personnel have been punished for poaching as a result although still an issue
- Working to create a battalion who will work with ICCN in park
Overfishing on Lake Edward

- Established fishing village committee in Nyakakoma village – elected representatives
- Comprised of fishermen, Traditional chief, Police, Military, ICCN, Local govt
- Developed system of self policing – arrests of illegal canoes and nets
- Stopped ICCN’s involvement in illegal fishing
Transboundary collaboration

- Supported transboundary collaboration in GVL since 2003 between Uganda and DRC
- Bring together PA authorities regularly
- Also bring together police, customs, immigration, army, judiciary, fishing departments, forestry departments, local government, security officials
Addressing conflict in the Albertine Rift
Phase 2

- 2008-2010 – 2 year project
- Took lessons learned from first phase to three new sites in the Albertine Rift
  - Kahuzi Biega Park
  - Itombwe Massif
  - Misotshi-Kabogo
- Expanded work in fishing villages in Virunga
Overfishing Phase II

- Vitshumbi and Kyavinyonge requested help establishing fishing committees in their villages
- Led to protection of spawning grounds and arrests of illegal canoes and nets
- Led to Governor of Nth Kivu supporting committees with funds for their operations
- Written up in World Bank Case study on conflict over natural resources by Sandra Ruckstuhl
Community Conservation Committees - PNKB

- Problem with Park Community Conservation Committees (CCC) because seen as part of ICCN
- Worked with local community and CCCs in Kahuzi Biega Park to improve relations
- Working better now and people willing to self police over extraction of bamboo from park
Protected area creation

- Being proactive to avoid conflict
- Itombwe massif and Misotshi-Kabogo
- Itombwe
  - Conflict over Ministerial arrete to create Reserve
  - Brought main NGOs, civil society, and government representatives together to agree way forward
  - Zoning plan being developed with local people’s input.
6. Kabobo-Marungu Landscape

- Aerial survey with flight program in 2006 – Marungu completely degraded
- Biodiversity survey of Kabobo in 2007
  - 6 new species of vertebrate discovered
- Followed up with Socioeconomic survey in 2008
Creation of DR Congo’s 8th Park

- Meetings held with traditional chiefs and Government in July 2009
- Led to agreement to create a National Park for Kabobo
- Working with villagers to agree boundaries of park and surrounding natural reserve
New conflicts – Large Scale Mining

BANRO concession
Lessons learned

- Conflict resolution approach gives the weaker members of society a voice at the table – encouraging democracy.
- Workshops that facilitated joint problem sharing tended to build relationships between antagonists.
- Training of ICCN staff was best approached by working with them to facilitate conflict resolution meetings.
- By legitimizing a committee to tackle a conflict, people can “name and shame” in public leading to greater likelihood of action.
- Need to review and monitor conflicts over time as situations change.
Lessons learned cont’d

- Re-establishing the rule of law in the park and getting agreement to give ICCN the authority to act meant that other conflicts were reduced also – created an enabling environment for law enforcement.

- Linkages with higher levels of authority and also regionally through the transboundary collaboration gives recognition of the national and international mandate.

- By thinking about conflict early on you can plan activities to make sure you do not create conflict or exacerbate existing conflict – be proactive.
Future plans

- Focus on conflict over natural resource extraction in DRC
  - Large scale mining of minerals
  - Oil mining in Greater Virunga Landscape
  - Fisheries on Lake Edward
  - Local community harvesting of resources from protected areas

- Use conflict-sensitive approach to finalize creation of protected areas in Kabobo and Itombwe
Mining

- Anglo Ashanti may establish gold mine in Ituri region in near future
- BANRO establishing gold mine between Kahuzi Biega and Itombwe
- CAMECO establishing gold/uranium mine near Kabobo
- Dominion Oil wants concession in Virunga Park
Creation of Protected areas

- Work with local communities to participatively agree boundaries and zoning plan for Itombwe and Kabobo
- Negotiations needed over boundary placement in order to maintain connectivity
- Look at incentives for community – employment and carbon funding for example
Extraction of biological resources

- Work with local communities in Itombwe and Kabobo to develop sustainable methods of harvesting of forest products in zoned areas.
- Continue to support conflict resolution committees in Virunga fishing villages.
- Expand collaboration to transboundary fisheries on Lake Edward.