conservation. However, the wealth and depth of information it presents on Tasmania's threatened animals elevates it well above the status of most handbooks. The target audience of "...anyone associated with the land, coast, fresh waterways and oceans of Tasmania, whether they be owners, managers, commercial or recreational users," and "...anyone interested in learning more..." are well served by Tasmania's Threatened Fauna Handbook. If similar volumes were to be produced by other states, Australia's rapidly growing list of extinct native species may be slowed.

Parks for Biodiversity: Policy Guidance based on Experience in ACP Countries

IUCN Publications, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK.
RRP US$24.75.

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The IUCN (World Conservation Union) defines biological diversity (or biodiversity for short) as "the variability of life in all its forms, levels and combinations". One approach to maintaining biodiversity is through the reservation of protected areas. In less developed countries, there is a poor capacity to fund and manage protected areas efficiently, and therefore international co-operation is required. The ACP countries — Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, are rich in biodiversity yet lack the economic means to conserve. The IUCN released Parks for Biodiversity: Policy Guidance based on Experience in ACP Countries after a request from the European Commission to provide policy guidance for support to protected areas in the ACP countries. This report is a summary of the main points derived by the IUCN, and was written to inform the wider public.

Although the focus of this publication is on biodiversity, its content places emphasis on protected areas and how they can be used to conserve biological diversity. The IUCN defines a protected area as "an area of land and/or sea especially dedicated to the protection of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means". This report highlights the need for an improved approach to managing protected areas in the ACP and suggests strategies that can be adopted by all stakeholders. An emphasis is placed upon the role of external support, and the steps potential "donors" can take in providing financial aid.

The goals of the IUCN and the European Commission are provided in the Foreword and Executive Summary, as well as a brief overview of definitions and key points. Part I provides a background to protected area planning and management and a 10-step summary of how donors can best support protected areas. The remainder of the report is divided into three parts, each designated to either Africa, the Caribbean or the Pacific. For each country, a perspective is provided detailing the extent and diversity of protected areas, and the nature of their management. The text continues by suggesting possible approaches for combining conservation and development in the protected areas of the ACP in order for self-sustainability. Major issues are identified for each country, most focusing on the decline in government funding for conservation, the role of indigenous communities, and the need for multiple uses in protected areas. Each part concludes with a step-by-step guide to what external support is needed, such as funding, involving the local community, private sector and non-governmental organizations, and improving professionalism and training. The text concludes with an extensive reference list specific for each of the ACP countries, in order for potential donors or just the interested reader to gain more information.

The clear structure of this report provides a logical and informative read. A highlight of the body of the text is the emphasis of key statements in bold print. This segregation of key sentences is so well organized that the reader can gain much of the information through selective reading. The text makes frequent use of figures to complement the material presented. Maps and graphs are clear and descriptive and add value to the content. The use of full colour photographs, along with the glossy finish increases the appeal of the text. Boxes of text are regularly used to present additional information.

As well as providing an overview of protected areas management in the ACP, the IUCN uses practical suggestions of how biological conservation in these countries can be improved. Parks for Biodiversity not only explains the difficult financial situation that the ACP countries have in environmental management, it takes that extra step by giving specific guidelines for how external support can assist effectively. Its approach for protected areas management in the ACP moves away from traditional, western-style strategies. The IUCN acknowledges that alternative approaches need to be applied to environmental management in less developed nations, with each requiring its own approach specific to the country's unique biota.

A positive tone is presented throughout the text, presumably to encourage potential donors to provide support to the ACP nations. Despite the focus on ACP countries, Parks for Biodiversity proves relevant for all regions of the globe. The conservation of biodiversity using protected areas is internationally congruent and is based on the same set of ecological principles. I commend the IUCN for producing an invaluable contribution to biodiversity conservation in the less developed world.

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