Exploring Options for Sustainable Financing of Protected Areas in the Mediterranean Context:

Lebanon’s Experience

Lebanon has thirty three legally protected sites that fall under different categories of protection:
- Legally protected Nature Reserves or Protected Areas
- Ramsar Sites
- Declared cultural and natural heritage sites
- World heritage sites
- Areas protected by ministerial decrees, municipalities and private initiatives.

Between 1992 and 1999, a total of seven nature reserves were established by law, covering about 207 km², or 2 percent of the Lebanese territory.

Non-Governmental Organizations
- Participation of local stakeholders
- Local political support to the reserve.
- Overcame the legal problems of money transfer to the reserves.
- Ability to conduct diverse fund raising activities
- The capacities of the NGOs were sometimes less than required for the PA management tasks.
- Membership in the NGO is on volunteer basis. This reduces the commitment to the task.
- Internal problems hindered the work of NGOs

Government Appointed Committees
- Wider representation (municipalities, NGOs, technical experts, management specialists)
- Defined mandate and legal authority
- Membership in the GACs is still on voluntary basis
- Reaching consensus on management issues might become problematic due to the wide representation
- Low political support.
Private Sector

Key Factors:
- Dynamism
- Creativity
- Vigor interventions
- Competitiveness
- Resources

New generation of reserve managers: “moving from conservationists to entrepreneurs”

D - Funding Strategies for PA in Lebanon

Financing Sources

- Int’l Org.
- Gov. Municipal.
- Private Sector
- Research Institutes
- Academia
- NGOs/ Clubs

Other PA/ Projects

Protect Area Managing Body

Financing Means

- Loans
- Grants
- Investmen ts
- Fund Raising
- Set Revenues

Funding Strategy

Business Plan

Sustainable Financing

What is there for them?

Actors/ Partners | Role in PA Funding Strategy | Benefit from PA
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International Organizations | Direct funding for research, capacity development, infrastructure, technical assistance, specialized expertise, staffing, networking, legal status and support, financial and non-financial incentives, etc. | Global environmental impact Support to the organizations’ objectives
Government | Direct funding for basic infrastructure, law enforcement, staffing, community outreach, logistical support, etc. | National environmental impact Support Government’s policies Support Ministry’s plans Support other related development needs Enhance the green image
Municipalities | Direct funding for basic infrastructure, law enforcement, staffing, community outreach, logistical support, etc. | Local environmental impact Enhanced living conditions and neighborhood Local economic benefit Employment opportunities
Other PAs/ Relevant Projects | Direct/indirect funding to share expertise, resources, lessons learned, visitors, marketing, awareness, etc. | Create synergies and partnerships Cutting on expenses by sharing resources and experiences

Private Sector

Direct funding to support specific activities of the PA management plan

Support the corporate social responsibility program of the company Used for “Green Marketing” & public image

Research Institutes

Indirect funding used in conducting research activities supporting the PA scientific program

Provide a suitable environment for field research, applied science, and ecosystem monitoring

Universities/ Schools

Direct/indirect funding for research, field trips and outdoor activities, awareness, networking, etc.

Provide an adequate environment for field studies/trips, outdoor activities Enhance volunteerism

Youth/ Sports Clubs

Direct/indirect funding for specific activities, support in political/legal lobbying, marketing and awareness, etc.

Gaining public exposure Enhancing self-image Increasing their contribution in public work

Political/ Social Figures

All the above, depending on the scope of work of the NGO.
E - Economic Significance of Protected Areas

Demonstrate the relevance of Protected Areas to Economic Development by:

- Economic Valuation
- Cost/Benefit Analysis
- Highlighting Actual Examples

F - Institutional, policy and legal ‘barriers’ to conservation

- Maintaining a stable institutional structure for PA management;
- Enhancing the adaptive capacity of local counterparts in taking over project activities once external financing has phased-out;
- Placing nature conservation on the priority list of the Government, and specifically to the Ministry of Finance;
- Issuing the Protected Areas Framework Law and application decrees;
- Equalizing the collection of admission fees in all protected areas;
- Giving the PA Management Body the required mandate to undertake all activities and tasks related to PA Financial Management.

Should restrictions in financing make us settle for less protection? Should we stretch out too thin and seek a losing case, or just do a good job with the little that we have?

Are there any ‘wealthy enemies’? How to be-friend them? Did we be-friend any of these in Lebanon?

Here it is a question of balance between sustainable financing and sustainable conservation.

How sustainable can sustainable financing be?

Are we creative enough?