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IUCN Offers Financing Guidebook for Managers

The World Conservation Union (IUCN) has published a guidebook to assist protected area managers in identifying and securing appropriate and sustainable finance. *Financing Protected Areas: Guidelines for Protected Area Managers* provides a step-by-step process for creating business and financial plans, and discusses mechanisms for generating revenue flows.

Released in October 2000, the 58-page book is based on inputs from a range of sources, including IUCN's Economics Unit and the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA). It guides readers through the range of funding sources and mechanisms available at international, national and local levels.

Lee Thomas, deputy chair of the WCPA and convenor of its task force on financing of protected areas, said that access to funds is becoming increasingly important for effective management. Learning how to access those funds is key. "The most common pitfalls for protected area managers in pursuing finance are a lack of a business plan and lack of a strategy for securing sustainable financial flows," said Thomas. "Hence our book recommends that park managers adopt both of these measures."

Linked to website

The book is intended to serve as a living document through the associated IUCN website of <http://biodiversityeconomics.org/finance/topics-38-00.htm>. The full text of the book is downloadable for free from that site; IUCN will update the book on the site as new material becomes available. In addition, the website offers material not found in the book, including a list of donor organizations by global region, along with links to those donors' websites.

In terms of achieving sustainable financing, said Thomas, the approach advocated in the book is universal to both terrestrial and marine protected areas. The book, therefore, is intended for both types. "There are differences, however, when it comes to individual users," said Thomas. "In some respects, it is more difficult to collect user fees individually from users in a marine park without entry stations, compared to a terrestrial park with designated entry points.

"The challenge for the manager," he said, "is to recognize the charging opportunities available, whether for a marine or terrestrial park, and to put in place cost-effective and acceptable arrangements for their implementation."

For more information:

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The WCPA website -- <http://wcpa.iucn.org> -- provides additional information on the work of the WCPA Finance Task Force.

BOX: Book available for free on the web

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<http://wcpa.iucn.org/pubs/publications.html> or <http://biodiversityeconomics.org/finance/topics-38-00.htm>

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