

HEA and Environment:

Protected areas and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation

Environmental organizations have come to realize that addressing the needs of local communities is essential to long-term preservation of biodiversity and protected lands. HEA can shed light on the livelihood systems of communities within these buffer zones and conservation corridors to aid project planning and impact assessment.

In addition to the broader information that a baseline assessment can provide, HEA can specifically quantify the contribution (to food and income) of specified activities that might be deemed harmful to conservation efforts (e.g. bushmeat, poaching, illegal wildlife trade, slash-and-burn agriculture, cattle grazing etc.). This will help organizations in understanding the amount of “gap” that will need to be filled by alternative strategies before “harmful” livelihood activities can be addressed.

HEA based analysis can be combined with basic information on systems of inheritance, to predict future human pressures on protected areas one, two or more generations into the future. This information could also be analyzed against projected future benefits of protected areas, such as climate stabilization or water conservation, to predict relative sustainability.

HEA could benefit protected area management in three ways:

Planning

Firstly, an HEA livelihoods baseline would help target project planning by illustrating and quantifying household dependence on natural resources within the protected area. If access to these resources is denied then there may be a food and income gap as a result. In order to have a somewhat neutral impact on surrounding communities, direct park employment and other income generating activities will need to fill the estimated gap. HEA and participatory tools can also help to flesh out other community needs and concerns.

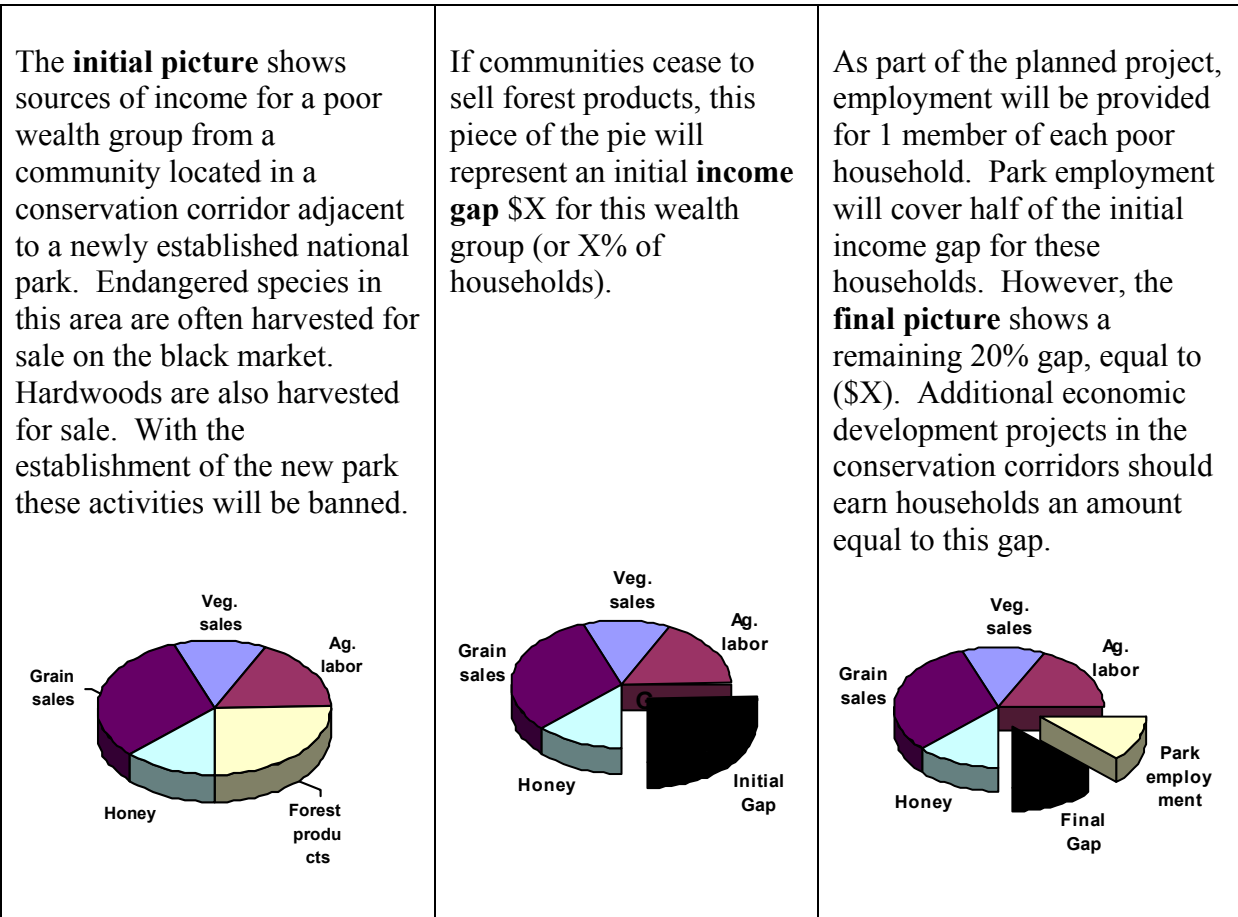
Monitoring impact

HEA can help assess the direct impact of projects within and around protected areas, such as direct employment or income generating projects on household livelihoods by comparing resulting food and cash income to baseline figures.

Assessing indirect costs and benefits of protected areas

Secondary benefits may result from the establishment of protected areas. In fact, many park projects claim this to be the case. For example, heavily touristed areas may result in improved infrastructure such as roads or electricity and access to markets. An example of costs might involve the arrival of opportunists which could increase population pressure and competition for resources. HEA can help determine the benefits and costs of secondary impacts for households around protected areas.

A presentation to the Moore Foundation might incorporate a case study from one of the grantees. Here is one simplified example of how HEA could benefit in the planning phase



FEG would present their services to the Moore Foundation in terms of providing technical assistance to grantees and relevant projects. Alternatively, FEG could present to one of the major grantees, such as Conservation International, and develop a joint proposal to Moore.