

Financial mechanisms for addressing Human Wildlife Conflict

with particular reference to institutional aspects therein.

IIED Case Study Summaries

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Namibian Insurance Scheme – HAC SIS

In 2003 a few Namibian conservancies [Community Based Organisations (CBOs) – the main implementing structure for Community Based Natural Resource Management in Namibia] established the Human Animal Conflict Self Insurance Scheme [HAC SIS]. They did so with the express idea of applying it within the borders of their own conservancies. Its functionality was based upon having established management structures and a conservation mandate to generate and distribute wildlife-derived income *equitably* (something that is effectively a legal requirement for conservancies under Namibian law).

The Namibian Government's policy at the time was not to compensate for wildlife damage, but the perception was that improved conservation was leading to increased conflict so the conservancies and their NGO partners decided to establish a mechanism that paid out for loss of life, livestock and crops. The conservancies agreed to match any third party financial contributions [bought in through their NGO partners, who also provided technical support].

HAC SIS wasn't a typical insurance scheme where premiums are paid in advance; it was more of a performance-based payment whereby registered conservancy members had to take mutually agreed proactive measures to protect themselves, their crops and their cattle. One of the main reasons that a commercial insurance company wasn't used was that communities only wanted to pay out after incidents rather than risk losing advance premiums.

Payments were backed up by various other measures including removal of predators that caused repeated problems, sometimes by offering said animals to trophy hunters and sharing resultant income; and the application of 'conservation agriculture' employing intensified but sustainable methods to reduce field sizes, making them easier to protect, whilst increasing yield and the available for wildlife and tourism.

The scheme successfully channelled collective income from tourism and wildlife to individual registered members who had incurred losses, without significant abuse of the system, by devolving management to the lowest level possible i.e. CBOs, whilst encouraging responsibility through strict claim conditions based on farmer vigilance (e.g. kraaling at night, guarding fields during day). It also put the issue of HWC into proportion –the actual loss incurred being far less than anticipated which made it relatively affordable.

The former points explain why it is going to be so challenging for the Namibian government to convert this into a national scheme that is as successful as its local progenitor [as now planned]. The fate of HAC SIS within this national framework is unclear, and the degree to which some of the key components of HAC SIS can be retained is also unknown.

To be a success the Human Wildlife Self Reliance Scheme [HWSRS] will have to facilitate better collaboration and understanding between key ministries i.e. such as the Ministry of Environment and Tourism [MET] and the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement, so that they view wildlife as a legitimate land use that can contribute to rural development [thereby reducing the likelihood that their policies will continue to exacerbate HWC]. The Namibian government's hope is that HWSRS will cover all households' in/ residents of communal lands.

Chitwan National Park Compensation Scheme

Compensation is a widely used, but (some might say) questionably useful, approach to HWC. The first of two case studies on this financial tool relates to its specific application in protected areas, in this case Chitwan National Park [CNP] where an ad hoc park-level compensation

scheme has been ongoing since the mid 1990's to compensate for human injuries, loss of life, livestock depredation and crop damage around the Park.

These payments were made through the Buffer Zone Management Plan that allocated 50% of revenues [from tourism and other income] to community development activities, giving priority to wildlife victims and their families. This action was complimented by a combination of preventative measures from fencing around the park and guarding stations in villages, to voluntary resettlement and alternative land-use to reduce conflict. Problem animals, particularly man-eating tigers and rhinos are either moved or in the case of the former, killed.

The park office deals with HWC based on its "3 Rs" (relief, reduce and resolve) with compensation being seen by the park as less important than the preventative measures being taken, and – by the buffer zone residents – as part of a package of measures that are all regarded as equally important. Compensation is based on the principle of partial payment for losses, and provision of fixed maximum ceilings for claims.

CBOs such as Buffer Zone User Committees (BZUCs) at the village level and the Buffer Zone Management Committee (BZMC) at the park level are seen as effective platforms for park-people dialogue over issues including compensation policies and practices [as well as playing a role in peer-to-peer verification of claims].

Despite room for improvement: in the time that it took for payments to clear due to the multiple levels of bureaucracy involved, and the level of compensation for loss of human life, the Park showed a reducing number of claims up until 2009. However, with the introduction of the national government compensation programme [which has a wider remit than CNPs previous system] the number of claims has increased.

CNP's park level endowment fund is currently being used to facilitate speedier cash flow for more immediate payouts than the government can make (at the initiative of the Park administration); this is on the basis that money from the central treasury is then meant to replenish the park endowment fund. However, the Ministry of Finance has been delaying paying for crop damage as promised under the new scheme – probably because the bill has become so high. Meanwhile, CNP's BZ Management Programme now covers additional elements of compensation outside the national scheme such as scholarships to the children of wildlife victims.

CNP seems to have the capacity to manage its own HWC and the centralization of this system risks undermining this. The park has a good source of income and a policy of recycling 50% of the park incomes to BZ management. The author estimates that 15% of Park proceeds would be sufficient to compensate wildlife-induced damages and that Chitwan's system should be sustainable even if central government support is withdrawn once more.

The Kenyan Compensation Experience

This case study focuses on the current situation with regards the national compensation scenario in Kenya wherein there is, on paper, a statutory government scheme plus ongoing private schemes including in conservancies around protected areas in the Mara Triangle and the Amboseli-Tsavo region.

National government attempts to address HWC through monetary compensation were instigated after the [ongoing] ban on hunting that came into force in 1977. The statutory government compensation scheme was meant to cover crop damage as well as injury and death caused by wildlife. The crop damage element was suspended in 1989 because the system reportedly became unworkable with widespread cheating on claims, high administration costs and lack of disburseable funds. National compensation for injury and death is supposedly still in operation [although it isn't paid, and the amounts theoretically involved are inadequate]. Private schemes on game ranches exist, seemingly, when there is sufficient profit motive to try and overcome the well-known problems with compensation. Those schemes focus mainly on carnivores, particularly lions, which are seen to be of particularly high value in terms of tourism.

Within an unclear and inadequate national framework individual schemes that avoid too many perverse incentives may be having qualified local success [i.e. reducing killing of lions], but they also build expectation and resentment in the wider geographic regions in which they operate [where compensation isn't being paid]. In some other unprotected regions of Kenya without monetary compensation schemes where holistic conservation programmes are in operation [encompassing livestock management/housing methods as well as education and awareness initiatives] lion populations actually appear to be more viable.

There is broad agreement that a different approach is required across the whole of Kenya to stem the severe ongoing national decline of carnivores like lions – one wherein broader benefits are derived to the communities living with wildlife based on clear, shared responsibilities; and that doesn't undermine traditional herding systems by paying people for avoidable livestock losses. As a contributing author notes “the future of carnivore conservation in this region depends on a better understanding of the nuances of HWC and a concerted effort to address appropriate cultural and community-level institutions, chiefly by providing economic benefits to local people who engage in *positive* conservation activities”.

Cameroonian HWC Scenario

This the first of two [anticipated] descriptive case studies illustrating the current situation with regards HWC and its resolution in sub-Saharan ape range states. In this instance the Cameroonian Poverty and Conservation Learning Group convened a multi-stakeholder meeting on HWC who put this case study together.

HWC occurs throughout both southern forest and northern savannah zones of Cameroon, and is anticipated to increase over the next decade due to incomplete land use planning and restriction of wildlife habitat due to the expansion of industrial agri-plantations.

There is an almost total absence of a legal framework to deal with HWC issues, and the general approach for resolving conflicts involves informal community attempts at prevention [e.g. through trapping pests, and eating them for bushmeat] and reactive government mitigation [e.g. allowing hunts known as 'battues'] and occasional, informal compensation.

Most HWC in Cameroon is thought to involve crop damage, followed by loss of livestock, and finally human injury or death [although data are very limited].

In the forest zones reported conflicts around the periphery of Protected Areas [PAs] often involve elephants, as per the savanna zone where elephants are highlighted along with carnivores such as lions.

Ineffective land-use planning and PA management, as well as increased human populations are significant issues in these areas. Individual projects funded by external donors have tried to address specific instances of HWC around PAs e.g. Waza National Park where human-lion conflicts due to livestock depredation led to a drastic drop in the lion population. Funds were used to improve fencing and discourage livestock rearing inside or close to the park, whilst in nearby Bénoué National Park small-scale agriculture has also been restricted.

More broadly although official Forestry Administration records suggest that most reported HWC incidents involve elephants, more systematic studies such as one on crop damage around Bénoué National Park demonstrate that monkeys and birds are the chief culprits at 44% of damage each, and that elephants are only responsible for 13%.

Responses to HWC in Cameroon are typified as being 'political and ad hoc' rather than based on clear policy. The study identifies three types of overlapping responses from the authorities:

1. To sanction local officers to identify and kill the supposed problem animal
2. To organize 'battues' to chase away or kill the animals in question and in some cases share the resultant meat as compensation for victims [a pragmatic but illegal solution].
3. To provide compensation to victims e.g. food [as above], or [occasionally] financial compensation – as in the case of when the family of a child injured by a chimpanzee was

awarded \$US2000 in compensation by a Minister involved [despite not having a budget line to draw this from].

Where compensation has been applied it seems to have been allowed under the auspices of statutory compensation for crops or trees impacted by development/ infrastructure projects deemed necessary for the public good [despite the obvious difference with HWC being unplanned and having entirely different cultural, social, and economic dimensions].

Enforcement and application of potential legal and regulatory provisions that could be used to tackle HWC is very weak due to this lack of clarity. This has impacts on both victims [e.g. delayed or lack of responses to issues affecting their livelihoods] and wildlife [e.g. reprisal killings on lions or elephants].

The situation is further exacerbated by weak coordination and collaboration between the key Ministries theoretically involved. It also seems that there is a lack of political will to design a clear and articulated policy on HWC in Cameroon due to its perceived magnitude, and the lack of a clear provision of financing for its resolution.