

**FROM CONFLICT TO COLLABORATION:
THE CASE OF CAHUITA NATIONAL PARK, COSTA RICA**

BY

VIVIANE A. WEITZNER

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**From Conflict to Collaboration:
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Viviane A. Weitzner

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University
of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree
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Master of Natural Resources Management**

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Abstract

In the face of ecological crises worldwide, governments and conservationists have come to one conclusion: centralized decision-making for natural resources management does not work. Many conservationists are calling for conservation policies and practices to *"be turned on their heads"*, so they are bottom-up and community-based. But the answers to complex socio-ecological questions cannot be found in simple reversals of management systems or in rhetorical twists, particularly since purely local level management systems are often ineffective in the face of population pressure, new technologies, multiple stakeholders and the increasing relevance of the cash economy for resource users.

Co-management, *"the sharing of power and responsibility between the government and local resource users"*, is fast gaining currency as a middle ground solution to situations where both centralized and local-level management has failed. However, while there are many benefits to co-management *in theory*, experts have noted there are relatively few examples of where it is working well *in practice*. This observation has fuelled research into the question of why: some have focussed on attempting to understand the conditions and design principles that might lead to success; others have started probing fundamental issues such as why states should be interested in devolving *"real power"* through decentralized environmental decision-making.

This thesis contributes to the dialogue by examining the issues underpinning the co-management of protected areas with particular reference to the Central American context. This region is beset by numerous challenges in the face of contradictory external demands that have resulted in policies leading to increasing – and often violent – socio-environmental conflicts related to protected areas. Against this backdrop, co-management is seen not only as a tool for more democratic and better environmental decision-making in the context of having to do more with less, but also as a potential vehicle for defusing and addressing conflict.

Specifically, this thesis documents and analyzes the only co-management process taking place in the context of national parks in Costa Rica, namely the joint management of Cahuita National Park, a marine-terrestrial park located on the southern Caribbean coast. When the park was established in 1978, the inhabitants (largely Afro-Caribbean) were forced to leave their farms without receiving compensation for their lands, and many turned to tourism as a livelihood. This new livelihood was threatened in 1994, when the government increased national park entrance fees to a level locals feared would mean the end of tourism. In response, they staged a peaceful takeover of the park, and subsequently entered into negotiations with the government. The result was that in 1997, the first co-management arrangement in a national park was established in Costa Rica. While the arrangement was informal at first and covered only a beachfront area of 2 km, it received official sanction in 1998, when the mandate of the Management Committee was expanded to decision-making over the entire park.

Cahuita's experience of moving from conflict with the state to collaboration mirrors a policy shift on behalf of the Government of Costa Rica away from centralized resources management towards a process of *"deconcentration, decentralization and democratization"*. There is a lot riding on the possibility that the management arrangement established in Cahuita might be adapted in other protected areas in Costa Rica, which cover over 25% of the country's territory. The case is gaining increasing attention from national and regional policymakers.

The general research objective of this thesis was to document and analyze the ongoing process of conflict and collaboration between local people and government officials in the management in Cahuita National Park in order to help strengthen the collaborative process, identify key lessons learned, and contribute to the ongoing theoretical discussion about both the forces at play in co-management and conditions required for success. Specific research objectives included undertaking a stakeholder analysis; evaluating the structure, process and outcomes of the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park; examining Berkes' (1997) four hypotheses on conditions required for successful co-management; and considering the replicability of the experience.

The objectives were met through six-and-a-half months of fieldwork conducted collaboratively with Marvin Fonseca, University of Costa Rica. The fieldwork took place in three main stages over one-and-a-half years (Feb. 1998 - Sept. 1999), and was based on a combination of participatory approaches ranging from those that were more extractive (e.g., semi-structured interviews) to those geared towards group learning and potential empowerment (e.g., participatory land-use mapping, group analysis and verification, and planning). The conceptual framework grounding the analysis draws on the literature of common property theory, public participation, rural and organizational development, conflict management and social learning.

The research revealed the co-management arrangement is undergoing many growing pains with regards to its expanded mandate over the park, and that a tragedy of the commoners situation is occurring in terms of the exclusion of resource users from neighbouring communities. However, the Committee has several important strengths to build on, including potential for managing conflicts, economic independence and the involvement of community leaders.

At the theoretical level, the research provided insights into the various spheres, sources and types of power at play in co-management, and how they affect outcomes. In particular, it underscored the important role played by 'people as enablers' of co-management, suggesting that co-management will be strengthened – and will likely not lead to co-optation – if: 1) there are 'visionaries' in government agencies; 2) there are leaders of all types in the community, there is cultural identity and community spirit; 3) there is a willingness and commitment on behalf of the co-managers to work together, and they have particular 'powers' (knowledge; representation; personality and ability/openness to understand; and ability to speak in public and negotiate). Additional factors enhancing the negotiation and implementation of co-management include: access to a trusted mediator; economic resources and independence; legal authority and responsibility; ability to forge alliances with external agents; democracy and rule of law.

Acknowledgments

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Chapter I

Introduction: Flops, Flips and Middle Grounds

If the locus of action is to be the community, conservation policies and practices must be turned on their heads. The approach must be bottom-up rather than top-down, and the local rather than the national. Diverse (rather than uniform) environmental values and conservation practices also must be encouraged.

Here is why community-based conservation becomes more revolutionary than evolutionary: Such changes call for nothing less than a turnaround in entrenched political norms.

– Western (1994)

Chapter I

Introduction: Flops, Flips and Middle Grounds

1.1 Introduction

If the locus of action is to be the community, conservation policies and practices must be turned on their heads. The approach must be bottom-up rather than top-down, and the local rather than the national. Diverse (rather than uniform) environmental values and conservation practices also must be encouraged. Here is why community-based conservation becomes more revolutionary than evolutionary: Such changes call for nothing less than a turnaround in entrenched political norms.

– David Western (1994)

In the face of ecological crises worldwide, governments and conservationists have come to one conclusion: centralized decision-making for natural resource management does not work. Many conservationists echo Western's (1994) call for conservation policies and practices to *"be turned on their heads"*, so they are bottom-up and community-based rather than top-down and centralized. But while there is no doubt that a system flip in conservation policies and practices is long overdue, the appropriateness of Western's image is questionable: local decision-making about the environment has been around for many centuries, while state management has been around only for some 400 years. Consequently, a more appropriate framing of the issue would suggest that conservation policies and practices *have been on their heads*, and need to be flipped *onto their feet* so they are rooted at the local level.

But the answers to complex socio-ecological questions cannot be found in simple reversals of management systems or in rhetorical twists. Scholars (e.g., McKean 1992; Berkes 1997) have pointed out that purely local level management systems are often ineffective in the face of population pressure, new technologies, multiple stakeholders and the increasing relevance of the cash economy for resource users, all of which are pressures which erode local level institutions or *"rules-in-use"* (North 1990; Ostrom 1992). They argue that community-based conservation initiatives that treat communities as islands, and do not see the need for communities to forge alliances with the state or market systems, are destined to fail (e.g., Agrawal 1997; Murphree 1994).

Clearly, then, the solution to situations where both centralized and local-level management has failed, lies somewhere in between. Co-management, *“the sharing of power and responsibility between the government and local resource users”* (Berkes et al. 1991), offers such a middle ground solution.

In theory, co-management – also known as joint-management, participatory management and collaborative management – is a ‘win-win-win’ situation, resulting in more cost-effective and efficient decisions that build on local knowledge and lead to better chances at maintaining ecological integrity. Co-management spans a spectrum of arrangements based on varying degrees of community and state participation and power balancing. It is a middle ground solution because it is based on compromises between stakeholders, and is a process rather than an end point. The main assumptions underpinning co-management are that local resource users have a stake in conservation and management, and that partnerships among government agencies, local communities and other resource users are essential (Berkes 1997).

Co-management is fast gaining currency among governments and conservationists worldwide as a viable alternative to conventional management approaches. In Canada, for example, experts have recommended co-management as a potential solution to some of the management problems of fisheries; this was in response to the recognition that centralized management had not been effective in warding off the collapse of the east and west coast fisheries (NRTEE 1998). At the international level, the concept is also becoming the subject of vigorous debate; in 1996, for example, the World Conservation Congress struck up a Working Group on Collaborative Management to examine the benefits and challenges of co-management internationally.

But while some experts are pointing out the many benefits of co-management, others – particularly political ecologists – are questioning some fundamental issues, such as: *“Why should state officials, when the central raison d'état is to accumulate authority, material resources and legitimacy, be interested in decentralizing and devolving real power?”* (Ribot and Agrawal 1998). They suggest that decentralization and co-management may simply be a cover-up for centralization at the local level, a means for

states to manipulate and yield power in spaces they could not have access to before (e.g., Ribot and Agrawal 1998; IIED 1994; Murphree 1994). In light of the currency of the issue and the rigorous debate around co-management, much work needs to be done to document and consolidate experiences to date, examine lessons learned, probe the fundamental issues underlying co-management, and identify conditions required for success.

1.2 The Contribution of this Thesis: Going to the heart of the debate

1.2.1 General Contribution

This thesis contributes to the dialogue by examining co-management within the context of protected areas, and specifically, national parks. This is a controversial topic because it challenges several assumptions, including:

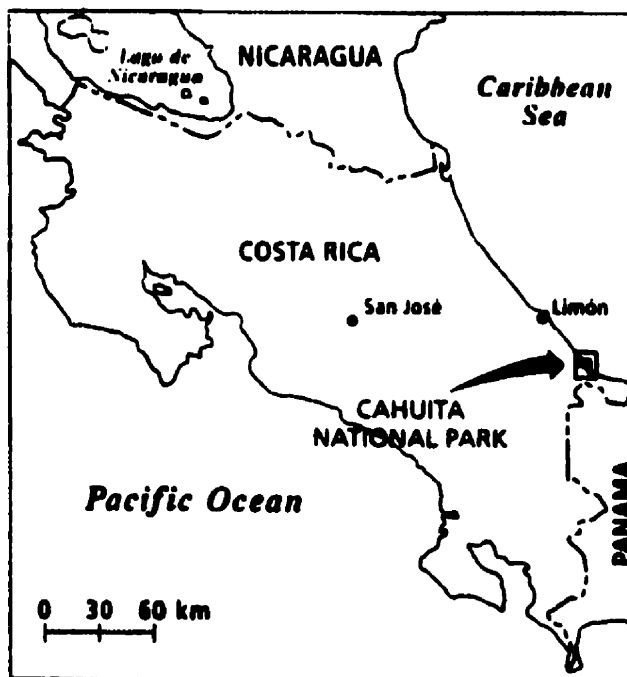
- That representative terrestrial and marine areas should be set aside solely for the purpose of recreation and scientific inquiry;
- That the state should be the sole manager of state property; and
- That western science is the best tool for managing protected areas.

Co-management of protected areas goes to the very heart of the debate on conservation, questioning the validity of conventional conservation philosophies that posit conservation as non-use or preservation.

1.2.2 Specific Contribution

The specific contribution this thesis makes to the literature on co-management is the documentation and analysis of the only co-management process taking place in the context of national parks in Costa Rica, namely the joint management of Cahuita National Park, a marine-terrestrial park located on the southern Caribbean coast of the country (Figure 1).

Figure 1-1: Location of Cahuita National Park, Costa Rica



Source: Weitzner and Fonseca (1999)

Costa Rica is known for two things in the eyes of the international community: its peaceful and democratic tradition, and its ambitious conservation agenda. Since 1948, Costa Rica has not had a national army. And since the 1970s, it has established protected areas in over 25% of its territory. At the outset, these two factors appear to go hand in hand in what many regard as a progressive vision espoused by the Government of Costa Rica. But the words of Alpheus Buchanan, a prominent leader of Cahuita, shed light on the fact that it does not take an external threat to disrupt the peace in Costa Rica:

If the government is really concerned about protecting the area, there is nobody more capable of preserving it than those who preserved and protected it for more than a hundred years. They can come and enjoy it with us as long as they respect our rights and our property....

If they are intelligent they would realize that you can't function a park in an area where people are going to be hostile. If you take away our rights, the people are going to be hostile, and the tourists are not going to want to come, and the park is not going to be effective (Palmer 1977).

Some of the most insidious conflicts have arisen from the government's centralized, "fences and fines" approach to conservation policy in the 1970s (Wells and Brandon 1992; Solórzano 1997). The establishment of parks led to the expropriation of lands, and the forced relocation of communities who were denied subsequent access to their lands and resources. Clearly, this approach was a recipe for conflict.

This thesis examines the impact of the establishment of Cahuita National Park on the community of Cahuita, a largely Afro-Caribbean community, and on smaller communities neighbouring the Park. It analyzes the innovative tactics Cahuitans used to manage several conflict situations with the state over the last 30 years, and evaluates the collaborative management institution that emerged as a result of negotiations.

1.3 Importance of the Case

Documentation and evaluation of the Cahuita experience is of critical importance at the local, national and international levels for several reasons:

- *At the local level:* The case is important not only for local people living near Cahuita National Park, but also for local people throughout the country and region who want to assert greater control over the resources upon which they depend. For the people directly affected by Cahuita National Park, the evaluation is of direct relevance as it identifies strengths and weaknesses in the management arrangement, which will help in strengthening the collaborative process. For other local resource users the case provides valuable lessons on key elements required for managing conflict situations effectively, negotiating collaborative agreements, and moving collaborative processes forward so they become more appropriate to the local context.
- *At the national level:* This analysis comes at a critical juncture in Costa Rican policy-making, as government officials work towards a process of "deconcentration, decentralization and democratization" of natural resources management (Solórzano 1997). Government officials are actively searching for new ways of managing

Costa Rica's vast protected areas system. There is a lot riding on the possibility that the management arrangement established in Cahuita National Park can serve as an approach to be adapted in other conservation areas in Costa Rica. The case has already been cited by Costa Rican policymakers as a success, making a close analysis even more urgent.

- *At the international level:* The case contributes to the growing literature on co-management, and serves as a springboard for discussion of theoretical questions such as the conditions required to make co-management work in practice. In particular, the thesis encourages critical reflection on *whose* baselines and goals are being used to measure success. It also probes the question of how far nation-states can go in terms of devolving authority and responsibility to a co-management board, particularly in the case of national parks. The Cahuita experience encourages a bottom-up perspective, and a questioning of the types of conditions that can lead to co-management as a potential vehicle for individual and community empowerment, rather than state co-optation.

1.4 Project Context for the Documentation of the Case Study

The documentation of the Cahuita National Park case study was part of a Mesoamerican Socio-Environmental Conflict Management Network (MSECMN) project entitled *Synthesis of Experience with Collaborative Decision-Making in Central America*. The project was funded by Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC), and its general objective was to enhance capacity and collaborative decision-making among local, national and regional groups in order to improve the sustainable and equitable management of natural resources in Central America. Specific objectives included:

- 1) To facilitate the participatory development of case studies of socio-environmental conflicts, so as to strengthen the relationships between key actors, facilitate collective analysis and identify appropriate solutions.

- 2) To coordinate communication and training of local and regional actors concerning the experience of collaborative management of natural resources through workshops, cross-visits, and national and international meetings.
- 3) To synthesize in a participatory way the lessons learned concerning the management of socio-environmental conflicts so as to orientate research and training on collaborative decision-making.
- 4) To consolidate mechanisms of exchange and coordination among national and regional networks concerned with collaborative management of socio-environmental conflicts and improvement of related public policies (IDRC 1997).

The idea to examine the Cahuita case within the *Synthesis of Experience with Collaborative Decision-Making in Central America* project framework emerged from a series of events. In October of 1997, the University of Peace (a MSECNM member) organized a field trip to Cahuita for its course entitled "Alternative Resolution of Socio-Environmental Conflicts". Course leaders and participants discussed the conflict that had taken place in Cahuita at two separate events: one with the administration and staff of the Park, and another with members of the community. One outcome of the course was that in November 1997, the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE), the Foundation for Urban Development (FUDEU) and the MSECNM held a follow-up workshop entitled "Principles of Alternative Conflict Resolution" in Bribri, the administrative capital of the canton of Talamanca. The workshop included the participation of Indigenous groups, members of various communities in the area including Cahuita, and MINAE representatives. At this workshop the decision was made to undertake a project to document the process of conflict and collaboration in Cahuita National Park, to begin in the first few months of 1998.

In December 1997, Dr. Berkes was contacted by Prof. Girot of the University of Costa Rica (also a member of MSECNM) regarding the potential involvement of Natural Resources Institute Masters students in the project. The hope was that this would forge institutional linkages between the University of Manitoba and the University of Costa Rica,

and enable the sharing of approaches and experiences with regards to co-management research.

It is within this context that the research for this thesis was undertaken. The fieldwork component was funded largely by IDRC. The development of the fieldwork objectives was a collaborative effort between Prof. Girot and Master's Candidate Marvin Fonseca of the University of Costa Rica, Dr. Buckles of IDRC, Dr. Berkes and myself of the University of Manitoba. In essence, they were tailored to fit to the objectives of the IDRC-funded MESCMN *Synthesis* project. One deliverable specified in my contract with IDRC was the co-authoring of an article to be presented at the Seventh International Association for the Study of Common Property Conference (Vancouver, June 10-14, 1998), which was subsequently published in the 1999 IDRC book *Cultivating Peace: Conflict and Collaboration in Natural Resource Management* edited by Daniel Buckles.

1.5 Research Objectives

The general research objective of this thesis is to document and analyze the ongoing process of conflict and collaboration between local people and government officials in the management in Cahuita National Park in order to help strengthen the collaborative process, identify key lessons learned, and contribute to the ongoing theoretical discussion about both the forces at play in co-management and the conditions required for success.

Specific objectives are:

- 1) To identify the stakeholders and their interests in the Park.
- 2) To analyze the structure, process and outcomes of the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park.
- 3) To examine Berkes' (1997) hypotheses on conditions required for successful co-management; namely, that, assuming co-management is desirable and there is a need for it, and that devolution of management power is possible and feasible, there needs to be:

- i) Appropriate local and governmental institutions;
 - ii) Trust between the actors;
 - iii) Legal protection for local rights¹; and
 - iv) Economic incentives for local communities to conserve the resource.
- 4) To identify lessons for those considering negotiating similar arrangements, and to consider whether the Cahuita experience can be replicated or adapted in other conservation areas.

1.6 Methodological Framework in Brief

The research objectives were met through six-and-a-half months of fieldwork that took place in three stages over one-and-a-half years (February 1998 - August 1999). The fieldwork was based on a combination of participatory approaches aimed to strengthen the collaborative management arrangement in the Park. In Stage 1 of the research (February 1 - May 30, 1998), fieldwork activities included direct and participant observation, semi-directed and informal interviews, a community survey based on open-ended questions, focus groups and participatory land-use mapping. In Stage 2 (November 16, 1998 - January 14, 1999), several workshops were held, including: a workshop at which the preliminary results from Stage 1 were presented back to the community for verification and discussion; a participatory evaluation of the administration of the park; a women's gathering; and a planning session for the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park. The main purpose of Stage 3 (August 2-16, 1999) was to finish writing a brochure about the history and management of the Park from the perspective of Cahuita.

The conceptual framework grounding the research draws on the literature of common property theory, public participation, rural and organizational development, conflict management and social learning. Some of the evaluation tools and concepts informing the analysis include: stakeholder analysis (e.g., Grimble and Chan (1995); Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation and Borrini-Feyerabend's (1996) adaptation

¹In response to IUCN findings that the legal status of co-management is key, Berkes (Pers. comm., 2000) modified this hypothesis to its present form: There must be legal status of the co-management arrangement. I will focus my discussion on this updated version.

for protected areas; Rocha's (1997) ladder of empowerment and Seymoar's (1997) self empowerment cycle; Lederach's (1995) discussion on conflict transformation; Lee's (1993) characterizations of single-loop and double-loop learning; Ostrom's eight (1990) design principles for a rigorous institution; and Berkes' (1997) four hypotheses on conditions required for successful co-management.

1.7 Delimitations

Conflict management and co-management are evolutionary rather than static processes, that move forward through a process of learning by doing. Because this analysis is limited to observations based on six-and-a-half months of field research, it represents only a snapshot of a work in progress. Nonetheless, since its inception in February 1997, the collaborative arrangement in Cahuita National Park has come a long way in terms of consolidating its mandate and process. The field season coincided with some major turning points in the arrangement, including a shift away from co-administration of part of the Park to co-management of the entire Park, from an agreement dependent on the will of the government to the establishment of a legally-sanctioned management regime. While the field season was arbitrarily chosen, it was a very propitious time for observation, evaluation and working with the Management Committee to strengthen the process.

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into ten chapters, including this introduction:

- *Chapter 2* frames the issues by reviewing relevant critical literature tracing the evolution of co-management in the context of common property theory and protected areas policy and practice. After describing Hardin's (1968) parable regarding the tragedy of the commons its three "pure" solutions – privatization, state management and communal management – the chapter explains why co-management has emerged as an alternative solution. It then traces the "change" (Berkes 1999) in conservation philosophies and policies underpinning protected

areas and national parks away from preservation towards sustainable use, and away from centralized management towards community-based resources management. It closes by touching on some the major conceptual and practical problems in implementing participatory management.

- *Chapter 3* links these issues to the Central American and Costa Rican contexts. The chapter highlights the contradictory external demands placed on Central American countries, and the challenges they face in trying to attain political stability, economic growth and environmental protection in the context of structural adjustment programs and state reform. Regional efforts to integrate environmental decision-making are outlined, and the types of collaborative management arrangements for protected areas that have emerged are described. The final section examines the Costa Rican policy, legal and institutional context for participatory management of protected areas, setting the stage for the discussion and analysis of the only case of participatory management in Costa Rica involving a national park, namely Cahuita National Park.
- *Chapter 4* outlines the research methodology for the fieldwork, describing the conceptual framework, the research team, and the project process and approach.
- *Chapter 5* presents the Cahuita National Park case study. It describes the historical background, and the process of conflict and collaboration in the park. The chapter highlights the evolution of the collaborative management institution from a Services Committee managing part of the park, to a Management Committee with the mandate to make decisions affecting the entire park.
- *Chapter 6* identifies and analyzes the various stakeholders in Cahuita National Park. It also maps the resource use in the park. This analysis provides deeper insights into the social organization in Cahuita and its neighbouring communities, and enables reflection on the influence the various stakeholders have over decisions affecting resource use in the park and potential sources for conflict.

- **Chapter 7** evaluates the structure, process and outcomes of the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park in light of the stakeholder analysis, perspectives expressed by various stakeholders throughout the fieldwork and direct observation. These are supplemented with evaluation tools and concepts from the literature on public participation, common property theory, rural development and social learning, among others.
- **Chapter 8** describes the process and outcomes of a planning session with the Management Committee that focussed on addressing some of the institutional weaknesses identified in the evaluation.
- **Chapter 9** engages the question: What forces are at play in co-management, and which conditions are required for success? The chapter reviews some of the current thinking on these topics, examining in particular Berkes' (1997) four hypotheses in light of the Cahuita experience. It hones in on the meaning of power and empowerment in co-management, and proposes a preliminary typology for the sources and types of power at play.
- **Chapter 10** concludes the thesis by identifying the principal lessons learned from the Cahuita National Park case study, and discussing the experience's replicability in other conservation areas. It provides Management Committee members' advice to others considering negotiating a similar arrangement, and closes with some reflections on the project process, outcomes and future challenges for the Management Committee.

Chapter II

Framing the Issues: Common Property Theory, Protected Areas Policy and Practice

It is not a coincidence that biodiversity and cultural diversity are co-inhabitants, for the latter has developed in response as an adaptation to the former, and has in turn nurtured it.

- Kothari (1995)

While the celebration of community is a move in the right direction... the implications of turning to community-based conservation have not been thoroughly explored.

- Agrawal (1997)

Chapter II

Framing the Issues: Common Property Theory, Protected Areas Policy and Practice

2.1 Introduction

Since the publication of Hardin's seminal essay *The Tragedy of the Commons* in 1968, there has been rigorous debate over his thesis that common property situations necessarily lead to resource degradation and/or depletion if there is no government intervention. Proponents of the tragedy of the commons argue that external regulations or private property rights are the only way to ensure sustainable use of the commons (e.g., Welch cited in Ostrom 1987). Critics point to many examples of common property regimes that are both self-regulated and sustainable (e.g., Berkes 1987; McKean 1992; Netting in Ostrom 1987). They argue that Hardin's thesis is not an adequate analysis of the situation because it does not consider the importance of local institutions, or the power they can have in determining sustainable resource use (e.g., North 1990).

Until recently, governments and conservationists worldwide have taken the view of Hardin's proponents, and have had a central role in creating the rules of use for common pool resources. However, in the face of ecological crises, decision-makers are increasingly recognizing the limitations of regulations imposed from the outside, and are shifting their focus away from top-down, centralized management regimes to decentralized, participatory community-based conservation schemes.

This chapter traces this (r)evolution in thinking. After a brief description of Hardin's parable, it presents both views on the commons debate. The three solutions most commonly proposed by scholars are reviewed, as well as the problems associated with each of these. The chapter describes the emergence of co-management as an alternative, and discusses co-management within the context of protected areas policy. It closes by highlighting some of the potential benefits and problems in implementation.

2.2 Co-management in the Context of Property Rights Theory

2.2.1 Open Access: 'The Tragedy of the Commons'

In his 1968 essay, Hardin tried to explain the commons dilemma using a parable about overgrazing in a medieval English commons. He pointed out that if a herdsman added an animal to the common field, he would have a positive gain of 1. However, there would be a negative effect of $-1/n$ (where n = the number of

Picture a pasture open to all...the rational herdsman concludes that the only sensible course for him to pursue is to add another animal to his herd... the conclusion reached by each and every rational herdsman sharing a commons. Therein is the tragedy. Each man is locked into a system that compels him to increase his herd without limit -- in a world that is limited. Ruin is the destination toward which all men rush, each pursuing his own best interest in a society that believes in the freedom of the commons. Freedom of the commons brings ruin to all.

– Hardin (1968)

herdsmen) for all other herdsmen, as more pressure would be exerted on the finite resources of the commons; while the positive gain is the herdsman's own, the social cost is shared by all. Hardin argued that rational individual herdsmen would inevitably keep on adding animals until the commons would finally be depleted.

Critics have pointed out that Hardin's terminology was incorrect, and that he was not in fact referring to common property, but to an open-access, *laissez-faire* (unregulated) – or non-property – situation. They argue that common property is a social institution (McCay and Acheson 1987), and that three types of 'pure' or basic common property resources exist: *private property* (an individual or corporation has the right to regulate the resource and exclude others); *state property* or *state governance* (government has exclusive rights to control access and regulate use); and *communal property* or *common property* (an identifiable group of users regulates the resource and can exclude others) (Berkes 1996). In short, pure common property resources are governed by institutions or rules of use (North 1990), while Hardin's parable "assumes away institutions and feedbacks" creating a free-for-all situation which is not sustainable (Berkes 1996).

2.2.2 The Three Solutions to the Commons Dilemma and their Flaws

But the sustainability and viability of common property resources (also referred to as common property goods) ultimately depends on the efficiency of their rules of use, as well as external circumstances. There are problems with each of the three 'solutions' to the commons dilemma, as is outlined below:

- *Private property:* Research has proven that private property does not necessarily lead to sustainable use (McCay and Acheson 1987). Individuals, companies or groups often buy property with the intent to exhaust the property's resources in order to maximize short-term benefits. Also, converting common property resources into private property units such as individual transferable quotas (ITQs) is problematic because quotas are uncertain predictions which could – and have – led to ecological catastrophe; governments often do not distribute the rights under ITQs equitably, and there are problems with enforcement (Townsend and Pooley 1995). Moreover ITQs could be bought up by a select few individuals or corporations leading to a monopolistic or oligopolistic situation (Berkes 1996).
- *State property or state governance:* Our scientific understanding of ecological processes remains very partial. Regulations based on science-predictive models have achieved modest success at best in protecting the commons. In the face of this, taking local knowledge into consideration is, at the very least, prudent. Whether attributable to the limitations of our knowledge, or, as Bromley (1991) has suggested, to corrupt governments with little interest in preserving natural resources, the historical record demonstrates that regulation imposed from the outside is not the cure to 'the ill' of the commons.
- *Communal property or common property:* While scholars have found numerous and diverse examples of common property management regimes that have achieved sustainability (e.g., McCay and Acheson 1987; Ostrom et al. 1994; Berkes 1989), they note that common property regimes more often lead to the tragedy of the commons than to sustainability. Local-level, community-based

management is often ineffective because of outsider interference, multiple interests, centralized management and inter-jurisdictional problems. Many forces put pressure on once-viable, small-scale, self-regulated management regimes, including new technologies, population growth, and the transformation of subsistence economies to cash economies (Berkes 1996).

Common-property resources (also referred to as common pool resources) “are a class of resources for which exclusion is difficult and joint use involves subtractability” (Berkes 1989). Solving the commons dilemma therefore involves addressing the issues of *exclusion* and *subtractability*. *Exclusion* refers to the ability to exclude access to the commons (Oakerson 1992). *Subtractability* refers to two things:

“First, any user of the commons subtracts from the flow of benefits; what one appropriates...is unavailable to others. Second, cumulative use by many individuals will eventually subtract from the total yield of the commons over time... It is the second type of subtractability, which reduces the capacity of a resource to generate benefits, that gives rise to the distinctive problem of the commons” (Oakerson 1992).

Subtractability can be addressed by ensuring that there are efficient rules – i.e., efficient institutions – governing the use of common-pool resources.

The issues of exclusion and subtractability can be resolved fairly easily in the case of a relatively small, homogeneous group of users working within a well-delimited area that is free from external pressures. But, as pointed out above, this situation is the exception rather than the rule. So how can exclusion and subtractability be addressed in situations in which the interests at stake are diverse, the resource users make up a far from homogeneous community, and there are external pressures on the commons in question? Increasing numbers of people are hoping that the answer lies in the use of combinations of state and common property regimes, namely, co-management.

2.2.3 Co-management as a Response to 'The Tragedy of the Commons'

In theory, co-management is a 'win-win-win' situation for all stakeholders involved, *"a complementary situation in which everybody offers something and receives something – and the end result is better management of the natural resources"* (Borini in Bayon 1996).

Over the years, several definitions of co-management have emerged. Some critics have proposed broad definitions, such as *"co-management is a broad concept that covers an assortment of managerial arrangements"* (Murphree 1989). Townsend and Pooley (1995) note that *"the term co-management has been used to span the spectrum from purely consultative arrangements to the co-equal status accorded indigenous treaty rights"*, adding that *"this is a clearly broad spectrum – so broad as to be almost meaningless."*

Following this argument, other scholars have tried to give the concept meaning by focussing on key elements, such as *"the sharing of power and responsibility between the government and local resource users"* (Berkes et al. 1991). While some question whether power can actually be shared among stakeholders (Girof, pers. comm., 1998), experts from around the world agreed at the 1996 World Conservation Congress meeting that co-management must involve the sharing of responsibility and authority over natural resource management: *"Co-management is a partnership in which governmental agencies, local communities and resource users, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders share, as appropriate to each context, the authority and responsibility for the management of a specific territory or a set of resources"* (IUCN 1996).

To date there have been numerous cases of co-management of common pool resources, including fisheries, wildlife, forestry, watersheds and protected areas. Because my thesis examines co-management as a possible solution to multiple open-access situations within a marine-terrestrial protected area, I will focus the rest of this chapter on framing the issues within a protected areas context.

2.3 Co-management in the Context of Protected Areas Policy

The above discussion centred on the tragedy of the commons, and located co-management among other attempts to address the dilemma posed by common property resources. In other words, the discussion started by examining what is happening with common pool resources, and worked its way out to reasons why co-management has been proposed as a possible management solution. This section takes a different tack: it locates co-management within the evolving understanding of the relationship between humans and nature, and within shifts in perspective with regards to conservation and protected areas policy.

2.3.1 The Background: The 'Yellowstone model' and Exclusivity

The idea of national parks originated in nineteenth century United States with the establishment of Yellowstone National Park in 1872 (Bryan 1973). At this time, there was vigorous debate about how best to prevent the overexploitation of natural resources, which led to two streams of thought. One stream *"allowed for the prudent use of natural resources by humans,"* and is exemplified by the seminal writing of Gifford Pinchot who saw conservation in terms of development, efficiency of use and the promotion of the common good, and whose writings led to the establishment of government regulations for industry and scientific inquiry into natural resources management. The other stream was founded on a preservationist philosophy that *"favoured the establishment of protected areas and the minimization of the exploitative use of nature"* (Hanson 1986).

The rationale for the establishment of national parks at the time – and particularly Yellowstone – was the preservation of scenic beauty and natural wonders for public education and recreation (Ghimire 1994). People living near parks were perceived to be the largest threat to preserving wilderness areas, as the conservation philosophy posited that people interfered with nature. The Yellowstone – or 'exclusive' management model (Borini-Feyerabend 1996) – has since been replicated in many countries, particularly in the developing world. In Asia and Africa, for example, national parks were established to protect larger mammals for the recreation of foreign tourists (Ghimire 1994). One result of

this global adoption of the Yellowstone model was that for years park rangers “*moved people, sometimes forcibly, from the land where they had lived for centuries*” (Kemf 1993).

Today the rationale and incentives for establishing parks – particularly in developing countries – have changed on account of international concern with deforestation and loss of biodiversity, funding available for nature conservation, interest in generating foreign exchange through tourism, and the potential of bioprospecting within protected areas (Pimbert and Pretty 1997; Ghimire 1994). The result is that many developing countries are rushing to expand the percentage of their territories under national park status. While from 1900-1949, fewer than 600 protected areas were established worldwide, between 1950 and 1990, 3000 were established, with 1300 in the 1970s alone. Since the '50s, the greatest increase in park establishment has taken place in the tropics (Ghimire 1994). It is estimated that about half of the existing protected areas – and approximately 86% of those in Latin America – are inhabited (Amend and Amend 1992, 1995).

But the increase in national parks establishment has been paralleled by a decreasing capacity of nation states to manage them. The consequence is a proliferation of paper parks governed by ineffective fences and fines approaches (Wells and Brandon 1992). Even if states were effective in implementing the fences and fines policy, they would be ineffective in achieving the purported goal of protecting biodiversity on two counts: 1) most biodiversity lies beyond protected areas (Murphree 1994); and 2) anthropogenic activity and human ‘disturbance’ is often directly linked to increased biodiversity (Pimbert and Pretty 1997). Scholars are increasingly aware of the positive feedbacks between natural, human-made and cultural capital, and the important role that traditional knowledge systems have played in achieving sustainability and ensuring the resilience of systems (Berkes 1993,96; Berkes and Folke 1997). According to Kothari (1995), “*it is not a coincidence that biodiversity and cultural diversity are co-inhabitants, for the latter has developed in response as an adaptation to the former, and has in turn nurtured it.*” If you remove one element from the picture – namely people and their knowledge – the result may be a loss of system resilience and biodiversity.

The establishment of national parks intended strictly for preservation and research is not only ecologically, but socially unsustainable in the long-term. While governments and private enterprises stand much to gain, the big 'losers' are the people whose livelihood activities have been restricted within these spaces. The result for local people is increased poverty, *"extreme antipathy towards official conservation measures"*, social conflict and further environmental degradation as the people within or neighbouring parks start putting more stress on the land buffering the park and commit destructive acts in parks in retaliation (Ghimire 1994). Many of these people have started turning to new activities on account of the prohibition of resource use within parks and the influx of new types of livelihood activities – such as those linked with tourism and the services sector – which has led to the loss of local knowledge of the resources, an important asset in effective resource management.

In short, the exclusive model for protected areas may be viewed as unsustainable. It is a product of a Cartesian, positivistic and urban world view that sees humankind as separate from nature. Much literature is emerging to debunk the 'wilderness myth' on which the Yellowstone model of protected areas is founded: critics have shown that the idea of vast tracts of land devoid of human activity is an artificial construct, as such spaces are non-existent, except perhaps in the Antarctic (e.g., Gómez-Pompa and Kaus 1992; Lewis 1993; Berkes 1999).

A new trend of conservation thinking is emerging that is putting humans back in the landscape, focussing on sustainable use and sustainability rather than on wilderness preservation, and voluntary rather than coercive conservation (e.g., Pimbert and Gujja 1997; Robinson and Redford 1997; Ghimire and Pimbert 1997). In essence, this trend blends aspects of the preservationist and 'prudent use' or 'wise use' philosophies posited in the nineteenth century (Berkes 1999), and defines sustainability and conservation broadly as *"the management of human use of organisms or ecosystems to ensure such use is sustainable. Besides sustainable use, conservation includes protection, maintenance, rehabilitation, restoration, and enhancement of populations and ecosystems"* (IUCN/UNEP/WWF 1991).

This 'inclusive' conservation approach is founded on the idea of the interconnectedness of humans and nature as part of the same ecosystem, and that sustainability can best be met "*when the individuals who are most directly affected are also fully involved in determining the objectives for which resources are to be managed, and earn a fair share of the benefits from any exploitation of these resources*" (McNeely 1996a). These ideas are far from new, as seen in Indigenous world views; "*this is an ancient approach and local communities have normally been the beneficiaries and custodians of their own conservation actions*" (McNeely 1996b).

Sustainable use proponents have even gone so far as to debunk the idea of national parks in favour of a more relevant category of protected area, such as 'village parks' or 'cultural landscapes', which would be based on the interrelation between cultural and biological diversity, and the notion of livelihood security (e.g., Ghimire and Pimbert 1997). Others (e.g., Brandon et al. 1998) have focussed on trying to adapt the concept of protected areas to include humans and their activities – while retaining the idea of zones that exclude human use – and there have been ongoing discussions in global fora to try to develop appropriate categories (e.g., biosphere reserves).

The emerging trend towards conservation as sustainable use is best described as a *paradigm change* (Berkes 1999) rather than a *paradigm shift*: there is ongoing tension between conservationists who believe in the preservationist ethic, and those who believe in sustainable use. A *paradigm shift* will have taken place only when the theory of sustainable use becomes practice, and when governments start changing protected areas and other environmental policy and legislation accordingly.

Closing the gap between the idea that humans are separate from nature, and can therefore possess and control it (the nature as resource view) and the idea that humans are interconnected with and live in nature (the nature as our home view) may require a fundamental rethinking of Western values (Halkyer 1995). This is a tall order given the staunch resistance to change and the increasing momentum of globalization. But steps are being taken to bridge that gap, which could minimize conflict situations and lead to more ecologically and socially sustainable conservation initiatives. Two important developments

towards this end are 1) the realigning of international and national policies regarding protected areas to allow for sustainable use and the presence of people in parks; and 2) the emergence of community-based conservation.

2.3.2 From Yellowstone to the 1990s: Attempting to Realign

Protected Area Categories and Policy with the Ideas of Inclusivity and Sustainable Use

The first attempt to consolidate the policies regarding national parks in the Western hemisphere came with the 1940 signing (and 1942 implementation) of the Washington Convention (Convention on Nature Protection and Wild Life Preservation in the Western Hemisphere). This Convention held that the term 'national park' should be used for an area that is *"established for the protection and preservation of superlative scenery, flora and fauna of national significance which the general public may enjoy and from which it may benefit when placed under public control"* (OAS 1940). In essence, it became a vehicle for the promotion of the Yellowstone model of national parks in the Western hemisphere.

Since the Washington Convention, however, a series of IUCN initiatives and world conferences have taken place to try to create additional criteria for protected areas, and to adjust the concept of national parks totally exclusive of human inhabitation or activities. These include:

- The First World Conference on National Parks (Seattle, 1962), where the idea of a 'zoning principle' was developed. It was stated that:

"To qualify as a national park or equivalent reserve, an area should enjoy general legal protection against all human exploitation of its natural resources and against all other derogation of its integrity resulting from human activity. While some departures from this principle may in practice have to be allowed, they should be very exceptional and always treated as exceptions".

The Conference declared that

"Exceptions may be justified to cover private rights which existed before the reserve was created, such as residential rights or rights to practise agricultural, pastoral, mining or quarrying activities, always provided that these rights are confined to a small part of the area. They should seldom

be permanent and their redemption or termination should be anticipated in the long term... In circumstances such as those described, it is impossible to cover the status of a protected area by a single definition; it would be necessary to invoke the 'zoning principle' and give as full details as possible of the particular situation" (International Commission on National Parks 1963 in Amend and Amend 1992).

- The 10th General Assembly of the IUCN (New Delhi, 1969), which attempted to establish a single, permanent, worldwide definition of national parks as:

"a relatively large area (1) where one or several ecosystems are not materially altered by human exploitation and occupation; where plant and animal species, geomorphological sites and habitats are of special scientific, educative and recreative interest, or which contains a natural landscape of great beauty and (2) where the highest competent authority of the country has taken steps to prevent or to eliminate as soon as possible the exploitation or occupation in the whole area and to enforce effectively the respect of ecological, geomorphological or aesthetic features which have led to its establishment and (3) where visitors are allowed to enter, under special conditions, for inspirational, educative, cultural and recreative purposes" (IUCN 1990);

- The Second World Congress on National Parks (Yellowstone and Grand Teton, 1972), and subsequent IUCN general assemblies, where the New Delhi definition of national park definition was accepted, although some additional explanatory notes were made, including: implementing a

**Table 2-1:
Zoning for National Parks Agreed Upon at IUCN's
11th General Assembly
(Banff, 1972)**

1. Protected natural zones: (a) strictly natural zone (b) Managed natural zone (c) Wilderness zone.
2. Protected anthropological zones: (a) Natural biotic zone (b) Cultivated landscape (c) Site of special interest
3. Protected historical or archaeological zones: (a) Archaeological sites (b) Historic sites.

tiered system of protection zones in national parks (Table 2-1); providing that *"the establishment of protected areas should not lead to the dislocation of native peoples and their indigenous life-style should not be disrupted, providing that these in themselves do not lead to a reduction of the ecological integrity of the area"* (Eidsvik 1990); and recognizing that villages and inhabitants that do not belong to an ethnic group and do not live in a protected anthropological zone exist within the boundaries of some national parks, and that these parks should not lose their

status on account of this, particularly if they are properly zoned and the inhabitants do not decrease the *“effective protection of the remaining area”* (IUCN 1985).

- A Framework for the Classification of Terrestrial and Marine Protected Areas (IUCN 1990), a document which sought to eliminate *“any exploitation or intensive occupation of the area”* protected by national park status (Eidsvik 1990).
- The IVth World Congress of National Parks and Protected Areas (Caracas, 1992), which recommended a revision of the protected area management categories outlined in the 1990 IUCN Framework for the Classification of Terrestrial and Marine Protected Areas, changes to the New Delhi definition of national park, and the establishment of a new category VI, the ‘managed resource protected area.’
- The XIX General Assembly of the IUCN (Buenos Aires, 1994), which adopted the changes suggested at the IVth World Congress, and led to the publication of the Guidelines for Protected Area Management (IUCN 1994). Protected area is defined as *“an area of land and/or sea specially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means.”* Depending on the management objectives, the following categories of protected area were identified: I Strict Nature reserve/Wilderness Area (strict protection); II National Park (ecosystem conservation and recreation); III Natural Monument (conservation of natural features); IV Habitat/Species Management Area (conservation through active management); V Protected Landscape/seascape (landscape/seascape conservation and recreation); and VI Managed Resource Protected Area (sustainable use of natural ecosystems – at least two-thirds of the area must be in its natural state). National park is defined as
“a natural area of land and/or sea, designated to (a) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations, (b) exclude exploitation or occupation that is inimical to the assigned purposes of the area, and (c) provide a foundation for spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible.”

- The World Conservation Congress (Montreal, 1996), where a workshop on co-management was held, and Working Group on Collaborative Management was struck.
- The First Latin American Parks Congress (Santa Marta, Columbia, May 1997), where co-management and the issue of people in parks was discussed.

In addition to changes to include human presence and activities within protected areas in international policy documents, an important development in conservation circles over the last decades is an apparent move towards community-based conservation.

2.3.3 Community-Based Conservation: Putting Humans Back in the Landscape

In recent years there has been increased recognition that natural resource management is far more effective when local people – and particularly resource users – are directly involved. Some of the benefits

No longer is community seen as an impediment to progressive social change. It now has become the focus of thinking on devolution of power, meaningful participation, and cultural autonomy. Yet, the resurgence of community in writings lacks a critical edge.

– Agrawal (1997)

of user input are better regulations based on local knowledge, and easier enforcement through social controls (Townsend and Pooley 1995). It also provides users with the opportunity to strengthen existing local level institutions that are vulnerable to erosion. Government agencies also benefit, not only because of the detailed knowledge possessed by local resource users, but also financially, because resource users can “*help gather information that is valuable, so [government agencies] do not have to spend so much on expensive scientific research*” (Hanson, pers. comm, 1996).

Since the 1970s and 1980s, the concept of community-based conservation has emerged as a means to maximize the benefits of local participation in conservation. Community-based conservation is founded on the following principles:

- People will conserve natural resources when they are given the appropriate incentives to do so;
- Conservation action must be dynamic, adaptable and based on sound science; and
- Diversity in resource management is required to deal with diverse local situations (McNeely 1996a).

But putting theory into practice has been difficult. Putting 'community' and 'participation' back into natural resources management has been hampered by the conventional approach to community-based conservation, which is far from nuanced, and by the asymmetrical power-relations between state agencies and community actors.

Agrawal (1997) underscores this point in his article "*Community in Conservation: Beyond Enchantment and Disenchantment*." He notes that "*while the celebration of community is a move in the right direction... the implications of turning to community-based conservation have not been thoroughly explored.*" He coins the term 'the mythic community' to describe the conventional and prevalent conception of community among conservationists: namely, "*small homogeneous groups using locally evolved norms to live with nature harmoniously, managing resources sustainably and equitably.*" But the reality of communities is far from this romantic notion. Communities are intimately connected with external actors, including those within the market and the state. They are made up of multiple actors with divergent interests and different access to resources and channels of influence, and who forge layered alliances and institutions to influence political outcomes both within and outside the community. By not recognizing the complexities and heterogeneity inherent in communities, Agrawal argues, community-based conservation initiatives have been off the mark.

While the theory has been flawed due to lack of nuance, there have also been problems in implementation. Agency professionals still remain largely in control of priority-setting, and the role of communities tends to be implementation of decisions made elsewhere (Murphree 1994; IIED 1994).

2.3.4 Getting Community-Based Conservation to Work

Experts have come up with a series of suggestions to help solve some of the problems inherent in community-based conservation.

Pimbert and Pretty (1997) underscore the need for conservation professionals to change their thinking and methods, and have devised a typology of conservation practices which contrasts what they call 'blueprint' and 'learning-process' approaches (Table 2-2). They advocate a shift away from 'normal' to 'new' professionalism, from teaching to listening and learning from communities, and from technical to communication skills. Along with numerous critics (e.g., Arnstein 1969; Sarin 1996; Little 1997), Pimbert and Pretty also stress the need for meaningful public participation that goes beyond consultative and incentive-driven participation to embrace more interactive approaches.

Table 2-2:

**Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resource Management Paradigms:
Contrasting Blueprint and Learning-Process Approaches**

	Blueprint	Process
<i>Point of departure</i>	Nature's diversity and its potential commercial values	The diversity of both people and nature's values
<i>Keyword</i>	Strategic planning	Participation
<i>Locus of decision-making</i>	Centralized, ideas originate in capital city	Decentralized, ideas originate in village
<i>First steps</i>	Data collection and planning awareness and action	
<i>Design</i>	Static, by experts	Evolving, people involved
<i>Main resources</i>	Central funds and technicians	Local people and their assets
<i>Methods, rules</i>	Standardized, universal, fixed package	Diverse, local, varied basket of choices
<i>Analytical assumptions</i>	Reductionist (natural science bias)	System, holistic
<i>Management focus</i>	Spending budgets, completing projects on time	Sustained improvement and performance
<i>Communication</i>	Vertical: orders down, reports up	Lateral: mutual learning and sharing experience
<i>Evaluation</i>	External, intermittent	Internal, continuous
<i>Error</i>	Buried	Embraced
<i>Relationship with people</i>	Controlling, policing, inducing, motivating, dependency-creating; people seen as 'beneficiaries'	Enabling, supporting, empowering; people seen as actors
<i>Associated with</i>	"Normal" professionalism	New professionalism
<i>Outputs</i>	1. Diversity in conservation, and uniformity in production (agriculture, forestry, etc.) 2. The empowerment of professionals	1. Diversity as a principle of production and conservation 2. The empowerment of people

Source: Pimbert and Pretty (1997)

Agrawal (1997) emphasizes the need for communities to gain greater autonomy and control in three action areas in order for community-based conservation to work: 1) creation of rules and practices around conservation; 2) implementation of these rules to monitor user behaviour and to sanction those who break rules; and 3) adjudication of disputes arising in the interpretation and application of rules. He points out that state

agencies must relinquish control in these domains, and recognize that the *“conservation outcomes are, and always will be, unpredictable.”* Community-based conservation is not about providing guarantees, according to Agrawal, but about upholding *“a set of appealing ideas”*.

Following this line of thought, he argues that for community-based conservation to be more profitable, it must:

- 1) *Be supported with a system of checks and balances among relevant stakeholders. “Unchecked authority in the hands of community-level decision makers is as likely to lead to perverse conservation outcomes as when external actors possess unbridled power.”*
- 2) *Channel greater authority and power to local groups, who are traditionally the less powerful, so that they can form effective checks against arbitrary actions by other powerful actors. Federated structures of community groups should be formed to this end.*
- 3) *Focus on reasonable processes of decision-making rather than on outcomes. Different interests, especially those traditionally marginalized, must be represented in decision-making; outcomes of the decision processes must feed back to influence future decisions; and decision-makers must submit to periodic performance reviews and be made accountable to their constituents. These points are particularly important to avoid the formation of centralized structures at the community level.*
- 4) *Ensure that local groups have access to adequate funds for implementing the rules they create. These funds should be raised locally through contributions of users, so community groups do not depend on governments. “Over time, this would mean that government agencies not just cede their authority to make rules about conservation, but that community groups also gain control over a large proportion of renewable resources currently managed by the state” (Agrawal 1997).*

Communities are not homogenous. Nor are they severable from the myriad connections to and influences of the social and political world of which they form a part. With increasing population growth and globalization, this connectivity and the complications it entails for community-based natural resources management will become more pronounced. The solution of community-based conservation then is erroneous, and is dependent on romantic and untenable assumptions. For his part, Murphree (1994) notes that at the heart of the problems inherent in implementing community-based conservation are two things: *proprietorship* and *scale*. He argues that in order for community-based conservation to be successful, programs must be:

- *Community-based* (the proprietary issue): that is, the community must have proprietorship, "*which means sanctioned use rights, including the right to determine the mode and extent of management and use, rights of access and inclusion, and the right to benefit fully from use and management*"; and
- *Community-based* (the scale issue): that is, initiatives should be based on "*interest-group associations that are small enough to foster primary relationships, collective interest, and peer control among proprietary units*" (Murphree 1994).

However, in most instances, 'isolated' community-based models of conservation are not the answer. Like Agrawal (1997), Murphree points out that communities are intimately linked with external actors – namely the state and the market. He argues that communities need allies – including the state – in order to realize their proprietary claims, and get "*assistance with collective agreements in order to overcome internal division and reach external actors.*"

Community-based conservation then, is nice in theory, but it often does not work in practice. While the fulfilment of Agrawal's (1997) prerequisites would no doubt lead to more successful community-based conservation initiatives, the very notion of community-based conservation must be questioned, given a world of increasing population growth and globalization. A more relevant approach given the complex forces at work is linking community-based and state conservation through co-management.

2.3.5 Co-Management and Protected Areas: The Middle Road

The distinction between participatory management, community-based management and co-management is often blurred in writings on conservation. So what are the differences between these terms? Renard's (1997) distinctions are very helpful in this respect:

Collaborative management differs from other forms of participatory management in that it entails a conscious and official distribution of responsibility, with the formal vesting of some authority. In this sense, co-management goes beyond community consultation and participatory planning to establish more durable, verifiable and equitable forms of participation, involving all relevant and legitimate stakeholders in the management and conservation of resources.

Co-management also differs from what the literature describes as "community-based resource management" because it recognizes that it is not generally possible nor desirable to vest all management authority in the community. The state should and will always retain some responsibility, if only for the provision of an overall policy framework for conservation and management.

Co-management therefore responds to both Murphree (1994) and Agrawal's (1997) concerns about the need for building partnerships and forging alliances in order to achieve sustainability, and addresses – at least in theory – the issues of proprietorship and scale.

Co-management is born out of the realization that "sharing power and responsibility" (Berkes et al. 1991) for the management of natural resources is mutually beneficial for governments and communities for a variety of reasons. Within the context of protected areas, it is evident that

neither local communities nor government agencies alone will be able to conserve protected areas and wildlife. Communities lack the resources to tackle threats or ecological issues at a regional scale, and in many places have lost their traditional ethos and institutions; governments lack the necessary micro-knowledge, on-the-spot manpower, or even often the necessary mandate when other agencies overrule them...There is therefore a need to explore partnerships in conservation, which will involve local communities and government agencies as core, equal participants, with support from NGOs and independent researchers (Kothari 1995).

Borini-Feyerabend (1996) describes the characteristics of the partnership needed between the various stakeholders in her definition of the collaborative management of protected areas (PAs):

The term 'collaborative management' of protected areas refers to a partnership by which various stakeholders agree on sharing among themselves the management functions, rights and responsibilities for a territory or set of resources under protected status. The stakeholders primarily include the agency in charge and various associations of local residents and resource users, but can also involve non-governmental organizations, local administrators, traditional authorities, research institutions, businesses, and others.

She underscores that these partnerships are not always the best answer to particular situations, and that practical experience has shown co-management in protected areas is advisable when the active commitment and collaboration of stakeholders are essential for the management of the PA (e.g., when the PA's territory is inhabited or privately owned), and the access to the natural resources included in the PA are essential for local livelihood security and cultural survival.

Furthermore, Borini-Feyerabend (1996) posits that co-management might be beneficial if one or more of the following conditions are in place:

- The local stakeholders have historically enjoyed customary/legal rights over the territory at stake;
- Local interests are strongly affected by the way in which the protected area is managed;
- The decisions to be taken are complex or highly controversial (e.g., different values need to be harmonized or there is disagreement on the ownership status of the land or natural resources);
- The agency's previous management has clearly failed to produce the expected results;
- The various stakeholders are ready to collaborate and request to do so; and
- There is ample time to negotiate.

Experts have noted the variety of co-management arrangements, and have characterized them along a continuum of participation, ranging from 'mild' arrangements in which community groups are consulted, to 'strong' arrangements in which stakeholders are included on a management board, or there is a devolution of specific authority and responsibility (e.g., Renard 1997; Borrini-Feyerabend 1996; McCay 1995; Pinkerton 1994; Pomeroy 1995). Some scholars underscore that meaningful participation and 'true' collaborative management can only occur when power asymmetries have been addressed, and when there is shared power and authority in decision-making (e.g., Berkes et al. 1991). Others emphasize that arrangements are context-specific, and that while in some situations devolution of power and authority is appropriate, in others it is not: "*There is no 'right place' to be in the participation spectrum,*" as arrangements are tailored to fit specific historical and socio-political contexts (Borrini-Feyerabend 1996). Above all, co-management is a process, and arrangements may move along the participation continuum and change in time through 'learning by doing'.

2.3.6 Benefits and Potential Problems

The benefits of co-management are similar to those mentioned for community-based conservation. In theory, co-management:

- Gives resource users more say in decision-making, providing the opportunity for resource users to strengthen institutions governing their activities;
- Reduces the financial burden on governments for natural resource management, because the valuable information provided by resource users means governments do not have to spend so much on expensive scientific research; and
- Promotes peace and provides important fora for conflict resolution. Some co-management institutions have even seen guerilla leaders sit at the same table as government officials to try to resolve problems (Maldonado 1996).

But there are few examples of success. Some of the reasons include that co-management can be costly to establish, requires a long-term effort and patience, does not provide immediate results (which could affect motivation), has a limited guarantee of

success, and requires restructuring of government administrative arrangements and policies (Berkes 1997). At the operational level, there are also myriad reasons for failure, such as:

- Inadequate identification of stakeholders and representation (Borrini in Bayon 1996);
- Ambiguity of rights and decision-making authority for co-management arrangements that are not entrenched in legislation (Campbell 1996);
- Failure to respect the culture and knowledge of the various stakeholders (Usher 1993; Nakashima 1993);
- Lack of communication among co-management board members, and between the board and local people (Cummings, pers. comm., 1997);
- Lack of organizational capacity, institutions, political leadership and technical resources to support activities at the community level;
- Lack of sustainable use of the natural resources in question. Agrawal (1997) emphasizes that simply because a community has increased control over natural resource management, this does not necessarily lead to sustainable use;
- Cooption by powerful individuals for private interests, or manipulation by governments for political ends (Borrini-Feyerabend 1996; Usher 1993); and
- Lack of funding, interest and political will to cooperate.

This list is far from exhaustive, but it points to the fragility of co-management arrangements. Given the growing attention that co-management is receiving as a possible solution to the tragedy of the commons, reflection is urgently needed on what conditions are required to enable the concept to work in practice. Focussing on co-management in a protected areas context is particularly important in light of the increase in the establishment of parks, and the ecological, social and cultural impacts parks have on the environment and the people that live within or close to parks.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter started by examining the tragedy of the commons, and the three solutions most commonly proposed. After discussing problems with each of these solutions, the chapter described the emergence of co-management as an alternative, and discussed co-management within the context of protected areas policy. It closed by highlighting some of the potential benefits and problems in implementation.

The next chapter links these issues to the Central American context. It describes the Costa Rican policy, legal and institutional context in order to set the stage for the presentation and analysis of the process of conflict and collaboration in Cahuita National Park, Costa Rica. In addition, the more theoretical aspects of the issues outlined in this chapter are probed further in chapter 9, where I examine criteria for successful co-management in light of the Cahuita case study.

Chapter III

Linking the Issues: Central America, Costa Rica and Cahuita National Park



Management Committee member Enrique Joseph presenting the Cahuita case at a regional workshop on decentralized and collaborative environmental management in San José (April 1998)



Working with Management Committee members (Alberto Jenkins, left, Manuel Mairena, centre) on a presentation for an international conference (December 1998)

Chapter III

Linking the Issues: Central America, Costa Rica and Cahuita National Park

3.1 Linking the Issues: The Central American Context

Like other regions worldwide, Central America faces a situation in which dwindling financial and human resources coupled with increasing declarations of protected areas is making effective protected areas management increasingly difficult. In 1998, the Central American Conservation Area System (SICAP) estimated that:

- 26% of Central America is under – or will shortly be under – protected area status (674 protected areas in total, 286 of which are proposed);
- there are approximately 1380 protected areas officials to care for these areas; and
- there is therefore 'institutional presence' in only 30.7 % (or 204) protected areas in Central America (McCarthy and Salas 1998), translating roughly to one warden per 5,000 hectares (Girod et al. 1998).

There is little training for parks officials, poor equipment and materials, and a lack of research programs. In addition, many protected areas in Central America contain inhabitants, and are established in areas that are very economically depressed. In Panama, for example, 13 of the 14 declared national parks – which are intended for strict conservation – have communities within their boundaries (McCarthy and Dimas 1998). The result is the proliferation of 'paper parks', as well as the escalation of conflict between local people and government officials in areas where local peoples' access to resources has been restricted, and/or in which they have been forcefully removed without adequate compensation. According to two recent studies, protected areas and unresolved land tenure issues are at the heart of some of Central America's most virulent conflicts (Penzich et al. 1994; Borel et al. 1999).

These problems are inherently linked to complex regional and national socio-economic and political processes spurred by a mix of international policies, interventions and market forces that political ecologists have called 'structuring agents' (e.g., Sanderson 1995). While an in-depth discussion of these is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is important to point out that Central America has been the stage of much civil strife, several violent civil wars, an unprecedented level of environmental degradation and deforestation, and high levels of poverty. While dictatorships and violence have been the norm in most countries, Central America is also home to one of the countries often cited as one of the most peaceful and democratic in the world, namely Costa Rica.

Since the 1980s, as peace gradually returns to the region and efforts are made to institute democracy, Central American countries – including Costa Rica – have been faced with several contradictory demands: on the one hand, the International Monetary Fund obliged countries to implement structural adjustment programs (SAPs) to reduce national debt which has resulted in cutbacks to social programs, an overall reduction of the government apparatus, and many responsibilities being transferred to the municipal levels; on the other hand, there is increasing pressure for countries to institute environmental protection programs and establish protected areas. Put all this in the context of increasingly liberalized global trade and increasingly powerful multinational companies, and it does not take a political economist to realize the overwhelming challenges faced by Central American governments trying to achieve not only political stability, but attempting to reconcile – and balance – competing demands by external agents with the needs of their people.

3.1.1 Regional Efforts and Concerted Policy-Making Regarding the Environment

Several regional initiatives have been undertaken to consolidate efforts with regards to environment issues affecting the region, and to develop economic opportunities, institutional capacity and political stability. These include:

- The establishment in 1989 of the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), which works to *“protect the region’s great biological and ecosystem diversity, facilitate regional adoption of sustainable development lifestyles at all levels, and coordinate environmental education and training, watershed and ecosystem protection, tropical forest preservation, urban pollution control, and toxic substance management”* (Figueres Olsen 1995). CCAD members are elected by their governments and are usually Ministers of the environment and natural resources. This institution presented a Central American Agenda for Development and Environment at the 1992 Earth Summit, and was an important force behind the creation of the Central American Inter-Parliamentary Commission on the Environment.
- The 1993 Convention for the Management and Conservation of Natural Forest Ecosystems and the Development of Forest Plantations, ratified by all Central American Governments, which proposes a framework for revising regional forestry codes, consolidating systems of protected areas, reforestation and rehabilitating degraded lands, and focussing on management and production in secondary forest areas. Subsequently, the Central American Council on Forests was created to bring together government, farmer unions, industry and women’s groups.
- The 1992 Central American Convention on Biodiversity, *“a regional mechanism to protect and conserve natural areas for aesthetic, historical, and scientific reasons”* (Figueres Olsen 1995).
- The establishment of biosphere reserves, to protect core, transition and buffer zones without jeopardizing the ecological integrity of the core area. Examples include: the La Amistad Conservation and Development Initiative, a 2.7-million acre reserve which straddles the border between Panama and Costa Rica; the Rio Bravo Conservation and Management Area in Belize (managed by the Nature Conservancy, the program for Belize, USAID, the Massachusetts Audubon Society and Coca Cola Foods) which encourages the local harvesting of chicle for international chewing gum manufacturers, to avoid intensive extraction in the area;

the Las Minas Biosphere Reserve in Guatemala; the Maya Biosphere Reserve in Guatemala's Petén department, where Conservation International, the Guatemala National Council for Protected Areas and local communities are promoting alternatives to slash-and-burn agriculture, cattle-ranching and destructive logging; the Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve in Honduras; the Bosawas Biosphere Reserve in Nicaragua; and Darien National Park in Panama.

- The 1993 Central American Convention on Climate Change, the development of a regional council on climate change, and the ratification of the International Framework Convention on Climate Change by Belize and Costa Rica, and signing by El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.
- The 1994 Central American Alliance for Sustainable Development, launched by U.S. Vice-President Gore together with Central American presidents. The Alliance has four goals: to make Central America a region where peace, freedom, democracy and development will thrive by promoting a change in personal and social attitudes in support of sustainable development in the political, economic, social, cultural and environmental domains; to ensure sustainable practices for preserving regional biodiversity; to communicate the Alliance's achievements to the international community so that Central American efforts will serve as an example to others; and to permanently strengthen society's capacity to increase participation in the process of improving the present and future quality of life (Lash 1995).
- Numerous initiatives by non-governmental organizations to help with capacity building, the establishment of civil society institutions and local Agenda 21s, spurred to a large extent by the Earth Council and the outcomes of the 1992 Earth Summit.
- Efforts to create a Central American Biological Corridor. Spurred by the Central American Alliance in 1996, this USD \$70 million project aims to link and integrate the management of protected areas from Mexico to Panama (Adalid 1996).

While there is much to applaud in the efforts underway to try to focus on more regionally concerted policy-making regarding the environment in Central America, as pointed out above, people at the front-lines of trying to put policy into practice are struggling with having to do more with less, and working in conflict-ridden environments. Those involved with protected areas policy and management are increasingly looking for new models to help them fulfil their mandates.

3.2 Co-Management in Central America

Against this backdrop, co-management has become a hot topic in Central American conservation circles. It was the subject of much discussion at the 1997 Latin American Congress on National Parks and Other Protected Areas (Santa Marta, Columbia, 21-28 May), which included a workshop on co-management of protected areas (Table 3-1), and at the 1998 Central American Indigenous Workshop on Protected Areas and the Environment (Panama City, Panama, November 10-15), among other fora.

**Table 3-1:
Selected Recommendations From the Workshop on Co-management at the
1997 Latin American Congress on National Parks and Other Protected Areas**

- Encourage the creation of a legal framework to support the decentralization of environmental management, local participation and co-management of protected areas, and where this exists, develop and implement corresponding regulations.
- Encourage processes of decentralization in public agencies in charge of the management of natural resources, and throughout all the countries in the region, strengthen local, decentralized institutions of natural heritage management that are based on civil society.
- Revise global management categories so they can be adapted to the realities of Latin America. Propose new management categories that contemplate situations of co-management, co-administration and participatory management, making explicit aspects such as dominion, management and access to the resource.
- Create a Latin American network of co-management initiatives that allows the institutional stakeholders, local stakeholders, researchers and public officials – among many others – to have access to a database of experiences of co-management, theoretical and practical literature, participatory methodologies and legal frameworks adapted to co-management initiatives. This network should organize future gatherings to enable information-sharing about experiences, to help channel efforts to document initiatives that are in progress and to encourage new co-management initiatives in Latin American protected areas.

Source: Girot et al. (1998), my translation

Already, there is a wide array of participatory management of protected areas experience in Central America, spanning from mere consultation with local people (e.g., Tortuguero National Park in Costa Rica) to situations in which local people are in total control of protected area management (e.g., the Kuna Yala Indigenous People of Panama) (Giro et al 1998). According to SICAP, there are 89 participatory management arrangements of protected areas in Central America (McCarthy and Salas 1998) (Table 3-2).

**Table 3-2:
Experiences of Participatory Management (PM)
of Protected Areas in Central America**

Country	Number of PM Experiences
Belize	9
Guatemala	19
Honduras	34
El Salvador	16
Nicaragua	2
Costa Rica	1
Panama	8
TOTAL	89

Source: McCarthy and Salas (1998)

It is important to point out that the working definition for co-management used to identify the above cases was *"an agreement with an interested party (anyone) in which rules are established by which that party can influence decision-making"*, and that these arrangements do not necessarily include local people (McCarthy, pers. comm., 1998). One of the major players in Central American co-management arrangements is NGOs, and agreements are often drafted between government and NGOs for the management of protected areas (without specifying explicitly that local people must be involved in the management). This situation is understandable in light of the fact that there has traditionally been a large divide between the government and marginalized local

communities in Central America, and NGOs are often seen as the most appropriate mechanism to help bridge this gap and enable dialogue.

According to a delegate of the Ketchi People of Belize at the Central American Indigenous Workshop on Protected Areas and the Environment (Panama, November 1998): *"We think it's better to have co-management with other NGOs in order to balance the government's control... There are NGOs that are on the side of Indigenous Peoples"* (Teul 1999). NGOs are often in the best position, and have the political, human and financial resources required to enter into collaborative management arrangements. But there have also been situations in which NGOs have attempted to coopt participatory arrangements, and have caused problems for the local people, as has been reported in the case of the establishment of the Miskito Coast Protected Area in Nicaragua (Nietschmann 1997). Other actors involved in the participatory management arrangements identified in the table above include municipalities, communities, Indigenous groups, research centres, universities and foundations (McCarthy, pers. comm., 1998).

With regards to the legal and policy frameworks for co-management in Central America, co-management is *not* a legally recognized or sanctioned type of arrangement in most Central American countries, and there have been no national policy frameworks developed regarding co-management to date (Giro et al., 1998). Rather, the arrangements that do exist are the outcomes of particular contexts – and sometimes conflicts – and have resulted in a diversity of arrangements ranging from those that are backed by law, as is the case of Mombacho National Park in Nicaragua, to those that are backed by agreements and memoranda of understanding, the latter two being the most common vehicles for establishing arrangements in the region (McCarthy 1998b) (Table 3-3). Practitioners and consultants are currently working on categorizing the types of experiences that do exist in order to develop a regional policy; the hope is that a proposed regional policy will have more power to influence Ministers and national policy-making (McCarthy, pers. comm., 1998).

Table 3-3:
Some Examples of Co-Management in Progress in Central American Protected Areas
 Source: Girot et al.(1998), my translation

- *Agreement with a research centre:* Barro Colorado Natural Mounument – STRI – Panama
- *Agreement with municipalities:* Yuscarán Biological Reserve – municipalities of Oropoli, Guinope and Yuscarán – Honduras
- *Agreement with a neighbourhood committee:* El Pino National Park – neighbours of the national park – Guatemala
- *Agreement with an NGO:* El Imposible National Park – SalvaNATURA – El Salvador
- *Agreement with a community:* Cahuita National Park – community of Cahuita – Costa Rica
- *Agreement with an Indigenous community:* Corregimiento de Nagará No 1, Comarca Kuna Yala – Panama
- *Agreement in which an organization manages more than one protected areas:* Tapir Mountain Natural Reserve, Bird Cayes National Park, Blue Hole National Park, Guanacaste National Park, Half Moon Caye National Park, Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Reserve, Crooked Tree Wildlife Reserve – Audobon Society – Belize

In Belize and Honduras, agreements tend to be tri-partite, signed by the relevant government agency, the local government and the organization requesting the agreement. In Belize, agreements are signed by the Director of the Forestry Department, the civil society group (NGO, community, association, etc.), and the Minister of Tourism and Environment. The Ministerial signature gives the agreement high-level backing. The Belizean government has also created a small fund (\$10,000 USD) to help communities start up co-management arrangements, and apparently has the greatest number of participatory management agreements that involve co-administration (McCarthy, pers. comm., 1998). In Honduras, parties to the agreement include the National Forest Development Corporation (AFE-COHDEFOR) on behalf of the government, the civil society organization (NGO, community, association, etc.) and the municipalities involved with the protected area. Here local authorities have the legal responsibility and authority over the natural resources of its municipalities (Girot et al., 1998).

Another type of agreement to establish joint management is Panama's 'administrative concessions', a type of arrangement recently given legal sanction under the General Law on the Environment (Law No. 41). The Law stipulates that protected areas will be regulated by the National Authority of the Environment, and can be delegated to municipalities, provincial governments, boards, foundations or private enterprise through administrative concession, i.e., a contract which allows an entity to engage in management activities, conservation, protection and development of a protected area in an autonomous manner (chapter II, article 2 in McCarthy 1998b).

In short, the diverse participatory management arrangements that have emerged in Central America are the outcomes of the particular situations on the ground rather than the result of concerted policy-making.

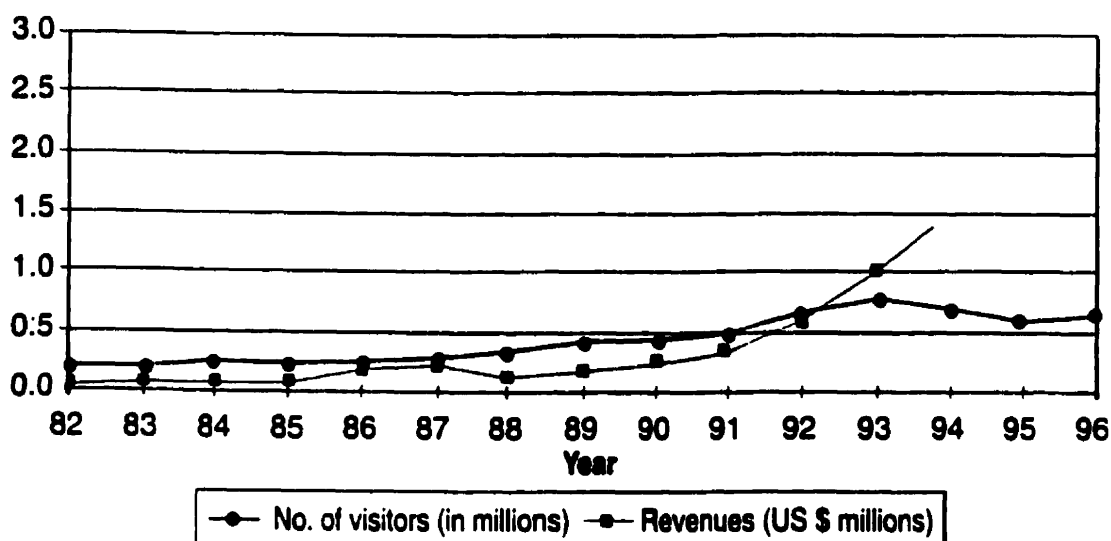
3.3 The Costa Rican Context

What stands out from the 89 Central American collaborative management experiences identified Table 3-2 is that the country with the least number of participatory management experiences in protected areas is Costa Rica. This is somewhat surprising given that Costa Rica is by far the most stable and democratic country in the region, and is the country with the most ambitious conservation agenda. So why are there so few participatory management experiences in Costa Rica?

There are at least four potential reasons. First, according to some, Costa Rica is "*very closed with regards to protected areas*", and will most likely lag behind other countries in the region because of the hold that the old, centralized way of protected areas management has over some of those who have been involved in conservation for the last few decades (McCarthy, pers. comm., 1998). This closedness is not surprising, in light of the fact that protected areas are considered Costa Rica's 'green gold': in 1996 the tourism industry provided more income for Costa Rica (a total of US \$688.6 million) than exports of bananas (US \$616 million) or coffee (US \$367.8 million) (Instituto Costarricense de Turismo 1997), with an average of 43% of foreign tourists visiting the national parks system from 1987 to 1997 (Proyecto Estado de la Nación 1998). And between 1982 and

1996 there was a significant increase in revenues from visitors to the protected areas system (Figure 3-1). In addition, bio-prospecting agreements to conduct research in Costa Rica's protected areas have the potential to bring in considerable income. For example, the 1991 agreement between Costa Rica's Institute for Biodiversity (INBio) and the U.S.-based multinational pharmaceutical company Merck, Sharp and Dohme stipulates that in return for samples of plant, animal and microbial extracts supplied by INBio from Costa Rica – the products of which Merck can patent and market exclusively – Merck will provide INBio \$US 1.1 million to boost research. In addition, INBio will receive a proportion of license fees from future Merck patents based on the samples; INBio gives the National Parks Foundation (a foundation primarily established to handle funds from foreign donors) one-tenth of the actual budget, and 50% of future gains (Flitner 1998). Since the Merck agreement, INBio has signed six similar agreements with other companies and institutions (Castro and Tattenbach 1998).

Figure 3-1: Growth in Number of Visitors and Revenues from Admission Fees to Protected Areas in Costa Rica, 1982-1996



Source: Castro and Tattenbach (1998)

Second, Costa Rica's Minister of Environment and Energy and high-level decision-makers will need to be shown that co-management works in order to be convinced about the viability of implementing the concept in practice, according to Polimeni (pers. comm., 1999), Costa Rica's Commissioner for Civil Society Participation.

Third, there are several examples of collaboration in Costa Rica's protected areas that are not reflected in the above table as they either did not meet the consultants' criteria (e.g., Gandoca Manzanillo Wildlife Reserve and Talamanca's Indigenous Reserve, both in the La Amistad Caribe Conservation Area), or are at the beginning stages of a potential collaborative management arrangement (e.g., Ballena Marine Park, Osa Conservation Area).

And fourth, the trend in Costa Rica has been towards privatization, and there are several examples of protected areas that have been established and are managed through private initiatives (e.g., Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve, established and managed by the Tropical Science Center).

But regardless of the lack of reported collaborative management cases in Costa Rica to date, there are several reasons to believe that collaborative management will soon be on the rise. These include:

- 1) *The right of the public to participate in decision-making with regards to the environment has recently been enshrined in law.*

The 1995 *Ley Orgánica del Ambiente* (Organic Law on the Environment) is based on the principle that both the State and private individuals should participate in the conservation and sustainable use of the environment, which the law declares is of public use and social interest (Article 2, a). Article 6 deals with public participation, and obliges the Government of the Republic, Municipalities and Local Governments to promote the active and organized participation of citizens in all decisions and actions regarding the protection and improvement of the environment.

- 2) *The policy shift and institutional changes away from centralized, top-down natural resources management towards a process of "deconcentration, decentralization and democratization" (Solórzano 1997) (Table 3-4).*

In 1995, the Government of Costa Rica introduced the National System of Conservation Areas (Sistema Nacional de Áreas de Conservación [SINAC]) to take over the administration of over 100 protected areas initially managed by a central office in San José (legally backed by the Law on Biodiversity in 1998). The result has been the establishment of 11 conservation areas covering the whole country, which are broken down into even smaller management areas. This restructuring was accompanied two years later (1997) by new policy guidelines for protected areas containing numerous references to public participation and involving neighbouring communities. As Vaughan and Rodriguez (1999) have stated,

"SINAC promotes participation of all groups, public and private, national and international, who share the common objective of preservation, restoration and protection of ecological equilibrium and biodiversity. Eventually SINAC aspires to have the civil society be in charge of most aspects of management, concessions, and research, with the state involved in facilitation and sharing financing matters with civil society. SINAC now functions as a technical organization decentralized from MINAE with a legal mandate which permits a great amount of flexibility in carrying out its mission."

In addition, in 1998, the *Ley de Biodiversidad* (Law on Biodiversity) was passed, which requires each Conservation Area to create a Regional Council consisting of NGOs, interested communities, municipalities and public institutions in the Area.² Among other things, these Councils will: oversee the implementation of SINAC's policies; ensure that the needs of local people are integrated into each Area's planning and activities; encourage multi-sectoral participation in the analysis, discussion and search for solutions to regional issues related to natural resources and the environment; approve the strategies, policies, guidelines, plans and specific budgets for the Conservation Area; and recommend to the National Council for Conservation Areas (a body consisting of the

²It should be noted that the Law on Biodiversity – and particularly the sections dealing with public participation – is currently the subject of much debate, and will likely be amended in the near future.

Minister of Environment and Energy, the Director of SINAC, the Director of the National Commission on Biodiversity, the Directors of each Conservation Area, and a representative of each Conservation Area's Regional Council) the creation, modification or change in category of its protected areas. The Law also provides for the establishment of Local Councils where necessary (Articles 29-30).

Also in 1998, Executive Decree 27485-MINAE was passed which creates the Office of Civil Society of MINAE as a vehicle for facilitating public participation in environmental management (Article 2). The Office is responsible for coordinating several programs, including Costa Rica's Local Agenda 21. And finally, in 1999 intense consultations were held with multiple stakeholder groups regarding Costa Rica's National Biodiversity Strategy, showing the shift towards the inclusion of pluralistic perspectives in national policy. Currently, discussions are underway to develop a Costa Rican Strategy for Sustainability (ECO-S.O.S.), a process spearheaded by MINAE's office of Civil Society, and supported by the United Nations Development Program, IUCN and the Inter-American Development Bank. The Strategy aims to include input from various stakeholders in order to develop an integrated umbrella strategy that will lead to the creation of policies in 12 different theme areas related to the environment (Lücke 2000).

- 3) *The need to deal with the outcomes of the increase in establishment of protected areas in the context of structural adjustment and decentralization, which include lack of personnel and resources to care for Costa Rica's protected areas, and increased socio-environmental conflicts with local people whose livelihood security has been affected.*

Just like other countries in the region, in 1980 Costa Rica initiated a structural adjustment program (SAP) that has been called "*una medicina amarga*," a bitter medicine (Korten 1997). While the government struggled to reduce its national debt through debt-for-nature swaps and policies aimed at increasing economic growth through incentives to increase foreign investments in agribusiness and other exports, critics charge that the net effect of Costa Rica's SAP has been to accentuate those problems that it proposed to solve, by:

- creating a dependency on international markets that leaves Costa Rica in a position that is increasingly vulnerable in the face of the global market;
- increasing the gap between capitalists and workers, in that it reduced domestic incentives for workers within the country to buy the products destined for export;
- consolidating the country's assets in the hands of transnational corporations that largely control export operations;
- accelerating deforestation due to the growth of agribusinesses (and tourism) in forested areas, and in areas that used to be in the hands of small-scale farmers, who now try to subsist by deforesting the infertile lands in the mountainous areas (Korten 1997).

The irony is that while the Government of Costa Rica created incentives for the expansion of agribusiness, it simultaneously rushed to establish protected areas, largely as a means to stop the agricultural frontier.

The result has been an inability to care for these protected areas due to a lack of human and financial resources, and the increase of conflicts. Many conflicts related to protected areas that have their roots in some of the SAP policies – and in the exclusionary “*fences and fines*” (Wells and Brandon 1992) approach to conservation management in the 1970s and 80s. Conflicts have erupted over:

- The lack of consultation with communities prior to the establishment of protected areas, or consideration of the impact on their livelihood. A recent director of the national conservation areas system describes the process used in the 1970s to establish parks:

“What the state did was to create a park and assign a few armed guards to defend it from hunters and farmers who intended to work the land – some had been recently expelled from their lands, and others were newcomers. The result was that the neighbouring communities became enemies of the park, because they were denied access to resources upon which they depended, or used for cultural reasons” (Solórzano 1997, my translation and emphasis).

- **The process of land acquisition and lack of funds for compensation.** Families whose lands were expropriated expect to receive compensation, although many do not possess the required documents to show they have title to their land. Add to this the fact that the state does not have enough funds to pay those who *do* have the appropriate paperwork and the result is a recipe for confused property rights, conflict and environmental retaliation. In Guanacaste, for example, fires were deliberately set because of lack of payment for expropriated lands, wiping out large tracts of forest (Proyecto Estado de la Nación 1998). SINAC (1999) estimates that 43.63% of land within the protected areas system is within private hands (15.07% of national parks), and would cost USD \$654,645,168 to acquire.
- **The invasion and occupation of land in protected areas.** While some families affected by protected areas changed their livelihood from subsistence activities to tourism activities, many continue to be subsistence farmers. Some try to find land in adjacent areas, but often agricultural land is scarce and land prices sharply increase after protected area status is obtained. The result is that some small-scale farmers have been forced to invade protected areas in search of land (Utting 1994). One example is the Carara Biological Reserve, where 3000 hectares of secondary forests were segregated after having been invaded by land-seeking peasants due to a shortage of land in the area (Brüggerman 1994).
- **Resource use in protected areas.** Costa Rican protected areas legislation does not allow resource use in strictly protected areas such as national parks and biological reserves, with the exception of limited amounts of subsistence fishing in national parks. However, hunting activities, turtle-egg gathering and other types of resource use continue to take place, both by people who have traditionally used the resources, as well as those who have not. This situation has led to violent clashes with armed park wardens in some instances, and results in an 'all or nothing' mindset in which resource users take as much as they possibly can for fear they may not have another chance.

Table 3-4: Milestones in Costa Rica's Protected Areas History and Management
Sources: Wallace (1992); <http://www.inbio.ac.cr>; Lücke (2000)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Additional Events/General Comments</i>
1939	Instituto de Turismo Costarricense held responsible for protected areas	1939: Law No. 13 to Preserve Poás and Irazú volcanoes 1945-1950s: "Paper parks" 1959: Caribbean Conservation Corporation established, Costa Rica's first NGO
1940	The Washington Convention (Convention on Nature Protection and Wild Life Preservation in the Western Hemisphere) signed, but not published until 1966	
1969	Forestry Law No. 4465: Department of National Parks established under the Forestry Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG)	1960s: Creation of forestry reserves to protect watersheds
1977	National Parks Law No. 6084: Independent National Park Services created under MAG	1970s onwards: the Agricultural Department compensated squatters for "improvements" in national parks (i.e., given money if they cleared the area)
1979	National Parks Foundation created to administer foreign donations (spurred by the corruption in the Ministry of Agriculture)	
1985	Fundación Neotropica created with the mandate of overseeing the management of buffer zones	mid-late 1980s: Debt-crisis; priority to buy inholdings in national parks
1986	National Park Service moved to the newly consolidated ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mines (MIRENEM), which separated natural resources from agriculture, and elevated conservation to the cabinet level	late 1980s-early 90s: Debt-for-Nature swaps; shift to socio-economic view, promoting parks to local people and environmental education
1989	INBio created, an autonomous, non-profit private institution (but philosophically and administratively a branch of SINAC)	1991: INBio-Merck agreement on Bioprospecting
1992	Law on Wildlife Conservation, No. 7317	
1995	Organic Law of the Environment, No. 7554 Creation of the National Protected Areas System (SINAC), and change in MIRENEM's name to the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE)	
1998	Law of Biodiversity, No. 7788 Executive Decree 27485-MINAE passed, creating the Office of Civil Society of MINAE	
1999	National Biodiversity Strategy	
2000	Costa Rican Strategy for Sustainability (ECO-S.O.S.)	
<p>Relevant Regional Conventions (and dates Costa Rica signed): Convention to create the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (1991); Central American Convention on Biodiversity (1994); Convention for the Management and Conservation of Natural Forest Ecosystems and the Development of Forest Plantations (1994); Central American Alliance for Sustainable Development (1994)</p> <p>Relevant International Conventions (and dates Costa Rica signed): Conventions on Climate Change and Biological Diversity (1994); CITES (1975); RAMSAR (1971); Global Convention on Intellectual Property (1980); Law of the Sea (1991).</p>		

In conclusion, recent changes in Costa Rica's laws, policies and institutions related to protected areas management and the environment pave the way for an increase in public participation in the future. These changes, together with the need to address SINAC's lack of human resources and to help defuse local conflicts related to protected areas, make collaborative management a promising potential management alternative.

3.4 The Final Link: Cahuita National Park

This thesis examines the one Costa Rican participatory management of protected areas experience SICAP has identified to date, namely the experience of Cahuita National Park. It is a particularly interesting case as it involves collaborative management as the outcome of a conflict resolution process. It draws lessons and insights not only for policy makers and practitioners regarding appropriate institutions and participatory planning among other things, but also for people who would like insights into how to negotiate and have more say over the resources on which they depend.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the Central American policy and institutional context for protected areas and co-management. It focussed on co-management as a potential vehicle for the socio-environmental conflicts that beset the region with regards to protected areas. The chapter then presented the Costa Rican policy context, and the current institutional and legislative environment, indicating that although not many participatory processes have been undertaken to date, there is a very enabling environment for future initiatives. It closed highlighting the one case of co-management that has been identified in the context of national parks in Costa Rica, and that is the subject of this thesis. Before delving into the case of Cahuita National Park, however, the next chapter discusses the fieldwork methodology used to gather the information on which the case study analysis is based.

Chapter IV

Research Methodology: A Hybrid Approach



**Co-researcher Marvin Fonseca,
tasting a marine turtle egg**



Mapping with Cahuita's Naturalist Guides' Association (May 1998)



Women's gathering – 33 women and some of their children attended (December 1998)

Chapter IV

Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the conceptual framework of the research, discusses the rationale behind the fieldwork approach, introduces the research team, and describes the project process and activities.

4.1 The conceptual framework: A Hybrid Approach

The conceptual framework grounding the research draws on the literature of common property theory, public participation, rural and organizational development, conflict management and social learning. As practitioners have pointed out (e.g., Steins and Edwards 1998), such a hybrid or pluralistic approach is particularly helpful in the case of complex, multiple-use common property regimes, such as protected areas.

Some of the concepts and tools used to shape the fieldwork methodology and inform the analysis include:

- From the literature on common property theory: Ostrom's eight (1990) design principles for a rigorous institution and Berkes' (1997) four hypotheses on conditions required for successful co-management;
- From the literature on public planning and participation: Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation, Borrini-Feyerabend's (1996) adaptation for protected areas and Rocha's (1997) ladder of empowerment;
- From the literature on rural and organizational development: Stakeholder analysis (e.g., Grimble and Chan 1995) and participatory research;

- From the literature on conflict management: Lederach's (1995) discussion on conflict transformation and Seymoar's (1997) self empowerment cycle;
- From the literature on social learning: Lee's (1993) characterizations of single-loop and double-loop learning.

These will be discussed in detail as they are being applied in the analysis.

4.2 The Fieldwork Methodology: A Critical Reflection on the Tools and Approaches Used

Just as the conceptual framework is a hybrid of various theories and concepts, so too the fieldwork methodology is a combination of different tools and approaches, ranging from those that are participatory and potentially empowering, to those that are primarily extractive.

In the last few years, there has been increasing recognition of the need for researchers working in communities to shift away from conventional extractive approaches of collecting information to more participatory, action-oriented methods of conducting field work. In conventional extractive approaches, the community's needs are not factored into the research agenda, and the community has no say in how the research is being conducted and to what end (e.g., Kinnaird and Hyma 1993). The assumption is that the researcher is the repository of the knowledge necessary to parse and analyze the information using concepts learned outside the community in question. The information is taken out of the community for analysis, and findings are not shared with community members. The outcome is that many local people feel they are being 'researched to death', and the findings are not benefiting the community or working towards solutions on the ground.

Participatory approaches such as Rural Rapid Appraisal (RRA), Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Participatory Action Research (PAR) were developed in the 1980s and 1990s to make research more relevant and economical, and to root the information gathering activities in the knowledge of the communities being studied. While RRA is essentially extractive – that is, the information is gathered and analyzed outside of the community – and results in learning by outsiders, it involves activities such as transects, informal mapping and diagramming that are based on local knowledge (Chambers 1994, 1997). PRA is

a family of approaches and methods to enable rural people to share, enhance and analyze their knowledge of life and conditions, to plan and to act... [It] emphasizes a reversal of learning, to learn with and from local people, directly... The role of the outside professional is one of facilitating investigation, analysis, presentation and learning by rural people themselves, so that they present and own the outcomes" (Pimbert and Gujja 1997).

PRA goes beyond RRA in that it emphasizes group analysis, planning and action; it recognizes not only the importance of local knowledge, but local people's capacity for analysis (Table 4-1). PAR uses participatory techniques that overlap with RRA and PRA, but its main focus is on "the underprivileged and on political action" (Chambers 1994): "PAR...works directly with local political/development capacities to bring real, visible organizational structures, effective local advocacy, and a durable change in power relations with the center" (Rennie and Singh 1996). In all three approaches, community members play a central role in documenting information; the hope in PRA and PAR is that the research exercise leads to community empowerment and works towards solutions from the ground up.

Table 4-1: The RRA-PRA Continuum Source: Chambers (1997)

Nature of process	RRA <-----> PRA
Mode	Finding out-elicitive <-----> Facilitating-empowering
Outsider's role	Investigator <-----> facilitator
Information owned, analyzed and used by	Outsiders <-----> local people
Methods mainly used	'RRA methods' <-----> 'PRA methods'

Scholars have argued the pros and cons of conventional extractive and participatory approaches (e.g., Chambers 1994, 1997; Rennie and Singh 1996; Huizer 1997; Kinnaird and Hyma 1993), and have underscored that while extractive research leaves much to be desired, participatory approaches are not without their problems: in the end many projects that claim to be participatory are just as extractive as those that openly use more traditional, scientific and/or quantitative approaches (Little 1994). As well, the information gathered in participatory approaches may be biased and inaccurate – it may even leave out important class, ethnicity and gender issues and perspectives (Sarin 1998; Kinnaird and Hyma 1993) – and therefore verification and inclusive research designs are important. Finally, the quality of participatory research depends on the experience and abilities of the research team.

With these arguments in mind, the research methodology for this project combines qualitative and participatory methods with scientific rigour (various perspectives on issues were sought and preliminary project outcomes were verified), while maintaining a solutions-oriented focus based on the needs of the situation on the ground. As will become evident in the description of the project process and activities below, even though all of the fieldwork activities involved participation, some were primarily extractive and led to learning by the researchers (e.g., semi-structured interviews), while others led to more learning and potential empowerment by the people involved (e.g., the participatory evaluation of the Cahuita National Park administration and the Management Committee's planning session). In essence, the research approach combines aspects of RRA, PRA and PAR:

- **RRA elements** – It includes analysis that is not participatory but draws on concepts and evaluation tools learned outside the community;
- **PRA elements** – All fieldwork activities were participatory, the findings were shared and verified with the community, and a planning workshop was undertaken to begin to address some of the issues identified in the information-gathering stage;
- **PAR elements** – Both community leaders and government decision-makers had input into the process. Government decision-makers expressly asked that the

research lead to a restructuring of the current management arrangement of Cahuita National Park so that it becomes a more equitable and efficient body (Cyrus, pers. comm. 1998).

Combining aspects of the various participatory approaches described above was appropriate in light of the fact that the research project and objectives were not conceived by the community itself, but we wanted to ensure that project outcomes were relevant and responded to needs identified throughout the project. The final combination of fieldwork tools used was the outcome of the researchers' perceptions of what might work best to meet our fieldwork objectives, together with input from research advisers, community members and government officials.

4.3 The Research Team

The field research team was comprised of two Master's students, Marvin Fonseca Borrás of the School of Geography, University of Costa Rica, and me, Viviane Weitzner, Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba. Pascal Girot, Associate Professor, School of Geography, University of Costa Rica, supervised the field work. Fikret Berkes, Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba, provided project guidance.

In addition, a small group of community members helped guide the project process, including Alpheus Buchanan, Antonio Mora, Enrique Joseph and Dexter Lewis. Project guidance was also given by Edwin Cyrus, Director of the La Amistad Caribe Conservation Area. Ongoing communication with these individuals took place throughout the fieldwork to discuss and get feedback on our observations, preliminary results and upcoming project activities. Field assistants included Lucia Chavarria, who provided invaluable help with our community survey in Cahuita, and Elvin Huertas, who played a key role in introducing us to resource users in Hone Creek and Punta Riel.

4.4 Researchers' Teamwork, Goals and Division of Labour

The different backgrounds, skills and gender of the two field researchers played a critical role in the outcomes of the project and the quality of information gathered. Marvin's familiarity with the local and national context, coupled with my background in journalism and familiarity with common property theory, provided a complementary mix that strengthened our methodology and analysis. For two people who were "thrown"³ together for six-and-a-half months to conduct community-based research, we were extremely lucky in sharing the same ideas about how to go about our work, and the importance of: a) gaining trust from community members before starting the project process; b) respecting the needs of community members regarding privacy (for example, we did not attend a couple of critical meetings working towards resolving a conflict, because we did not want to hamper peoples' ability to speak openly and honestly); and c) being constantly aware that our work was first and foremost to help assess and strengthen the collaborative management arrangement in Cahuita.

This is not to say that it did not take some time – and some testing! – before Marvin and I felt completely at ease working together as a team: a very large part of the learning process of this project revolved around negotiating and weaving together our various expectations and ideas about the project, and our different working styles. From my perspective, the success of our teamwork depended to a large extent on my ability to draw on the *Latina*-part of my upbringing, and the values and way of life I had learned during the 13 years I spent growing up in a coastal community in Southern Spain. This, coupled with Marvin's openness in listening to different ideas – and willingness to try out new approaches – helped bridge the potential North-South cultural gap. Our ongoing

³Neither of us had much notice that we would be working with each other on this project: I had less than one month's notice (and was uncertain whether I would be examining Cahuita or another protected area), while Marvin had even less. We were also at different levels of preparedness: Marvin had been discussing this project as a Master's thesis for some time and had some well-formed ideas about the methodology he wanted to pursue, while I had very little time to get up to speed on the context and issues at stake, although I too had some definite ideas on the approach I wanted to take. Considering these imbalances and differences at the beginning, the speed with which we became cohesive as a team was remarkable.

discussions and reflections on our teamwork added an important dimension to the learning and project process.

Our goals during our stay in Cahuita were to be respectful; to learn by listening and partaking in community activities; to remain flexible in terms of our process by adapting and responding to situations as they arose; to be inclusive and try not to appear to take sides; and to give back to the community in whichever way possible. One of the greatest benefits of our approach was that we developed our research methodology in the field. This helped ensure that the questions – and process – responded appropriately to the situation.

Gender and personality were important determinants in who we 'connected' with in the field. While Marvin had a special affinity speaking with Cahuita's Rastafarians, for example, I was better able to connect with the women in the town, and could attend meetings for and by women. In addition, we were able to communicate in the language of choice of each person: interviewees were given the choice of speaking either Spanish or English, and were accommodated accordingly. All interview guides and project framework materials were available in both Spanish and English.

There was no formal division of labour. I spent more time in the field, as Marvin returned to San José for up to three days per week. However, the programmed project activities were shared equally.

As the Cahuitan Dexter Lewis put it, our role was in essence to enable Cahuitans "to tell our story", the story of conflict and collaboration in Cahuita National Park (pers. comm., 1998). We saw our primary task in the field as gathering the information from the local people in their own words and pictures. Our hope was to strengthen the collaborative management in place in Cahuita National Park by: a) analyzing the information gathered using current tools for evaluating common property resources and collaborative management arrangements; b) presenting our observations back to the community and government officials for group analysis; and c) facilitating a planning workshop regarding the next steps required to strengthen the collaborative arrangement. As the project

progressed, it became evident that community members and MINAE officials started regarding us as advisors to their process, asking for advice on a variety of issues. Not taking sides on these issues, and trying to enable those who sought advice to come up with their own solutions, became an increasingly difficult balancing act.

4.5 Project Process

As outlined in the introduction to this thesis, several events took place leading up to the fieldwork component of this project. Following the identified need to document the process of conflict and collaboration in Cahuita National Park that emerged from a series of workshops held by the University of Peace, MSEC MN and FUDEU, Prof. Girot contacted Dr. Berkes regarding potential Master's students to work on the project. Shortly after developing a proposal for IDRC to fund my part of the research (Marvin's was funded directly by MSEC MN and FUDEU) – and IDRC's acceptance of this proposal – the fieldwork started in February, 1998.

The initial agreement with IDRC was for four months of research leading up to the presentation of the results at the Seventh International Association for the Study of Common Property Conference in (Vancouver, June 10-14, 1998). However, after this first stage of research, my Thesis Committee agreed that an additional two-to-three months of fieldwork was needed to bring back the preliminary findings to the community for dissemination and verification. A second proposal was submitted to IDRC to fund both Marvin and my work for the second stage of fieldwork. Finally, a third 'stage' of research took place, which was more of an opportunity than a planned research stage. Berkes agreed to subsidize a two-week stay in Costa Rica which I tacked-on to a trip to attend a conference in El Salvador. In short, the fieldwork took place in three main stages over the course of one-and-a-half years:

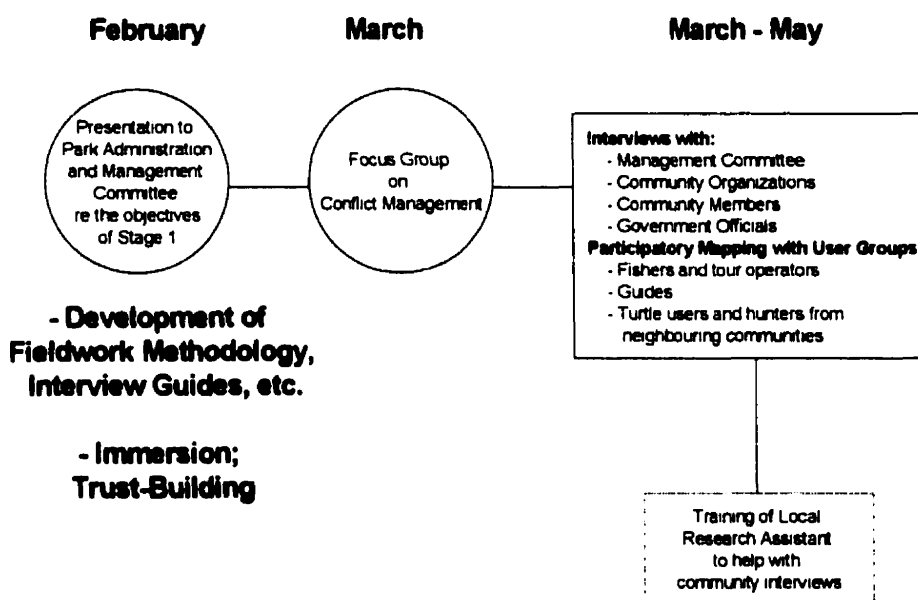
- **Stage 1 – *information-gathering* – February 1 - May 30, 1998;**
- **Stage 2 – *verification, workshops and planning session* – November 16, 1998 - January 14, 1999; and**
- **Stage 3 – *quick update and brochure-writing* – August 2-16, 1999.**

While I have characterized each stage by the main type of activity/ies taking place, it is important to point out that several information-gathering activities occurred throughout the whole project process, and were not merely confined to Stage 1. These activities included literature searches, participant and direct observation (particularly at Management Committee and community organization meetings), and informal gatherings. In addition, Marvin visited Cahuita in between the three stages of fieldwork, and carried out some project-related activities. With this in mind, the following section describes the principal research activities that took place during each 'main' stage of the fieldwork as characterized above.

4.6 Project Activities and Rationale

4.6.1 Stage 1: Information-Gathering (February 1 - May 30, 1998)

Figure 4-1: Project Process for Stage 1: February 1-May 30, 1998



Other activities undertaken in Stage 1

- Two newsletters entitled *El Aracife* to inform the community about our project objectives and activities and to help establish a community newsletter
- International workshop presentations: E. Joseph, San José (April), Pascal Girot, Washington (May), V. Wetzner and M. Fonseca, Vancouver (June)

1) Presentations to Government and Community Groups and Individuals, Building Trust, and Developing Field Methodology

The first fieldwork activity was an informal presentation of our research project and objectives at a staff meeting of the park administration in Cahuita National Park. The intent was to introduce ourselves and to inform the park administration of the project scope (many had already met Marvin at previous workshops). Marvin did most of the explaining of the project, as at this stage he was far better versed than I was in the project context.

Two things became apparent in discussions following the brief presentation: 1) not many people knew about the project; and 2) they wanted to know the tangible benefits of the research for the park and the community of Cahuita. The suggestion was made that we not delve into research activities immediately, but spend the following two weeks presenting the project to the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park, and to other individuals and/or organized groups in the Cahuita. Another suggestion was that the research lead to a tangible benefit, such as a promotional video or a brochure for the park. We explained that a video would not be possible given our resources and timing, but that we could help write a brochure.

The following week we presented our project at a Management Committee meeting using flipcharts. Marvin and I took turns presenting the information, and we highlighted that the park staff and administration had placed emphasis on the importance of tangible benefits from our research. Committee members expressed interest in our project, and supported the idea of a brochure for the park.

Subsequent informal conversations about our project were held with the president of the Chamber of Tourism, individual members of the Management Committee, Ministry of Environment and Energy officials and the vice-president of a women's group. These were mostly to inform them about the project activities, rather than to get endorsement or feedback.

Besides becoming immersed in the community, getting to know people, and trying to establish rapport and trust before starting in on project activities, we spent the first three weeks discussing and designing the main building blocks of our methodology and developed the interview guides. In essence, we worked backwards, examining our fieldwork objectives, and then brainstorming about the possible fieldwork tools we could use for each. The final selection of fieldwork tools and the project process remained flexible, and was adapted to respond to particular situations as they arose.

2) Focus Group to Discuss Reef Access Conflict, and Participatory Mapping of the Reef

As a primary means to discuss and gather perspectives and information regarding conflict management in Cahuita National Park, and specifically the conflict that had taken place in Cahuita in 1994, we developed the idea of holding two 'working groups': one with community members in Cahuita, and one with MINAE officials. The intent was to examine the different perceptions about the 1994 conflict in the park, to engage in group analysis on conflict management interventions since then, and to discuss the current situation and expectations with regards to the collaborative management in the park.

For the community working group, we designed colourful invitations which we posted in several central locations in the community. The posters were an open invitation to whomever wanted to attend a "Meeting to analyze the experience of conflict management in Cahuita National Park". We invited a member of MSEC MN to help co-facilitate the working group with Marvin, and Pascal Girot also attended. My primary task was to note-take.

The event was attended by approximately 10 people (mostly fishers, tour operators, members of the Management Committee, a member of a women's group and other community members). It quickly became apparent that participants did not want to speak about the old conflict that had taken place in 1994, but were anxious to discuss a new conflict that was brewing over access to the reef. We abandoned our original plan of holding a co-facilitated working group, and proceeded more along the lines of a focus group with Marvin leading the discussion and questions. We spent approximately three

hours with the participants, focussing on their concerns regarding this new conflict, brainstorming on possible proposals they could bring to the negotiating table, and discussing the management of the park in general and their hopes for the future. In order to help visualize the conflict, we asked the participants to draw a map of the reef using flipchart paper and colour markers. This map identified, among other things, the areas of the reef that are in recuperation, the areas to which they take tourists, and those where they do not take tourists.

For logistical reasons, the working group with MINAE did not take place. It was difficult to set a meeting date and time, and again, Marvin and I sensed a lack of interest in engaging in group analysis about the 1994 conflict. Instead, we spoke with individual MINAE representatives about their experience of the conflict.

3) Interviews with Management Committee, MINAE and Community Organizations

During March to May, we held in-depth interviews with the Management Committee, Ministry of Environment and Energy officials and community organizations using interview guides based on open-ended questions that were designed specifically for each type of interviewee (Management Committee, MINAE, community group) (Appendix 1). Many of the questions were designed to help examine Berkes' (1997) four hypotheses on pre-conditions for successful co-management.

The objectives of the interviews with the Management Committee included:

- To determine the background, role and objective of the Management Committee;
- To determine the role of individual members on the Management Committee;
- To identify the major interventions that have been made regarding park management (i.e., decisions and implementation of decisions);
- To identify management plans – or rules of use – designed in collaboration with the community;
- To examine the perceptions of the impact of decisions on environmental health;
- To determine communication feedback mechanisms (dissemination of information,

community input);

- To identify Committee member's perceptions regarding the major challenges facing the park, how the Committee could be strengthened, and recommendations for others interested in entering into a similar arrangement.

The objectives of the interviews with members of MINAE included:

- To identify the policies that affect the management of Cahuita National Park;
- To determine MINAE's mandate and role with regards to the park's management;
- To identify the management plans and regulations currently used to manage the park, as well as how these are enforced;
- To identify the types of activities and resource use that take place in Cahuita National Park;
- To find out about the state of the environmental health of the park.

The objectives of the interviews with community groups included:

- To determine the role and objectives of community organizations;
- To examine their relationship or involvement with the management of the park;
- To determine whether the Management Committee represents organizations' interests adequately.

The five members of the Management Committee were interviewed, as well as a former member. Two MINAE officials were interviewed (the Director of the Conservation Area and the Area's legal counsel). Community organization representatives (mostly presidents or vice-presidents) were interviewed from seven community organizations, including three women's groups, the Naturalist Guides' Association, the Chamber of Tourism, the Development Association and a representative of a now defunct fisher's organization.

Marvin and I were often both present at each of these interviews. Most were tape-recorded and transcribed in order to capture the information accurately and in the voices of the interviewees. Several interviewees handled the tape recorder themselves,

controlling when it was stopped and started. Copious notes were taken during interviews with people who did not feel comfortable with a tape recorder (which happened only once). In order to facilitate the analysis of these interviews, hard copies were made and relevant sections marked for easy access during writing.

4) Community Survey

We conducted a random household survey in Cahuita using a semi-directed interview guide based on open-ended questions (Appendix 2). The main purpose was to examine the feedback loops with regards to communication between the Management Committee and community members, to identify how people currently use the park, and to get peoples' views on issues affecting the park. In addition, the survey helped us gather information about the impressions of community people with regards to the 1994 conflict, and to find out whether – and how – this incident had affected them.

The objectives of the community survey included:

- To find out how the conflicts with the park have affected community members and their families economically, culturally and socially;
- To identify how the community members used the park before and after its establishment (fishing, agriculture, medicinal plants, trees, hunting, etc.), and to determine what portion of their income depended – and still depends – on this use;
- To determine whether community members know about the Management Committee, and how they perceive its role;
- To identify community members' concerns regarding the park;
- To identify community members' vision of the park and Cahuita for the future.

A total of 39 people were interviewed. The sample size was based on spatial groupings of three houses (which we selected), using the latest map by the Costa Rican Statistics and Census Bureau (1996). We used a 'Route Map' on which we listed all the people in each of the houses chronologically: first the head of the family (self-identified by the family), the spouse (if appropriate), children (over 18 years of age) and other relatives. Every third person on the list for each geographical conglomerate was interviewed.

These interviews, which lasted from 30-45 minutes, were conducted individually either by Marvin or me. While most interviewees spoke Spanish and could therefore be interviewed by either of us, there were several instances where foreigners or members of the older generation preferred to speak in English (and some foreigners German); I undertook the interviews in these cases. In addition, we hired a field assistant who conducted approximately five interviews. For the purpose of these interviews, notes were recorded on the interview guide sheet. The information was subsequently transcribed into charts for analysis.

5) Participatory Mapping with Cahuita's Naturalist Guides and Resource Users in Neighbouring Communities

In the final two weeks of Stage 1, participatory mapping exercises were conducted with the Naturalist Guides' Association of Cahuita, and with resource users in the neighbouring communities of Punta Riel and Hone Creek (considered by many to be poachers as they hunt paca and iguana, gather turtle-eggs and sometimes hunt turtle). This was undertaken to identify the type and location of resource use activities in the park, and as a means to engage in conversation about resource users' concerns. In addition, for users in neighbouring communities, the intent was to make explicit resource use that had up until now either been denied or dealt with in a violent fashion, to inform resource users about the presence of the Management Committee, and to begin potentially opening up a dialogue between these users and MINAE.

The mapping exercise with the Naturalist Guides took place at the community centre in Cahuita over two hours, following our word-of-mouth invitation to members. Using flipchart paper and colour markers, the map started out as a very small map drawn on a table by one person in consultation with other members. Eventually, in response to discussions around the table, the Guides decided to draw a far larger map using multiple pieces of flipchart paper which they taped onto a wall of the community centre. All the Guides joined in the endeavour to map the park and their activities.

Mapping with neighbouring communities' resource users was a very sensitive activity. We owe much to the help of Elvin Huertas, a Punta Riel community member (and security guard in the park) who asked us to look into these issues when he heard about our project, and who accompanied us in all our activities in Punta Riel and Hone Creek. Without his help, it is very doubtful that we would have been able to approach the resource users in these communities as successfully as we did.

Essentially, Huertas took us to the households of resource users he knew in the neighbouring communities. He approached them, explaining our project and why we were interested in speaking with them about their concerns regarding the park and mapping their use. In response to the initial suspicion shown by most of these resource users, we explained that we were not government officials, but students interested in their perspectives and use of the park. We impressed on them that their perspectives were important, and noted that in the future there might be room for increased dialogue with MINAE and the Management Committee regarding their concerns. Following these explanations, peoples' tensions decreased somewhat, and after further discussions, we asked them if they would be willing to draw their use areas in the park. Some drew individual maps, and in one case the exercise was a group endeavour. Often enthusiasm for the exercise increased as the mapping progressed and discussions continued. The outcome was four individual maps, and one group map.

Besides mapping, we discussed the experiences these resource users have had in terms of livelihood security and interactions with the park staff. These conversations went into even greater detail over an extended lunch – essentially an *ad hoc* focus group – comprised of approximately five resource users Elvin Huertas identified as entirely dependant on their activities in the park.

6) Newsletter

Marvin and I produced two newsletters during Stage 1 (Appendix 3). The first was to highlight a conflict management exercise that we had seen the Management Committee undertake. We also took the opportunity to inform the community about the existence and

membership of the Management Committee and to introduce ourselves, our project, and our project objectives.

The second newsletter was written by members of the community, outlining the various community groups in the community and their objectives. Many community members expressed interest and enthusiasm in converting the first newsletter we created into an ongoing community newsletter, and so we helped train several in how to produce and write a newsletter. This is discussed further in chapter 7, section 7.4.8.

7) Workshop Attendance and Dissemination of Preliminary Results

The preliminary results of the case were presented at several different fora, including:

- The Central American Workshop on Decentralized and Collaborative Management of the Environment (*Encuentro Centroamericano sobre Manejo Descentralizado y Colaborativo del Medio Ambiente*) (San José, Costa Rica, 20-23 of April, 1998). At this Workshop, Enrique Joseph, a member of Cahuita National Park's Management Committee, presented the Cahuita experience with our assistance, and disseminated a summary paper.
- A May 1998 workshop hosted by IDRC and the World Bank in Washington DC. Pascal Girot presented a poster of the Cahuita experience, and disseminated a draft co-authored article.
- The Seventh International Association for the Study of Common Property Conference (Vancouver, June 10-14, 1998). Marvin and I presented the preliminary results described in the co-authored article, Weitzner and Fonseca (1999).

In addition, Marvin and I explained our project process and methodology at a documentation workshop of the MSEC MN (March 25-27 in Palo Verde, Costa Rica). I was

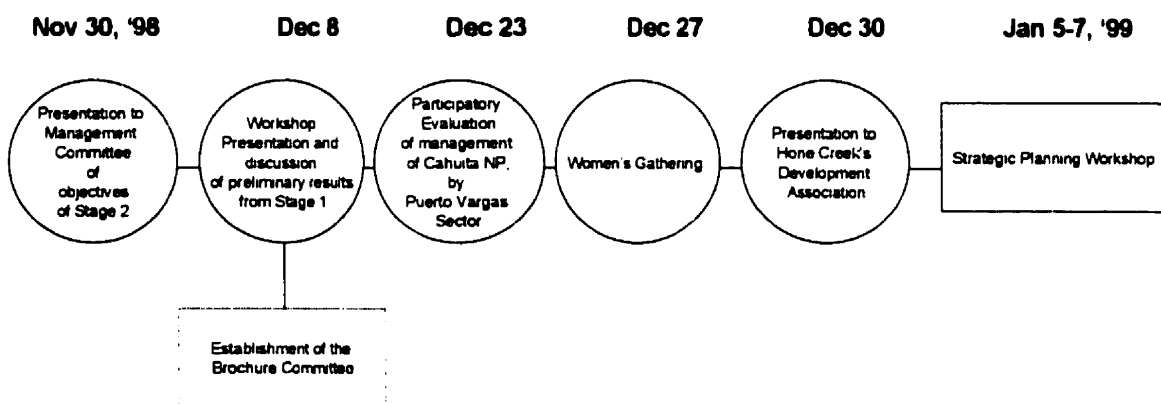
also invited to give a seminar on common property theory and co-management for members of the MSEC MN.

4.6.2 Stage 2: Verification, Workshops and Planning (Nov. 16, 1998 - Jan. 14, 1999)

The objectives of Stage 2 were to:

- present, verify and discuss the preliminary results of the first stage of research;
- document the progress of the Management Committee over intervening months;
- facilitate a planning workshop for the Management Committee;
- attempt to open dialogue between the Management Committee and other communities neighbouring the park, and the Ministry of Environment and Energy and these communities; and
- gain a better understanding of the role of gender in decision-making in Cahuita.

Figure 4-2: Project Process for Stage 2: Nov. 16, '98 - Jan. 14, '99



Other activities undertaken in Stage 2

- Ongoing informal interviews with members of the Management Committee, women, guides, park officers and community members and leaders
- Helping prepare a summary report of the Cahuita experience for a member of the Management Committee to bring to an international conference
 - Desktop-publishing various documents for community members
 - Information-gathering visits to key organizations in San José
- Discussions with the Director of the Conservation Area regarding our plans and progress

Stage 2 was geared more to local learning and analysis than Stage 1, and included a series of presentations, workshops and events based on participatory approaches. Activities included:

1) Discussing and developing the methodology for Stage 2

Before going to the field, Marvin and I spent 10 days in San José discussing and developing the methodology. A meeting with United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization - Forests, Trees and People (FAO-FTP) regional facilitator Carlos Brenes helped focus the fieldwork approach. Meetings were also held with senior officials at the regional office of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and information was gathered from the Ministry of Energy and the Environment (MINAE) and the Costa Rican Institute of Tourism.

2) Presentation of research objectives to Management Committee

Once in the field, we took the first available opportunity (November 30, 1998) to present our research objectives to the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park. Using a flipchart presentation, Marvin and I took turns explaining our objectives and proposed activities. At the Committee's request, we added an objective to this stage of our fieldwork, namely to help draft a brochure about the park from the perspective of the community. We also set dates for upcoming activities, and took this opportunity to formally present the Management Committee with documents we had written to date (our draft co-authored article in English [eventually published, Weitzner and Fonseca 1999], and a draft co-authored article published by FUDEU in Spanish [eventually published, Fonseca and Weitzner 1999]).

3) Workshop to present and discuss preliminary findings from Stage 1

This workshop was held on December 8, 1998 in the community centre in Cahuita, and its objectives were to:

- **select the Park Brochure Committee;**
- **present and discuss preliminary findings and recommendations from the first stage of the research process; and**
- **discuss the evolution of the Management Committee during the intervening months.**

We distributed invitations to relevant parties (the Management Committee, Conservation Area staff, Naturalist Guides), and invited other individuals by word of mouth. Sixteen participants attended, including current and former members of the Management Committee, officials from the Ministry of Environment and Energy, park wardens, Naturalist Guides and the community doctor.

Marvin and I co-presented and co-facilitated at this workshop. Following the selection of the Park Brochure Committee, a slide-show was held to help place the Cahuita experience in an international context, and to make community members and government officials aware that similar experiences are occurring elsewhere. Slides were shown of some of Canada's Arctic co-management experiences, followed by slides from our first visit to Cahuita. This was very successful with the participants; the Management Committee was interested in getting more information about similar experiences, and everyone enjoyed seeing a retrospective of Cahuita (not to mention scenes of the Arctic!).

After this slide show, Marvin and I took turns presenting the preliminary results of our work using flipcharts. Topics included observations on the evolution of the collaboration between the government and the community of Cahuita, some of the weaknesses and strengths of the process and our preliminary recommendations. We asked participants to feel free to make comments throughout.

Participants were very receptive, adding to, correcting or qualifying our observations. These comments were recorded on flipcharts for all to see. While some participants became defensive when we pointed out some of the weaker aspects of the collaborative process, others saw our observations as an opportunity to start strengthening it. One participant pointed out that while hundreds of researchers had passed through

Cahuita, we were the only ones to present our results back to the community. We expressed our interest and commitment in working with the Management Committee to address some of the weaknesses by facilitating an upcoming planning session. The workshop ended with a dinner at one of the nicer establishments in town.

4) Participatory Evaluation of the Management of Cahuita National Park, Puerto Vargas

This event (held December 23, 1998) was designed in cooperation with the then park superintendent, Alberto Jenkins. Jenkins asked us if we could facilitate a participatory evaluation of the Park administration for the park wardens in Puerto Vargas, the government-run section of the Park. Jenkins, who became the park superintendent in September, had been on a training course in how to run protected areas, and was aware of the benefits of using a participatory approach in planning and evaluations. However, he was not sure how to undertake such a task himself. With this in mind, we saw our task as twofold: a) to co-design and facilitate the event; and b) to provide the administrator with a model that could be used in subsequent evaluations.

The evaluation was a full-day event which Marvin and I co-facilitated. A total of six park staff attended, including the superintendent. The objectives were to analyze and evaluate the work progress to date in Cahuita National Park, to identify priority actions, and to begin the planning process of activities to be undertaken in 1999. The event was divided into two sessions.

In the morning session, discussion took place on several key areas and functions of park management, touching on the strengths (What are the things we have done well?), weaknesses (What are the things that have not worked so well?) and potential options for improvement and prioritization. Key areas and activities discussed included: the Management Committee; roles and responsibilities of park staff; the administration of the National Park; the Conservation Area administration; the Talamanca subregion administration; security in the park; visitors; and natural resources management.

For each of these key areas, a flipchart was made outlining the three discussion questions. The methodology we used to begin the discussion was anonymous colour cards on which participants wrote their observations. We then pasted them on the flipchart and engaged in open discussion. It became clear, however, that this type of anonymity was not needed, and that everyone was willing to participate and engage in open discussion after people had warmed up. The group decided to abandon the former methodology, and the activity proceeded with brainstorming and open dialogue instead, with participants' comments recorded on the flipcharts. For the evaluation of the park administration, the superintendent was asked to leave the room.

The afternoon session involved discussion of activities which theoretically should take place in a national park. Main topics included: protection of the resource and visitor safety; public use; research; monitoring; capacity-building and environmental education; communication; administration. The methodology for this section involved flipcharts containing each main topic and sub-topics, with a checklist indicating the assessment participants gave each topic area: i.e., whether current activities in this topic area were considered good, regular or bad, and identification of options and priorities for action.

The minutes from this event were circulated among all participants and the Conservation Area Director. The superintendent agreed he would program activities for the upcoming year based on this evaluation. Park staff agreed to participate in the planning session with the Management Committee, where minutes from this event were also distributed.

5) Women's Gathering

In order to supplement the information we had gathered from individual women on the role of gender in decision-making, we explored the possibility of coordinating a group event that would be beneficial both for our research and for the women participating. The women's gathering, held December 27, was the outcome of discussions with some of Cahuita's most prominent women. We asked them what type of event they thought would be appropriate to get the women of Cahuita together to discuss their role in decision-

making in the community, or if this would be appropriate at all. Several women mentioned that it had been a long time since different groups had the opportunity of getting together. They noted that most workshops for women had focussed on their problems. From these comments, we decided on an event that would bring the women of Cahuita together *not* to work or to discuss problems, but to celebrate and reflect on their successes over the last year. This seemed particularly appropriate for an event taking place at the very end of the year.

Our role in this event was to facilitate a space which the women would manage themselves. We asked the presidents of three women's groups to speak about the activities and successes of their groups; one of these women also volunteered to speak about her experience as a member of the municipal government. While I was present at the event, Marvin – together with a couple of community men – coordinated the logistics for the dinner, and served the meal.

The turnout at this event was remarkable: it was the first time in many years that so many of Cahuita's women – 33 in total – had gathered. The result was a two-hour talking circle, in which the three women leaders spoke about their experiences, and women from other groups joined in. The event started off with a candle ceremony in which each woman lit the candle of her neighbour, and while so doing, made a wish for her. Following the discussions, the talking circle closed with another wishing game: a ball of yarn was thrown from one woman to the other, with wishes made to each woman that caught the ball. The result was a web of yarn that then had to be de-webbed – a symbolic way of showing that the job can only be done by working together. Perhaps the biggest success of the event was the dinner: it was hard to hear above the laughter and voices of the women. Several women have started talking about making this dinner an annual event.

6) Presentation to the Development Association of Hone Creek

On December 30, 1998 we attended a meeting of the local government in the neighbouring community of Hone Creek (the Development Association of Hone Creek). The rationale for doing this was to briefly introduce ourselves and our project, to determine whether the Association knew about the Management Committee, to provide some

background information on the collaborative process in Cahuita National Park, and to invite members of the Association to the Management Committee planning workshop to take place the 5-7 of January. Our hope was to pave the way for potential future dialogue between the Association, MINAE and the Management Committee, a need which had been expressed by the park staff, and particularly the superintendent.

7) Planning Workshop for Cahuita National Park

Marvin and I organized and co-facilitated a three-evening planning workshop on January 5-7, 1999 at the community centre in Cahuita. This was the first planning exercise members of the community of Cahuita and MINAE have undertaken together. In particular, it was designed to address the weaknesses of the Management Committee and park administration identified in the first stage of research. The specific objectives, methodology and outcomes of this planning session are described in detail in chapter 8. At this meeting we distributed the minutes of the workshop at which we presented our preliminary results, and the participatory evaluation of the park administration.

4.6.3 Stage 3 – Quick Update and Brochure-Writing (August 2-16, 1999)

The objectives of Stage 3 were to bring back all the primary resource materials back to the community (cassette tapes, maps); finish writing the brochure for the park from the perspective of the community that had been started in Stage 2 (Appendix 4); and get another snapshot of the progress of the Management Committee. Marvin and I also took this opportunity to start writing a reflection on our project process and teamwork.

The Case of Cahuita

*If the government is really concerned about protecting
preserving it than those who have preserved and protected it
come and enjoy it with us as long as I*

*If they are intelligent they would realize that you can't fu
going to be hostile. If you take away ou
and the tourists are not going to want to come*

"Mr. Gavitt's Calypso" Cahuita National Park

*National Parkers are going around,
Into my farm they love to walk,
Telling everybody all around the town,
They say, "This is a National Park!"*

*They want to get a full detail,
How long I own this piece of land?
"No tell no lie or else you going to jail"
That's what they made me to understand.*

*They want to know my mother's name,
From whence she went and whence she came,
What kind of fellow was my father?
How long since he married to my mother.*

*They want to know about my grandmother,
They want to know she religion,
What kind of fellow was my grandfather?
All of this they say they must understand.*

*I say, "Your question is hard for me,
Give me a chance and I will see,"
Finally I come to a conclusion,
"I find an answer to your question."*

*My grandmother was an Anglican,
My grandfather Jonathan,
They got a little boy, he was very bad, I say,
When the fellow dead, they were more than glad.
Me mother was Rebecca, an Israelite,
Me daddy was Willie, an Amalekite,
When it come to me, I don't got no land,
I'm a true-born Calypsonian.*

- Walter Gavitt Ferguson

Chapter V

The Case of Cahuita National Park, Costa Rica

5.1 The Context: From Cocoa and Coconuts to Conservation and Catering

5.1.1 The Regional Context: Natural and Cultural Diversity

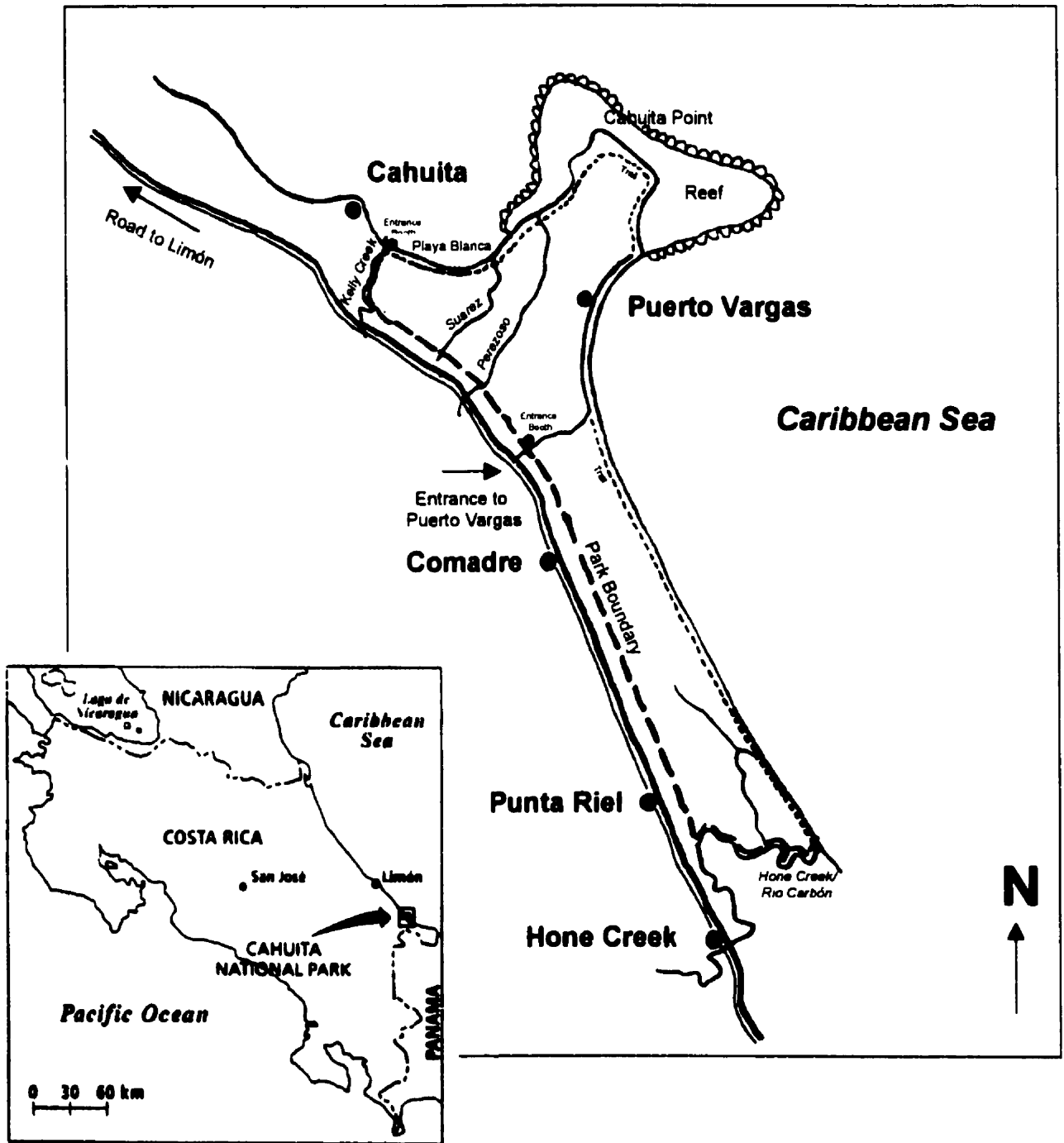
Cahuita is located on Costa Rica's southern Caribbean coast in the canton of Talamanca, province of Limón (Figure 5-1). The province of Limón – particularly the canton of Talamanca – is renowned for its natural and cultural diversity.

The province is of vital importance to the national economy and ecology: it boasts the largest port in the country, and contains a variety of the country's most ecologically important and diverse tropical forest ecosystems. These two factors, together with the province's beautiful coconut tree-lined beaches, have made Limon a haven for investment: there is ongoing exploitation by transnational banana and logging companies, and since the 1980s, the tourism industry has been an important economic force particularly for coastal communities. Despite this natural richness, the region is one of the most economically depressed in the country (Mora 1998a), which puts increased pressure on the natural resources.

In addition, the area is one of Costa Rica's most culturally diverse. Talamanca is home to 85% of Costa Rica's Indigenous Peoples (Bribri and Cabécar, who used to live near the coastal areas, but who now live mainly in or near Talamanca's mountain range), a large population of Afro-Caribbeans (who live along the coast), mestizo farmers primarily from the Costa Rica's central valley or Pacific region (who live mostly in the southern valley of Talamanca), and foreigners primarily from Asia, and more recently, from Europe and North America (who are dispersed throughout the canton) (Calderón 1998).

It is within this socio-economic and geographical context that the experience of Cahuita unfolds. In the space of 15 years, the economy of this coastal community changed from subsistence agriculture, hunting and fishing to tourism on account of three factors: the creation of Cahuita National Park, the *Monilia* fungus which devastated the region's cocoa crops, and the establishment of the road system which spurred the development of the area's tourism industry. The natural beauty of Cahuita, its coral reef and diversity of wildlife, together with its distinct mix of cultures, helped catalyze the transformation.

Figure 5-1: Cahuita National Park and Neighbouring Communities



Source: Adapted from Weitzner and Fonseca (1999) and Vargas (1993)

5.1.2 The Local Context: A Brief History of Cahuita

The first historical record to describe Cahuita (Pittier 1895) notes that the site was a favourite fishing and turtle-hunting ground of the Miskito Indians from Nicaragua and fishers from Panama. These fishers travelled to the site every year, following the northward migration of green and hawksbill turtles; they built temporary fishing camps, cultivated the land, and traded their goods with the Bribri and Cabécar Indigenous Peoples who lived inland. According to Cahuitans, the community was named by Miskito turtles: the original name *Cawita* means “*point where the caway trees grow*” in Miskito, and refers to the vast number of *sangrillo* – *caway* or ‘blood trees’ – growing on the promontory known as Cahuita Point (Palmer 1977).

The site was not permanently settled until 1828, when William Smith, an English-speaking Afro-Caribbean who travelled to Cahuita from Panama every year to hunt turtles, made Cahuita his permanent home (Palmer 1977). By the end of the 1800s, the settlement had grown to a conglomeration of some 20 houses located on the Point (Pittier 1895). This expansion was due largely to the migration of Jamaicans – and to a lesser extent Afro-Caribbeans from other countries in the Antilles – to the area (Royal 1993). These settlers came at first to build the railway to transport coffee from the central valley to the port city of Limón, located 42 kilometres north of Cahuita. Later, more were recruited by the United Fruit Company to help build railways to transport bananas along the Caribbean coast, and to work on the plantations that were expanding from Panama into Costa Rica (Palmer 1977). In 1903, Cahuita experienced another wave of migration, this time English-speaking Afro-Caribbeans fleeing Panama during its war of independence. Shortly after 1914, the town of Cahuita was relocated from Cahuita Point to its present site at the other end of the beach. The land was purchased from William Smith and donated to the townspeople by the president of Costa Rica, Alfredo González Flores, in gratitude for their having rescued him from a sinking ship (Orthello 1972).

By 1915, the main livelihood activities of the settlers had shifted from turtle-hunting to subsistence farming and day jobs at the banana plantations in the area. However, when the Panama disease hit the banana plantations in the 1930s, the region's economy

the Panama disease hit the banana plantations in the 1930s, the region's economy changed once again. The United Fruit Company all but abandoned its plantations on the Caribbean coast, focussing its activities and setting up new plantations in the Pacific. The outcome was that local people turned to cocoa production as an alternative, and started organizing themselves into cocoa cooperatives (Royal 1993).

For many years the primary livelihood activities for Cahuitans revolved around cocoa and – to a lesser degree – coconut production, supplemented by other subsistence agricultural activities, fishing and hunting. Women participated in many of the activities and were primarily responsible for cocoa drying and taking care of the coconut walks; they contributed to the economy of the household by selling coconut oil and baked goods (Grant, pers. comm., 1998). Trading continued with the Bribri and Cabécar, and Cahuitans also sold their goods in Limón. This way of life was preserved for many decades largely because Cahuita was not accessible by road until 1976 (Palmer 1977).⁴

5.1.3 The 1970s: Conservation Hits Cahuita

The 1970s brought about a sea change for the community of Cahuita. In 1970, the coral reef that lines Cahuita Point was declared a national monument – without any consultation with the community. The state wanted to protect the flora and fauna of the area, the coral reefs, the historical artefacts in the area, and the various marine ecosystems

The coral reef is considered *“the most important in the country because of its size and numerous species of coral; and because it is surrounded by high quality beaches, and contains objects of great historical interest for the country”* (Executive Decree 1236-A, my translation).⁵ The reef contains 35 species of corals, 140 species of molluscs, 44 types

⁴Palmer's (1977) folk-history of the Talamanca coast entitled *'What Happen'* provides a detailed and vivid description of the coast's peoples and history. Meléndez and Duncan (1993) and Olien (1967) provide in-depth analyses of the socio-cultural and political context of Costa Rica's Afro-Caribbean population.

⁵All quotes from Spanish sources have been translated into English. Moreover, unless taken from Palmer (1977), all quotes from community members have been translated from Spanish into English.

of crustaceans, 128 varieties of algae and 123 types of fish. The terrestrial portion includes a variety of animal species, including howler monkeys, three-toed sloths, crab-eating raccoons and white-nosed coatis, as well as important ecosystems, such as swamp mangroves (Boza and Cevo 1998). Executive Decree-1236-A establishing the national monument declared that the terrestrial portion would cover 1,067.9 hectares; the marine portion, 22,400 hectares, including 600 hectares of reef. It strictly forbade forestry activities, hunting and trapping, turtle-hunting and turtle-egg gathering, extraction of corals, and other commercial, agricultural, industrial and other activities detrimental to the resources of the national monument. Commercial and sports fishing would be subject to restrictions deemed necessary to protect the natural resources of the protected area.

For the community, this declaration meant the end of a way of life that had endured since the turn of the century. Cocoa producers were told they could not clean the underbrush of their cocoa crops, coconut farmers were told they could no longer manage their coconut walks, and fishers were told their activities would be restricted.⁶ When officials informed those who lived inside the national monument boundaries that they would have to sell their lands, the community objected. The resistance grew when the community heard that the state was contemplating changing the category of protected area to national park, which would mean even greater restrictions.

5.1.4 Cahuita Fights Back

Spurred by growing community concerns, an *Ad Hoc* Commission of government officials and community leaders was established in 1974 to review the community's needs and propose amendments for consideration by the Legislative Assembly during its legal review of the change in protected area category. Although Cahuita took the lead, neighbouring communities were also consulted and asked for input. In 1977, the Commission presented its report – an Agreement between the community of Cahuita and the government – to President Oduber.

⁶Palmer (1977) notes there was much confusion among community members regarding which activities were prohibited in the national monument due to mixed messages from government officials.

The Agreement recognized that the local people were a “favourable factor” in terms of conserving the natural and cultural resources of the area. It stated that those people living within the boundaries of the proposed park should continue to reside on their property and engage in subsistence activities “as long as they do not extend beyond their currently occupied areas nor change their traditional methods of work”. The report also recommended that a socio-economic study be conducted on land tenure in the park. A 1977 study revealed that 87% of the land was owned by small-scale farmers, and, of these, 93% did not want to sell their land (Ramírez 1977). The community therefore had a large stake in ensuring that the government pay heed to its proposed amendments.

But the government disregarded these proposed amendments when Cahuita National Park was established in 1978. Instead it forced the community members within the park boundary to relocate, and denied them access to their coconut walks and farms. The government agreed to offer compensation to those affected. However, because of lack of funds and the fact that many owners did not have the necessary documents to show title or possession, only a few people have actually received compensation. Documents were available for only 25 of the 71 affected plots of land, and of these only 10 have been paid as of 1998 (MINAE 1997). Problems were further compounded with the passage of the beachfront law (Ley Marítimo-Terrestre) in 1977, which eliminates private property rights within the first 200 metres of the seashore, affecting all coastal residents.

It should be noted, however, that while the government's official position was to relocate the community members and deny them access to their lands and resources, in practice many still continued

using their lands. When the *Monilia* fungus hit the region in the late 1970s and early 1980s, destroying 95% of the cocoa

I know hotel is good business, but I'm not going to build a hotel in Cahuita because we don't want tourist business. We want our own way of life.

– Cahuita community member (Palmer 1977)

crops, many farmers decided to give up their cocoa farming activities (Kutay 1984). Those with crops within the park boundaries were more disposed to sell their land to the state, and many who were previously against changing their livelihood to tourism turned to the

expanding industry as the only viable alternative. In short, in the space of 15 years, the community of Cahuita was forced to change its source of livelihood from subsistence agriculture, fishing and hunting to tourism because of the establishment of the national park, the decimation of the area's cocoa crops, and the development of tourism.

Today, tourism is the number-one source of income for Cahuita. The population in the district has grown from its initial 20 households to a population of 3,983, including the town of Cahuita and surrounding settlements (Ministerio de Economía y Hacienda 1997). The population in the town's centre numbers some 1091 (EBAIS 1998), and consists of English-speaking Afro-Caribbeans, Spanish-speaking mestizos, people of Chinese origin and a growing population of North American and European foreigners investing in the tourism industry. There are approximately 70 businesses in the town, ranging from tour agencies and hotels to restaurants and bakeries (Cruz 1996), all of which depend on tourism directly or indirectly.

Clearly, the impact of this change has been large: several Cahuitan's claim their culture is being eroded, and link this erosion to the growing social problems in the town, such as drugs and alcoholism. A number of community organizations have cropped up to help target these social problems, and other organizations are working to strengthen Cahuitan's identity and cohesion. The organizations include: a theatre group that stages the plays of Claudio Reid, a Cahuitan playwright and community leader who has written several plays about important events in Cahuita's history, such as the Monilia plague; a women's group that aims to empower Afro-Caribbean women; and *Ashanti*, a musical band that plays calypso.

Perhaps the greatest impact of the change from a subsistence economy has been that on women. Women no longer have as many social spaces in which to meet as they did before, and engaging in small-scale cottage industries is becoming more difficult (Grant, pers.comm., 1998). Moreover, many women choose not to attend events and meetings held for them, because they fear reprimands from their husbands. Despite these obstacles, there are three women's groups in Cahuita whose members are working hard to empower themselves and to find new ways to support their families.

Although the service sector has increased, a small number of Cahuitans and people from neighbouring communities still engage in traditional resource-based activities. Cahuita's 15 or so fishers sell their catch – primarily lobster and a variety of fish – to local restaurants and families and supplement their income taking tourists on sports-fishing and snorkeling outings (Mairena, pers. comm., 1998). But resource users in the neighbouring communities of Punta Riel and Hone Creek have not diversified their economy, and 100% of it depends on subsistence activities in and around the park, according to informal interviews. Tourism has not caught on in these communities, primarily because they are not located on the beachfront, as is Cahuita. Many residents continue farming their lands in the park, and engage in turtle-egg gathering, fishing, and turtle, iguana and small mammal hunting. A handful still engage in small-scale cocoa production.

In light of the importance of the tourism industry for Cahuita, and the continuing resource use by local peoples, any threats to the tourism industry or to access to resources in the park are recipes for conflict.

5.2 The Conflict, Negotiations and Outcomes

5.2.1 Price Hike Threatens Cahuitans' Livelihood

Things came to a head on September 1, 1994, when the state imposed a nationwide price hike in park entrance fees for foreigners from 200 colones to 2,400 colones – from approximately \$1 to \$15 USD – an increase of over 1000% (nationals would still pay 200 colones, approximately \$.80). If the government had its way, a foreign family of 4 would have to pay \$60 USD a day to visit Cahuita's beach; this would most certainly mean the death of the tourism industry in Cahuita. There were two main issues at stake for Cahuita: economic survival (the state was once again threatening Cahuitans' livelihood) and sovereignty (the community felt strongly that Playa Blanca, the beach adjacent to the community, was its own beach).

In reaction to the increase in fees, the community organized a Committee of Struggle (*Comité de Lucha*) comprising three community leaders and the president of

Cahuita's Development Association (the local elected government), and staged a peaceful takeover of the park. One of the members of the Committee of Struggle describes the takeover:

When the problem emerged, the people took the park. We took it in a pacific way. What we did was to sit next to the entrance of the park and play dominos. When a tourist arrived, we said: "Sir, don't pay. The community of Cahuita invites you to enter the park free of charge." We knew we were in our just right, because we knew that the law backed us given that many of us were still owed compensation for our lands (pers.comm., 1998, emphasis added).

According to others, the whole community mobilized: women made drinks and food, and even the schoolchildren were brought to Playa Blanca. As one Cahuitan woman describes it, *"It was a party!"*

Park officials left their posts at the entrance of the park near the town of Cahuita (Playa Blanca), as well as at the entrance in Puerto Vargas, according to interviews with community members. There were some incidents of vandalism of park officials' vehicles, but no open violence. The Ministry of Resources, Energy and Mines (MIRENEM) – now known as the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE) – published advertisements in the major national newspapers (such as *El República* and *La Nación*) warning tourists about the conflict situation, and cautioning them not to visit Cahuita National Park. According to community representatives, this had a disastrous impact on tourism. It also compounded the resentment community members felt towards park officials.

5.2.2 Towards a Negotiated Solution

Intense negotiations between the Committee of Struggle and MINAE ensued. The Committee of Struggle maintained two initial positions: that the community of Cahuita should control the entire park, and that the state should pay the remaining compensation for expropriated lands. Both of these positions went beyond the expectations of the community negotiators, but they took advantage of the situation to try to get as much out of the negotiations as possible. In the words of a prominent community leader and member of the Committee of Struggle, *"We knew that we couldn't get everything... but, hey, in a*

negotiation you have to ask for more than you want so in the end you get what you really need” (pers. comm., 1998).

In counterproposals, the community negotiating team argued for five kilometres of beachfront inside the park, from Kelly Creek to Rio Perezoso (Figure 5-1). This was a strategic move, because if the government agreed, the community would have free access to the reef which, they argued, they had the capacity to manage. However, the government countered that the community did not possess the required capacity and hired a biologist who wrote a report supporting the government’s position (Cyrus, pers. comm., 1998).

The bottom line for the community – their primary interest – was free access from Kelly Creek to Rio Suarez, the two kilometres of beach adjacent to the community of Cahuita. Without free access to this beach, “*we will die of hunger,*” according to leader Alpheus Buchanan; he noted that tourists would look for other vacationing spots (in Tovar 1994). The position regarding payment for lands was far less urgent, as evidenced by the fact that 20 years had gone by without any collective action or uprising to tackle the situation.

On the other side, the government needed to strengthen the infrastructure, services and conservation in national parks, and it wanted foreigners to pay a higher entrance fee than nationals. By increasing the entrance fees for tourists in all of Costa Rica’s parks, the government could generate more income, while at the same time ensuring the self-sufficiency of protected areas. But its immediate interest was to remain in control of Cahuita National Park. For this reason it was open to negotiations with Cahuita (Table 5-1).

In the negotiation process, the Committee of Struggle represented Cahuita’s tourism interests, the position of community members whose lands had been expropriated without compensation, and the interests of the community at large. MINAE represented the interests of the state. The Defensoría de los Habitantes de la República, Costa Rica’s Ombudsperson, acted as mediator. Both parties trusted the mediator, and she played a key role in opening the dialogue between the parties that eventually led to the Agreement of Cooperation.

A government negotiator in the process, appropriately described the negotiations as follows: *"It was a very, very, very difficult negotiation.... [The community representatives] didn't want to negotiate with MINAE until they received compensation for their lands. That resulted in a situation where all the participants – the minister, vice-minister, director, all the various levels that came to the meetings – always came face-to-face with very rigid positions"* (pers. comm., 1998).

**Table 5-1:
Analysis of the Conflict Arising from the Increase in Park Entry Fees**

	Community of Cahuita	Government
<i>Stakeholders</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Association • Chamber of Tourism • Landowners • Businesspeople 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Environment and Energy • National Conservation Areas System • La Amistad Conservation Area • Cahuita National Park administrator
<i>Negotiators</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee of Struggle • 3 community leaders • President of Cahuita Development Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of La Amistad Caribe Conservation Area • Senior government officials • Cahuita National Park superintendent
<i>Positions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compensation for land • Control of entire park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen infrastructure, services and conservation in national parks • Establish different fee rates for foreigners and nationals
<i>Interests</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free access to Playa Blanca for tourists • Sovereignty • Compensation for lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate more income for national parks • Ensure self-sufficiency of national parks

Mediator: Costa Rica's Ombudsperson

Agreement of Cooperation

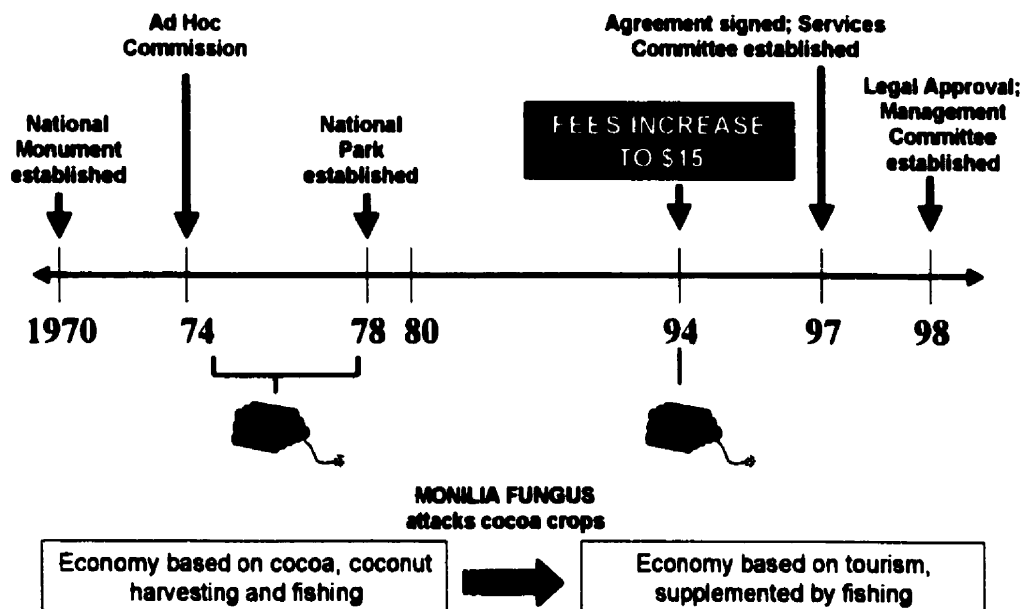
5.2.3 An Agreement Is Signed

On February 13, 1997, the Minister of Environment and Energy, René Castro Salazar, and the President of Cahuita's Development Association, Rolando Shirley Brooks, signed an Agreement of Cooperation. The highlights of the Agreement are that it:

- Prohibits charging entrance fees to people who use the portion of the park between Kelly Creek and the Rio Suarez (Playa Blanca).
- Reconfirms the government's commitment to complete compensation payments to the landowners whose lots were expropriated.
- Creates a Services Commission made up of community representatives and government officials to co-administer the services of the park.

In addition, the community was given the go ahead to accept and administer donations from tourists entering Playa Blanca, and to reinvest these funds for the upkeep of Playa Blanca. The community had in fact been operating on this principle since July 1995 (Joseph 1995). Figure 5-2 shows the process of conflict and collaboration in Cahuita, emphasizing the important milestones.

Figure 5-2: The Process of Conflict and Collaboration



5.3 Outcomes: From Co-Administration to Co-Management

Since its establishment in February 1997, the collaborative management institution that emerged from the negotiations has gone through an important transition, from being a Services Committee that co-administers part of the park under an agreement of will between the parties, to a Management Committee that co-manages the entire park under legal sanction. This change in mandate is described below.

5.3.1 The Services Committee

The Agreement of Cooperation dated February 13, 1997 stipulated that the Services Committee should be made up of two government representatives and three community representatives, including: the director of the La Amistad Caribe Conservation Area (ACLACA) or a representative; the administrator of Cahuita National Park; two representatives of Cahuita's Development Association (Cahuita's elected local government); and one representative of Cahuita's Chamber of Tourism (an elected body representing Cahuita's business interests).

The functions of the Committee were to ensure the adequate functioning and quality of new services to park visitors (washrooms, camping areas, a locker room, first aid services and information about the park and its biodiversity), establish fees for these services; and develop guidelines for the operations and administration of the Committee.

The Agreement had a five-year term, starting from the date of validation by the Contraloría General de la República, a government office in charge of officially approving these types of agreements. However, this validation was never carried out, so in effect the Services Committee was operating *de facto* rather than *de jure* for one year.

5.3.2 The Management Committee

In January 1998, the Services Committee changed its name to the Management Committee, reflecting a shift in vision from the collaborative administration of Playa Blanca

only, to the collaborative management of the entire park. It received legal recognition when the rules of use for the National Park were published May 20, 1998.

Highlights of the Executive Decree (26929-MINAE) outlining the rules of use are that it:

- Refers to the Organic Law of the Environment, calling for the involvement of civil society in the planning and development of Cahuita National Park;
- Officially establishes the Committee for the Management of Resources and Services (referred to as the Management Committee throughout this article), outlining its structure, administration and process (essentially the same as those in the Services Committee);
- Describes the functions of the Management Committee: to ensure the adequate functioning and quality of services offered in Cahuita National Park; to establish fees for these services; to take the administrative measures necessary to ensure that the park is functioning well; to ensure the fulfilment of the public use rules outlined in the document, as well as those entrenched in Costa Rican environmental law; to modify the rules of use as stipulated in the Executive Decree;
- Notes the role of the Management Committee is to recommend to the Director of ACLACA actions needed to ensure the park is functioning well;
- States that if the services offered to the public are not carried out satisfactorily, MINAE will assume temporary responsibility;
- Describes public use rules, public use zones (but locations not identified), carrying capacity of the park, and subsistence fishing rules. Only 20 local licensed fishers can use the park, and of these no more than 5 will be licensed to fish lobster (outside the reef area only). Turtle hunting and turtle-egg gathering are prohibited;

- Does not include a termination date.

According to MINAE's regional lawyer, an executive decree is a unilateral administrative decision; if there is a change of government, the decree can easily be modified (González, pers. comm., 1998). It fits beneath the category of law within the Costa Rican legal framework. In essence, the arrangement holds the same political and legal weight as national parks themselves; these are also created by executive decree, and can be altered or withdrawn unilaterally by the president, as has happened in the past with Santa Rosa National Park (Wallace 1992).

5.3.3 Some General Comments on the Evolution of the Collaborative Process

During the year that the Services Committee operated, it expanded its mandate from co-administering Playa Blanca to managing the entire park, *even if it did not have legal backing*. This shows the willingness of the various actors to work together. The Services Committee focussed on park services for visitors, and the community's role was essentially to share decision-making with regards to these services. It was the solution to a conflict management exercise, a means of "*putting out the fire*" (Pearson, pers.comm., 1998), and was intended to address the immediate demands of the community.

When the Committee changed its name to the Management Committee in January 1998, it was in recognition that the initial terms of reference had been fulfilled; that is, the services for visitors were more or less in order. With this immediate need satisfied, members started to broaden their vision to include issues outside of Playa Blanca and the services sector.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter described the regional and local context for the Cahuita case study, the conflict that took place in 1994, and the evolution of the collaborative management arrangement that resulted as an outcome of negotiations. It outlined the provisions in the initial Services Committee Agreement, and those in the Executive Decree establishing the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park. Some of the highlights of this Decree are that it gives legal recognition to the Committee, strengthens the community's control over the park, and builds in flexibility for the Committee to modify the rules of use specified in the Decree, including the structure of the Committee itself.

In short, the Management Committee has started taking on a new role with a new scope. The move is a natural one, as the community demands more control over what is happening in the park. Moreover, MINAE has the political will and enthusiasm to move forward with this new vision of park management. But the evolution of the Services Committee into the Management Committee is a process that has moved forward extremely quickly, and is full of growing pains. In order to describe these, and to set the stage for a detailed evaluation of the Management Committee's structure, process and outcomes, the following chapter identifies the stakeholders who are affected by – or who affect – Cahuita National Park, and documents the resource use in the park.

Stakeholder Analysis and Resource in Cahuita National Park



Mapping with resource users from neighbouring communities (May 1998)



Chiquita banana truck on the Pan-American Highway near the park

Chapter VI

Stakeholder Analysis and Resource Use in Cahuita National Park

6.1 Introduction

Before evaluating the Management Committee's structure, process and outcomes, it is essential to undertake a stakeholder analysis to identify the key actors or stakeholders in Cahuita National Park, and assess their respective roles and interests. This analysis provides further insights into the social organization of Cahuita, the type of resource use that takes place in the park, and the links and relationships among the stakeholders. It sets the stage for an examination of the appropriateness of the Committee's current structure, representativeness, accountability and legitimacy, and provides the backdrop for a better understanding of the potential conflicts that could emerge.

6.2 Definitions and Approach

For the purposes of this analysis I identify and discuss three types of stakeholders:

- primary stakeholders in the park, i.e., those who depend on the resources for livelihood security and *"those social actors who are aware of their interests, possess specific capacities and/or comparative advantage, and are willing to invest specific resources in management"* (Borini-Feyerabend 1996);
- stakeholders who have the power/authority to affect substantially the policies and institutions governing resources use in the park; and
- actors whose actions affect the environmental integrity of the park.

In other words, I examine what Steins and Edwards (1998) define as the 'user community', namely *"all individuals who have an influence over or are influenced by the institutional arrangements of the CPR [common property resource], either directly or indirectly"*.

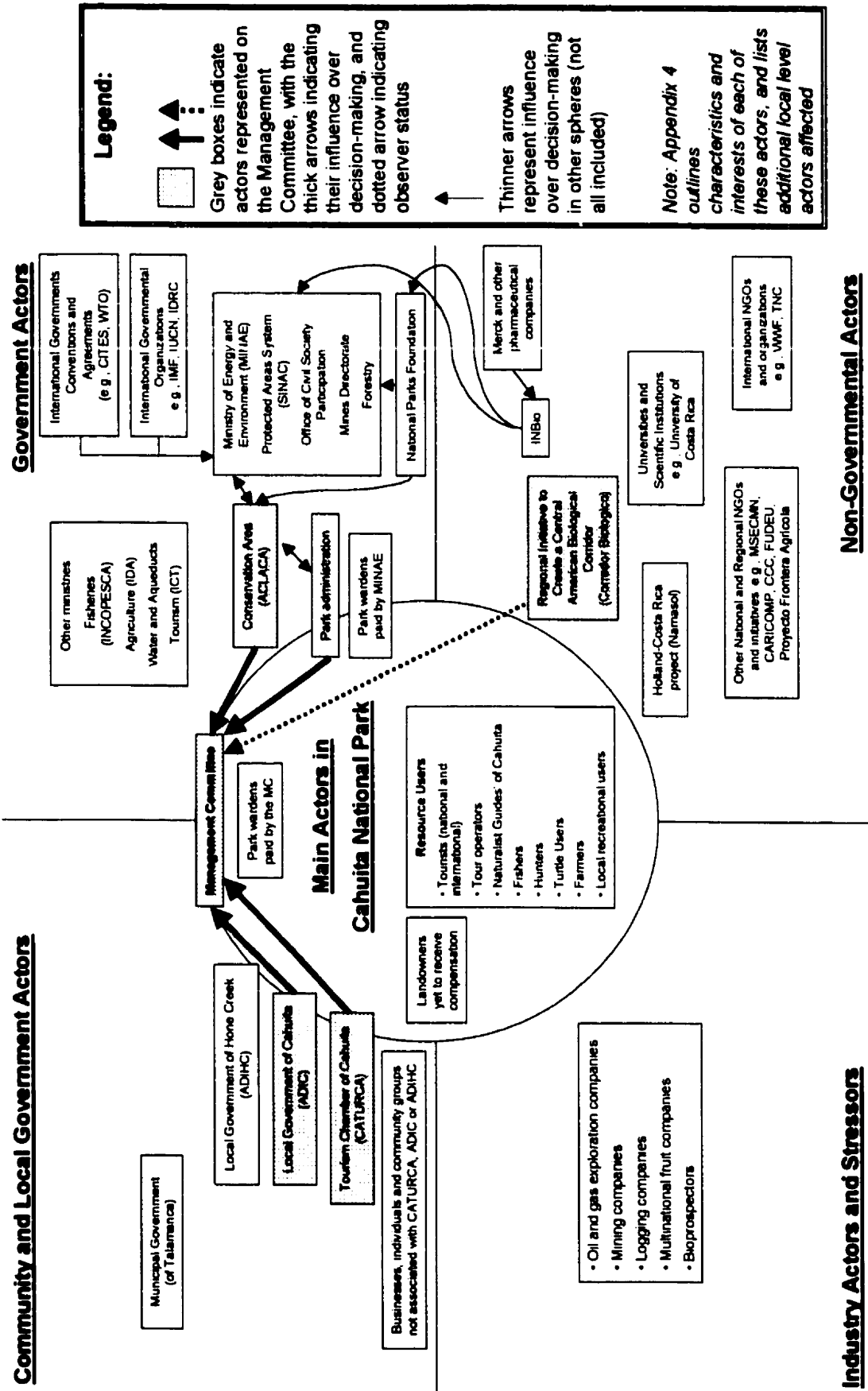
One danger with stakeholder analysis Murphree (1994) underscores is that it *“can easily transform interest into a conceptual collective proprietorship by a vast and amorphous circle of stakeholders.”* He adds that *“communities’ investment in their environments – their land, their resources, their labor, their local environmental knowledge, their managerial presence, and their stake in the future – is in the aggregate and, by social accounting, far higher than that of all external actors put together.”* I hope to avoid this pitfall by focussing mainly on the primary stakeholders in the park. Nonetheless, I include and discuss other powerful actors in order to provide an overall picture of the various forces affecting the park, with the understanding that their inclusion does not constitute proprietorship, and does not imply they are *“equal stakeholders in relation to those for whom [the resources in the park] possibly represent their ancestral domains”* (Sarin 1998). In essence, I am combining stakeholder and ‘actor-oriented’ analysis, the latter being a tool *“for the observer to understand the dynamics of a situation in which a project is introduced, and for generalization from this to a more systemic understanding [of] the nature of conflict generally”* where actors include *“parties who may not be involved in face-to-face encounters but who nevertheless influence the situation, affecting actions and outcomes”* (Skutsch 1998).

Finally, stakeholder identification and analysis *“is clearly, in itself a subjective exercise, depending on the experience and value system of the analyst”* (Skutsch 1998). The following analysis then is based on my understanding of those actors who comprise the ‘user community’ in Cahuita National Park.

6.3 Stakeholder Identification

In the diagram below, stakeholders are identified according to their institutional type, after Murphree (1994): community institutional actors; government institutional actors; and non-governmental institutional actors. I also include industry/commercial institutional actors. More detail is provided in Appendix 5, which presents a matrix identifying each actor (including some basic characteristics and mandate/objective where applicable) and their interests in Cahuita National Park.

Figure 6-1: Stakeholders in Cahuita National Park



6.4 Analysis and Discussion

6.4.1 Resource Users and Use

Three observations need to be made about the resource use in the park:

- There are very different interests among the resource users identified. While national and international tourists – and consequently tour operators and naturalist guides – tend to be interested in cultural and ecological conservation, fishers, hunters and turtle users are more interested in consumptive and subsistence use.
- There are varying degrees of use and dependency. Tourists do not depend at all on the resources in the park for their livelihood, while tour operators are more dependent (they also take tourists to other sites besides the national park), and consumptive resource users the most dependent.
- The distinctions among local resource users are not cut and dry in reality, and there is overlap among the users. For example, a fisher may also engage in hunting and turtle use, a tour operator may also engage in subsistence fishing, and a park warden may also be a tour operator or naturalist guide.

A general observation from informal interviews and participatory mapping with local resource users, is that people from Cahuita tend to engage in resource use in the Playa Blanca area and around the coral reef (with some monitoring of the beach between Hone Creek and Puerto Vargas), whereas the people from Hone Creek and Punta Riel engage in resource use activities in the terrestrial portion of the park, and in the coastal zone between Hone Creek and the entrance to Puerto Vargas.

When asked to draw the national park and their resource use areas within it, most resource users in Punta Riel and Hone Creek drew a straight line of beachfront that started at Hone Creek and finished at the Puerto Vargas entrance (e.g., Figure 6-2), or a picture of the entire park where the reef and Cahuita point are depicted quite small (e.g., Figure

6-3). Resource users from Cahuita, however, drew maps in which the reef and Playa Blanca area were the primary focal points, and drawn larger than the Hone Creek - Puerto Vargas section of the park (e.g., Figures 6-4 - 6-5). While Cahuitans engage primarily in tourism activities and fishing (although several still engage in turtle hunting), the residents of Punta Riel and Hone Creek engage primarily in hunting, turtle use and fishing, with some agricultural activities. Figure 6-6 provides a synthesis of the resource use and locations in Cahuita National Park gleaned from the participatory maps.

Several interesting points emerge when examining the differences in the maps and mapping process between women and men. For example, Figure 6-2, drawn by a female resource user in Punta Riel, is the only map that shows trees and even the latrines in the park, and depicts the animals in more detail than the maps by men. This is consistent with the fact that women used to be – and in some cases still are – the primary harvesters of tree products, and particularly coconuts. In addition, they cook the animals hunted in the park, which may account for the level of detail of the animals depicted. With regards to the mapping process of the Guides of Cahuita, it was interesting to note that once they decided to draw a large map of the park with all members of the group contributing to the process, the women started focussing on drawing the houses in Cahuita and in neighbouring communities (and in great detail, identifying each family out loud by name as they mapped), while the men focussed on drawing resource use areas in the marine and terrestrial portions of the park. This shows the different focusses, knowledge and interests of the men and women in the group.

With regards to the consumption and markets for the resources taken in the park, in addition to keeping some of their catch for their families, the resource users in Cahuita sell their fish and seafood (in the past this included some turtle meat) mainly to the restaurants in Cahuita. The people from other neighbouring communities sell their fish, seafood, turtle eggs and iguanas mostly to the restaurants and corner stores around their communities; but they also sell turtle eggs, turtle shells and paca meat to markets in Limón and San José (Table 6-1). Other resources extracted from the park – by local and non-local users – include birds and fish sold to exotic species collectors. There are also reports of sea cucumber once being extracted by foreigners.

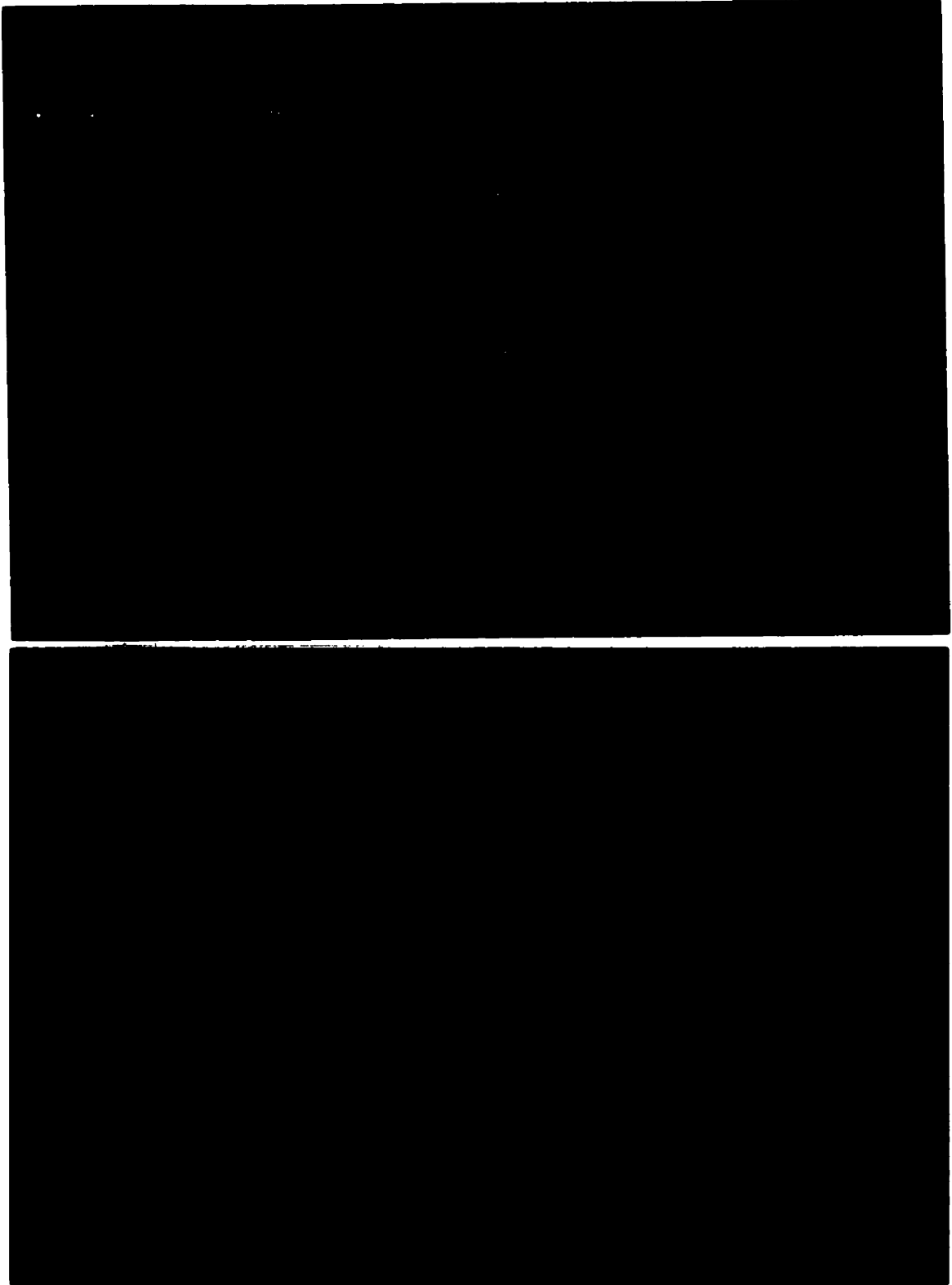
To date the resource use in the park has been open access – the National Park Law and the new rules of use as specified in the Executive Decree have not been enforced due mostly to lack of personnel. However, resource users have expressed an interest in rules and enforcement with regards to lobster use, fishing in the park and turtle egg gathering (the last two will be discussed in the section on conflict management in the next chapter). One problem is that the resource users are not organized: there is no fisher's association, for example (this was tried, but according to some, the association was coopted by one family, and people lost interest as the family was accumulating the benefits); and there is no turtle's organization.

**Table 6-1:
Technology Used, Market Value and Markets for
Resources Hunted in Cahuita National Park by
Residents of Punta Riel and Hone Creek**

Resource	Community	Technology Used for Hunting	Approximate Price	Markets	Use
Iguanas	Puerto Viejo, Punta Riel	Lassos, dogs	1,500-2000¢ (\$6-8 USD) per iguana (some say it can go up to 5,000¢ – \$20 USD – each)	Neighbours, informal market	Food
Turtles: -green -leatherback -hawksbill	Puerto Viejo, Punta Riel	-Turtles: Rope attached to a stick; machete. Turtle flipper is roped, and brought back to the hunters home; there it is killed with a machete - Eggs: Taken by hand, carried in long tubes.	700¢/Kg (\$2.80 USD) of meat (hardly sold) 600¢ (\$2.4 USD) for 12 eggs 8,000¢/Kg (\$32 USD) of shell	-Eggs sold in local restaurants and corner stores, and in Limón and San José -turtle shells sold in Limón and San José; -Turtle meat is shared among community members	Food and adornment (shell); Turtle eggs are considered aphrodisiacs, and good for impotence problems
Paca	Punta Riel, Comadre		1,500-2000¢/Kg (\$6-8 USD) (but in San José sells for up to 5,000 ¢/Kg – \$20USD)	Corner stores, bars	Food

Source: Former resource user from Punta Riel (pers. comm., 1998)

**Figures 6-2 - 6-3: Participatory Maps of Resource Use in Cahuita National Park
drawn by Resource Users in Punta Riel and Hone Creek
Top (Punta Riel female mapper); Bottom (Hone Creek male mapper)**



**Figure 6-4-6-5: Participatory Maps of Resource Use in Cahuita National Park
drawn by Resource Users in Cahuita**

Top: Naturalist Guides' Association of Cahuita; Bottom: Fishers/Tour Operators

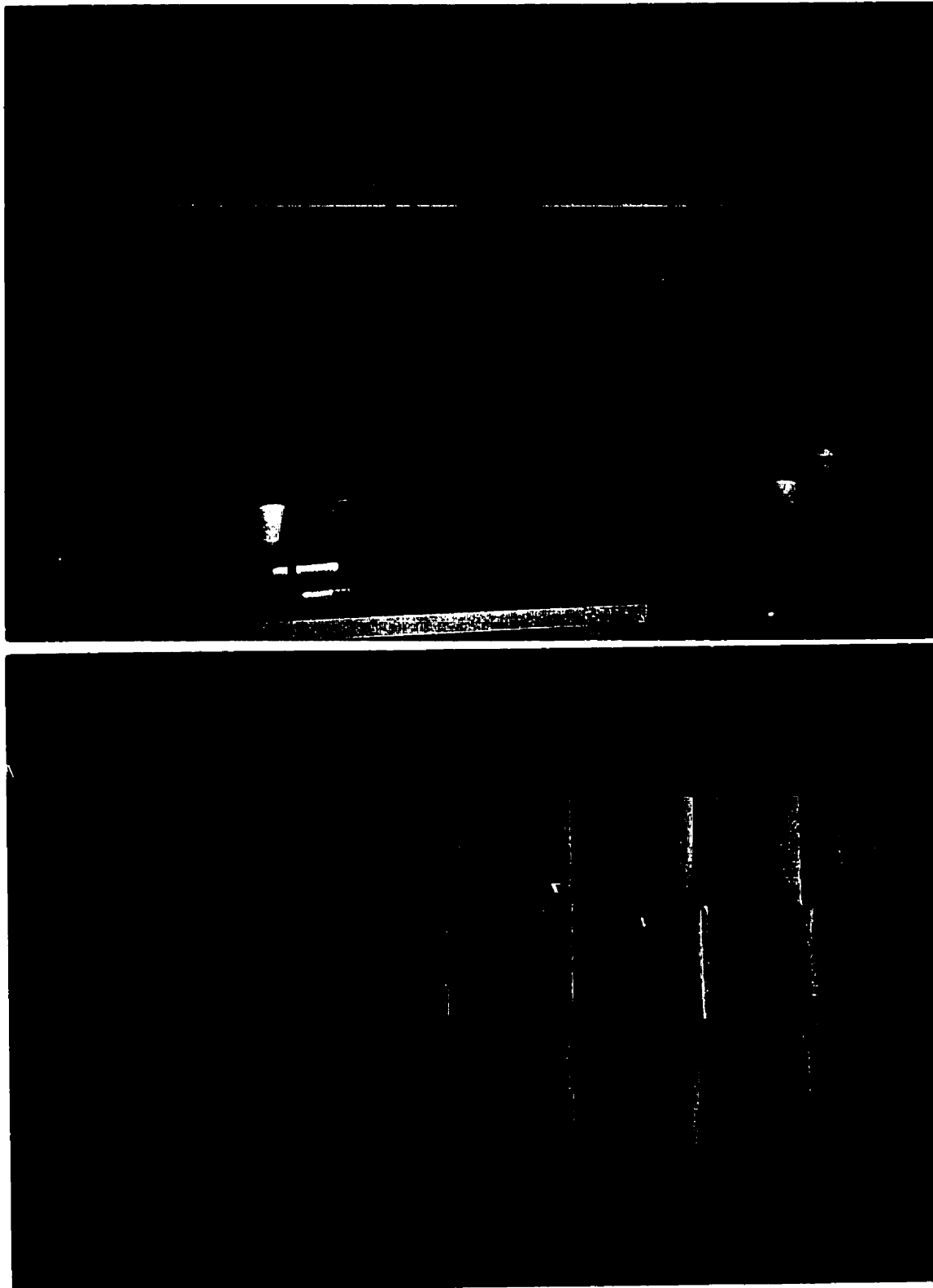
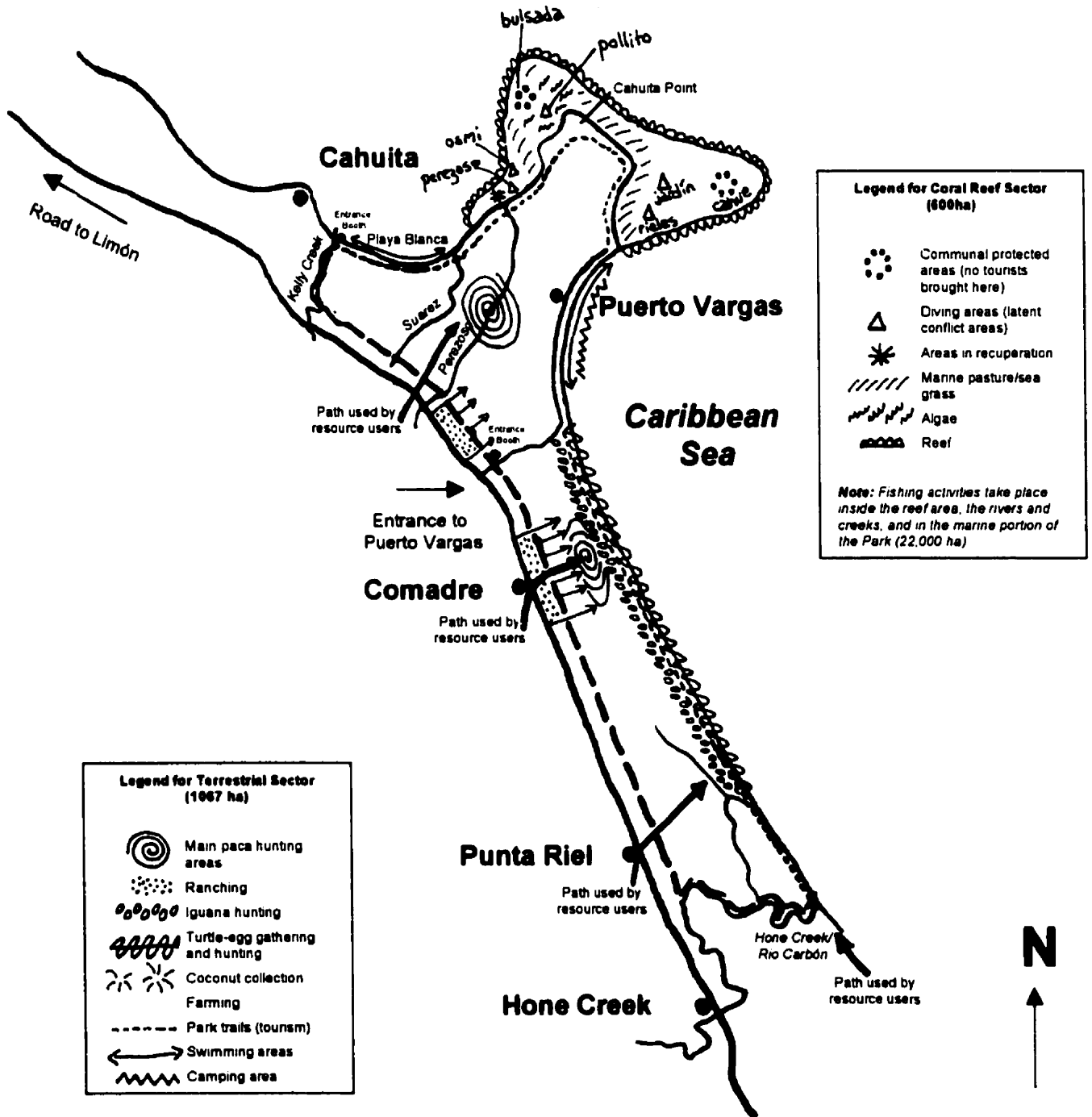


Figure 6-6: Synthesis Map of Resource Use and Locations in Cahuita National Park Gleaned from the Participatory Maps



6.4.2 Local Level Organization and Leadership

As can be seen by the number of social interest groups listed in the Matrix in Appendix 5, there is a high level of social organization in Cahuita. In fact, there are over 13 different peoples' organizations, spanning

Uphoff's (1998) distinctions from authoritative (local administration and government) to collective action (membership organizations, cooperatives) to autonomous decision-making institutions (service organizations, private business).

"There are too many Committees and community organizations. We are over-organized in Cahuita. We have the spirit. Like the young people cleaning the streets in Cahuita and picking up the garbage on Fridays. Nobody told them they have to do that!"

– Cahuita 'political' leader

However, it should be emphasized that some groups are working better than others. In our community survey, for example, very few people could list community groups (most came up with ADIC and CATURCA). When asked how people thought these organizations were working, most responded by saying "not well". And on a variety of occasions, people involved in community organizations commented that there is a general apathy on behalf of residents to get involved in community groups, and that they only show up to protest when there are problems.

Regardless of these comments, Cahuita is extremely well organized compared to other communities neighbouring the park.

One factor is its strong leaders, as was seen in the 1994 conflict. According to

"Puerto Viejo [a coastal community some 15 km south] sold out to foreign interests. They wish they had one or two of Cahuita's leaders. There are two reasons why Cahuita is still in the hands of the people here: 1) Its leaders; and 2) Its dignity."

– Cahuita 'cultural' leader

a prominent male leader, there are at least 11 leaders in Cahuita, two of which are women (other men asked identified three women leaders). He noted that *"leadership is something you are born with, it's a gift"*, and that what motivates him as a leader is that he *"wants to get things done, both for the community and out of personal interest."* In his view, there are very few young leaders: *"The new generation is more cowardly. To be a good leader you have to be aggressive, and I don't see that in the younger generation."*

But one of the women this leader identified as a community leader had a different perspective on leadership. From her point of view, there are several community leaders

"[Community leaders] may not even know they are leaders. They are people who act, not just talk.... A leader is someone who does things for the community, and does not expect anything back."

– Cahuita female leader

who are not the aggressive type the prominent male leader identified, and who do not partake in activities in the same way that does Cahuita's 'Committee of Struggle'. Rather, these community leaders "may not even

know they are leaders. They are people who act, not just talk." According to her, "a leader is someone who does things for the community, and does not expect anything back." She added that many leaders are not involved in community organizations, and those who other people consider as leaders are often involved in too many community groups: "You have to look at who is supposedly a leader, and then on how many committees they sit...if they are on many, they can't be doing their job well...They have to learn to say 'no'." This female leader's list of leaders in the community was quite different from those mentioned by some of the male leaders. Besides the gender differences in who is or is not a leader, it is clear that leadership plays a large role in Cahuita's social fabric. This will be discussed further in chapter 9.

6.4.3 Heterogeneity and Diverging Interests within Groups and Relations with External Agents

Another important point to make about the stakeholder diagram above is that individual members of groups that appear to have unified interests in the park may in fact have diverging interests. This is the case, for example with the Naturalist Guides of Cahuita. At its largest, the membership of this group reached 13. However, there were (I use the past tense, as whether this group can be said to exist is questionable) two rival factions in the group: those who were interested in conducting tours in order to gain economic benefits, and those who were interested in the group solely as a means to help with conservation and preservation of the park's natural resources. This conflict of interest split along gender lines: members interested in conducting guided tours for income were male, and those interested in conservation and monitoring were female.

The youths' original intentions were to form two separate groups. Because of the intervention of outsiders, however, the groups were encouraged to form a single group. First, the MINAE program, Committee's of Vigilance of Natural Resources (COVIRENA), persuaded the youths to unite in order to form a Cahuita Committee (requiring 10 members at least), which involved training in environmental legislation and the issuing of identify cards showing they were COVIRENA with the authority to help monitor and denounce illegal activities. However, throughout this process, there were problems getting the group off the ground, according to informal chats with members and direct observation; the president was somewhat disorganized, and there was little know-how with regards to how to run a group. Since MINAE's intervention, Namasol has approached the youths to give them training and other benefits, but the group has diminished to only a handful of members – mostly male – interested in guided tours. In short, the youth – particularly those who were interested in conservation rather than economic benefits – have suffered a lack of motivation due in large part to interference by external actors, as well as internal community dynamics.

"When there's no money in a group, everything works very well. But when the money comes, that's when we have problems. We have to help one another."

*– President of EBANO,
addressing Cahuita women*

A similar issue regarding the imposition of the interests of outsiders was mentioned by women we spoke with in Cahuita. It was noted, for example, that many outside agents are interested in creating women's groups, and approach the Development Association. Groups are formed, but *"often, if you look behind the women's groups, the decisions are often made by men"*, according to one Cahuitan woman. Another complaint was that with classes such as coconut jewellery, the women are trained by outside professionals rather than by the women of the community who have been doing this for years. Again while there have been direct benefits for Cahuita's women, there has also been increased competition among the groups for resources from external agents. Several community members voiced the opinion that often the training courses for women do not go far enough, as they do not teach the women how to market their goods and become self-reliant.

But while there are various interests in what appear to be homogenous community groups from the outside, so too are there different interests within and among the government agencies that govern resource use in the area and the park. For example, the interest of MINAE's Office of Civil Society Participation is to democratize decision-making, whereas SINAC's main interest is biodiversity conservation. Taking this one step further, there are SINAC officials whose conservation interests might be on preservation and non-use, while others might be interested in sustainable use. And clearly, the interests of the Directorate of Mines and Forestry within MINAE focus more on economic growth than public participation or conservation. In short, there is complexity, diverging interests and further sub-groups within the groups and agencies listed in the stakeholder diagram above.

6.4.4 Power Relations and Potential Conflicts

What becomes clear when looking at all the players with interests in Cahuita National Park is that there is a variety of different interests at each of the geographic and political levels (local, provincial, national and international), with potential tension and conflicts between those interested in development and commercial activities, those interested in conservation, and those interested in subsistence use.

A second general observation from the stakeholder diagram (Figure 6-1) is that some stakeholders hold more power and potential to influence decision-making with regards to Cahuita National Park and its environmental health (Table 6-2 identifies the various stressors and their potential impacts on the environmental integrity of the park).

For example, it might be very hard for subsistence users to tackle banana or mining companies whose activities affect the environmental integrity of the park. Although Figure 6-1 does not have an arrow indicating the relationship, industry and commercial interests play a large role in influencing all policies affecting the environment in Costa Rica. Likewise, the multinational pharmaceutical company Merck, and its Costa Rican partner – INBio – have far more clout to influence the policymaking and programs in favour of bioprospecting, than say, local residents who would like to receive compensation for their lands, and continue with sustainable resource use in the park. Some of these power

asymmetries and the conflicts that have emerged – and have the potential to emerge – among stakeholders at the local level, and between the local and other levels, are discussed in the next chapter’s section examining the Management Committee’s role in conflict management.

Table 6-2:

Stressors and their Potential Impacts on Cahuita National Park

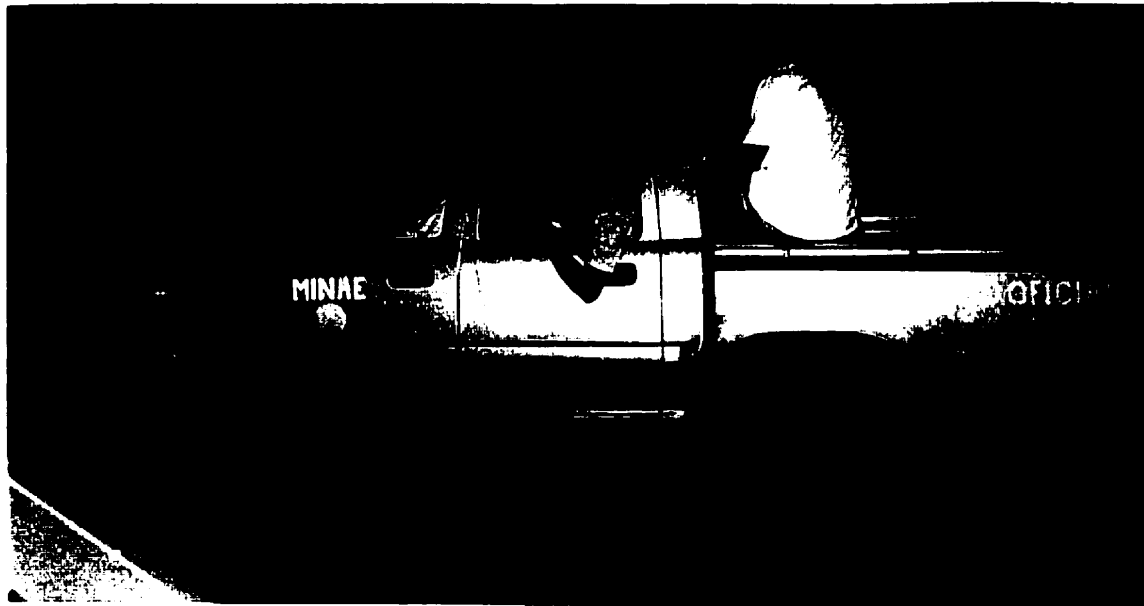
Industrial/Commercial activities	
<i>Mining activity</i>	Contamination of watershed area from runoff
<i>Multinational fruit plantations</i>	Contamination from pesticide use and solid wastes (plastic bags) which degrades the coral reef and has an impact on fish and wildlife, and on humans who eat the affected species Soil erosion leading to increased flooding, mud-slides and sedimentation of the coral reef
<i>Logging</i>	Decreased biodiversity of species in the park (increased 'island-effect' of the park) Soil erosion leading to increased flooding, mudslides and sedimentation of the coral reef
<i>Oil and gas exploration</i>	Offshore exploration activities affecting fish, turtle and lobster migratory routes Potential contamination through spills
<i>Bioprospecting</i>	Disturbance of wildlife; extraction; impact of using existing trails and creating new trails
Local Resource Use Activities	
<i>Tourists and recreational users</i>	Flipper use and trampling on coral; solid waste; impact on trails; feeding the animals; use of suntan lotion affecting environmental health of reef
<i>Tour operators and guides</i>	Motor oil and anchoring in unmarked spots can degrade reef
<i>Fishers</i>	Reported use of chlorine to stun and get easy access to octopii; potential overfishing
<i>Hunters and Turtle Users</i>	Overharvesting of turtle eggs
<i>Farmers and ranchers</i>	Clearing to allow for sowing crops and grazing
Other Local Stressors	
<i>Untreated household waste waters discharged into Creeks</i>	Potential contamination of creeks and swimming areas
<i>Pan-American Highway</i>	The road is in very close proximity to the national park which leads to the death of snakes and animals

6.5 Conclusion

This stakeholder identification and analysis visualized and examined those actors directly affected by, or who have a direct influence on, the activities, regulations and environmental health of Cahuita National Park. It showed the different interests and varying degrees of dependency of primary stakeholders; touched on some of the potentials for future conflict among primary stakeholders with different interests, and between these stakeholders and other powerful actors; mapped the resource uses and locations in the park; and highlighted some of the stressors affecting the environmental integrity of the park. It also provided greater insight into communal organization in Cahuita, community groups' relationships with external actors, and the heterogeneity in and among community groups and government agencies. This analysis paves the way for an evaluation of the structure, process and outcomes of the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park.

Chapter VII

Growing Pains: An Evaluation of the Management Committee's Structure, Process and Outcomes



Park staff and community members being driven home after a party at Puerto Vargas (December 1998)



Workshop to present the preliminary results from Stage 1 (December 1998)

Chapter VII

Growing Pains: An Evaluation of the Management Committee's Structure, Process and Outcomes

7.1 Introduction: Evaluation Approach and Criteria

As the word itself suggests, evaluations are value-based exercises. The critical – and controversial – questions relating to evaluations, are: Which values, assumptions and criteria inform the evaluation, and whose are they?

To date, most evaluations of common property institutions have focussed on three main criteria: efficiency, equity (or fairness) and effectiveness (or sustainability) of the governance structure, process and outcomes (e.g., Hanna 1995; Oakerson 1992; Folke and Berkes 1995). Effectiveness refers to the ability to meet goals, objectives or needs, and the extent of user compliance with these goals. Efficiency refers to maximizing productivity and minimizing waste and effort (or transaction costs) in achieving the goals, objectives or needs. Transaction costs for management agencies are related to the costs in coordinating data collection, analysis design and implementation of regulations, communication and conflict resolution; while for resource users, transaction costs are related to participation, i.e., the cost of work time lost to meetings, time required to acquire information and communicate to users, and direct monetary expenditures such as travel (Hanna 1995). According to Hanna (1995) in the ideal case scenario, management must meet two efficiency conditions: *“It will cost the minimum necessary to achieve its objectives, and it will cost less than the benefits it creates”*. Finally, equity refers to fairness in the management institution's representation, as well as in the distribution of costs and benefits of decision-making. But how the above criteria are interpreted and applied to a particular context clearly depends on whose goals, values and assumptions are being used as a baseline against which to examine the co-management arrangement.

For example, participatory democratic notions of equitable representation or equitable distribution of benefits may be diametrically opposed to notions espoused by people living under a traditional or customary system that is divided along caste, religious or gender lines in terms of who participates in governance structures and who has access to the resources. In these contexts, people in the community may perceive it as fair that certain people benefit more than others. As Agrawal (1999) argues, a more appropriate criterion might be legitimacy: Is the representation considered legitimate in the eyes of those represented? Is the distribution of benefits considered appropriate from the perspective of those affected? Implicit in this argument is the controversial – but very important – insight that however “*feudal, anti-democratic and conservative*” (Davies 1998) customary systems might appear, imposing participatory democratic values on them could have a detrimental social and ecological effect. In short, sometimes undemocratic institutions can lead to successful outcomes (Strum 1994), and superimposing participatory democratic values in these contexts might just be another form of colonialism.

The issue of perspective arises again with the criterion of effectiveness. If effectiveness refers to the ability to meet goals or objectives, the question is whose goals or objectives are they? There is debate in the literature on common property as to whether the desired goal – and therefore appropriate measurement of effectiveness – of co-management arrangements should be: increased democratization and community control over decision-making as an end in itself, regardless of the effect on the resources (Agrawal 1997); “*real conservation improvements*” of the resources, rather than empowerment, degree of participation, tenurial rights or any other measure (Western 1994); or linking social and ecological goals, i.e., “*sustainable use of natural resources to provide for the livelihoods of resource users without undermining ecological functions and diversity*” (IUCN forthcoming). To sum up, different stakeholders might have different goals, and therefore different baselines for evaluating the effectiveness of the institution (Western 1994).

7.2 Evaluation Approach for Cahuita

The following evaluation of the structure, process and outcomes of the Cahuita National Park Management Committee is informed by the perspectives expressed by the people involved in the Management Committee itself, by community members, and by resource users in neighbouring communities, as well as direct observation. It provides a snapshot of the evolution of the institution since its inception, drawing on a mixture of tools and concepts from the literature on common property theory, stakeholder analysis, public participation/collective action, conflict management and social learning.

The assumption behind this analysis is that the goal of co-management is sustainable use of natural and cultural resources to provide for the livelihoods of resource users without undermining ecological functions and diversity (adapted from IUCN forthcoming), through a decision-making process that fosters meaningful participation of those whose livelihoods are directly affected (where 'meaningful participation' refers to involvement at the earliest stage of decision-making, i.e., the 'normative level' *"in which decisions are made regarding what should be done"* [Smith 1982]). In other words, as Little (1994) argues, participation is seen both *"as a goal in itself that allows communities to have greater control over their lives and resources"* and *"as a means of achieving improved social and economic objectives."* Because there is as yet no management plan for the park, however, and because no management decisions have been made regarding resources use in the park (beyond those relating to recreational issues and attempting to stop 'poachers'), the ecological impact of the institution cannot be assessed at this time. Consequently, this analysis will look at the institutional structure, process and outcomes of the Management Committee, rather than at the linkage between the institutions made by the Management Committee and the ecological integrity or resilience of the park.

The effectiveness of the arrangement is examined with regards to whether the mandate outlined in the Executive Decree that established the Management Committee is being fulfilled. I also adopt Cardinall and Day's (1998) definition of effectiveness to assess the Committee's *"ability to integrate diverse values, knowledge, and information in support of sustainable environmental management"*. The criterion of efficiency is used to

examine how to minimize 'wasted' efforts in the process and functions of the Committee, and to minimize transaction costs. The criterion of equity is used to analyze the distribution of costs and benefits, the balance of power among the members of the Committee, as well as the stakeholders involved or excluded. However, this is supplemented with the criterion of legitimacy in terms of community members' view about the representation and status of the Committee. Moreover, the criterion of accountability is used to examine the *"institutionalized responsiveness to those who are affected by one's [the Management Committee's] actions"* (Cernea and Farrington 1998).

Finally, social learning is examined particularly in terms of conflict management and the evolution of the structure and functions of the Committee. While there have been several definitions of social learning, two simple definitions are *"a process that can be encouraged by lifting barriers to communication and by encouraging interaction between the parties involved in policy issues. The core idea is that parties can learn from each other by more open and responsive communication"* (Glasbergen 1996); and *"how communities of people with diverse and common interests can reach agreement on collective action to solve a shared problem"* (Webler et al. 1995). Webler et al. (1995) note there are two realms for learning: one is *within* the participation process, and the other is *outside* the participation process. *"People within the process have a very intense learning and working experience. But the success of a policy choice at being implemented also depends on its legitimacy in the eyes of the people outside the process"* (Webler et al. 1995).

This evaluation will focus mostly on learning *within* the process, but touches on aspects of learning outside the process. In particular, it will examine the types of learning taking place, using Lee's (1993) conceptualization of single-loop and double-loop learning. Single-loop learning involves *"solving problems within the conceptual framework of the organization"*. In this model of learning, *"some learning can be made routine without threatening managerial control"*, while *"problems that do not fit the operating theory of the organization cannot be solved"* (Lee 1993). Double-loop learning involves *"solving problems by re-examining premises and goals or organized cooperation"*. In this model of learning, *"some learning requires conflict or threatens loss of managerial control"*; however,

“when successful, real learning occurs – institutional theories of reality are improved, and the cybernetic disconnection of goals [i.e., avoiding boundaries where critical variables go out of range] can be revised into a more accurate reflection of overall priorities” (Lee 1993).

The evaluation closes with a summary of the overall strengths and weaknesses of the Management Committee process, structure and outcomes that emerge from this evaluation.

7.3 Structural Issues

7.3.1 The Current Structure and Representativeness

Assessing the appropriateness of the structure and make-up of the Management Committee is particularly important given the change in the Committee’s mandate from the provision of services in Playa Blanca to the management of the entire park, and in light of the stakeholder analysis presented in the previous chapter.

As stated in the Executive Decree, the Committee is made up of five official voting members: the Director of the La Amistad Caribe Conservation Area; the Administrator of Cahuita National Park; two representatives from the Development Association of Cahuita; and one representative of the Cahuita Chamber of Tourism. The park administrator and the Director of the Conservation Area (or a representative acting on his/her behalf) are constant members, while the community members rotate depending on the current circumstances of the community organizations (community representatives are elected by the Chamber of Tourism and the Development Association, and are usually the presidents or members who sit on the organization’s board of directors). In practice, the Management Committee has also appointed an observer/overseer, for a total of 6 people on the Committee.

At present, then, the community members on the Committee represent only one of the communities neighbouring the park, namely Cahuita. In addition, they represent Cahuita’s development and tourism interests only; there are no user groups – other than

those linked with tourism interests – on board. How well ADIC and CATURCA represent the development and tourism interests of Cahuita is in itself a question, in light of numerous observations by community members that these groups are not working well.

7.3.2 Who should be included in the future?

According to a community member of the Management Committee, in the future it will be critical for the resource users who know the park intimately to be represented, such as fishers and divers. Other Committee members (three) suggested the possibility of including direct representation from Cahuita's Naturalist Guides' Association. And a former Committee member suggested including representation of one of Cahuita's women's groups (he did not specify which), or else a community representative that is not part of an organized community group. Other suggestions were to include a biologist to ensure appropriate technical support. None, however, considered the importance of including representation from groups in neighbouring communities, or the issue that the resource users suggested for future involvement are not organized into groups (with the exception of the guides, whose organization is somewhat questionable as was discussed earlier).

We need a biologist, a good biologist, to start with... from the community, we need various people, the fishers and the divers, for example, in order to maintain the reef. In other words, we need to involve the people that really live from the resources... They have lots of knowledge, because they have spent many years living with the reef and in the water. They are people who know and have seen the changes that occur after each flood, for example, which is a common occurrence here.

– Management Committee member, 1998

7.3.2.1 Neighbouring Communities and Users

At the workshop we held to present our preliminary results, we pointed out that the Management Committee needed to review its representation in light of its change in mandate, and emphasized the need to include representation from the neighbouring communities. We discussed briefly four potential ways this could be done, including:

- 1) **By community, including representation of users. Individuals on the Committee would represent MINAE, Cahuita, Comadre, La Fé/Punta Riel and Hone Creek.**
- 2) **By local governments/development associations. Individuals on the Committee would represent MINAE, the Development Association of Cahuita and the Development Association of Hone Creek (which represents residents of La Fé/Punta Riel and Hone Creek) .**
- 3) **By sectors of Cahuita National Park. Individuals would include representatives from MINAE, the Playa Blanca sector, the Puerto Vargas sector, the southern sector, the sector from Suarez to Perezoso (this is similar to option 1).**
- 4) **By user groups. Individuals would represent the hunters, turtle users, fishers, guides, tour operators, farmers and MINAE. Clearly, this would first require the consolidation of user groups.**

The comments made at our suggestions were quite revealing. One MINAE representative dismissed the suggestion of including the turtle users – or their interests – on the Management Committee, saying that their activity is illegal. The implication was that although people in the area have been engaging in turtle use for over 100 years – in fact Cahuita was first settled by turtle users – they do not have a legitimate stake in the park. While the turtle users have themselves noted that there is an open-access situation with regards to turtle use in the park, the question is whether there is a means other than prohibition to address the situation.

A Management Committee member agreed that neighbouring communities should be included on the Committee, but pointed out that before that step is taken, it is important first to consolidate the operations of the current Management Committee. Several others agreed with this point.

In short, there are no official plans to include representatives from neighbouring communities on the Committee for the time being. In the planning session, however,

important inroads were made to including neighbouring communities in the future, which will be discussed in the next chapter. And, apparently, since the end of our fieldwork, representatives of the Development Association of Hone Creek have entered into a dialogue with the park administration and Management Committee, and have reportedly attended one of the Management Committee meetings.

7.3.2.2 Women and Youth

With regards to the inclusion of women and youth, to date two women have served on the Committee – a park superintendent, and a president of Cahuita’s Development Association. While there is no specific mandate to include women on the Committee, women are equally eligible to be elected to community institutions such as ADIC, which is one of Sarin’s (1996) criteria for involvement of members on joint management committees.⁷ However, the majority of resource users in the park are men; women do use the park for recreation purposes, including occasional fishing, but most of the livelihood activities in the park – such as tours, subsistence fishing and turtle egg gathering and use – are conducted by men. The women’s groups and associations in Cahuita rely to a large extent on the tourism that comes to the area for their businesses, cottage industries and employment.

In our conversations with women in the community, and at the women’s workshop we held, there was a sense that Cahuitan women focus far more on decision-making within the private sphere – i.e., the household – with economic activities, reclamation of cultural identity, and health and social

“It is time that the children know our history, know our roots. This could help avoid many things. We’re still slaves today. There are many people – children – that are in drugs – which is a very ugly thing. Before neighbours used to look out for each other, and today we are all egotistical, and only criticize each other.”

– Vice-president of the Afro-Caribbean Women’s Association, addressing Cahuita women

issues. While several women spoke about the need for more representation of women in

⁷Sarin’s (1996) additional criteria include voluntary, open membership to all resident users; option for inclusion of new settlers; and ability to attend meetings at short notice.

the municipal government, another who had been a member of the municipal government emphasized that *"it was very difficult, because I was the only woman"*, adding that she suffered anxiety and tension by being on the municipal government, and felt she was not listened to as decisions are made by majority vote. *"We shouldn't be preoccupied with trying to be on the municipality, because we can do whatever we want outside of the municipality,"* she said. While important strides have been made with regards to women's participation in government, she stressed that women have advanced very little – in centimetres only – and are not being given the positions they deserve. The largest themes that emerged from the women's workshop were the importance of knowing the rights of

"The only thing that we need to do is to help other women who have problems. It doesn't matter which colour or race there are, we have to continue fighting."

**– President of EBANO,
addressing Cahuita women**

women, engaging in mutual support of women regardless of colour and race, rescuing cultural identity including spirituality/religiosity and increasing self-esteem. Some women stressed the need for building bridges among the various women's groups in

Cahuita, and for women to gain more political prominence at the municipal and national levels.

As regards inclusion of women's groups on the Management Committee, several leaders of women groups interviewed suggested they would like to see their women's group participating directly in the future, even though they do not work within the park. One women's group president said while her group would like to participate, she thought the guides would also make good candidates for future involvement. But she also strongly suggested the inclusion of an Elder, *"someone who knows the area...an old fisher who perhaps has fished in the park all his life and has seen the changes. I think someone from the community should be included who perhaps is not a professional, but who has a lot of knowledge."* Overall, the sense from the women we spoke with was that while they would be interested in participating directly on the Management Committee in theory, their interests and focus are primarily elsewhere.

With respect to the youth in Cahuita, the only organized youth group is the Naturalist Guides' Association of Cahuita. It is important to note that the conception of youth in Cahuita is quite distinct. For example, several of the member of the guides are in their middle-to-late thirties. The guides clearly would like direct participation on the Committee.

In conclusion, the representation of the Management Committee needs to be reviewed, with consideration of representation from neighbouring communities and resource users. However, more work first needs to be done to ensure that the groups currently on the Committee – and those who might be considered in the future, such as the guides – represent the interests of their constituents, and other stakeholders in Cahuita.

7.3.3 Accountability and Legitimacy

As will be discussed in the section on communication, there is very little 'downwards' accountability on the Management Committee. Most community people do not even know of the existence of the Committee, and there is some question as to the effectiveness of communication between the board members and the organizations they represent. Finally, there is also concern that the organizations represented at the table are not working well. This questions the Committee's legitimacy and credibility at the community level.

In our community survey, we asked interviewees who they would contact if they saw something suspicious/illegal taking place in the national park. Our intent with this question was to identify which institutions hold the most weight/legitimacy in the eyes of the community with regards to the park, and whether the Management Committee would feature. The following chart lists the individuals and institutions identified by interviewees, and the number of times they were mentioned (some respondents referred to several different institutions and/or individuals, while others referred only to one):

**Table 7-1: Institutions/Individuals Cahuitans Would Notify
in the Event of Witnessing an Illegal/Suspicious Activity in the Park
(n = 39)**

<i>Individual/Institution Identified</i>	<i>Number of times mentioned</i>
Individual A (at the time of interviews, president of the Chamber of Tourism)	4
Individual B (a member of the Chamber of Tourism)	1
Individual C	3
Individual D	1
Chamber of Tourism	5
Development Association of Cahuita	2
Park Wardens at the Entrance Booth	16
Police	9
MINAE	3
Park superintendent	2
Courts	1
Director of the school	1
Everyone needed: MINAE, park wardens, the Minister, Sala IV, Greenpeace	1
Don't know	2
Nobody	1

The answers reveal five interesting points:

- That Cahuitan's would turn to the Chamber of Tourism far more often than the Development Association for addressing suspicious/illegal activities (10:2);
- That several Cahuitan's would look to particular community leaders to address the problems, rather than the institutions they represent (Individual A + B + C + D + school director = 10 mentions);
- That not all Cahuitan's would go to the park wardens (mentioned only 19 times out of 39 respondents);
- That several community members would consider going to the police (mentioned 9 times) and as far as the courts (mentioned specifically once, and in combination

with other options another time). In addition, one respondent brought in the notion of political leverage and alliances, by mentioning going to the Minister and contacting Greenpeace; and

- That the Management Committee was not referred to once.

The lack of accountability and communication with the general body of community members, and the fact that the Management Committee was not referred to once as a potential problem solver, questions its legitimacy. However, if the number of times the various subgroups that make up the Management Committee are mentioned is considered, the picture changes: out of a total of 62 'mentions' for different individuals or institutions, over half (33) correspond to people or institutions represented on the Committee, namely CATURCA, ADIC, the wardens at Playa Blanca, MINAE and the park superintendent. But clearly, more work needs to be done by the Management Committee if it is to gain the credibility of the people of Cahuita as a body that manages, and shares authority and responsibility for the national park.

There is far better communication and 'upwards' accountability: the Director of the Conservation Area is fully aware of the activities of the Committee, and the Committee is slowly gaining legitimacy from the point of view of the superintendent of the park and MINAE officials at the regional level.

7.3.4 Mandate, Power, Authority and Jurisdiction

Interviews with Committee members, the participatory evaluation in the government-run section of the park, and observations made within and outside Committee meetings revealed there was general confusion about the overall mandate, power, authority, responsibility and jurisdiction of the Committee. While some saw the Committee as under the authority of the park administration and answerable to the superintendent, others saw the Committee as a decision-making body to guide action in the whole park, with the park administration under its guidance. The participatory evaluation in the government-run section of the park highlighted the resistance government park wardens feel in receiving 'orders' from people on the Management Committee, particularly since in

the view of several government wardens, the Management Committee does not have the capacity to manage the park. In addition, in several conflict situations, it became clear that Committee members did not act because they were unsure of the power and authority they represented as members of the Management Committee. Given this situation, the power and authority of the Committee – and its mission and objectives – became priority items for discussion at the planning session.

7.4 Operational and Process Issues

7.4.1 Mechanisms for Election and Turnover

While the Agreement for the Services Committee did not outline any mechanisms for electing representatives or the length of their terms, the Executive Decree which came into effect in May 1998 notes that in its first session, the Management Committee will elect a president, secretary, treasurer, *vocal* (a member to voice concerns) and *fiscal* (observer/overseer who makes sure that the operations of the Committee are conducted legally) who will remain on the board for one year, with possibilities of re-election. Essentially, these are the rules that the Committee agreed to follow when it was first established as a Services Committee in 1997. However, the second formal election for the Committee did not take place until September 1998, 7 months after the one-year mark when it was officially supposed to hold elections. In addition, as can be seen in Table 7-2, there has been a lot of turnover on the Committee.

Among the first members were those who played an active role in negotiating the cooperative agreement signed in 1997. Since then, there has been very high turnover on the Committee, including three superintendents. Only two members (one government member and one community member) have been on the Committee more or less throughout (with a few months off each) (Table 7-2).

**Table 7-2: Turnover on the Management Committee
(Since its inception as a Services Committee in 1997)**

	Feb. 1997 First Committee	Jan.-June 1998 Fieldwork Stage 1	Nov.-Jan. 1998/99 Fieldwork Stage 2	Aug. 1999 Fieldwork Stage 3	Dec. 1999 Current
<i>President/ Coordinator</i>	Gina Cuza Jones* Government (MINAE)	Gina Cuza Jones* Government (MINAE)	Rodolfo Enriquez Community (ADIC)	Rodolfo Enriquez Community (ADIC)	Rodolfo Enriquez Community (ADIC)
<i>Secretary</i>	Eduardo Pearson Government (MINAE)	Eduardo Pearson Government (MINAE)	Alberto Jenkins* Government (MINAE)	Campbell* Government (MINAE)	Campbell* Government (MINAE)
<i>Treasurer</i>	Alpheus Buchanan Community (CATURCA)	Alpheus Buchanan**	Enrique Joseph Community (CATURCA)	Enrique Joseph Community (CATURCA)	Enrique Joseph Community (CATURCA)
<i>Member</i>	Rolando Brooks Community (ADIC)	Irma Humphries Community (ADIC)	Edwin Cyrus/Induni Alfaro Government (MINAE)	Eduardo Pearson Government (MINAE)	Eduardo Pearson Government (MINAE)
<i>Member</i>	Rodolfo Enriquez Community (ADIC)	Enrique Joseph Community (CATURCA)	Manuel Mairena Community (ADIC)	Manuel Mairena Community (ADIC)	Tacho Community (ADIC)
<i>Observer</i>		Dexter Lewis Community (ADIC)	Dexter Lewis Community (ADIC)	Dexter Lewis Community (ADIC)	Corredor Biologico Regional Project

* Superintendent ; ** Adjunct, non-voting; MINAE: Ministry of Environment and Energy; ADIC: Development Association of Cahuita (local government); CATURCA: Cahuita Chamber of Tourism

The high turnover and constant change in membership clearly has a negative impact on the working relations among members, and the operations and effectiveness of the Committee. New members go through a learning curve with regards to the Committee's process, projects and agreements taken in the past. There is also a period of adjustment in terms of the dynamics of the Committee due to new mixes of personalities involved, changes in working rhythms and comfort levels.

An internal regulations document drawn up by MINAE, and still going through approval by the Committee, suggests that each party elect their Committee representative before the end of a calendar year. At the first session of the Management Committee in each calendar year, internal Committee elections would take place for the positions of

coordinator (the new word adopted for president in the Executive Decree) and secretary, and an observer/overseer would also be nominated. Each member would remain on the Committee for one year, dated back to the 1st of January of that year (while the regulations make no mention of re-election, the Executive Decree stipulates that this can take place). The draft regulations also suggest that members be replaced if they no longer belong to the organization they represent, if they do not show up for three meetings in a row (unless they have good reasons for this), or if they do not fulfil the obligations outlined in the Executive Decree. These are good suggestions to try to regularize the terms and roles of the Committee members; however, elections in the community organizations take place at different times of the year, which could lead to some turnover, regardless. Increasing membership terms to two (or even three) years would reduce the turnover and increase the Committee's effectiveness.

7.4.2 Knowledge of Functions, Roles and Responsibilities

Three things that stand out clearly from Table 7-2, are that: there was a shift in the control of the presidency away from the government towards the community (in September 1998); government officials have remained in the position of secretaries for the board; and community members have continuously had the role of treasurers.

As one community member noted, Cuza Jones was chosen as the first president of the Committee for two reasons: she was a "*woman of the community*" (Cuza is a Limón native, and is an active member of one of the community's women's groups) and had a full salaried position at MINAE. The government officials chosen as secretaries were elected largely because they are salaried, and can therefore carry out the Committee's work while being paid. The fact that community members have been elected as treasurers is symbolic, because this is the lifeblood for the Committee. As will be discussed below in the section on finances, the donations made by visitors support the Committee's work, and it is therefore appropriate that the financial aspects be controlled by the community. And the flip in presidency from the government to the community occurred after the Committee was legally sanctioned. This was a pre-meditated move, according to comments made at the workshop in which we presented preliminary results.

However, what became evident in our interviews with Committee members is that there was uncertainty and confusion with regards to their roles and responsibilities, and with regards to the mandate and objectives of the Committee itself. This confusion is understandable due to the transition the Committee has gone through from a Services Committee to a Management Committee. In addition, the roles and responsibilities of the Committee members were never defined in the Services Committee agreement, and are not clearly outlined in the new Executive Decree. The proposed internal regulations might partially solve this situation if they are adopted, as they spell out Committee members' roles and responsibilities (although not in enough detail).

One of the problems with the way the internal regulations and the Executive Decree were formulated is that they were drafted by MINAE staff people and then brought to the Committee for approval. The visioning and content was not a group exercise. This might explain why to date the Committee has not yet absorbed or adopted the contents of these documents. Nonetheless, there is flexibility to change these documents, and it will be up to the Committee to ensure that they reflect the Committee's needs and perspectives adequately.

7.4.3 Committee Meeting Process

Meetings are usually held at MINAE's headquarters in Cahuita, and take place every Wednesday. In addition, *ad hoc* meetings can be convened by any member of the Committee when necessary. A meeting can take place if a minimum of three members are present, with no specifications for there to be at least one member from each party. Decisions are made by a majority vote (although they try to arrive at consensus). In theory then, decisions could be made with two government officials and one community member, or by three community members.

The coordinator acts as chair, and the secretary is in charge of recording the agreements made by the Committee. The agenda is prepared by the secretary, and it is reviewed and approved at the beginning of each session. In addition, minutes of the previous meeting are reviewed and approved. Each meeting has an agenda item entitled

'other', where members can bring up additional issues. Community members who would like a specific issue to be addressed by the Committee can attend the meeting and have their item included in the agenda.

While the above outline of the process of the Committee sounds quite organized, in practice the process is not as smooth. Management Committee meetings usually extend to three hours per week (sometimes going over this), and rarely start on time. While there is an agenda, discussions often go on many tangents without actually addressing or resolving the agenda item at hand.⁸

The meeting process depends to a great extent on the ability of the chair, i.e., the Committee president/coordinator. While the former government president was proficient and comfortable in chairing, the current chair has a difficult time with the idea of formally chairing the meeting, and often needs to be reminded that he has to formally open the meeting and give people the floor to speak. This 'difficulty' of community members being able to participate in formal meetings is something that is seen time and again in collaborative management arrangements worldwide, for example Alaska (e.g., Hensley and Harrow 1998) and Canada (e.g., Weitzner 2000). The issue is whether this formal culture is appropriate, and how to balance informal and formal ways of working effectively. In addition, although the amount of time spent at meetings could be considered 'inefficient', there may be other considerations at stake: the meetings are a chance for social interaction and updates among the Committee members, which can increase the social cohesion and working relations among the participants; moreover, the meetings (and their length!) might serve the function of underscoring the importance of the Committee's – and particularly the community member's – input in the operations and management of the park, and act as a reminder that MINAE can no longer act unilaterally.

⁸This is part and parcel of Latin American meeting culture in general: there is a tendency to hold numerous meetings that go on for hours, with discussions that never seem to get 'to the point'. Some people have called this tendency *reunitis*, which roughly translated is 'meetingitis'. After attending several meetings in Cahuita, at the regional level and in San José, Marvin and I developed a list of 10 steps for a 'successful' meeting: 1) arrive one or two hours late; 2) make sure written invitations have not been distributed; 3) make sure you do not have an agenda or objectives for the meeting; 4) do not take notes; 5) do not specify a timeframe for the meeting; 6) make sure there is no chairperson; 7) do not discuss the issues at hand; 8) leave the work for the next meeting; 9) if a decision is made, do not specify who will do it or by when; 10) do not summarize any progress made at the closing of the meeting.

7.4.4 Decision-Making Procedures and Power Dynamics

With regards to decision-making, there are problems in how decisions are made, tracking what has already been discussed and decided, and follow-through implementation. Some of these problems are inextricably related to the power dynamics among Committee members. Co-management theorists (e.g., Berkes et al. 1991; McCay 1995; Pinkerton 1994; Pomeroy 1995; Sen and Nielsen 1996) have tended to examine these types of issues using variations of Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation (Berkes 1997). In the case of protected areas, for example, Borrini-Feyerabend (1996) has developed a participation spectrum based on Arnstein. However, while variations of the Arnstein ladder are useful in labelling the 'structural type' of arrangement in place as viewed from the outside, there are critical power dynamics that take place among Committee members, within individuals and at the community level that these adaptations do not address. In light of this, the following analysis draws mostly on Rocha's (1997) synthesis of relevant literature and ladder of empowerment, which offers a more complex understanding of the multiple sources and types of power that have a direct impact on decision-making in co-management (see Appendix 6 for an outline on Arnstein [1969], Borrini-Feyerabend [1996] and Rocha's [1997] discussions of participation and power).

7.4.4.1 Fieldwork Stage 1:

Power in the Hands of Government Reps and a Community Leader

During the first stage of the fieldwork (January-May 1998) – when the Committee was operating *de jure* as a Services Committee, but *de facto* as a Management Committee – two community members on the Committee noted that the bulk of the decisions were made by three people: the two government officials (president and secretary), and the adjunct treasurer, a community member who was not an official member of the Committee and had no voting rights. On several occasions decisions were made by these three people, who then informed the other

"Buchanan is an old soldier; he's the man that always try to uplift this community, he's the number one, he always do everything."

**– former president of
Cahuita's Development Association**

Committee members of the outcome. The reason why the adjunct treasurer's power was accepted both by the government officials and by the community at large, is that he is arguably Cahuita's most prominent leader. However, official community representatives on the Committee complained that when urgent decisions needed to be made, the government officials often only contacted the treasurer rather than all Committee members.

In-depth interviews with the three official community representatives revealed that while one felt that the meetings were *"very democratic"* and that the government officials were not *"authoritarian or negative"*, the other two felt that relations were unbalanced. *"MINAE representatives feel they have supremacy over us community people,"* said one member. *"At the time being we're at an impasse... because the MINAE representatives think that their ideas should prevail. The best thing about the arrangement will come when the criteria and ideas of the community prevail, because we community people will live here our whole lives."* Two of the three official community members expressed the frustration that Arnstein (1969) refers to when she says that *"participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless. It allows the powerholders to claim that all sides were considered, but makes it possible for only some of those sides to benefit. It maintains the status quo."* These members used the word 'manipulation' to refer to the tactics and politics of those who held the power in the Management Committee.

Essentially then, in Stage 1 a redistribution of power had not occurred; while the treasurer wielded a fair amount of power in influencing the outcome of decisions – thereby balancing the overall power between the State and Cahuita – the decision-making process of the Committee was far from democratic. An important point to emphasize, however, is that the decisions made by the Committee during this time focussed on relatively small decisions relating to the provision of services that have not had implications with regards to resource use and access. The process became far more democratic when dealing with access issues. One example was a conflict that took place when a \$6 USD fee for visiting the reef was proposed (essentially the fee for entrance into the state-governed national park area) in March 1998. While it was provoked by the three 'powerholders' of the

Management Committee at the time – i.e., the treasurer and the two government officials – it was resolved through open meetings with affected parties, who then gave the Management Committee the final decision-making power over the issue. (The first issue of our newsletter *El Arrecife* in Appendix 3 describes this conflict in detail).

7.4.4.2 Fieldwork Stage 2: Power in the Hands of Community Members

During Stage 2 of the fieldwork (November-January 1998/9), however, there was a large turnaround in the decision-making process and power dynamics in the Committee. During this time, a community member was the coordinator/president of the Committee, and community members were largely in charge of the meeting process. The new superintendent and Management Committee secretary spent one-and-a-half months away at a training course, and the only government officials to participate in meetings were either the Director of the Conservation Area, or a MINAE representative acting on the Director's behalf. Several meetings were held without government officials present, and decisions were made regardless.

What became evident in Committee meetings during this time was that one community member started dominating and leading the discussions, while the other two – including the chair and coordinator – remained fairly quiet. This is perhaps due to the dominant member's education and comfort level in terms of speaking in public (he was fairly involved in politics, and was elected president of Cahuita's Chamber of Tourism late in 1998). But it could also be due to the learning process he had benefited from since he first started on the Committee (Stage 1), as well as the 'chemistry' and effect of the other personalities in the group. For example, the two government people who held much of the power during Stage 1, and who did much of the talking, were no longer members of the Committee. And when the park superintendent was present after his training course, it became clear that he did not have much power to assert his opinions. We did not attend any meetings during which the Director or his representative were present; their presence might have influenced power dynamics during the meetings.

7.4.4.3 Stage 3 of the Fieldwork

Unfortunately during the few days we were in Cahuita during Stage 3 of our fieldwork, no Management Committee meetings were held. The town was busily preparing for National Parks Week, an annual event that Cahuita hosted in 1999. We therefore did not have a chance to see how the balance of power on the Committee might have shifted with the new park superintendent, Campbell. However, we were able to observe how the Management Committee, the Director of the Conservation Area and other members of MINAE and the community of Cahuita were working together to make National Parks Week a success. This event served as a means to showcase the evolution and progress of the Management Committee, and to highlight this type of arrangement as an option for other national parks.

7.4.4.4 Analysis and Conclusion

It is clear the Management Committee itself is the outcome of what Rocha has termed 'socio-political community empowerment', involving "1) *critical reflection by the community and members-of-community (individuals) rethinking their relationship to structures of power and 2) collective action upon those structures*" (Rocha 1997). In addition, "*the community is transforming itself from the inside into a powerful actor, capable of garnering resources for local benefit; at the same time, members-of-the-community are transforming themselves from bystanders into actors in and through this process*" (Rocha 1997). The dynamics of some Management Committee members demonstrates that particular individuals are at different stages of empowerment and transformation into actors: While some are going through McClelland's (1975) Stage III (I have an impact on others) and Stage IV (I gain strength from serving/influencing others) power experiences, others are experiencing Stage I (It strengthens me) and Stage II (I strengthen myself) power through participating in the process.

Overall, our observations of the power dynamics and decision-making process of the Committee revealed that they depend to a large extent on the personalities, attitudes, abilities and interests of the individuals involved. A given individual's ability to influence

decision-making is related directly to his or her power and influence in the community (and with the government officials), but also to the individual's ability to speak his or her mind openly and to participate in discussions. In addition, participating in the process can lead to learning, skills-building and potential individual empowerment. The force or power of personalities seems to be of more account in influencing power dynamics and decision-making even than the Committee's structural composition (three community representatives, two government representatives). In short, considering the various types of power and empowerment within individuals, the community and power dynamics among members of co-management boards is important because they can have more of an impact on decision-making and outcomes than the formal structure – or even formal powers – of the co-management arrangement itself.

7.4.5 Tracking and Implementing Decisions

Throughout the entire three stages of fieldwork, a recurrent problem with regards to decision-making was tracking and implementation. Because of the lack of consistent note-taking and tracking of decisions (discussed further in the section on communication) – and perhaps compounded by the high turnover rate – Committee members duplicated efforts and recycled issues. Moreover, when decisions were made by the Committee, no effort was made to identify who would carry out the decision, or by when. The predictable result was that many decisions were made without any implementation.

As one Committee member noted, "*there is no one on the Committee that says – 'well, I'm going to verify whether or not it was done' – there's no 'fiscal'...no person to ensure implementation.*" While this function is assigned, there is lack of awareness and clarity of what it entails. Several Committee members noted that implementation is often left up to the government representatives, who are very busy and cannot follow through on implementation.

7.4.6 Working Relations and Trust

As with most groups, the working relations between Committee members depend a great deal on the attitudes and dynamics of the Committee members. According to one government Committee member, how well the Committee works depends almost entirely on the attitudes of the people involved:

*"The attitude that one has to demonstrate, has to be an open attitude. Often there are [government] colleagues who **entorpecen** (literally make clumsy, create an obstacle, or thwart) the process in a negative way regarding certain things that could be negotiated...That creates an obstacle in the process and is a step backwards. But the attitude that one has to have, I think should be always open; to converse, to negotiate, until the point at which...you push the extremes of the regulations and scope of action permissible....One always has to have a positive attitude, and radiate this in the community so that people see you as a positive agent, and not as someone who is an obstacle to the process. I think this is the key to success for any type of community work."*

She later added that *"there are people who being inside or outside the Committee do nothing but **entorpecer** (make clumsy, create an obstacle, thwart), which leads to people being ill-at-ease and unmotivated."* This comment refers directly to a conflict that took place between a community member and a government official sitting on the Committee, which resulted in the government member's removal.

While member's attitudes is a major determinant of the Committee's working relations, so is members' willingness to work in a fashion that respects the knowledge and potential contribution of everyone participating. Other factors affecting working relations include: the sense that MINAE people are just passing through, and are not as committed as community people in terms of conserving the park; that park superintendents are often not available, because they are involved with many other responsibilities, that require their absence from the community and the park; the increasing frustration and tiredness expressed by community members on the Committee regarding the fact that they put in many hours, and yet do not receive any remuneration, while government people receive salaries and do not put in as much effort.

Regardless of these factors affecting working relations, however, Committee meetings we attended were cordial, and even involved some joking. According to interviews, all Committee members felt there was trust and openness among the members, in terms of transparency and being able to work together. One member stated: *"Yes, there is trust in the sense that we know each other, we think we are all making progress with regards to management. In other words, there has been a change in attitude on behalf of the administration, as well as on behalf of the community, in order to carry out the changes that we're undertaking."* Another Committee member described the trust relationship like this: *"There is trust. When we get together, people express themselves, and their disagreement in some things... There are some people who have their roces (brushes), that's normal, and that has to happen so that everything isn't 'yes, yes, yes' or 'no, no, no.'"* In short, tension and disagreement are a necessary part of any relationship, which does not necessarily exclude trust.

While the Committee has its ups and downs in terms of working relationships, one image will always stick in mind. The first day that Marvin and I arrived in Cahuita to start Stage 3 of our fieldwork, we walked down the main street of Cahuita after being dropped off by the bus some time in the early evening. Sitting at a table of a café were all the members of the Management Committee, and the Director of the Conservation Area, having a beer together. To me that was a sure sign of a process in progress.

7.4.7 Planning, Technical Support and Knowledge Used

There are several issues related to planning, technical support and knowledge used in decision-making. These include:

1) *Management plan*: There is no management plan for the park. This has had a large impact on the effectiveness of the Management Committee (in terms of lack of clarity with regards to rules and regulations, communication issues, etc.), and has even spurred conflicts. On the positive side, there is the opportunity to ensure that any new management plan is jointly developed between community members and MINAE. It is interesting to note that while the drafting of a management plan specifically was not cited as a priority by the

Management Committee in our planning session, they did suggest several functional areas and activities that require individual plans. This points to the need for training for members of the Management Committee with regards to developing and implementing integrated management plans. Capacity-building in protected areas management was identified as a top priority for the Management Committee in the planning session.

2) *Operations plan*: These are drafted once per year by outside biologists, and are not fulfilled due to lack of resources (financial and human). The participatory evaluation we held in Puerto Vargas was the first time park staff had been asked for input regarding the park administration's needs, priorities and possible solutions/actions. Not once have the park wardens – or community people – been asked for their input into any planning documents concerning the park.

3) *Management Committee planning*: To date the Management Committee has operated in a crisis management mode, and there has been no concerted effort to engage in short-, medium- or long-term planning. A Committee member pointed out that: "*We've gone along putting out fires and dealing with some of the most burning issues [in Playa Blanca]. Once these are resolved, I think we will be able to define our future goals.*" But this sense of being in crisis is precisely – as the Committee member suggests – directly linked to the Management Committee's organizational weaknesses, its lack of goal-setting and its lack of planning; if the Committee continues on the path explained by the Committee member, the result will be a lifetime of waiting, as crises are part and parcel of hands-on management and will remain so until planning – and learning – takes place. By engaging in ongoing planning activities the Committee might not consider what it does as 'crisis management' or 'putting out fires'.

4) *Technical support*: To date any information available on the resources in the park has been conducted by university students and biologists, and there has been little or no follow up with regards to action or joint planning. The Costa Rica-Holland project Namasol has conducted some capacity-building courses in the community, but these are geared to increasing the quality of nature tours, rather than monitoring and information-gathering for environmental decision-making. There is no ongoing technical support for decisions made

regarding resources in the park. The new superintendent Campbell is a marine biologist, which will no doubt prove beneficial in decision-making about the reef.

5) *Local knowledge*: There has been little attempt to try to gather, validate and use the knowledge of community people with regards to the resources in the park (Namasol offered one course on medicinal plants which collected traditional knowledge on 78 different plant species used for remedies [Piedrahita Yepes 1998]). Throughout our fieldwork we observed that some government officials operate under the assumption that they have the knowledge it takes to run a national park, and that community members need to go through capacity-building in order to 'get up to speed'. In other words, the prevailing attitude is that knowledge must be transferred to community people, without consideration of the potential that the knowledge transfer could go the other way. We noticed that government officials often use technical jargon around community people, which has the impact of making them feel not only alienated, but frustrated and potentially humiliated. One community member stated that: *"Since we are the people who live here, they (MINAE) should listen to us more, and analyze our proposals, and perhaps give them a technical 'tint' in order to apply them. But not come to us with technical proposals, and then we are left looking towards the sky because we don't know what they are talking about."*

In fact, several community members we spoke with – and two Committee members – questioned the way in which MINAE is managing the park. One commented on what he called a 'plague', i.e., the spread of almond trees in the park, which is an introduced species. MINAE's policy is not to cut down any trees in the park, regardless of whether they are introduced or taking over. The Committee member noted there used to be parakeets in the park, that no longer come because the trees they fed from were slowly covered in *matapalo*, parasitical species' that kill the trees if it is not pruned: *"For them [MINAE] that's management. But in order to maintain an ecosystem, you also have to give life to the ecosystem,"* he said. Another who spent many years working on his farm in the park said that contrary to previous times, now nothing is touched in the national park: *"There are plants that are more aggressive than others, and a time might come where only one type of plant will exist...In the years I've been here I've noticed that."* He added: *"We*

have to make sure that the plants don't disappear, we have to reproduce them, and it's a lie that that's done by leaving them alone." Drawing on the knowledge of people who worked the land in the park for years, and who live off the resources today, would help in producing appropriate planning and ensuring biodiversity is maintained.

7.4.8 Communication and Feedback Mechanisms

There are six potential avenues for communication: 1) internal communication, i.e., communication among the Committee members; 2) Committee-park staff communication; 3) Committee-MINAE communication; 4) Committee-community communication; 5) Committee-park visitor communication; and 6) Committee-general public communication.

1) *Internal communication.* As noted above, the secretary is supposed to be in charge of minute-taking, and to maintain a *Libro de Actas* (Minute book). According to the proposed internal regulations, the secretary is also in charge of distributing copies of the decisions. During the three stages of fieldwork, however, it was evident that note-taking was not conducted regularly, that the secretaries did not maintain an up-to-date minute-taking book, and never once disseminated decisions to Committee members other than orally.

The non-dissemination of records of the agreements has had a negative impact in terms of the passing on 'corporate knowledge' and effectiveness of the Committee. New members are not given records of previous decisions; the high turnover on the board makes this problem especially acute. As well, it became evident that many members were not aware of the provisions in the Services Committee Agreement, the Executive Decree, or their responsibilities and functions on the Committee. A backgrounder package for new members could be very helpful to alleviate these problems.

2) *Committee-park staff communication.* There are essentially two 'staffs' in Cahuita National Park: those paid by and operating under the Management Committee, who are responsible for the Playa Blanca section of the park (two wardens and one security guard); and those paid by and operating under MINAE, who are mainly responsible for the Puerto Vargas section of the park (six staff members, including the superintendent and cook).

There is little communication between the Management Committee and the MINAE staff. Only one Committee meeting took place in Puerto Vargas, with all park staff and the Committee. A party also took place in the Puerto Vargas headquarters in January 1999, so that all people involved in the park could meet each other and mix. As well, park staff was present at the presentation we gave disseminating the preliminary results of our project (December 1998), and at the planning session (January 1999). But besides these events, the MINAE park staff clearly lack information on the Committee's functions activities.

This became particularly apparent in the participatory evaluation we conducted with MINAE staff (December 1998). The park staff is unaware of who sits on the Committee, the authority and power of the Committee, or the decisions it takes. A suggestion was made that the superintendent of the park – who is always a member of the Committee and who lives with the MINAE park staff – inform them of the Committee activities during staff meetings and post the minutes in the warden house. This type of information-sharing, together with further involvement in Committee activities and meetings, would help dispel the misconceptions that exist among the MINAE park staff that the Management Committee and Playa Blanca staff do nothing, and vice-versa. In addition, because of the high turnover in the Puerto Vargas staff, it would be helpful for new staff members to receive a backgrounder on the history, objectives, authority and functions of the Management Committee.

There is more communication between the Committee and the Playa Blanca staff, largely because they are very close in geographical proximity, and the Playa Blanca staff reports to the treasurer each day to hand over the day's donations (the Puerto Vargas headquarters is 7 kilometres away). Nonetheless, there are still problems with regards to communicating decisions about what is and is not allowed in the park, and consequently decisions do not get enforced by the park staff.

3) *Committee-MINAE communication.* Communication between the Committee and regional MINAE headquarters in Limón is quite good, as the superintendent of the park keeps the Director informed about activities in the park through meetings and telephone

conversations. As well, the Director of the Conservation Area is actively interested in the activities of the Committee, and often visits the community.

4) Committee-community communication. There are no formal mechanisms by which the Management Committee disseminates information about its activities or decisions to the community of Cahuita. The representatives of the Chamber of Tourism and the Cahuita Development Association inform their board of directors by word of mouth (although this reporting back is inconsistent, according to comments made by people in these organizations).

Likewise, there are no formal community feedback mechanisms. The community representatives tend to bring to the table the concerns of the constituents of their organizations, and their own personal interests. Community members not represented by the Chamber of Tourism or the Cahuita Development Association can bring their concerns directly to Management Committee members. However, according to our community survey, the vast majority of Cahuitans do not know about the Committee or who sits on it: 10 people of 39 said they had heard about the Management Committee, but of these, only 6 were able to comment correctly on some aspect of the function and role of the Committee; 25 respondents said they knew that Playa Blanca was managed collaboratively between MINAE and the community.

In order to raise awareness of the Management Committee and to provide a potential mechanism for future dissemination of Committee activities we started a community newsletter named *El Arrecife* (The Reef). The intention of the first issue was to inform the community about the Management Committee and who sits on it; a conflict that had taken place with regards to the access to the reef and the way Committee had managed the conflict; and our project (who we were, what we were doing in Cahuita, and the objectives of our work) (Appendix 3). There was much enthusiasm about this newsletter, and interest was expressed by several people to have it continue as a community newsletter. However, while a nascent editorial committee was started, some training took place with regards to newsletter production, and an issue was published with articles by community members featuring community groups and their activities, the project

was aborted. This was on account of Namasol's expression of interest in starting a similar newsletter, which would mean a paid job for one community member. Namasol took over production of *El Arrecife*, but published only one issue that featured its own work in the community before the newsletter died, another example of cooption of community initiatives by external agents. There has been some talk in the community about starting *El Arrecife* again, as per the editorial committee's initial intentions, although more training and resources would be required.

It should be noted that the choice of a newsletter as a potential vehicle for dissemination was due largely to our skills (I have a background in newsletter production and training of community people in writing skills), and our ideas regarding the type of vehicle that might eventually increase social cohesion in the community: the idea was for a community newsletter that could serve as an information vehicle for other groups in the community as well. This is not to say that we regarded it as the only type of communication vehicle for the Committee; open houses, community presentations and perhaps even theatre are additional mechanisms which could increase two-way communication and raise awareness about the Committee's role and activities.

5) Committee-park visitor communication. When visitors come to Cahuita, very few know about the history of the area, or the fact that Cahuita is the first national park in Costa Rica to be run collaboratively between the State and a community. They also do not know that the money they donate at the Playa Blanca entrance supports the 'community-run' section of the park, and is re-invested back into the community. Instead, park staff simply ask them to register their names, and to donate if they wish. Moreover, there is nothing to distinguish the park staff as 'community park staff', as they wear the same uniforms as the MINAE staff in Puerto Vargas. Clearly, informing visitors about the history of the park, and letting them know what their money supports, would generate more funds for the Management Committee.

In a survey conducted with 37 visitors at Playa Blanca during Easter Week in March 1999, only 8 visitors knew the park was collaboratively managed, with three having been told by word of mouth by people in the community, one having seen some papers to this effect at the entrance booth, and four having read about the collaborative management arrangement in guide books. Not one visitor was informed about the collaborative management of the park by the park staff at Playa Blanca. Only four people interviewed were told what their donations were being used for, but of these only two remembered being told the donations were going towards conserving and maintaining the park (nothing was mentioned about the Management Committee). Furthermore, while we found that the guides were quite good in pointing out the ecological features and medicinal plants of the marine-terrestrial park and historical sites of interest, never once did they mention the collaborative management arrangement in the park.

In response to this lack of information for visitors – and on request by the Management Committee – we wrote and desktop-published a brochure for the park from the point of view of the community with the input of a brochure committee that helped identify the goals and desired content of the brochure. We then spent five days speaking with community and government people to verify and approve the content and layout of the brochure. The brochure explains not only some of the history of the area, but also touches on the conflict that took place, the work of the Management Committee, and how donations are being used. The Director of the Conservation Area has committed to providing the funds to have the brochure professionally designed and printed, although to date this has not yet been done.

There has also been talk of the Management Committee setting up its own office in the Playa Blanca entrance building in order to provide more information to visitors about the history and management of the park. This would also give the Committee more autonomy and cohesion, rather than operating out of MINAE's headquarters in Cahuita. In addition, training for the park staff with regards to informing visitors about the where their donations are being channelled and the management arrangement in the park would be helpful, and could lead to an increase in revenues for the Committee.

6) Committee-general public communication. Committee members have attended several national and international conferences to present the Cahuita case. To date they have participated in meetings in San José, Nicaragua and Honduras. In addition, the Management Committee has been involved in community-to-community capacity-building. Through a project coordinated by Marvin at the Office of Civil Society Participation of MINAE, members of communities surrounding Ballena Marine National Park, a marine park on the Pacific Coast, have visited Cahuita to speak with Management Committee members about strategies for negotiating collaborative management. The Cahuita members will also go to Ballena Marine National Park to visit. Presenting the case at conferences and being involved with community-to-community capacity building has increased the pride Committee members feel in being first joint management committee in a national park in Costa Rica.

7.4.9 Sources of Funding

While the proposed internal regulations suggest that both ACLACA and the donations of the park should fund the Committee's activities, the Committee has relied almost entirely on the donations it receives at Playa Blanca for its operations. Between January-December 1997, it collected USD \$14,689 in donations, and from January to December 1998, USD \$19,360 (Joseph, pers. comm., 1999).

The money collected goes to cover the salaries of the park wardens at the Playa Blanca entrance (two full-time salaries) as well as the security guard hired to cover the Playa Blanca area at night. The remainder is used for activities such as the Puerto Vargas/Playa Blanca mixer that took place in December 1998, and are re-invested back into the community for projects and other needs (for example, funding the Cahuita aqueduct and school supplies). Contrary to collaborative management boards elsewhere, community members *are not* paid per diems.

The entrance fees collected at the Puerto Vargas entrance go directly to the National Parks System in San José. As a point of comparison, in 1997, the park had a total of 54,887 visitors. Of these, 33,809 registered at the Playa Blanca entrance, donating USD

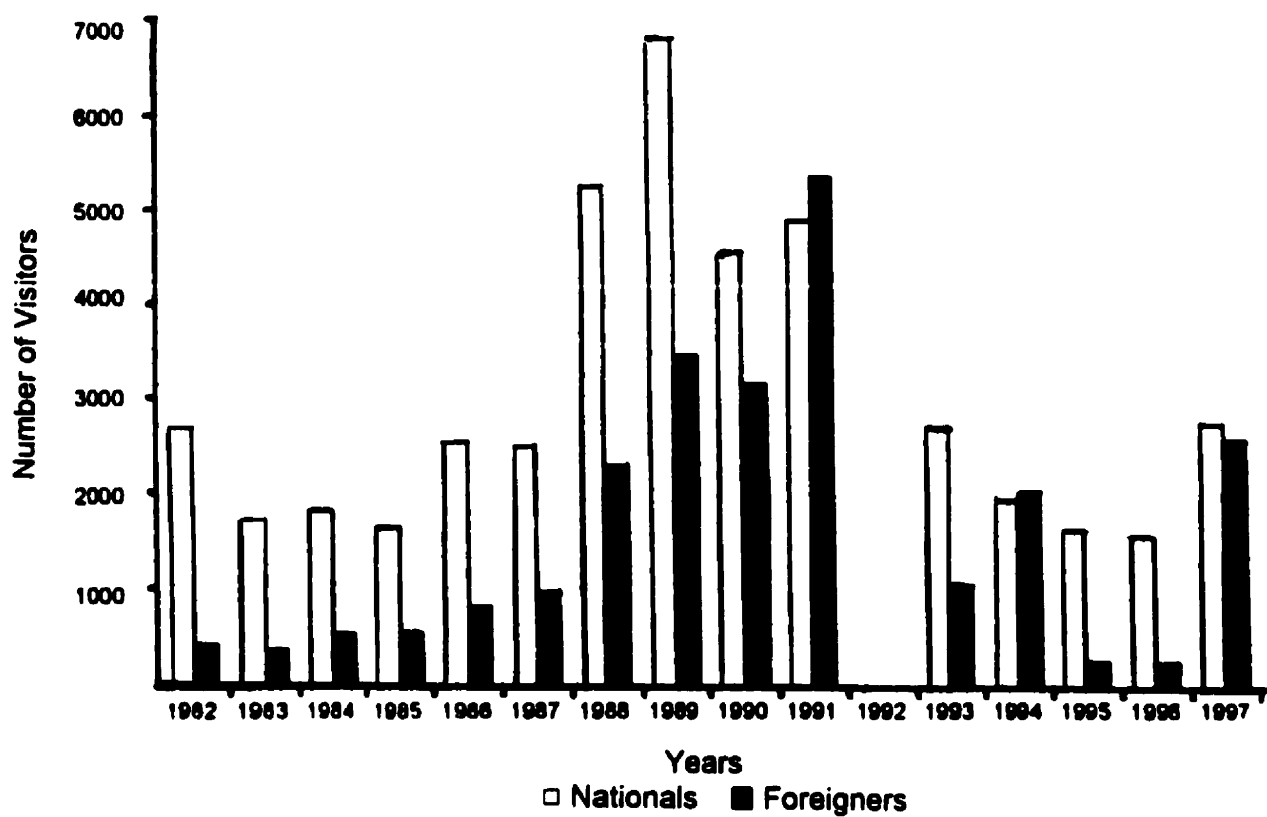
\$14,689, or approximately USD \$0.43 per person to the Management Committee. Approximately 21,078 visitors registered at the Puerto Vargas entrance.⁹ Of these 18,666 were nationals, but only 11,904 paid entrance fees, totalling USD \$9,523 (assuming \$.80 – 200 colones – entrance fee each); 2,412 were foreigners, but only 2,280 paid entrance fees, amount to USD \$13,680 (assuming that the foreigners paid \$6 entrance fee each). In short, in 1997 the total amount of money going to the National Park System in San José from entrance fees at Puerto Vargas amounted to USD \$23,203, while the USD \$14,689 from the Playa Blanca sector stayed in the community (all figures are from Cuza Jones, pers. comm., 1998; and Joseph, pers. comm., 1999).

An interesting situation that has arisen, is that the Management Committee is continuously asked to lend the MINAE section of the park money for operations and fuel. Therefore, unlike many collaborative management situations where boards are often dependent on the government for funds and consequently feel controlled, in Cahuita this is most definitely not the case.

While the Management Committee is not dependent on the government for income, it is completely dependent on tourism. This makes it vulnerable to fluctuations in the tourism industry. As is reflected in the visitation to Cahuita National Park from 1982 to 1997 (Figure 7-1), there has been a decline in tourism in Cahuita since it peaked in the late 80s/early 90s.

⁹It should be noted that many visitors do not register, particularly in the Playa Blanca section, and therefore the recorded figures for number of tourists visiting the park are not very accurate.

Figure 7-1: Visits to Cahuita National Park from 1982 to 1997
 Source: Cuza Jones (1998)



There are several reasons for this decline in park visitation from 1982 to 1997:

1) *The 1991 Earthquake.* The Caribbean coast suffered great damage due to the 1991 earthquake. The coast became inaccessible because of flooding and damage to the roads and other infrastructure (Zumbado 1993). Cahuita's reef was pushed up by approximately 1 meter. In 1992, no one was taking registration in Cahuita National Park, although some people did visit.

2) *The increase of fees for entrance to national parks and the 1994 conflict.* The Ministry of Environment and Energy placed advertisements in major newspapers to alert potential visitors about the conflict situation in the park. According to community people, this had a serious impact on tourism; the community tried to reverse this impact and attract tourism by hosting colourful events in the first two weeks of December 1994 (Tovar 1994).

3) **Cahuita's growing reputation as a centre for drug trafficking.** There have been numerous newspaper articles implying that the area between Cahuita and Limon is a major entry point for cocaine transported from Central and South America (e.g., Segnini 1997; Vizcaino 1998). There have been allegations that Cahuita is a storage centre for cocaine to be distributed elsewhere (Vizcaino 1998). While some tourists might be attracted to Cahuita because of this reputation, its effect is clearly negative. In addition, according to several interviews with community people, drug use is increasing among *Cahuiteños*, which is leading to increased violence and theft in the community.

"It's a beautiful area that is in great demand... But unfortunately, the infrastructure was very damaged by the 1991 earthquake, access to the conservation areas is very difficult and there is a general conception that it's a dangerous area due to crime and drugs, which isn't necessarily true. We don't feel comfortable sending groups of older or very young tourists there, and when we do send young groups, we warn them of the dangers"

**– María Amalia Piza,
Director of Group Expeditions,
Viajes Horizontes (in Bermudez 1996)**

4) **Security issues.** A 1997 Travel Information Report for Costa Rica issued by the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade stated:

"Canadians travelling to beaches located on the south eastern coast in the province of Limon should exercise caution due to incidents of violent crimes against tourists in 1996 and 1997. Consequently, Canadians travelling in Limon should ensure that all travel is undertaken during daylight hours, avoid making stops enroute to their final destination, stay in well-frequented and protected hotels/campgrounds, and avoid camping overnight on beaches" (DFAIT 1997).

Besides the incidents mentioned above, there was a murder in November 1994 a few kilometres north of Cahuita involving an American tourist (Gonzalez 1994). Clearly these types of incidents and security concerns have a big impact on tourism in the area.

5) **Lack of appropriate marketing.** Another factor leading to a decrease in tourism is the lack of appropriate marketing for the Caribbean, and the fact that it

"has been promoted in the same way as the Pacific coast, when in reality the two coasts are very different both in social and ecological terms. The Caribbean has a great potential for tourism development because of its rich cultural diversity, the

bilingualism of the people and its biological richness. In fact, it has an advantage over the Pacific in that it still has abundant natural resources..." (Namasol's Plan for Tourism Promotion, cited in Piedrahita Yepes 1998).

Besides the often cited lack of government support for marketing the Caribbean, people have noted the lack of capacity in marketing and general dysfunctionality of Cahuita's Chamber of Tourism as another factor in the decrease of tourism in the area (Bermudez 1996). Namasol has started addressing this situation by establishing a marketing campaign to increase the profile of the southern Caribbean.

One successful event organized in conjunction with Cahuita's Chamber of Tourism was inviting the Minister of Tourism to Cahuita in February 1998, along with a busload of journalists. The intent was to capture the Minister's and media attention, and to give journalists concrete pointers on how to handle coverage of Cahuita more appropriately in the future. In a public address, the then president of Cahuita's Chamber of Tourism told journalists: *"In the future, when you have information on Cahuita, be objective. This area has been punished by false reports. Tourism has decreased because of these problems. Cahuita has organized itself to bring security to the tourists of Cahuita."* In response, the Minister noted: *"People know there is almost a 'xenophobia' about Limón, and many rental car companies do not permit people to take their cars here"*. He agreed there has been a lot of *"unjust suffering"* due to misinformation about the Caribbean, adding that *"there are very few places in Costa Rica as secure as in Limón."*

6) *Racism, lack of cultural identity, tensions between community members, and the popularity of other resort destinations such as Cuba, have also been cited as potential reasons for a decrease in tourism in Cahuita (Cruz 1996).*

As a result of the overall decrease in tourism in Cahuita, currently there is a 70% underutilization of hotel capacity in Cahuita (Piedrahita Yepes 1998). In addition, the southern Caribbean only

"At this moment we're completely bankrupt because of the decrease in tourism, and if you ask any of the small and medium tourism businesspeople in Cahuita, they'll tell you that they don't make enough money to cover water or electricity bills."

**- Cahuita community member 1996
(in Cruz 1996)**

attracts 6% of Costa Rica's tourism market (Bermudez 1996). However, the decrease in tourism to the Caribbean parallels a national decrease in tourism, particularly between 1994 and 1996 (Bermudez 1996).

Clearly, the Management Committee is in a vulnerable position by depending solely on park entrance fees from tourists visiting Playa Blanca as a source of income.

7.4.9.1 Other Financial Sources for Activities in the Park

Some activities related to the park are also funded by external organizations, such as Namasol and foreign governments. For example, Namasol provided funds to build the current Playa Blanca entrance building and the access bridge over Kelly Creek. As outlined in a 1998 book entitled *The Coral Reef of Cahuita Point: The Origin of a Village and a National Park, Experiences for Sustainable Development* (Piedrahíta Yepes 1998), Namasol has also provided training courses for community members – particularly nature guides – in basic marine ecology, coral reef ecology, birds, marine turtles and medicinal plants – and has indicated that it would provide funding for a park management plan. However it has not approached the Management Committee directly about this, and skepticism has been expressed about Namasol's approach. There are rumours that Namasol has already created a draft management plan without any input from the Management Committee, and was considering hiring a foreign biologist to complete it, without community input.

In addition, there was a large push by the (former) Cahuita coordinator of the Namasol project to set up a foundation that could manage the park on a 'concession' basis, i.e., a contract whereby the foundation would have the rights to manage certain aspects of the park, including services. In an interview with the former coordinator of the project, it was clear that the foundation would consist of a hand-picked group of people, with Namasol playing a major role. Clearly, this would have large implications for the Management Committee, although according to the Conservation Area's Director and legal counsel, such a foundation would be answerable to the Management Committee (Gonzalez, pers. comm., 1998). To date, however, the idea of a foundation has not been

sold to community members. In fact, community people seem more skeptical than ever about Namasol's role in the community, due to lack of financial transparency in the project's operations, and the sense that very little of its money trickles down to Cahuita, as most of the project money goes to outside consultants.

Another source of funding for activities related to Cahuita National Park is a *Fideicomiso* or trust fund set up with money from the Swedish and US governments for management activities in ACLACA. The fund, known as the "Fondo de Fideicomiso del Area de Conservación La Amistad Sector Caribe", was established on June 23, 1999 (Banco Interfin 1999). The Swedish government has donated USD \$253, 644.42 to this fund, and the US government USD \$128, 448. A Committee of Investment, which includes three community members, approves the budgets related to the use of the profits generated from this seed money. A portion of this will reportedly be spent in Cahuita on activities to be determined in conjunction with the Management Committee (Buchanan, pers. comm., 1998). According to a National Parks Foundation official who helps administer the *Fideicomiso*, a sub-account could be created for activities related to Cahuita National Park (Carvajal, pers. comm., 2000). Clearly, if the Management Committee has the power to determine how monies from this fund are spent in Cahuita National Park, it will be critical for the Management Committee to consolidate its process, and for members to get capacity-building regarding protected areas management so that the funds are allocated equitably and appropriately.

7.4.10 Conflict Management/Transformation

To date, one of the Management Committee's most important roles has been dealing with a variety of conflicts. Not only was the institution itself created as a means of 'resolving' a conflict, but it has served as one of Cahuita's focal points and main mechanisms for addressing conflicts related to the national park. Although there is no mention of alternate dispute resolution mechanisms in the Executive Decree that establishes the Management Committee, the members of the Committee, as well as leaders of the community, have become fairly proficient at addressing conflict over the years, and have established informal mechanisms for arriving at resolutions.

As Seymoar (1997) has noted in her observations on the conflict experiences of 50 communities, after a community identifies, acts on and 'resolves' an inequity, it achieves increased space to negotiate beyond that point, and to tackle a new inequity. As they gain experience and success, community groups are able to handle conflicts easier and negotiate settlements more effectively. This leads to community empowerment, according to Seymoar (1997), who adds that with the experience of each new inequity, the community undergoes a state of non-engagement and inward reflection, before it can re-engage in more mature partnerships with others.

This 'self-empowerment cycle', as Seymoar calls it, is evident to a large extent in the negotiation skills and pressure tactics Cahuita's leaders have learned over the years as they face each new inequity. Ideas such as recourse to Costa Rica's Ombudsperson, peaceful takeovers in the event that appropriate solutions are not reached, or recourse to the courts, come easily to those who have been involved in trying to work out solutions to previous inequities the community has faced. To a large extent, the success of the Management Committee in managing conflict situations relates to its ability to lean on the experience of Cahuita's leaders. However, the Management Committee also faces several problems with regards to planning for conflict management. In addition, there are several latent and overt conflicts that it has not yet begun to address.

7.4.10.1 Conflicts 'Addressed'

During our fieldwork, we saw how several conflicts were dealt with by the Committee. These included:

- **conflicts involving single individuals (e.g., visitors using unauthorized recreational vehicles in the park);**
- **incidents involving security issues (e.g., hostage-taking and mugging in the park);**
- **historical and inter-group conflicts (e.g., feuding between the families of two tour operator/fishers);**
- **intra-Management Committee conflicts (e.g., resentment between two members leading to the resignation of one member; and the illegal fishing by a Management**

- Committee in the park, also leading to his resignation);
- **Management Committee-community conflicts (e.g., the proposed payment of national park entrance fees for tourists visiting the coral reef).**

Regardless of the ability of some of Cahuita's leaders in negotiating outcomes, our observations about the conflicts 'managed' revealed two main institutional weaknesses that undermine the Management Committee's effectiveness in conflict management:

1) *There is a lack of institutional learning.* Rather than drawing up plans and preventative measures to avoid similar conflicts from occurring in the future, the Management Committee deals from a crisis perspective. For example, at least two incidents took place with regards to the use of unauthorized recreational vehicles in the park. While their use was eventually stopped, the Management Committee did not think of how it could avoid such conflicts in the future, and did not use following Committee meetings to address this issue. These incidents (one of which involved a park warden) are directly related to the lack of information both park staff and users have with regards to what is and is not permitted in the park. There is no signage and very rarely are brochures provided with this information. In addition, the Management Committee does not officially update the park staff on new decisions regarding park prohibitions other than verbally.

This lack of learning can also be seen in how the hostage-taking incident was handled. The big issue with regards to this incident was the coordination of the park staff in the Playa Blanca and Puerto Vargas sections. Once the hostages were found and rescued, the pursuit of the hostage-takers took place. There was very poor coordination between the two staffs (due to some extent to the lack of walkie talkies, telephone lines and available vehicles), and indeed the onus of the searching fell mostly on the shoulders of Management Committee members. Tensions rose between community members and some of the MINAE park staff, because the community members felt the MINAE staff was not as serious in the search for the hostage-takers as they should have been. While Management Committee members reflected on this incident informally, there was much blaming and no action with regards to preventing a similar failure in communication and lack of coordination among staff from occurring in the future. One Management Committee

member suggested peacefully taking over the Director of the Conservation Area's office until he had made some telephone calls to acquire equipment for the park wardens to do their work. But aside from this threat, the Committee has still not implemented a coordination plan in the event of another hostage-taking or robbery in the park.

2) *There is ambiguity surrounding the Management Committee's authority with regards to being able to speak on behalf of the national park, and fear of enforcing rules.* This was evident in the management of the inter-family feud conflict involving two fishers/tour operators (one was a Management Committee member). Briefly, this incident involved Party A denouncing Party B for taking sand out of the park to use as a decorative touch in his restaurant. Party B then denounced Party A for illegal fishing in the park. While Party A was still in his boat fishing, Party B approached the president of the Management Committee. Rather than dealing with the issue himself, the president of the Management Committee contacted the police and the park superintendent. Party B took the superintendent by his boat to where Party A was fishing. However, the superintendent did not take any action because he was not in a MINAE boat, but in the boat of a community member.

The way this conflict was managed underscores the ambiguity the president of the Management Committee felt with regards to his authority. However, the superintendent was also unsure of the scope of his authority. This points to a recurrent issue surrounding enforcing rules or dealing with disciplinary action in a small community: the small town politics and fear of being ostracized – or of being the target of retaliative actions – after getting involved as an authority figure. In short, not only are Committee members apparently not aware that they now have legal backing and can act on behalf of the Committee, but they also fear the potential social outcomes of assuming authority and representing the Committee and interests of the national park vis-à-vis other community members.

In sum, as practitioners have pointed out, *“social conflict is a natural, common experience present in all relationships and cultures”* (Lederach 1995). They note that *“conflicts are inescapable, but they can be positive as well as negative”*: positive in the

sense that they can lead to questioning the status quo which can lead to creative change, and negative when they are ignored or consciously set aside, which can lead to further barriers between parties and escalation of conflict (Mitchell 1997). Many argue that “a linear process of dispute resolution with a clear point of ‘resolution’ or closure” is inappropriate, as it runs counter to the increasing recognition that conflicts are often comprised of repeated patterns, cycles and links between issues (Pendzich et al. 1994). Lederach (1995) points out that “*it is certainly true that in any conflict progression specific decisions are made and expressions of conflict may end. But if there is an ongoing relationship, conflict remains.*” In light of the recognition that conflict is natural and ongoing, some experts (e.g., Thomas 1976; Wehr 1979) have started using the term ‘conflict management’ to describe interventions that aim to de-escalate conflict. Others (e.g., Curle 1991; Ruppasinghe 1994) prefer the term ‘conflict transformation’, pointing out that it more adequately captures the inherent dialectical nature of conflict, and the idea that “[social conflict] is a phenomenon that transforms events, the relationships in which conflict occurs, and indeed its very creators. It is a necessary element of transformative human construction and reconstruction of social organization and realities” (Lederach 1995).

In order to strengthen its conflict management – and perhaps even spur conflict transformation – the Management Committee needs to start examining the conflicts it deals with on a day-to-day basis, and to explore their interconnections. While some are clearly related to more systemic issues that it might not be able to address directly, others may be linked to issues it can work to change. In addition, it must engage in recognition and reflection on conflicts as they occur in order to begin to develop preventative management plans to deal with similar conflicts in the future. As it stands – by engaging in crisis management rather than conflict management – and by not recognizing its failures and ‘experimenting’ with new possible approaches, the Management Committee is not working towards strengthening itself or its performance.

7.3.10.2 Latent and Overt Conflicts Not Yet Addressed

Besides the conflicts described above, there are several latent and overt conflicts the Management Committee has not yet addressed. These include:

1) *Access to resources in the park.* Resource users complain that the park administration is steadily impinging on their rights to access, and is trying to stop resource use within the park altogether. The interests at stake for the various resource users are quite different. For the 15 Cahuitan fishers, at stake are questions of sovereignty and tradition rather than economics. Most fishers combine their subsistence activities with tourism, and do not depend solely on fishing for a living. But people in the neighbouring communities of Hone Creek and Punta Riel, who use a wider variety of resources, including fish, turtles and their eggs, iguanas and paca, have a large economic stake in access to the park's resources, as many depend on these entirely as a source of income. If they are enforced, restrictions in number of users and use as specified in the 1998 rules of use, will lead to tense situations not only between the park administration and users, but among the users themselves. The Management Committee could play a key role in managing this situation, particularly since it has the power to change the rules of use in the park.

2) *Balancing conservationists' and users' interests.* The interests of resource users clash with those who are primarily concerned with conservation/preservation (whether for economic and job-related reasons). The potential for conflict relating to these diverse interests and values exists within the community of Cahuita itself; between Cahuitans and the government; between Cahuita and neighbouring communities; and between neighbouring communities and the government. One conflict that has emerged as a result of this difference in interests, and that has not yet been addressed by the Management Committee, involves the use of turtles and turtle eggs. According to turtle-egg gatherers from the community of Punta Riel, a number of incidents have happened in which park rangers have fired warning shots at turtle users. In 1994, park rangers shot 63 bullets in one incident (Huertas, pers. comm., 1998). In 1995, four turtle users representing the 13 users of Punta Riel approached the park administration to propose that turtle users be

allowed to have access to and manage the turtles in part of the park; the first proposal was half the nesting grounds from Hone Creek to Puerto Vargas (2,650 metres), and the second proposal was one kilometre of the nesting grounds. The intent of the turtle users was to be able to harvest in a way that they could leave some of the turtle eggs in the nest, rather than taking them all. Currently, turtle egg gatherers take all the eggs, because they know that if they do not take them, someone else will – a classic tragedy of the commons situation. However, the park administration did not accept the turtle users proposals, and since then the only communication between the administration and the turtle users has been violent.

In 1998 violence escalated, largely because the guides of Cahuita took an active interest in protecting and monitoring turtle-nesting areas in the park, primarily for economic reasons – they take tourists to see the turtle nesting sites. The guides are accompanied by armed police, and since the beginning of monitoring in February, 1998 a number of violent situations occurred involving the firing of warning shots, and the 'accidental' shooting of one turtle-egg gatherer. There is a potential for this conflict to escalate even further, causing tension not only between two groups, but between two communities.

But there is also potential for conflict even among Management Committee members representing Cahuita and MINAE, regarding different conservation values. One MINAE representative was very adamant that no resource use should take place in the national park (although one superintendent was very tolerant, and even asked Cahuita's fishers to provide a list of those who fish in the park at night, in order to alert the security guard that they are allowed to enter the park by night; this shows the diversity of views on conservation and management that can exist even within a government agency). However, one Committee member clearly saw the park not as a place that should be left untouched or unused, but as a place of work: *"You always have to include resource use...If you cannot fish, if you cannot use the resources, things could get dangerous, as it is all part of the cycle... I adore this park...For me this park is special; all of us in the pueblo think this way, that it is a work area, not a place for leaving untouched."* Balancing these values and views will be key in managing this latent conflict among Committee members.

3) *The ongoing issue of compensation for expropriated lands.* As was noted earlier, to date only 15 of the 71 claims for compensation have been paid off as of 1998. Even of those with valid documentation, 10 remain on the waiting list (MINAE 1997). In addition, according to informal interviews with people in the neighbouring communities, those who have been paid tend to be those who are most well-off; most of those who have not been paid have the lowest income levels.

Things recently came to a head when a community leader heard that the government was planning to take another 5 years before completing payments. In April 1998, he and several other colleagues went to the site of his plot of land in the park and started 'deeply pruning' the area. They were accompanied by several women who provided them with refreshments. This was a pressure tactic to expedite this leader's payment. Instead of taking his worries to the Management Committee of which he was an unofficial member, the leader contacted both the Director of the La Amistad Conservation Area, and the incoming Minister of Environment and Energy. The result was that the landowner was promised compensation within a period of days. This action sets a dangerous precedent for others to follow, in that others may take to the park and start engaging in destructive behaviour. The Management Committee will need to play a role to prevent damage to the park while supporting landowners' requests.

4) *Contamination and erosion of the reef by banana companies, logging and off-shore mining developments.* These are very large issues that resource users, particularly fishers, and other local people talk about, but have not begun to address. While many are aware that the principal attraction of Cahuita National Park is its reef, and that it is in a somewhat degraded state (c.f., Cortés 1995), there have been no local initiatives on this front. The Development Association of Hone Creek has expressed an interest in allying with the Management Committee to begin lobbying and addressing these issues.

In short, the biggest challenge facing the Management Committee regarding these latent and overt conflicts is balancing power-relations and interests between: a) government and local actors; b) tourism representatives, conservationists and resource users; and c) the 'have' community (Cahuita) and the 'have not' communities neighbouring

the park (Hone Creek and Punta Riel). In the long term, it will be critical to address the issue of contamination and erosion of the reef. What becomes clear is that some of these conflicts are systemic, and in order to be effectively addressed would require transformative measures at the government and institutional level (for e.g., poverty alleviation policies, legislation and programs; changes in contradictory policies and legislation regarding development and conservation, etc.). As Grimble and Chan (1995) note, "*it is beyond the scope of collaborative management to deal with some of the inherent structural problems and the factors giving rise to conflict of interest,*" as these require macroeconomic policy changes. What the Management Committee could do is form alliances that put pressure on the government to catalyze policy changes on issues affecting the area. This would, however, require recognition of these problems, and concerted planning efforts and alliance-building.

7.5 Outcomes

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, different stakeholders have different perceptions with regards to what the outcomes of co-management should be. This section outlines the various perspectives on the benefits of the collaborative management process in Cahuita.

7.5.1 From the Perspective of Members of the Management Committee

According to members of the Management Committee interviewed during Stage 1 of the project, the most important outcomes of the collaborative management arrangement in Cahuita National Park include :

- ***Political empowerment.*** People now have the right to opine about what should and should take place in the park.
- ***Better relations with MINAE.*** All Committee members agreed that this was an important outcome, although interviewees varied in the extent to which they thought relations had improved. One community member thought relations had

improved “a tad bit”, and one government member and another community Committee member responded “*I think so*”, to the question of whether they thought the Management Committee had helped improve relations between the community and MINAE. Another government member said: “*I don't think relations have improved, I see it.*” Another community member noted that there has “*definitely*” been an improvement in relations, “*and there will continue to be improvements as we consolidate our group and execute decisions.*” He added it would be important to focus on involving children in the park, so they grow up with a different vision with regards to MINAE and the park than those whose views have been influenced by the expropriation of lands and the takeover of the park. Yet another community Committee member noted that “*relations between MINAE and us are 100%...At the moment relations are magnificent; they don't want to do anything without us.*”

- *An understanding that MINAE must pay landowners any compensation outstanding for their lands in the park.*
- *More efficient administrative operations, tangible outcomes in the park, and better fiscal management and transparency.* One member said that “*before, things weren't achieved as quickly as they are now,*” adding that the level of support the community and MINAE are giving the Management Committee to get things done (such as cleaning up the garbage, maintenance and security) is fairly good. Another noted that the Committee has led to more transparent financial management than when the Development Association was responsible for the funds entering Playa Blanca during the takeover of the park and negotiations with MINAE.
- *Improvement of Cahuita's economic and social conditions.* Access of visitors to the park on a donation basis which are then reinvested back into the Committee and community was seen as a major economic and social benefit. This arrangement has helped increase tourism in Cahuita, according to one Committee member, and has also provided jobs for community people, which has a direct social impact. In addition, community people and MINAE officials have worked together to improve

the infrastructure, security and cleanliness/contamination in the park, which has had a positive effect on tourism, and resulted in the Puerto Vargas Sector maintaining the Ecological Blue Flag, an internationally recognized award for clean beaches. These factors, together with the potential for the services in the park to be leased to community organizations or individuals through concessions, give the park a *“realce (a highlight), a different face”*, and *“will have a positive impact on the social aspect of the community, because the people will see other things and the pueblo will become accustomed to a new attitude,”* according to one member.

7.5.2 From the Perspective of People in Cahuita

While most people we interviewed in our community survey did not know about the existence of the Management Committee, after telling them about the Committee, and the collaboration between MINAE and the community in the management of the park, we asked interviewees what they thought some of the best things about this collaboration might be. Answers paralleled those of Management Committee members, and included: community participation in decision-making (the number one answer); more responsible and better management in which the burden is shared; employment of local people; financial resources for reinvestment in the community; better relations with MINAE; free access to the park for locals; increased cleanliness and security; better infrastructure; capacity-building; that the park is recognized as Cahuita's; strengthening of community unity.

7.5.3 From the Perspective of People in Punta Riel and Hone Creek

None of the people we talked to in the other communities neighbouring the park had any knowledge about the collaborative management arrangement in the park. Most stated that the establishment of the park has brought nothing but problems, and no benefits to speak of. *“The creation of the park ruined us completely,”* said one resident from Punta Riel, *“because we can no longer use it. The park has done nothing good...It has destroyed families. Being from here, how is it possible that the park prohibit us from taking an iguana while foreigners can take and export them, while we go hungry?”* He

added that tourists do not come to Punta Riel or other communities neighbouring the park, because they like the coast and the beach, and not the poorer places. Another noted that the park has done some good things in that it is trying to protect the *tepezcuintle*, i.e., paca, and the turtles, which might become extinct. But, he stated, *“they haven’t paid me [for my expropriated lands], and they don’t let me farm. And they don’t let me sow seeds. Not even fish...”* Others mentioned similar disadvantages, such as *“they don’t let us catch turtles, they don’t let us do what we did before...we don’t have the rights we had before”*.

In short, while the people from Cahuita are benefiting from tourism and the new collaborative management arrangement in the park, the people from neighbouring communities feel they have gained no benefits from the park. It should be noted that Namasol started a program to install paca breeders on the plots of the people neighbouring the park. The program was going to teach the people how to breed paca, so that the animals could be released into the wild and also into the park, and the people could hunt an allocated number of animals. However, according to people in neighbouring communities, the program got as far as installing approximately 13 breeding structures, and then came to a halt. There has been talk about this program being restarted.

7.6 In Summary: The Management Committee’s Main Strengths and Weaknesses

This evaluation has underscored the strengths and weaknesses of the Management Committee’s structure, process and outcomes from the perspectives of Management Committee members, Cahuita community members, resource users in neighbouring communities, direct observation and academic literature. At first impression, it would seem that the Committee is in a fragile situation, and is full of growing pains as it moves from services provision in Playa Blanca, to management of the entire park.

Some of its major weaknesses – or, as one community member has put it, *“opportunities for improvement”* – include:

- *High turnover among Committee members, and very short membership terms.* This creates organizational instability, as new members are constantly having to catch

up and new group dynamics have to be fostered, and hinders trust-building. High turnover also leads to inefficiency and ineffectiveness, and a lack of long-term thinking and planning. One means to reduce turnover would be to increase the membership terms of Management Committee members to two years.

- ***Lack of clarity with regards to decision-making authority, mandate, roles and responsibilities and election mechanisms, and poor information-sharing.*** Not only does this hamper the Committee's activities, it also creates tension, misunderstanding, and can even result in people working at cross-purposes or else losing motivation. Without an organizational platform, it is difficult to be effective, efficient or engage in single-loop – let alone double-loop – learning leading to positive institutional change.
- ***Lack of representation of resource users both from Cahuita and neighbouring communities.*** Without the buy-in of resource users, the chances of the Management Committee being successful in curbing open access situations are very slight. In the future, inclusion of these users could help with monitoring and enforcement activities.
- ***Lack of a management plan, technical support, resources and planning.*** The lack of a management plan has led to confusion with regards to the rules governing the park which has spurred conflict. In addition, lack of ongoing planning activities has left the Management Committee to react rather than to be proactive and preventative.
- ***Lack of training and capacity-building.*** Both community members and government officials on the Committee need more skills and capacity-building with regards to joint protected areas management, conflict management, organizational processes, participatory planning, financial management and fundraising. Training would be a first step in helping it move towards planning.

- ***Lack of appropriate (internal and external) communication vehicles and feedback mechanisms; lack of accountability to constituents, and poor functioning of the represented groups (from the perspective of community members).*** All these factors hamper the credibility – and question the legitimacy – of the Management Committee, and add to its inefficiency. More work needs to be done to strengthen those groups currently represented on the Committee, but also to identify means for other stakeholders to be able to voice their concerns.
- ***Lack of consideration of local knowledge in decision-making, and of ensuring that the technical jargon in proposals for the park is understood by community members.***
- ***Lack of vision of the park as 'one park'.*** Regardless of the change in the Management Committee's mandate, there is still a long way to go before the members get beyond seeing the park in terms of the community-run section of Playa Blanca on the one hand, and the government-run section of Puerto Vargas on the other.
- ***Inequitable distribution of benefits to neighbouring communities (favours Cahuita).*** Currently no benefits from the collaborative arrangement flow to members of neighbouring communities, and there are no incentives for them to engage in sustainable use.
- ***Lack of solid legal backing.*** While the Executive Decree provides statutory backing for the Committee, this is not a very strong form of legal backing and could be withdrawn unilaterally. This issue will be expanded in discussions on Berkes' (1997) hypotheses in chapter 9.

While these weaknesses seem daunting, the Management Committee also has many strengths, including:

- ***Flexibility is built into the Executive Decree for the Committee to change its structure and modify the rules of use specified in the Decree.*** This flexibility provides the opportunity for the Committee to become a far more appropriate and effective institution.
- ***Personal commitment and political will to try to do things differently.*** The Director of the La Amistad Caribe Conservation Area has invested a great deal of energy in trying to make the Cahuita experience successful, as have other staff, such as the superintendent in place at the time of negotiations, and the Area's legal counsel. Community members have also shown the will to engage in a new relationship with MINAE. There has, however, been resistance to change from some MINAE officials, which is to be expected after years of working with the centralized, top-down, fences and fines approach to management.
- ***Potential in managing conflicts.*** This is an important foundation on which to build a stronger institution. However, more concerted conflict management planning needs to take place.
- ***Trust-building between the parties.*** The trust-building has occurred over the last years between MINAE and the community of Cahuita is vital to strengthening the ongoing collaboration. However, if and when resource users from neighbouring communities start participating on the Committee, it will be important to emphasize building and maintaining trust, particularly since these users are seen as poachers by people in Cahuita and in MINAE.
- ***Financial autonomy.*** The Management Committee is completely self-reliant financially. However, it depends on tourism in the area, which is subject to fluctuations. In order to decrease its vulnerability to these fluctuations, and to embark on projects, the Committee will need to procure new sources of funding.

- *Participation of respected community leaders.* The buy-in and participation of respected community leaders gives the Management Committee some political weight both at the community level and in the government.

7.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, this evaluation has revealed that at present the Committee is operating as a governance institution rather than a management planning institution. It has led to political empowerment for the community of Cahuita (through the two organizations represented on the Committee), employment, tangible outcomes such as better infrastructure, cleanliness and increased tourism, and recognition of Cahuita's sovereignty over part of the park. However, clearly more work needs to be done if it is to fulfil its potential, such as spurring increased social cohesion at the community level (through strengthening community organizations and ensuring two-way communication), better conflict management, and increased environmental integrity. In order to move into a planning mode, it will need not only organizational consolidation (including a review of its representation), but also ongoing capacity-building. This, in turn, will enable social learning and institutional resilience. If this is accompanied by stronger legal backing and increased funds, the Committee would be well on its way to being a more effective, efficient, equitable and accountable institution.

Chapter VIII

Planning Session: Addressing Institutional Weaknesses

Juntando Esfuerzos

**Taller de
Planificación de Actividades
en el Parque Nacional Cahuita
1999-2000**

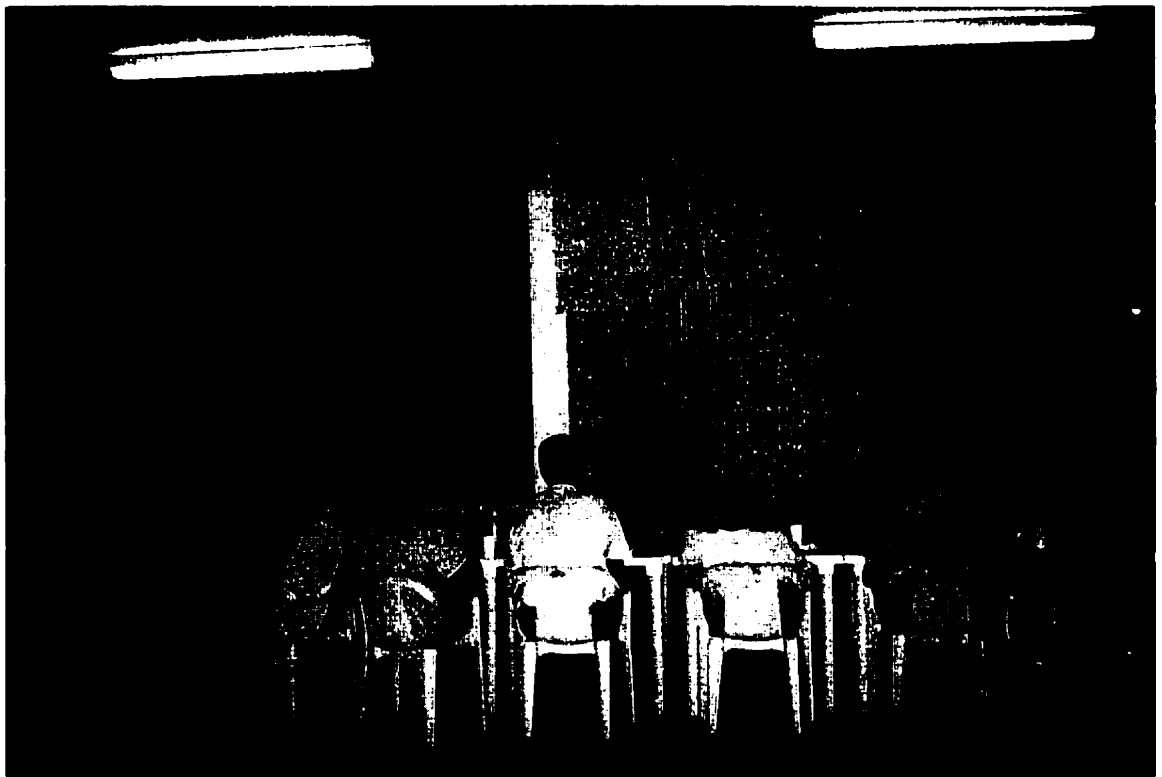
4, 5 y 6 de enero de 1999, San Juan Comunal, Cahuita

Objetivos Principales:

- Definir la visión, misión, estructura y funciones del Comité de Manejo
- Identificar las prioridades en el manejo del Parque
- Elaborar un cronograma de actividades
- Trabajar sobre cuestiones legales hacia un convenio más adecuado

Participantes:

Comité de Manejo, funcionarios del Parque, miembros de la comunidad de Cahuita, representantes de comunidades aledañas, MINAE



Planning session with Management Committee and park staff (January 1999)

Chapter VIII

Management Committee Planning Session: Addressing Institutional Weaknesses

8.1 Introduction: Objectives of the Planning Session

In order to address some of the issues identified in Stages 1 and 2 of our fieldwork, we held a planning workshop spanning three evenings (January 5-7, 1999). Participants included all but one of the Management Committee; the government-paid park wardens; one community-paid park warden; and MINAE officials from the Conservation Area's headquarters in Limón.

The objectives of the planning session were to:

1. Define the decision-making powers, authority, vision, mission, structure and functions of the Management Committee;
2. Identify the priorities for action with regards to the management of the park;
3. Create a timeline of activities; and
4. Work on legal issues towards a more appropriate agreement.

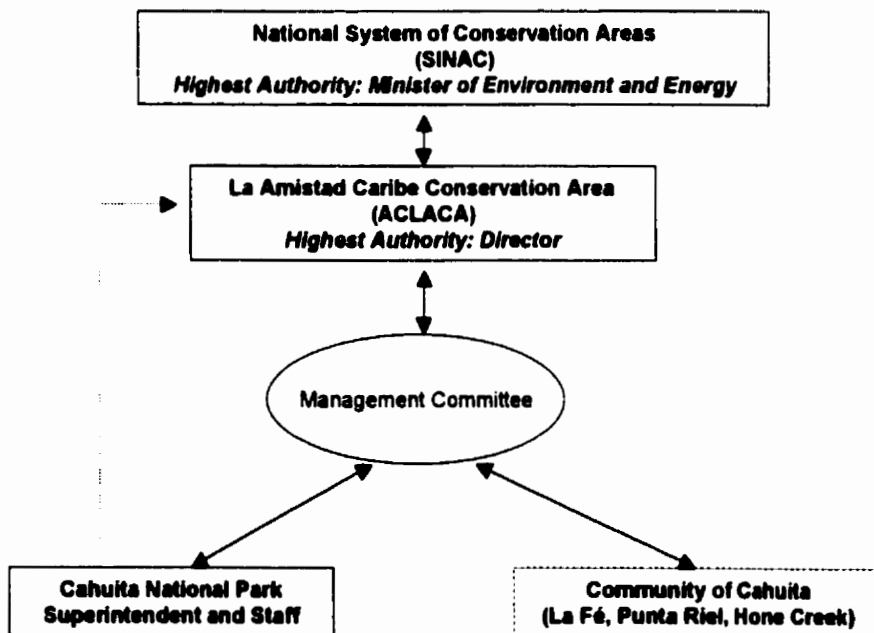
Time constraints allowed for us to work only on the first two objectives, while some progress was also made on the fourth objective. The result was a working document which once finalized, will be used to amend the Executive Decree that provides legal backing to the collaborative process.

8.2 Hierarchy of Decision-Making Powers in Cahuita National Park

To prepare for the planning session, we drew up a preliminary 'organizational/power in decision-making' flow chart (Figure 8-1) together with the Director of the Conservation Area, showing the Committee's decision-making role regarding the

park. The diagram showed the Management Committee reporting directly to the Director of the Conservation Area (as per Article 3 of the Executive Decree), who in turn reports to the Minister of Environment and Energy. The administration of the park, including the superintendent, is shown under the authority of the Management Committee. Also shown on the diagram is Cahuita's (and eventually other communities') power to influence the decision-making of the Management Committee. It should be noted that while the communities are shown in the diagram, their decision-making powers would be channelled through and represented by their elected member on the Management Committee. This diagram served as the basis of discussions in the meeting, and was approved and adopted.

**Figure 8-1:
Flow of Power in Decision-Making in Cahuita National Park**



8.3 The Management Committee:

Towards a Definition, Vision, Mission, Objectives and Functions

After addressing the decision-making powers of the Committee, we conducted brainstorming exercises to define the term 'Management Committee', its vision, mission, objectives and functional areas for the park. The idea was to begin the process of reviewing the Executive Decree establishing the Management Committee, in order to make it more appropriate. This was particularly important, given that the Executive Decree is still geared towards services provision in the park rather than reflective of the Committee's expanded mandate. Currently, the Decree outlines the Committee's functions as to: a) ensure the adequate functioning and quality of services offered in Cahuita National Park; b) establish fees for those services; c) take the administrative measures necessary to ensure that the park is functioning well; d) ensure the fulfilment of the public use rules outlined in the document, as well as those entrenched in Costa Rican environmental law; e) modify the rules of use as stipulated in the Executive Decree.

Marvin and I co-facilitated brainstorming activities, by first informing the group of what a vision and mission entailed (and giving them examples), and then asking people to brainstorm openly on any ideas and/or catch phrases they came up with. We asked participants not to constrain themselves, but to feel free to bring up whatever they were thinking about with regards to a vision and a mission. As they did so, we wrote down people's ideas and catch phrases on flipcharts. There was quite a bit of tension in the room at first, and Marvin and I found it imperative at times to ask community members for their input, and at others to ask government officials to keep their statements short and understandable to all (there was a tendency to use jargon). At one point there was a terse exchange of words between one government official and a community member, which almost derailed the process. It was interesting to note that although we had arranged one long table for participants to sit at, community members chose to sit together on one side of the table, and government officials on the other. In short, it was very evident that we were dealing with parties in conflict.

At the end of the first evening's session, the group had endorsed the decision-making flow chart (Figure 8-1), developed a definition for the Management Committee that all endorsed, brainstormed about ideas for a vision, started drafting a mission and even started working on some objectives for the Management Committee. We pasted these on flipcharts which we kept up on the community centre walls for the next day.

In order to prepare for the session the second day, Marvin and I essayed a first drafting of the Management Committee vision statement, given that this had produced the most difficulty for the group. We distributed draft copies of this vision, as well as the mission, definition of the Committee and the preliminary objectives the group had drafted. The second day's session started by reviewing the work undertaken the previous day. It was agreed that a MINAE official would work on creating a more appropriate vision statement from the draft Marvin and I had produced. After much negotiation, the group finalized the draft definition, vision, mission, definition and objectives as follows:

Definition: The Management Committee is an instance of joint administration and natural and cultural resources management of Cahuita National Park *between the state, the community of Cahuita and its neighbouring communities.*

Vision: The Management Committee of Cahuita National Park administers and manages a protected area that contributes to the global preservation of the world's natural heritage; promotes the conservation of natural and cultural resources within and without the park; strengthens neighbouring communities by means of benefits derived from the protected area, with the objective of increasing the communities' quality of life; ensures all users enjoy and learn from the resources and services offered in the park.

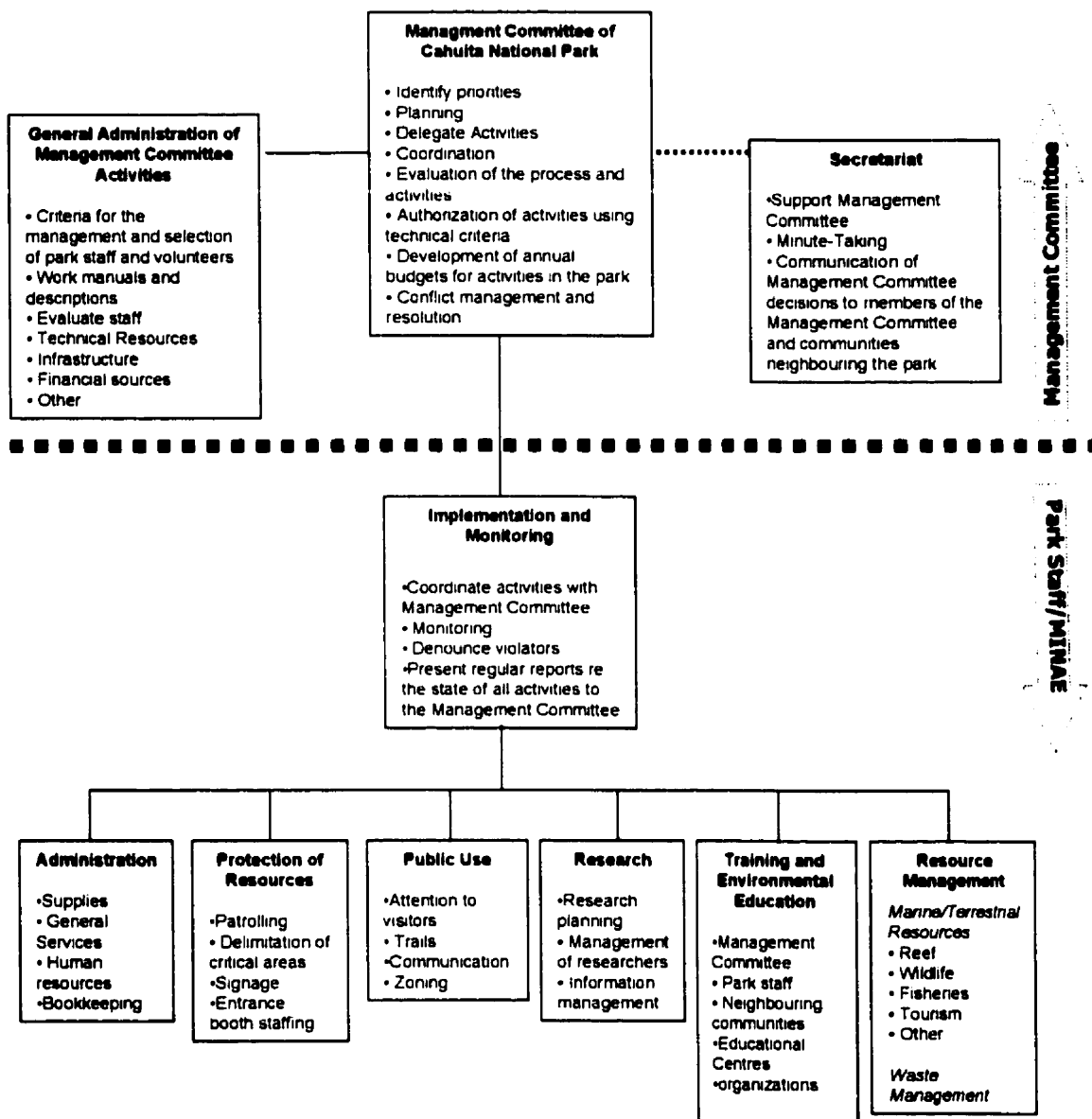
Mission: To ensure that the objectives of Cahuita National Park are fulfilled, through decision-making and *fiscalización* (oversight, supervision) of the activities undertaken by the personnel of the protected area, and making recommendations to the Minister of Environment and Energy or person responsible, regarding all aspects of planning, administration and management of the park.

Objectives:

1. Ensure that the objectives of Cahuita National Park are fulfilled, taking the necessary decisions for the administration and management of the natural, cultural, human, technical and financial resources.
2. Promote environmental education within and without Cahuita National Park.
3. Identify and promote priority research topics for the optimal management and use of Cahuita National Park.
4. *Garantizar* (guarantee, vouch for) the sustainable use of Cahuita National Park's natural and cultural resources, taking into consideration both scientific and local knowledge.
5. Contribute with the strengthening and participation of organized groups in communities neighbouring Cahuita National Park for the integrated management of the protected area and its *zona de influencia* (area of influence).
6. Channel technical and financial resources that complement/supplement the State budget.
7. Oversee the ongoing adaptation of Executive Decree 26929-MINAE.

As a means to visualize and clarify the roles and functions of the Management Committee, MINAE's administration of the park, and the relationship between these, an organizational flowchart was created. It should be noted that once again, Marvin and I presented a preliminary diagram, based to a large extent on the functional areas that had been identified and worked on in the participatory evaluation conducted in Puerto Vargas. After much discussion on the second and third days of the planning session, and after many changes, the following organizational chart was agreed upon by the group (Figure 8-2):

**Figure 8-2:
Management Functions in Cahuita National Park**



What becomes clear from the diagram is that there is a large divide between the Management Committee – and MINAE – with regards to implementing decisions, monitoring, etc. MINAE takes the lead with regards to all these, with the Management Committee overseeing and evaluating. We explained that in most instances of co-management, community people help with monitoring and gathering information for decision-making, and that often joint management task groups are established to tackle specific resource use and issues. However, the new visioning that had taken place was already a large change from how the management of the park had been envisioned before, and the issue of how to involve community people in monitoring is something that will have to be addressed in future planning sessions. With the small number of personnel involved in the park, it is doubtful that all the proposed functions ascribed to MINAE personnel will be able to take place, if community people do not become 'formally' involved in implementation. It should be noted that community people are already involved in certain activities, although in an *ad hoc* way.

8.4 Priorities for Action

As a means of identifying priorities for action we used a participatory methodology suggested by one of the participants. Participants brainstormed on the activities involved in each functional area outlined in the above diagram (we recorded their observations on flipcharts, and they corrected us or clarified where necessary), and then each participant prioritized and assigned weights to the particular activity areas assigned under each functional area. The scale used to define the weighting of the priorities was 1 to 5, where 5 corresponded with the group of activities of highest priority. After each go around in which participants assigned their weights to the action area, the values were added up.

Table 8-1 indicates the outcomes of this exercise for the Management Committee functional area, and Table 8-2 is a summary of the number one priorities per functional area. The full results of this exercise (i.e., all the charts and weights per functional area) are presented in Appendix 7.

Table 8-1: Management Committee Priorities for Action

<i>Functional Subareas</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Total Points</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Internal regulations	- Revise and approve the Committee's internal regulations - Implement the internal regulations once they are approved	33	1
Identification of funding sources	- Identify possible partners - Write fundraising proposals	31	2
Infrastructure	- Conduct a needs assessment focussing on: latrines, garbage bins, tables, signage - Define the physical location of the Management Committee secretariat	30	3
Develop annual budget	- Develop and propose to MINAE an annual budget for Cahuita National Park - Implement	27	4
Executive Decree/ Agreement	- Revise and adapt the Executive Decree - Consult the community with regards to the rules of use in the Decree - Examine the possibility of changing the Executive Decree for a stronger type of Agreement	18	5
Evaluations	- Evaluate the implementation of the annual strategic plan - Evaluate the staff (those hired by MINAE and CDM) - Regularly evaluate the progress and goals achieved - Conduct financial audits	15	6
Administration			
Work manuals and descriptions	- Develop a manual of activities, functions and responsibilities of park wardens	29	1
Technical resources	- Conduct a needs assessment - Develop a procurement plan - Develop manuals for controlling the inventory	23	2
Criteria for selecting wardens	- Develop and define profiles of wardens taking into consideration the functional areas of Cahuita National Park	21	3
Criteria for selecting volunteers	- Develop and define profiles of volunteers taking into consideration the functional areas of Cahuita National Park	20	4
Evaluations of the wardens	- Develop forms for evaluating: - the Management Committee - the park staff - the superintendent of Cahuita National Park - the work plan and achievement of objectives	15	5

Table 8-2: Summary of Top Priorities for Action in Cahuita National Park Defined Per Functional Area

<i>Functions</i>	<i>Priority Activities/Actions</i>
Management Committee	<p><i>Administration: Manuals and job descriptions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a manual of activities, functions and responsibilities of park wardens <p><i>Internal Regulations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revise and approve the Committee's internal regulations - Implement the internal regulations once they are approved
Administration	<p><i>Human resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human resources management and control - Organization and planning of human resources - Start a search for an environmental education trainer
Resources Management	<p><i>Tourism</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turtle observation - Diving - Sport fishing - Identify which activities should and should not be permitted - Zoning - Identify the carrying capacity - Evaluate the quality of services available for tourists <p><i>Waste Management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Studies to determine the nature of waste and its volume - Identify institutions or businesses that could help with waste treatment - Implement a recycling and waste separation system - Identify and implement practical measures for collecting solid waste and treating water
Public Use	<p><i>Attention to tourists</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distribute written information regarding what can and cannot be done in the park - Maintain an up-to-date registry of park visitors - Hold discussion groups and talks - Undertake guided tours - Conduct interviews with tourists to evaluate the services <p><i>Trails</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and design trails - Construct and maintain trails - Trail interpretation - Signage on the trail between Playa Blanca and Puerto Vargas
Protection of Resources	<p><i>Patrolling</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and unify criteria and strategies - Coordinate with police - Involve neighbouring communities - Develop a patrolling plan identifying roles - Denounce violators
Research	<p><i>Research Planning</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinate with the research department of ACLACA - Gain access to ACLACA's information system - Promote/encourage university research - Develop a list of research priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - carrying capacity - biodiversity inventories - environmental health of the resources, especially fauna - bio-indicators - marine populations, with an emphasis on fishery
Training and Environmental Education	<p><i>Management Committee</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify training needs - Focus on: legal aspects; management of protected areas

The planning session ended with a dinner paid for by the Management Committee. It should also be noted that the Management Committee contributed funds to all the materials purchased for this activity, as well as the snacks, showing that it took ownership over the event.

The evaluations we received were quite telling regarding not only our process, but also the way we had to actively manage people's participation. Most government members noted that while they found the activity helpful and essential, they did not appreciate being cut off and interrupted. Community members (two) said the activity had been helpful, particularly because it had helped them learn how to start voicing their opinions in public. One community member wondered why we had not given another slide show, indicating that there really should have been some fun besides all the intense work. Most stated that more time was needed.

8.5 Moving from Planning to Action: Some reflections

While there was much enthusiasm and sense of progress after the planning session, our visit in August 1999 indicated there had been no movement to set up a timeline for the implementation of the priorities identified. There was a change in the park's superintendent, and a new 'overseer' had been appointed to the Management Committee – a member of the regional initiative Corredor Biológico, which aims to create a biological corridor through Central America. According to conversations with the current coordinator of the Management Committee, however, there is talk of using and implementing the planning priorities in the near future.

It might take some time before all the players involved in the management of Cahuita National Park adjust to the new organizational structure and decision-making hierarchy in the park, and the Management Committee's new roles and objectives. The planning session was a negotiation process which involved resolving *"incompatible organizational norms by setting new priorities and weightings of norms"* and led to a major restructuring, a process which organizational development practitioners Argyris and Schön (in Friedmann 1987) have said is part and parcel of double-loop learning. But as

Friedmann (1987) notes, double-loop learning implies a *"restructuring of one's relations to the world, a process of re-education or, still more powerfully, cultural change"* which is a painful process, particularly as in this case, for some actors it *"threatens loss of managerial control"* (Lee 1993). The question for the individuals involved in the Management Committee – and all those involved in the management of Cahuita National Park – is whether they will be able to undergo the restructuring, re-education and cultural change necessary to adapt to the new vision and objectives of park management they have proposed, without slipping into the old models and assumptions informing their actions.

Already, in its first three years of life, the Management Committee – and the personnel of the La Amistad Conservation Area – have made some important moves in envisioning a new management model for Cahuita National Park. It is to be expected that the period of adaptation – and effective implementation of action resulting from a new *modus operandi* with regards to planning – may take some time.

8.6 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the first planning session of the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park to date. The session clarified where the Management Committee fits in with regards to authority and decision-making power over Cahuita National Park, as well as the functions of the Management Committee and Cahuita National Park administration. In addition, it produced a working document of the Committee's definition, vision, mission and objectives, and identified and prioritized actions items for implementation in each of the functional areas.

While much progress was made, the outcome was a working document that needs to be further refined through subsequent planning sessions. In addition, a timeline and action plan needs to be developed with regards to the priority activities identified. The dynamics in the room during the planning session show the need for a third-party facilitator in future planning activities. They also showed the need for capacity-building with regards to protected areas legislation, joint management of protected areas and integrated management planning.

for



Presenting our brochure to community
left to right: Tony Mora, Conservation
researcher Marvin Fonseca, Enrique .

Chapter IX

A Reflection on Conditions Required for Successful Co-Management

9.1 Introduction

Over the last few decades, scholars and practitioners have been identifying and discussing the various conditions that lead to successful co-management. This debate is essential in helping to guide policy decisions towards more appropriate – and enabling – legal and policy frameworks, and in helping those at the front lines of co-management to negotiate and implement more appropriate and effective arrangements.

The analysis in this chapter comprises this thesis' contribution to the theoretical dialogue on conditions leading to successful co-management. In order to set the stage for the analysis, it begins by very briefly reviewing some of the criteria and hypotheses on conditions required for successful collaborative management found in the literature on common property theory, community-based natural resources management and collective action, among other fields. It then focusses on Berkes' (1997) four hypotheses for successful co-management, examining them through the lens of the Cahuita case study. The final section of the chapter maps the power at play in co-management, and identifies several key issues and lessons that emerge from the Cahuita case study that provide further insights into co-management.

9.2 A Brief Review of Some Salient Theories on Conditions Leading to Successful Co-management

Just as the issue of how to evaluate co-management arrangements involves subjectivity, so to does the idea of what comprises success. Clearly, whether a co-management arrangement is successful or not depends on which goals and criteria – and whose goals and criteria – are used to measure success.

For common property theorists, successful management of common pool resources leads to ecologically sustainable resource use, and depends on the ability to address the two-pronged nature of common property resources discussed in chapter 2, namely that *“exclusion is difficult and joint use involves subtractability”* (Berkes 1989). Central to this notion of success is the ability to curb free riders, i.e., *“social actors who perceive that [they] will receive a higher individual payoff for a socially defecting choice than for a co-operative choice, even though individuals engaged in collective action would, in the long term, be better off by working together”* (Steins and Edwards 1998).

Over the years, common property theorists have speculated on the conditions that would lead to success in averting the tragedy of the commons (e.g., Wade 1988; Ostrom 1990; Murphree 1994; Pinkerton and Weinstein 1995) (Table 9-1). Perhaps the most often cited theorist in this regard is Ostrom (1990), who developed eight design principles for robust common-pool systems (targetting mostly simple, single-use systems):

1. Clearly defined boundaries;
2. Congruence between allocation and access rules and local conditions;
3. User’s ability to modify the operational rules through collective-choice arrangements;
4. Monitoring of management system;
5. Graduated sanctions;
6. Conflict resolution mechanisms;
7. Management rights of resource users are not challenged by external agents;
8. Nested enterprises.

**Table 9-1:
Speculations on Conditions Required for
Successful Common Property Resources
Institutions**

Wade (1988):

- the nature of the resource;
- the costs of exclusion technology;
- the relationship between resources and user groups;
- the characteristic of the user group;
- noticeability of cheating;
- the relationship between users and the state.

Murphree (1994):

- institutional reforms that vest control and planning with local user groups
- legislation that recognizes and guarantees rights for local people over the use and benefits of wild resources
- economic incentives and effective mechanisms for controlling access and the sharing of benefits locally.

Pinkerton and Weinstein (1995):

- accountability;
- effectiveness;
- representativeness;
- adaptability

Ostrom emphasizes that these eight design principles are not a blueprint for effective local institutions, but emerged from the study of long-lasting local institutions. She also notes that decision-making about common property resources takes place at three levels: the *legislative* level, where decision-making arrangements form the legal framework which stakeholders in the resource have to operate; the *organizational* level, where decision-making arrangements determine the rules of interaction between management organizations and user groups; and the *operational* level, where the purpose of decision-making arrangements is to provide resource users with day-to-day rules controlling access to, and allocation of and control over the resource. For complex ecological issues such as biodiversity conservation, Ostrom (1995) underscores the need for a diversity of institutions across scales.

As the complexity of the common property resource and its user group increases, a larger spectrum of considerations comes into play. This includes questions of scale (e.g., cooperation across jurisdictions and even nation states), representation (e.g., which stakeholders should be represented), the heterogeneity of the user community (particularly if this includes those who affect the resource, as well as those who use it) and the different social processes involved in the management institution (e.g., conflict resolution, negotiation, power and social learning) (Steins and Edwards 1998). Steins and Edwards (1998) have developed five 'discussion statements' regarding the management of complex, multiple-use common property resources that they insist are not conditions for success or design principles, but are instead speculations for discussion:

1. Platforms for resource use negotiation in multiple-use CPRs must consist of representatives of the different user groups (i.e., individual user groups need to appoint a representative who negotiates on their behalf in the platform).
2. Platforms must be physically (i.e., place and timing) and culturally (i.e., constitution and operation of meetings) accessible to representatives of all user groups.

3. Platform performance depends on the level of organization of individual user groups within the platform, the relations between the various user groups and the strengths and skills of the representatives in the individual user groups.
4. New platforms for resource use negotiation in complex, multiple-use CPRs must not be built on existing platforms for single-use resource management.
5. Platforms must be facilitated by a third party to co-ordinate multiple user groups, to ensure continuity and to reduce or absorb the transaction costs of forming and operating the platform (Steins and Edwards 1998).

Large ecological systems require numerous considerations. Experts from across Canada recently helped the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy identify those conditions that would lead to successful co-management of Canada's oceans resources. Three core elements were identified:

- *A strong supporting institution:* A competent and trusted co-management institution requires solid political endorsement, supportive policies, enabling legislation and funding.
- *Effective engagement of stakeholders:* The economic, environmental and social values as well as the concerns and aspirations of stakeholders must be part of the co-management system, fostered through open and transparent public participation.
- *Capacity-building mechanisms:* The objective of capacity building is to improve the quality of decision-making and sectoral efficiency of management performance in planning and implementation; it seeks to develop the problem-solving capacities of people, communities, governments and other organizations so they can resolve their own problems. This requires institutions at all levels regaining – or training in – capabilities in resource management skills, ranging from consensus building and rule making, to enforcement and monitoring (NRTEE 1998).

And finally, with regards to protected areas (which are often multiple-use, involve the global common property resource of biodiversity, can involve fugitive resources, and can span across intranational and international jurisdictions), scholars have also been active developing criteria for successful co-management. Pimbert and Pretty (1997) posit the following conditions for success, noting they will not take place overnight, will “*require shifts in the balance of social forces and power relations*”, and are more likely to take place in situations where governance is democratic and where reliance on coercive conservation is not the norm:

- Enabling legal arrangements for communal access to biological resources, focussing on granting of rights, access and security of tenure to farmers, fisherfolk, pastoralists and forest dwellers so they can take a long-term view.
- Flexible national regulatory frameworks that can accommodate ‘local peculiarities’ with regards to the decentralization of control and responsibility for protected area management.
- Local communities must a) have the right to retain their knowledge about biological and genetic resources in and around protected areas; b) be able to access information about the medicinal plants and other biological material they manage in protected areas; c) be free to develop their own technologies and to take advantage of other technologies they find useful; d) be able to exercise their right to choose and retain those cultural and marketing systems that best meet their needs.
- Funding is needed for local people to develop their biological resources in and around protected areas.
- Application of appropriate regulations to prevent pollution and resource-degrading activities. Economic policies should include the removal of distorting subsidies that encourage the waste of resources, the targeting of subsidies to the poor instead of the wealthy, and the encouragement of resource-enhancing rather than degrading activities through appropriate pricing policies (Pimbert and Pretty 1997).

Clearly, this last set of conditions is particularly relevant to the Cahuita case study, and will be referred to in further discussion in this chapter.

This brief review of selected hypotheses regarding conditions for successful common property management highlights the increasing variables and complexities that come into play when moving from single-use, local level common property systems, to multi-use common property resource systems, and finally to fugitive and global common property resources that require local, national and international attention. It is important to underscore, however, that many of these hypotheses on conditions required for success are just that – hypotheses and lessons learned – that can help guide policy and action. In the final analysis, whose goals are being used to determine what is or is not successful plays a critical role. As Steins (pers. comm., 1998) has pointed out, there have been situations where, for example, all of Ostrom's (1990) design principles were present, but where the institution was far from successful because it did not address the real wants and needs of the resource users in question, or even the right resource! This shows that there is much to Western's (1994) argument that success in community-based resources management – which can be seen as a sub-category of co-management (Pomeroy and Berkes 1997) – *“must be measured by how deeply the effort is embedded in each community's aspirations and how effectively members efforts sustain it.”*

9.3. Berkes' (1997) Hypotheses:

An Analysis and Reflections Based on the Cahuita National Park Case Study

Berkes (1997) hypothesizes that:

“Assuming that co-management is desirable and there is a need for it, and assuming that devolution of management power is possible and feasible, then (in my experience) four conditions seem to define successful co-management: Are there appropriate institutions, both local and governmental? Is there trust between the actors? Is there legal protection of local rights? Are there economic incentives for local communities to conserve the resource?”

Subsequently, Berkes has changed the question/hypothesis with regards to legal protection of local rights to: *“Does the co-management arrangement have legal status?”* (Pers. Comm., 2000). The following analysis examines the two assumptions and the four conditions individually, using Berkes' revised hypothesis on legal status. However, at the risk of sounding redundant, again the issue of perspective must be underscored: Success

from whose point of view? Desirable from whose point of view? Appropriate from whose point of view? As a starting point, then, I will assume that because as Pomeroy and Berkes (1997) have pointed out in co-management it takes “*two to tango*” (although in other collaborative management scenarios there may be more than two players), the perspective for assessment must include both the perspective of the local people, *and* the perspective of the government stakeholders. In short, it must include the perspective of all the parties in a co-management arrangement.

9.3.1 Assumption #1: Co-management is desirable and there is a need for it

Clearly, in the case of Cahuita, co-management is desirable and there is a need for it from both the perspective of the community of Cahuita and that of the government. It is desirable as the outcome of an interest-based conflict resolution exercise that meets the needs of the stakeholders involved. But both parties have more at stake than merely conflict resolution over the long-term.

The government needs the people of Cahuita to help in maintaining and managing the national park due to lack of sufficient personnel and resources, and in light of its new policy guidelines that stress the input of civil society. Drawing on the knowledge of the people who engage in activities in the park will be helpful in developing, monitoring and enforcing effective rules-in-use in the park, and avoiding the current open access situations which lead to the prisoner’s dilemma.

From the point of view of the people of Cahuita, co-management is imperative in ensuring the best decisions are made regarding the park, which have a direct impact on the livelihood security of the people. In addition, there is a sense of sovereignty and stewardship regarding the park; many Cahuitans feel they have far more at stake than government people in caring for the park, as they have to live with the outcome of decisions, while government people are just passing through. Some – especially the old members of the community – have a strong attachment to the park, which they refer to variously as the Garden of Eden or their *finca* (land). Clearly, Cahuitans would not have agreed to let the government wardens back into the park after its takeover, if they did not

feel Cahuita would benefit from the agreement to administer part – and then co-manage all – of the park. A major coup was ensuring that the money donated at the Playa Blanca entrance be re-invested back into the community. In addition, many note that the park administration and staff have particular technical knowledge and resources to help manage the park.

From the perspective of both Cahuitans and the government then, co-management is desirable and there is a need for it. If the desire for co-management was not shared by the parties, and if there was no *need* for it (either as a means of conflict resolution or to help supplement the state's human and financial resources), the arrangement would not be feasible. Arrangements that are imposed by one party are likely to fail.

***Conclusion regarding Assumption #1:
Co-management is desirable and there is a need for it***

Co-management must be rooted in the aspirations and desire of the parties involved, and they must perceive a need for it.

9.3.2 Assumption #2: Devolution of management power is possible and feasible

This is perhaps one of the most controversial of Berkes' (1997) assumptions and hypotheses, and has been the subject of much recent debate. While I will briefly touch on some of the issues at stake, these will be analyzed in greater detail in the final section of this chapter where I map the power at play in co-management.

According to Pomeroy and Berkes (1997), devolution is one of four types of decentralization. They define decentralization as *"the systematic and rational dispersal of power, authority and responsibility from the central government to lower or local level institutions"* where *"increasing local autonomy is the focal point"* and *"power and authority are transferred or withdrawn by laws enacted at the centre."* The four types of decentralization include:

- ***Deconcentration***: the transfer of authority and responsibility from the national government departments and agencies to regional, district and field offices of national government offices. This is referred to as administrative decentralization.
- ***Delegation***: the passing of some authority and decision-making powers to local officials, but central government retains the right to overturn local decisions and can, at any time, take these powers back.
- ***Devolution***: the transfer of power and responsibility for the performance of specified functions from the national to the local level governments without reference back to the central government. The nature of transfer is political (by legislation), in contrast to deconcentration's administrative [nature]; and the approach is territorial or geographical, in contrast to sectoral.
- ***Privatization***: the transfer of responsibility for certain governmental functions to non-governmental organizations, voluntary organizations, community associations and private enterprises (Pomeroy and Berkes 1997).

While these types of decentralization never exist in their pure forms outlined above, according to the above characterization devolution of management power in co-management involves a legally backed transfer of power and responsibility from the centre to the co-management institution, without reference back to the government. This implies that the government *"is ostensibly giving up power, decentralizing authority and relinquishing control over resources"* (Ribot and Agrawal 1998). In other words, the organizations to which management power has been devolved have autonomy and control over decision-making with few – or no – strings attached to government.

However, there are three main issues with regards to the proposition of the devolution of management power:

1) *It seemingly contradicts the role and legitimacy of nation-states.* Critics have pointed out that there are relatively few examples of management arrangements *"in which there is a*

significant devolution of power to local people" (Pimbert and Pretty 1997; Rivera Araya 1997). Ribot and Agrawal (1998) suggest this is linked to the inherent contradiction in the proposition that states give up the very control and authority that gives them legitimacy (and that is also, in theory, the result of their legitimacy).

2) *There is a conceptual problem with the idea that co-management arrangements comprised of government and community stakeholders be devolved power "without reference back to the government"*. This conceptual problem relates to the nature of accountability and responsibility of nation states not only to *all* their national constituents, but also to their international commitments. This point is particularly important in the case of national parks which are theoretically established in the interest of all national citizens, but also in the interests of the international community. In short, nation states are comprised of local structures, and embedded within global structures, to which they are accountable and responsible.

3) *It does not acknowledge agency and responsibility at the community level*. Devolution assumes that management power resides with the state and must be transferred to the local level. But in the case of Cahuita, two interesting insights emerge:

- That management power would not have been devolved to the collaborative management board without the community's socio-political empowerment (Rocha 1997) and ability to negotiate its demands. It was not so much a state-willed devolution as a community-driven revolution (a statement further supported by the fact that to date Cahuita National Park is the only co-management arrangement involving national parks in Costa Rica);
- That, as Agrawal (1999) has put it, *"state formation in community spaces is not just about the reproduction of state structures and logics through acts initiated by states, or through coercion. It is as much about how this reproduction relies on the willingness of locally situated actors to use new laws to extend state control over themselves."* In other words, just as decentralization is a means by which states can access loci of power to which they had no previous access, so too is it a

means by which communities can have access to the state. It provides the opportunity for local people to attempt to have their views heard, and their rights protected, in ways not previously available.

In short, the case of Cahuita encourages a flip in perspective away from the idea of the local level being 'given' or 'devolved' management power and of being the object of cooptation and state-formation, to the idea that the local level has agency as well as responsibility, and that co-management might even be a vehicle that can lead to socio-political empowerment.

In conclusion, this discussion has shown that the feasibility and possibility of devolution of management power, i.e., *"the transfer of power and responsibility for the performance of specified functions from the national to the local level governments without reference back to the central government"* (Pomeroy and Berkes 1997, my emphasis) is questionable, particularly in the case of national parks. Devolution in co-management stops short of granting full autonomy on account of the nature of representative democracies, and the embeddedness of nation-states in – and their responsibility and accountability to – global structures (discussed further in the final section of this chapter). In this context, what is feasible and possible is the provision of legal backing of authority and responsibility of co-management arrangements, and the transfer of certain management functions, with the understanding that there *is* reference back to the central government. Making this clear – calling a spade a spade – is important in ensuring that the discourse of devolution does not raise expectations that cannot be met, which could lead *"to misunderstanding, disappointment and withdrawals of trust"* (Covey 1992). In addition, the knowledge that the devolution of management power in co-management is 'bracketed' is helpful in designing and strengthening co-management arrangements. Finally, this discussion questioned the appropriateness of the language of devolution in light of the fact that the local level has agency and responsibility.

**Conclusion regarding Assumption #2:
That the devolution of management power is possible, and feasible**

There must be transparency about the 'bracketed' nature of the decision-making powers possible in co-management (of national parks), and parties are aware of the scope and limits of their decision-making authority.

9.3.3 Hypothesis #1: There must be appropriate institutions, both local and governmental

According to North (1990), institutions are *"the rules of the game in a society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction"*. North distinguishes between informal institutions which are *"embodied in customs, traditions, and codes of conduct"* and change incrementally, and formal rules which *"may change overnight as the result of political or judicial decisions"* (North 1990). He also distinguishes between institutions and organizations, the latter being *"groups of individuals bound by some common purpose to achieve objectives"* (North 1990) which are agents of institutional change. This analysis examines Berkes' (1997) hypothesis in light of the main institutions (both rules of use and organizations) at the legislative, organizational and operational levels (Ostrom 1990) which affect the management of Cahuita National Park.

9.3.3.1 The legislative level

When looking at rules at the legislative level affecting co-management of protected areas, it is important to consider rules that establish protected areas, rules that affect the environmental health of protected areas, rules that affect land tenure, communal access to resources intellectual property rights, and rules that enable co-management arrangements (e.g., Pimbert and Pretty 1997). The issue here is the relative power that nation-states and local communities have in influencing these rules to ensure they are appropriate to their contexts and situations.

As noted in the previous discussion on Berkes' assumption regarding the devolution of management power, nation-states are embedded within global structures and forces that have a direct impact on how they conduct their affairs domestically, and how

they make rules. National laws regarding national parks, environmental standards, intellectual property rights, etc., are influenced to a great degree by international policy-making fora such as the IUCN; international trade agreements and conventions, such as the WTO, Convention on Biological Diversity, TRIPS, CITES, RAMSAR; and increasingly, by multinational corporations. This is a large issue in Costa Rica and other tropical countries that have high biodiversity, and who are the target of increasing attention by bioprospectors and pharmaceutical companies.

With regards to the legislative level, several issues regarding appropriate institutions emerge for Costa Rica, which have a direct impact on Cahuita National Park:

1) The contradiction that exists among international conventions dealing with biodiversity and intellectual property rights. For example, Costa Rica has signed and ratified two agreements that make norms regarding intellectual property rights: TRIPS and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). According to Costa Rica's State of the Nation Report (Proyecto Estado de la Nación 1998), the obligations in both agreements are geared to similar issues, but have different and conflicting objectives, and assume different legal systems and obligations. TRIPS imposes private intellectual property rights over biodiversity, while the Convention of Biodiversity recognizes local collective rights over biodiversity. In Costa Rica there is fear that TRIPS will make the application of the CBD impossible, particularly because if Costa Rica does not apply TRIPS, it will be subject to trade sanctions (Proyecto Estado de la Nación 1998).

Some critics even go beyond looking at the substance and implications of these types of international agreements to question the very appropriateness of converting biodiversity into a global common property that can be commodified (e.g., Goldman 1998). They note that if history and contextual factors are not taken into account in commons discourse, and if those using this language do not engage in reflexivity, then the commons discourse might itself be part of a 'commons project' – *“a hidden and not-so-hidden institution of domination and imperialism in North-South relations”* that should be mined for *“explanations of new forms of social control that can lead to intensified exploitation of all forms of nature, human and non-human”* particularly because *“significant artefacts (e.g.,*

institutions of power) are being left behind that undermine commoners' rights to control the knowledge produced, and ultimately – because their knowledge helps determine the role of capital, the state and development institutions... – the realm of what is defined as the commons” (Goldman 1998).

2) The link between multinational pharmaceutical corporations, Costa Rica's National Biodiversity Institute and state agencies responsible for protected areas, and the distribution of benefits at the local level. Putting aside the question of whether seeing biodiversity as a global common property is a form of imperialism, an important issue is the distribution of benefits from protected areas, and the impact that the new valuing of biodiversity might have in terms of increasing protectionism and non-use in national policies and legislation. The institutional and financial linkage between Costa Rica's National Institute for Biodiversity and the National Parks Foundation and National System of Protected Areas (see Figure 6-1 in chapter 6) implies that in effect there is a link with the funders of INBio – i.e., multinational pharmaceutical corporations – and the state agencies in charge of protected areas. It can be argued that the state has much to gain from this linkage, as it is helping not only to generate income, but also to undertake biodiversity inventories, and is encouraging scientific research in protected areas. However there is a double standard being applied, and the 'losers' in this arrangement are the people who depend on the resources in protected areas for survival: these people are being told they cannot use the resources for commercial purposes, while INBio and multinational corporations are welcome to use the resources in what is considered a public good – namely biodiversity in national parks – for commercial purposes.

Some highlight that bioprospecting offers benefits to local communities, as locals are hired to work on biodiversity inventories; INBio trains them in scientific methods, and they then go back to the conservation areas that are their home, and produce inventories. However, very few of these 'parataxonomists' are hired (in the first two years of the training program, some 32 were hired and 19 stayed on [Janzen et al. 1993]). Moreover, they are trained at INBio's headquarters in the capital, and the chances that they will remain in their communities after they receive their training, and after they have completed the inventories in their home areas, is questionable. While there is no doubt that bioprospecting is

providing jobs and the opportunity of training to Costa Ricans, most of these are going to people living in the capital. Clearly, there are very large issues associated with the appropriateness of rules about biodiversity conservation, bioprospecting and intellectual property rights at the international and national levels, and the impacts they have at the local level. For example, appropriation of *sui generis* knowledge on biodiversity is at the heart of the ongoing debate regarding Costa Rica's National Biodiversity Strategy, which was tabled in 1999 (Giro, pers. comm., 2000).

The recent Law on Biodiversity (1998) has made some important strides towards addressing and harmonizing some of the above issues, many of which are summarized in the discussion of Berkes' hypothesis regarding legal backing for co-management.

3) Cross-scale institutional issues – the lack of congruence and appropriateness between international guidelines and conventions, national laws and local situations. As was discussed in Chapter 3, Costa Rica's legislation regarding national parks is affected to a great extent by the IUCN's categories. However, in Central and South America, the norm is that protected areas and national parks contain people, and therefore there is a need for more appropriate international policy guidelines and national legislation to address this issue.

One international convention which affects national legislation and has had a direct impact in Cahuita National Park is CITES. This declares the marine turtles that people in the neighbouring communities use as endangered. As was described in the conflict management section of the evaluation of the Management Committee, the result is that turtle users are considered illegal poachers, and the outcome has been violent confrontations, and a free-for-all with regards to turtle use. At the heart of this controversy – and of the issue of appropriate institutions regarding this controversy – are values, and the issue of animal rights versus human rights. It also raises the question of whether there is flexibility in national legislation for protected areas to enable dialogue with people considered poachers by international standards, and to enter into institutional arrangements where these resource users could help manage the resource, as they themselves have proposed. After all, as common property theorists would argue, enabling

institutions that would help reduce depletion by some margin is better than having an open access situation.

Some headway towards this possibility is made in the 1998 Law of Biodiversity. Article 55 notes that the state will give priority to species that are in danger of extinction, taking into consideration national and international red lists, and conventions such as CITES. However, under 55 (2), the Law also states that where there is communal cultural or subsistence use of these endangered species, the state will promote the necessary technical assistance to help ensure the long term conservation of the species, "*respecting cultural practice.*" Article 101 states that incentives will be developed for community participation in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity through technical assistance and other incentives enshrined in the Law, "*especially in areas where endangered, endemic or rare species have been identified*". Finally, Article 102 states that the Ministry of Environment and Energy, in coordination with other relevant public authorities and civil society, will give priority to financing and giving technical or other advice for projects that involve communal management of biodiversity.¹⁰

4) Contradictory laws and policies with regards to conservation and development.

There have been many problems related to contradictory national policies that have resulted in socio-environmental conflicts. One example that could lead to future conflict is the granting of concessions for petroleum exploration offshore Talamanca by the Directorate of Mines housed in MINAE, which could have a direct impact on the environmental integrity of Cahuita National Park. The issue of contradictory laws and policies regarding conservation and development was recently recognized in the 1998 Law on Biodiversity, and in the future, moves will be made to attempt to rectify the situation. Article 103 of the Law on Biodiversity states that all Ministries and public agencies must revise their existing legislation and propose or make the necessary changes to eliminate

¹⁰There are also examples of community-based monitoring of turtles in Costa Rica (e.g., in Tortuguero National Park and in Ostional), and there is increasing recognition for the need to enter into dialogue with turtle users. This was seen in the recent International Agreement for the Conservation of Caribbean Sea Turtles between the Presidents of Costa Rica, Panama and Nicaragua, an Agreement which aims to establish a marine biological corridor between the three countries, and recognizes the need for resource users to participate in decision-making (CCC 1998).

or reduce negative incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and propose appropriate disincentives.

5) The relative legal strength of national parks. While there is national parks legislation in Costa Rica, national parks are established by unilateral presidential Executive Decrees. These Decrees can be – and have been – withdrawn, and are subject to political tides.

6) Enabling policy framework for co-management and legal backing for co-management arrangements. With regards to enabling policies and legislative frameworks for co-management of protected areas, chapter 3 of this thesis demonstrates that Costa Rica is quite advanced. In addition, the 1998 Law on Alternative Conflict Resolution recognizes alternative dispute resolution processes for conflicts, and Costa Rica's ombudsperson provides a valuable resource with regards to mediation of disputes and agreements that may lead to co-management.

Nonetheless, there is still no precedent for a co-management agreement in a national park that has strong legal backing. In the case of Cahuita National Park, for example, the agreement to establish the Services Committee was signed by the Minister and the Development Association of Cahuita. However, it was not passed or approved by the *Contraloría*, the government office which gives final approval to *Convenios* (Memoranda of Understanding or Agreement). The current management arrangement is given official sanction by Executive Decree, which – while politically unwise – could be withdrawn. More work needs to be done to attempt to create management arrangements which have stronger legal backing.

This review of some of the issues related to appropriate institutions at Costa Rica's legislative level that affect protected areas and co-management highlights just how inextricably related some of these are to the international policy and legal context.

9.3.3.2 *The organizational level*

Clearly it is important to ensure there be appropriate decision-making arrangements to determine the rules of interaction between management organizations and user groups. In Costa Rica, there has been a move towards incorporating the participation of user groups in law-making at the national level (for example, the drafting of the 1998 Law on Biodiversity was based on a consensus decision-making process that included the National Peasant Table and the National Indigenous Table, and the 1999 National Biodiversity Strategy involved an intense series of consultations with various stakeholders). However, with regards to Executive Decrees, while local groups are often consulted before they are issued, a more appropriate way to go about drafting these would be to ensure that people at the local level are involved right from the start, and are full participants in developing the initial text.

In terms of the National System of Protected Areas' organizational structure and policy guidelines, there have also been important moves with regards to including local resource users. However, these changes are so recent and preliminary, that whether what has been established in writing is implemented in practice remains to be seen. Questions such as appropriate representation and meeting processes, and participatory management planning are key.

With regards to the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park, issues at the organizational level include:

- **Structural issues:** appropriate representation of primary stakeholders.
- **Process issues:** turnover of membership, culturally appropriate meeting process, appropriate internal and external communication and feedback mechanisms, 'upwards' and 'downwards' accountability, ability to voice concerns, consideration of local knowledge, and appropriate language (i.e., not everyone could understand the jargon being used).
- **Outcomes:** appropriate distribution of costs and benefits.

Another large issue at the organizational level is the ongoing training of professionals and field staff with regards to participatory methodology. While this is improving – for example, a superintendent of Cahuita National Park went to a one-and-a-half month training course – there needs to be more support for implementation in the field. In addition, at some events, such as the planning session we held, it is important to have recourse to a third-party facilitator that can help move the process forward in an appropriate way, as Steins and Edwards (1998) have suggested in their discussion points on multi-use CPRs.

9.3.3.3 The operational level

Appropriate rules at the operational level are important in terms of day-to-day rules controlling access to, allocation of, and control over the resource. In Cahuita National Park there is still a long way to go with regards to developing appropriate rules that satisfy the needs and aspirations of affected community members and state officials.

Conclusion regarding Hypothesis #1:

There must be appropriate institutions, both local and governmental

There must be appropriate institutions at the local, national and international level.
Comment: This may be idealistic in light of the constraints imposed on the state (and therefore on co-management) by global 'structuring agents' and international commitments; the various agendas and power asymmetries among actors; and the inevitable inconsistencies (and contradictions) in decision-making.

9.3.4 Hypothesis #2: There must be trust between the actors

Clearly, there are many actors affected by – or who could influence the outcomes of – co-management, as was seen in the stakeholder analysis of Cahuita National Park in chapter 6. For the purposes of this discussion, then, I will assume that by actors, Berkes (1997) means the parties to the co-management arrangement, the members on the board, and the constituents they represent.

As was noted on the section on trust in the evaluation of the Management Committee (Chapter 7, 3.6), all Committee members during stage 1 of the fieldwork stated there was trust between the Committee members, which was defined variously as people being able to express themselves openly in Committee meetings; people knowing each other; and changes in attitude. In other words, trust was seen as the *outcome* of building a relationship, and the comfort levels that grow as people show commitment to making the Committee work. It was not a pre-condition.

Committee members emphasized that trust does not negate disagreements, and that this creative tension in perspectives is a healthy and necessary part of any relationship that enables things to move forward. From the perspective of Cahuita's Management Committee, then, pre-conditions to building trust among the members on a co-management board are open attitudes, commitment to making the process work, and time to get to know each other, establish rapport and comfort levels. In observing the Committee in action, it also became apparent that transparency – particularly financial transparency – was also an important factor in establishing and maintaining trust.

In addition, respect for the knowledge and potential contribution of community Committee members was a very large issue affecting relations – and potential outcomes – of the Management Committee. There were tense moments in some Committee meetings, and in our strategic planning session, where state officials showed a lack of respect for the potential contribution community members could make with regards to resources management. The assumption was that the state officials had the capacity and knowledge – or at least were aware of the limitations of their knowledge – and that community members were lacking in this regard. The issue of respect is very closely linked to the issue of attitude and openness, but is in and of itself a necessary ingredient – together with trust – in building healthy co-management relationships.

With regards to trust between the Committee and community members, or between the Committee and state officials, much has to do with communication and feedback mechanisms, and the legitimacy and influence that the members of the board have in both government and community circles. According to the Oxford English Reference Dictionary,

to trust in someone means “to place trust in; believe in; rely on the character or behaviour of...to place reliance in” (Pearsall and Trumble 1996). For those in the community this is clearly a difficult thing to do with the Management Committee, as most community members do not even know of its existence. However, besides increasing two-way communication with community members, having members of the Committee who are respected community members or leaders in Cahuita would no doubt increase their trust in the Committee. With regards to trust between higher level state officials and the Committee, ongoing communication about the Committee’s activities has been key, as has transparency and the important role played by leaders.

Finally, considering the relationship between community members in Cahuita and park officials, building trust has to do with seeing park officials active in the park, and supporting or participating in community events. Again, the key is respect and understanding, and a sense of participating rather than simply ‘passing through’. Also, the level of trust in the park administration is linked to who is hired – not only in terms of personality, but whether they are from the province of Limón, and can understand and respect the ways and culture of Cahuita. For example, tensions between community members and the state decreased at the time of the 1994 conflict when Gina Cuza Jones was hired to be superintendent of the park (she is from Limón), and Edwin Cyrus – also of Afro-Caribbean decent – became involved.

To conclude, there is an historical mistrust between members of the community and the Ministry of Environment and Energy on account of the way the park was established and the lack of compensation, a ‘constraint’ existent in protected areas worldwide (e.g., Kothari 1995). The actors involved in resolving the 1994 conflict, and the collaboration that has ensued, are working towards changing this. However, the process could be sped up if there were more openness, accountability and communication between the Management Committee and community members.

**Conclusion regarding Hypothesis #2:
There must be trust among the actors**

There is respect (for difference). Trust will be more likely if there is communication among the parties, legitimacy and accountability, and means to resolve potential conflict.

Comment:

Pre-conditions to building trust among the members on a co-management board are: open attitudes, commitment to making the process work; time to get to know each other, establish rapport and comfort levels; financial transparency; and respect for the knowledge and potential contributions of *all* board members.

Pre-conditions to building trust between the co-management board and community members, and between the Committee and state officials are: communication and feedback mechanisms; respect, legitimacy and influence of members of the board in both government and community circles.

Pre-conditions to building trust – and overcoming the historical mistrust – between park officials and community members are: Hiring park officials who have open attitudes, and who respect and understand the culture and ways of the communities in which they work – hiring people from the area, or from similar cultural backgrounds if possible; active participation of park officials both in activities in the park, and activities in the community.

9.3.5 Hypothesis #3: The co-management arrangement must have legal status

There is no doubt that legal backing for collaborative management agreements and authority to make and enforce rules strengthens co-management arrangements. In the case of Cahuita, for example, the Committee felt it could not act on certain decisions while it was operating *de facto* but not *de jure*. However, even though it now has statutory backing, this backing is rather weak as it can be unilaterally withdrawn.

In order for the Cahuita arrangement to be truly precedent-setting – and for it to forge the way for other co-management arrangements – the Committee will need to work towards establishing stronger legal backing. One way would be for it to insist on a Memorandum of Agreement with the Minister, where both parties sign an Agreement that neither can withdraw from unilaterally without first going through a formal process. But

another means would be to lobby the government for amendment of the National Parks Law to allow for co-management arrangements. In this way, co-management arrangements would be backed by law rather than Executive Decree. If this occurs, however, the case would also have to be made for national parks to be protected by law rather than by Executive Decree in order to avoid potential loopholes.

A further consideration that needs to be made is that if co-management arrangements are backed by law, then it would be much easier to protect local rights to resources use in protected areas, and the range of rights associated with these that Pimbert and Pretty (1997) specify as key. Jointly negotiated co-management agreements – which would stipulate the types of resources use that could take place in the protected area, and the rights of the local people in this regard – would carry the full force of law. This would enable the possibility of arrangements that might contravene existing legislation, but that are more appropriate to the situation on the ground.

Currently, the National Parks Law strictly prohibits *all* resource use (hunting, gathering, plant extraction, etc.) in national parks, with the exception of subsistence and sports fishing in certain areas, and only after there is proof that these activities do not result in ecological alterations (Article 10). There is no mention of – or special dispensations for – local people. While Executive Decrees can specify resource use that goes beyond the National Parks Law – as does the Decree establish the rules of use in Cahuita National Park – they do not constitute legal protection of local rights as such.

Some protection for local rights with regards to intellectual property, traditional knowledge and biodiversity is provided by the 1998 Law on Biodiversity. Specifically, it:

- Holds as one of its guiding principles that cultural diversity must be respected. Article 9 (3) states that diversity of cultural practices and knowledge associated with components of biodiversity must be respected and fostered, in keeping with national and international legal frameworks, particularly in the case of peasant communities, Indigenous Peoples and other cultural groups.

- States that Indigenous Peoples and local communities' knowledge, practices and innovations with regards to conservation and ecologically sustainable use of components of biodiversity should be recognized and compensated (Article 10 (6))
- Requires the informed consent of local people with regards to access to genetic or biochemical components in their home areas (Article 63 (1)). It also provides for the local people to demand the type of protection they want for their local knowledge leaves (Article 63 (2))
- Recognizes the right of local communities and Indigenous Peoples to oppose access to their resources and associated knowledge, for cultural, spiritual, social, economic and other reasons.
- Recognizes and protects *sui generis* intellectual property rights, i.e., the knowledge, practices and innovations of Indigenous Peoples and local communities that are related to the use of components of biodiversity (Article 82).
- Mandates a participatory process for determining the nature and reach of *sui generis* community intellectual property rights (Article 83).

These answer most of Pimbert and Pretty's (1997) criteria for protection of local people's rights. In addition, the Law on Biodiversity provides for the state to "respect" cultural practices with regards to endangered species, as mentioned in the discussion on CITES above.

Therefore, there now exists a legal framework that could be used to argue for increased access and other rights of local people for subsistence use of resources in Costa Rica's national parks, even though this contravenes the National Parks Law. It would be interesting to see the outcomes of local people taking this issue to the courts.

In conclusion, there is no doubt that legal backing for co-management is one of the keys to its success. This is particularly true if this legal status also enables the legal

protection for local use rights, and other rights associated with these. In the case of Cahuita, more work needs to be done to lobby the government for stronger legal backing. If the government works towards allowing for the legal status of co-management by amending the National Parks Law, then co-management agreements – together with the provisions set out in the 1998 Law on Biodiversity – could allow for the legal protection of local rights and more incentives for sustainable use.

***Conclusion regarding Hypothesis #3:
The co-management arrangement must have legal status***

There must be legal backing for the co-management arrangement and protection for the rights of local resource users

9.3.6 Hypothesis #4:

There must be economic incentives for local communities to conserve the resource

For the purposes of this discussion, I will assume that 'incentives' refers to benefits. For the people of Cahuita, economic benefits are a very important outcome of conserving the resources in Cahuita National Park; most survive from tourism (whether directly or indirectly), and many tourists visit Cahuita to lounge on its white beaches and visit the National Park. The park also provides jobs for community people, particularly in the Playa Blanca section directly managed by the Management Committee. And a portion of the funds received through donations at Playa Blanca is channelled to help support community needs or events.

However, conservation of the resources in the park is motivated by additional incentives, including social, cultural and historical factors. Many Cahuitans are very proud of their Park, and have a very close attachment to it. During the course of the fieldwork we often heard the comment that "*Cahuita is the park, and the park is Cahuita*". There is a sense of cultural attachment and sovereignty over the area that plays a large role in conserving and maintaining the park's resources.

Moreover, the residents of Punta Riel and Hone Creek have noted that they would conserve turtle eggs if they were given the authority to manage the turtle nesting areas, showing that simply having a recognized stake in decision-making and management of the resources – i.e., simply having political empowerment to influence decision-making – might be incentive enough towards conservation (i.e., sustainable use).

But besides incentives towards conservation as a pre-condition for success, another important and relevant line of questioning with regards to incentives and co-management is: What incentives exist with regards to co-management? What are the benefits of co-management, and are these greater than the costs? Is there a fair distribution of the benefits and costs of co-management among the primary stakeholders in the park?

According to our interviews with members of the Management Committee and community people in Cahuita (outlined in chapter 7), there is a wide range of benefits associated with co-management. Management Committee members cited socio-economic incentives (increased employment opportunities for local people and associated positive social impacts), the forging of better relations with MINAE (i.e., conflict management), participation in decision-making in the park, more efficient administration, financial transparency and a variety of tangible outcomes (better security, waste management, maintenance and infrastructure).

Community members of Cahuita noted similar potential outcomes of collaboration (most did not know about the existence of the Committee), but several mentioned that this collaboration could help unite and strengthen the community, and bring capacity-building. Additional benefits are that the park is recognized as Cahuita's and there is free access for local people. However, the people from the neighbouring communities of Punta Riel and Hone Creek said the park (and the co-management board) had brought no benefits to their communities. It should be noted, however, that one of the security guards hired for the Playa Blanca section was from Punta Riel.

In short, there are many benefits related to the co-management arrangement in Cahuita National Park, including potential increased social unity or cohesion, political empowerment, socio-economic benefits, (informally) recognized 'ownership' rights over the park, and more efficient and effective administration of the park. Because the Management Committee is self-funded, to date, the arrangement has cost the government no additional money from government coffers (except for perhaps the costs of negotiating with the community), although clearly it has lost the money it would otherwise have gained from entrance fees in Playa Blanca (Table 9-2).

Table 9-2: Main Benefits and Costs of Co-Management in Cahuita National Park

	<i>Cahuita</i>	<i>Government</i>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Better relations with MINAE •Local conflict management mechanism •Money generated through donations stays in the community •Increased employment opportunities for local people •Potential increased social unity or cohesion •Increased sense of stewardship and pride •(informally) Recognized ownership rights over the park and free access for locals •Participation in decision-making and priority-setting •Better security, waste management and infrastructure (which could lead to more tourists and revenue) •Capacity-building •Financial transparency •Increased potential to attract funds from donors •Increased potential to forge alliances with universities, research institutions and NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Better relations with community members •Local conflict management mechanism •Increased personnel at no additional cost (see Costs below) •Increased monitoring of illegal activities, both in the terrestrial and the marine portion. MINAE has no boats for patrolling, and so the observations of community members who operate tour and fishing boats is helpful. •Better security, waste management and infrastructure (which could lead to more tourists and revenue, even in the Puerto Vargas section) •Financial transparency •Ability to tap into the knowledge of local people for better environmental decision-making •Increased profile and reputation at the national and international level with regards to democratic decision-making processes for environmental management •Increased potential to attract funds from donors •Increased potential to forge alliances with universities, research institutions and NGOs
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Opportunity costs for community members of the Committee with regards to the time they invest (at least 12 hours per month), particularly since they are not remunerated •Potential increased tension and personal retaliation between members of the Management Committee (and community personnel) and other community members who violate the Management Committee's rules of use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Funds it would otherwise have gathered through donations in Playa Blanca •Opportunity costs for government members of the Committee with regards to the time they invest (at least 12 hours per month); however, they are salaried
<p>NOTE: <i>Punta Riel and Hone Creek are so far bearing mostly costs, which are related to the establishment of the park (e.g., restriction of access, threatened livelihood security, lack of compensation). The only benefits they have received from the Co-Management arrangement to date is the opportunity to be hired as a staff person for the Playa Blanca section.</i></p>		

Conclusion regarding Hypothesis #4:

There must be economic incentives for local communities to conserve the resource

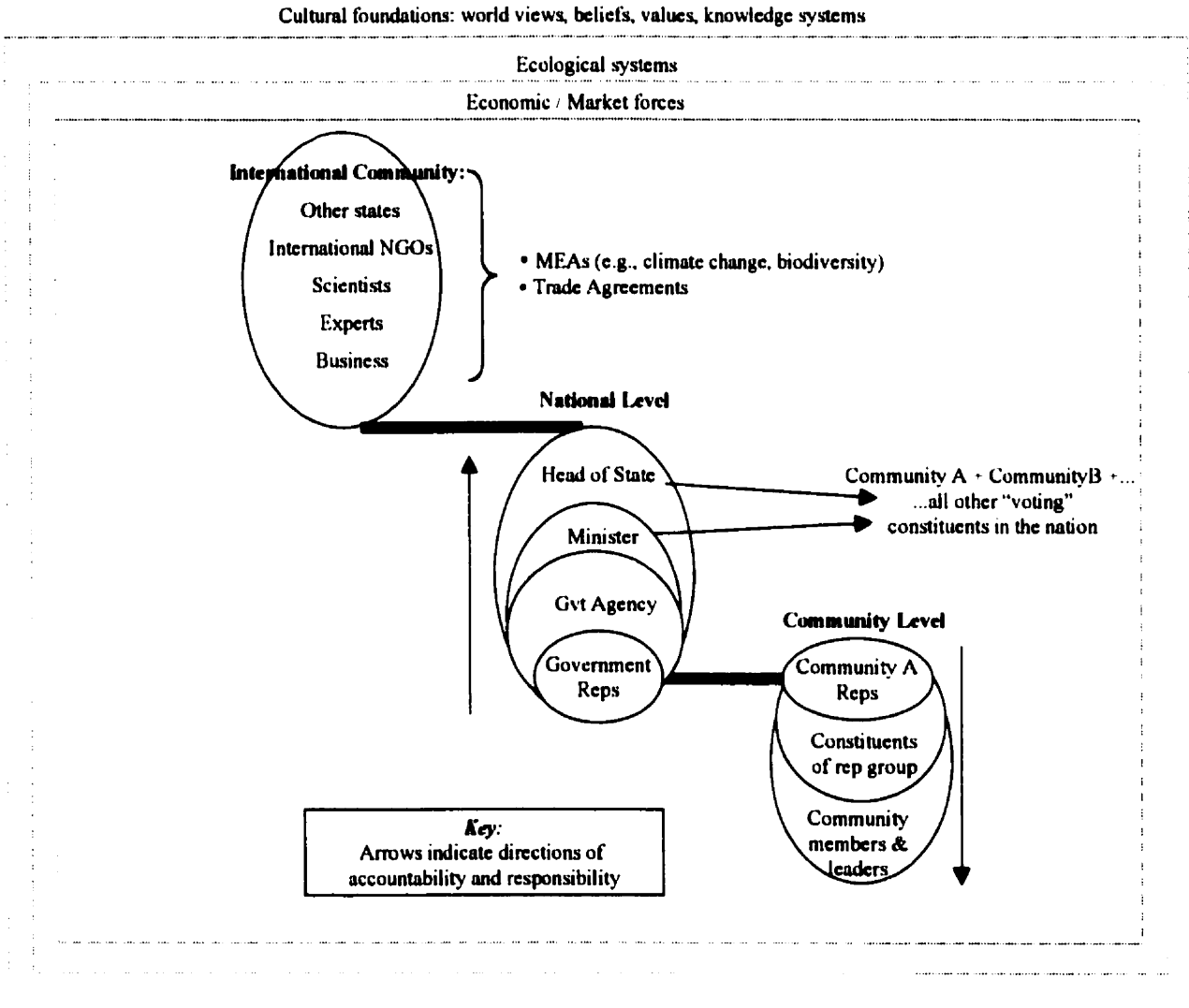
There are social and/or economic benefits for all resource users to conserve the resource, including political empowerment to influence decision-making.

9.4 Mapping the Power at Play in Co-Management and Drawing Lessons from Cahuita

What has stood out throughout the discussions in this chapter – and throughout this thesis – is that co-management institutions are at the confluence of many different agendas, and are embedded in local, national and international structures and processes (Figure 9-1). Communities and government agencies that enter into co-management arrangements are in an inherently asymmetrical relationship in many respects. The question then, is: What are the conditions that need to be in place to try to balance this asymmetry, and to decrease the vulnerability of co-management institutions to potential co-option – both from ‘above’ and from ‘below’?

The Cahuita case study offers some interesting preliminary insights into these questions. This section maps and describes the principal types and sources of power issues that emerge at the five main power spheres in co-management: the supranational sphere; the national sphere; the co-management institution sphere; the Committee-community sphere; and the community sphere. While the discussion on the supranational and national sphere is more general, the analysis of the other spheres draw more specifically on the Cahuita case. This section closes with a reflection on the lessons the Cahuita case provides with regards to those elements that might lead to co-management as an empowering experience, both for community and governmental representatives.

**Figure 9-1:
Constraints, Accountability and Responsibility in Co-Management**



9.4.1 Mapping the Power at Play

9.4.1.1 Macro-Level/Supranational Power Issues and Constraints

As was noted in the discussion of Berkes' (1997) assumption on devolution, nation-states often fail in their promise 'to deliver' (Pomeroy and Berkes 1997) on their policies with regards to the decentralization of 'real power' in decision-making. This failure is linked to a range of external, macro-level or supranational constraints that have a direct influence on how states conduct their affairs in practice. These constraints include, but are not limited to:

1) Globalization and market forces. These forces affect the structures of all nation states, and some scholars have argued that they are drastically diminishing and 'eclipsing' the role and power of states (Evans 1997). However, there is disagreement over the role of the state in light of globalization, and whether market forces are creative or destructive agents of change. For some, there is no role for the state in globalization, as market forces and local communities become the alternative means for forwarding progress. Others (e.g., Ribot 1999) use Antonio Gramsci's (1971) argument that the role of the state is to protect spaces in which civil society – i.e., *"that sphere of society which organizes itself autonomously"* (Lummis 1996) – can thrive, particularly in light of the strength of market forces and the seeming ability of these forces to crush cultural difference and the power of resistance at the local level (Colás 1994).

Still others underscore the insidiousness of global economic and market forces as powerful 'structuring agents' that constrain the behaviour of countries – and, in particular, developing countries – where the lines between government and private enterprise are blurred (Sanderson 1995). In these countries, governments are often synonymous with private interests. As an Indigenous participant from Honduras put it in a Central American conference on decentralization and collaborative management, *"private enterprises are a privileged class in our country, and fighting against private enterprise is fighting against the government"* (Dominguez, pers. comm., 1998). In fact, the sway of private enterprise can be so strong in developing countries, that the whole country's policy revolves around

enhancing its performance. Such is the case of multinational fruit companies in Central America, which gave rise to what have come to be known as 'banana republics'. One Cahuitan reflected on this phenomenon when he said: *"Before 1948, the government in Limón was controlled by the United Fruit Company. Whatever the Company said, it became the law of the land"* (Clinton in Palmer 1977). Because of the political power of private interests in developing countries, they are far more prone to elitist type models of democracy, although, clearly, this problem exists in industrialized countries as well.

2) Global environmental issues. Environmental issues have different scales which dictate how best they can be dealt with, and who should be involved in decision-making. While some issues are better dealt with at the national and local levels, other issues – such as global commons issues like climate change and biodiversity – call for international action. This points to an interesting dynamic in the role of the state: on the one hand, states can (in rhetoric, at least) devolve power and responsibility to the local level for some issues; on the other, states participate in international policy-making fora where they are only one of many stakeholders – including other states, experts, international NGOs and industry, etc. – and in so doing, they are shearing some of their power and control. States committed to Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements use the goals and commitments in these agreements to guide policy-making, legislation and action at the national level. In essence, the magnitude of the environmental problems may leave states with little choice but to participate in a process that – if successful – will have an impact beyond the amelioration of global environmental problems: the process leads to a transformation and fragmentation of state power through its commitments at the international level.

Global environmental problems are therefore not so much a constraint to decentralization, as a type and scale of problem that requires concerted planning efforts at the supranational level following the subsidiarity principle, i.e., *"anything that is being done (or could be done) at a lower level should not be done at a higher level"* (Thompson 1998); plans can, however, then be implemented through decentralization (Lee 1993). The question for the local level then, is to what extent its ability to guide action through devolution is constrained by commitments and policy-making at the international level. In the case of Cahuita National Park this is an extremely important point, as was discussed

with regards to international Conventions such as CITES, CBD and IUCN categories for protected areas, to mention a few examples.

3) Financing. The devolution of management power is dependent to a large extent by the ability of states to finance management and capacity-building activities at the local level. This is a large issue in Costa Rica, where some critics have noted that often there is not enough funding to even pay the salaries of people involved in local municipal governments, let alone other types of activities (Rivera Araya 1997). The devolution of management power without financial resources to implement activities can render local-level decision-making bodies and co-management boards ineffective, unless they can come up with their own creative sources for funding.

Another point related to financing is that monies that are allocated from national budgets are vulnerable to political tides and changing priorities, many of which are driven by the forces of globalization. This is clearly an issue for co-management boards based on civic science approaches, in that it may take years before they start having measurable outcomes that convince politicians. Indeed, according to Ostrom (1987), whether an institution is regarded as successful – and in the context of this discussion, whether or not politicians will buy into the scheme and finance it – depends to a large extent on when outcomes are being analyzed, as institutions require a trial and error process that leads to learning and adaptation. Overall, however, with both communities and state agencies working together, in the long term, the costs of management and enforcement are likely to be lower than if the state were the only manager (Hanna 1995; Berkes 1995). Nonetheless, some financing is required, especially at the beginning; and without resources, institutions are more likely to fail.

The above list of supra-national structuring agents is far from exhaustive, yet it gives an indication not only of the changing role of the state, but of some of the complex forces that constrain the devolution of management power in decision-making about natural resources in the era of globalization. States are embedded within global structures that have a direct impact on how they manage their affairs. An interesting question for further research on these macro-issues is to what extent decentralization is a trend that

will further bifurcate rich and poor nations – North and South – as poorer nations have far more supra-national, structural constraints to contend with in attempting to implement decentralization in practice.

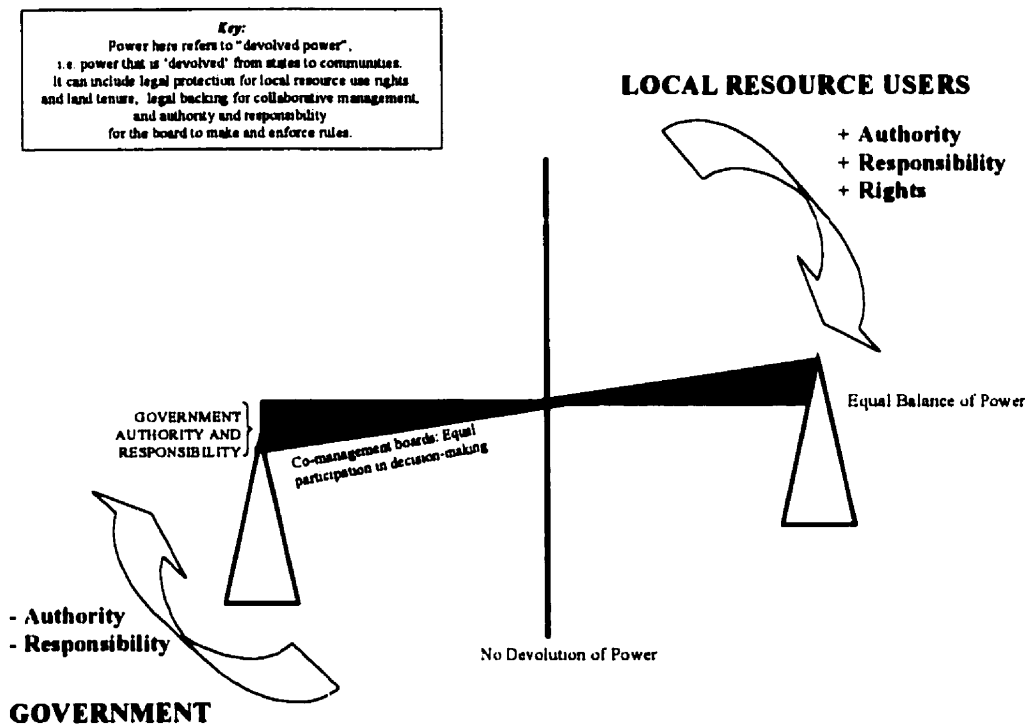
9.4.1.2 National Level Issues and Constraints:

Upwards and 'Lateral' Accountability and Responsibility

Nation-states are also constrained in how much power they can decentralize to the local level by the fact that they are accountable and responsible not only to their international commitments, but also to *all* of their constituents as Figure 9-1 visualizes. In other words, a national government could not give co-management institutions complete authority and responsibility for the management of natural resources – particularly national parks – without any strings attached, as elected government representatives must answer to constituents elsewhere in the country.

In the event of deep-seated disagreements between local community members on the board and people outside the community, for example, constituents not on the board (or even private, multinational interests, for that matter) could lobby their elected representatives to influence the outcome of decision-making; chances are that the elected government representatives would side with the interests of the majority or more powerful group, and instruct government officials on the co-management board to reflect these interests. Therefore the beliefs and interests of other constituents play an important role in checking and balancing actions at the local level; and, it would seem that even in the face of conflict, the balance of power in decision-making shifts in favour of those who represent the larger (geographically) or more powerful (economically and politically) constituents, which is part and parcel of how representative democracy 'works'. While the chances of this type of deep-seated disagreement occurring are slim, the possibility exists, as was seen, for example, in the case of a very strong, and legally-backed co-management arrangement, namely Tuktut Nogait National Park in Canada's Northwest Territories (Weitzner and Turner 1998). In short, regardless of the rhetoric of devolution, in the final analysis – and particularly with national parks – the state retains the final say with regards to decision-making (Figure 9-2).

Figure 9-2: The Balance of 'Devolved' Power (i.e., Authority and Responsibility) in Co-Management



9.4.1.3 The Co-management Institution Sphere

At the Board level there are a variety of power issues which influence the outcomes of co-management. These include, but are certainly not limited to:

1) Legal authority and responsibility to act and enforce rules. As was discussed above, legal authority and responsibility to act and enforce rules gives the Committee legitimacy from the point of view of the state, and constitutes the platform or foundation for co-management.

2) Knowledge, education and skills (regarding the resource, legislation, participatory processes, technical issues, etc). 'Knowledge is power'. The more knowledge about the resources – both scientific and local – the greater the chances of success, as common

property theorists have noted. However, additional types of knowledge/education/skills needed by Committee members in order to function well are knowledge about relevant legislation, knowledge about participatory management processes, and knowledge about resources which can be drawn upon (whether mediators, facilitators, potential trainers, technical support, etc).

3) Representation (i.e., power vested in individuals, legitimacy). The power of representation refers to the legitimacy and authority vested in individuals by members of the community (or the state in the case of state representatives). Here the community empowers the individual to speak out on behalf of the community. However, there is an implicit recognition that in turn the individual is accountable to the community. An individual may be empowered in this way through social norms or traditional community structures, or in the case of Cahuita, by being elected through membership in a community organization. Clearly, well-functioning and appropriate community organizations are an asset in terms of the legitimacy and power of representation (as is two-way communication).

4) Personality and ability/openness to understand and listen (i.e., attitude, respect). Power of personality plays perhaps the most important role in making or breaking co-management processes. Openness of attitude and respect for other Committee members' knowledge and contribution is a pre-requisite to establishing cohesive group dynamics, comfort and trust.

5) Ability to speak in public and to negotiate (i.e., to participate and to affect outcomes). Without the power to participate and to negotiate, Committee members are ineffective representatives with regards to voicing the concerns of their constituents, and negotiating on their behalf. Both these abilities are influenced greatly by previous experience, and can be enhanced through 'learning by doing' in co-management.

6) Economic (i.e., ability to implement). Economic power is crucial in co-management. The financial independence of the Committee has been an important factor with regards to increased autonomy, although the Committee needs more funding to implement priority

activities. Knowledge about donors/potential partners, and how to mobilize funds, is particularly important here. However, the more self-reliant the Management Committee can be (through user fees or other self-initiated processes), the more independent and autonomous it will be in fulfilling its mandate.

9.4.1.4 The Committee-Community Sphere

Here there are two power issues at stake: information and legitimacy or credibility. Information is a powerful tool in helping make informed decisions. Clearly, if the community has no information about the activities of the Committee, it cannot voice its concerns, or have input into making more sound and appropriate decisions. By retaining information, and not actively seeking two-way communication with its constituents at the community level, the Committee suffers from lack of credibility and legitimacy in the eyes of the people in the community.

9.4.1.5 The Community Sphere

Last, but certainly not least, there are two main factors at play at the community level in Cahuita that have helped (or hindered) the process from moving forward:

1) Leadership of all types. As Kothari (1995) has noted, *"many local communities are now loosely united clusters of families and individuals, alienated from their local environment and other communities, turning slowly into the materialist consumers which characterize today's urban class."* This affects community spirit and community cohesion. There is no doubt that this is an important factor in Cahuita: there is increasing competition in the community for access to scarce and valuable resources, such as tourism and funding from external donors. In addition drugs and alcohol have taken their toll on the community. There is a growing bifurcation between the haves and the have-nots, even within the community. However, against this backdrop, one thing Cahuita has going for it is its leaders. There are leaders of all types:

- ***The 'aggressive'/political leaders***, such as the those belonging to the Committee of Struggle who negotiated the collaboration between the government and the community. Most of these leaders have a history of fighting inequities and for the rights of the people, and are motivated *both* for personal reasons and for the interests of Cahuita. These leaders bring different experiences and levels of education to the table: one member of the Committee of Struggle, for example, was very active in organizing and working in cocoa cooperatives; two others have university backgrounds, and while one of these is motivated to see Cahuita improve for personal economic reasons and has many insights into how to mobilize for political action, the other has political aspirations. All three of these leaders, however, are clearly also committed to the improvement of Cahuita.
- ***The cultural leaders***, such as Claudio Reid, Walter Ferguson and members of the calypso band Ashanti. Reid and Ferguson are the historians of Cahuita, one writing theatre scripts while the other tells the story of Cahuita through his songs. Reid involves the youth of Cahuita in his productions, and while Ferguson is getting older and is not as active, he is often seen teaching his songs to a young student outside his house. And Ashanti keeps the Calypso music of the area alive, playing at various venues in the town for tourists and locals. The music and theatre of Cahuita are very important in keeping the spirit, dignity and identity of Cahuita's culture alive.
- ***The sports leaders***. Sports is a big part of life in Cahuita, and there are several leaders who organize team sports. Community members – both old and young – gather around the soccer field in Playa Negra almost every week, to watch Cahuitans play soccer. There is even an 'old-timer's' team, which is comprised of older members of the community who as youth were avid soccer players. Other community sports and pastimes include basketball, surfing, and years ago, cricket and horse racing. In short, there is no doubt that sports increases community spirit and teamwork, and is an important part of Cahuita's social fabric. Those who organize these events – and who are models to others – play an important role in the community.

- ***The women leaders.*** As was noted in the stakeholder analysis in chapter 6, there are several different types of women leaders in Cahuita. There are those who have organized cooperatives such as bakeries to provide employment opportunities for the community's women. There are leaders who know about the medicinal uses of plants, and who continue to be called for their services as midwives. There are other leaders who work towards strengthening their families – and the community – from the household-up. And finally, there are those who keep the traditional foods of Cahuita alive, by cooking not only at home, but offering these foods for sale at Cahuita's restaurants, bakeries and stands. The various types of women leaders in Cahuita play a very important role in providing a nurturing environment for their children, passing on traditions, sustaining families economically, and being the life-force (literally, providing food and drink) and supporting other leaders negotiating on behalf of the community.
- ***The youth leaders.*** There are several youth who are attempting to create new spaces and opportunities for Cahuita's youth.

Clearly, the various leaders of Cahuita, the shared history of communal organization for agricultural and political purposes, the identity and dignity of the people, to quote one Cahuita leader – and the 'hardness' of life in one of Costa Rica's most (geographically and physically) unforgiving areas – have contributed greatly to individual and community socio-political empowerment. This empowerment helped spur the collaborative management agreement, and is key in the ongoing negotiations of the Management Committee.

2) Community organizations. There are many community organizations in Cahuita, that while not functioning well in the eyes of the community – and subject to the domination of elites in some cases – are important with regards to mobilizing Cahuita.

This discussion of the main power issues at the supranational, national, Committee, Committee-community, and community spheres highlights the complexity and interconnectedness of the forces at play in making co-management work in practice. These are summarized in Table 9-3.

Table 9-3: The Types and Sources of Power at Play in Cahuita National Park

Sphere	Power Type/Issue	Source	Outcomes
<i>Supra-national</i>	Economic and Political 'Structuring agents'	Multinationals International Governments International NGOs	Shapes International Policy that drives Costa Rica's national policy; multinationals influence Costa Rica's policy directly
<i>National</i>	Political authority and responsibility Judicial power	Constituents: Citizens, Industry NGOs	Shapes Costa Rica's national policy
<i>Management Committee Level</i>	Legal authority and responsibility (i.e., Executive Decree) Knowledge and Education (regarding the resource, legislation, participatory processes, etc) Representation (i.e., power vested in individuals, legitimacy) Personality and ability/openness to understand i.e., attitude, respect) Ability to speak in public and negotiate (i.e., to participate and affect outcomes, manage conflict) Economic (i.e., ability to implement)	Community and state reps Community State	Shapes the outcomes of decision-making and rules of use in the park
<i>Committee-Community</i>	Information Legitimacy/Credibility	Committee members	Shapes the potential input of community members in the Committee's decision-making process
<i>Community level</i>	Culture/Identity/Spirit/History (social cohesion) Market forces/elitism Socio-political empowerment	Individuals Leaders 'Community'	Shapes who is elected to the Committee Shapes the input that community representatives bring to the Committee negotiating table Nurtures and helps shape the abilities of Committee members Helps shape who is elected to the local, municipal and national governments
<i>Note: All 'power spheres' are embedded and interconnected, as per Figure 9-1.</i>			

9.4.2 Co-Management with a Human Face

Regardless of all the discussion on structuring agents, conceptual, theoretical and legal constraints in this chapter, in the end when the skin of the onion is peeled back, co-management has a human face. Many of the challenges and power issues are, as one Canadian co-manager has stated, *"in people's heads"* (Weitzner 2000). But this is also where the strength of co-management lies: within people.

With regards to 'people as enablers', the Cahuita case offers the following lessons. That co-management will be strengthened if:

1. There are 'visionaries' within the state agencies.
2. There are leaders of all types in the community, there is cultural identity and community spirit.
3. There is a willingness and commitment on behalf of the co-managers to work together, and they have the following powers: knowledge and education (regarding the resource, legislation, participatory processes, etc); representation (i.e., power vested in individuals, legitimacy); personality and ability/openness to understand (i.e., open attitude, respect); and ability to speak in public and negotiate (i.e., to participate and affect outcomes, manage conflict).

To help fulfill the board's mandate, three additional factors surface: the importance of financial resources and independence; legal authority and responsibility for the co-management arrangement; and the ability to forge alliances with external agents. If this is all couched in a nation-state where there is democracy and rule of law, then, with all these elements in place, I would argue that a co-management board is well positioned to become a vehicle for empowerment rather than co-option.

9.5 Conclusion

This chapter provided this thesis' contribution to the theoretical dialogue with regards to co-management. It started by reviewing some of the salient hypotheses and criteria for success with regards to the management of common property resources across different ecological scales, noting the various considerations that come into play in each context. It then examined Berkes' (1997) two assumptions and four hypotheses with regards to the success of co-management through the lens of the Cahuita case study. While the findings coincided with most of these, the Cahuita case study suggested the following elaborations/qualifications (Table 9-4):

Table 9-4: Suggested Elaborations/Qualifications of Berkes (1997) Hypotheses in Light of the Cahuita Case Study

Assumption 1: Co-management is desirable and there is a need for it	Co-management is rooted in the aspirations and desires of the parties involved, and they perceive a need for it.
Assumption 2: Devolution of management power is possible and feasible	There is transparency about the 'bracketed' nature of the decision-making powers possible in co-management (of national parks), and parties are aware of the scope and limits of their decision-making authority.
Hypothesis 1: Appropriate institutions, both local and governmental	Appropriate institutions at the local, national and international level. <i>Comment:</i> This may be idealistic in light of the constraints imposed on the state (and therefore on co-management) by global 'structuring agents' and international commitments; the various agendas and power asymmetries among actors; and the inevitable inconsistencies (and contradictions) in decision-making.
Hypothesis 2: Trust between the actors	There is respect (for difference). Trust will be more likely if there is communication among the parties, legitimacy and accountability, and means to resolve potential conflict.
Hypothesis 3: There is legal backing for the co-management arrangement	There is legal backing for the co-management arrangement and protection for the rights of local resource users.
Hypothesis 4: There must be economic incentives for local communities to conserve the resource	There are social and/or economic benefits for all resource users to conserve the resource, including political empowerment to influence decision-making.

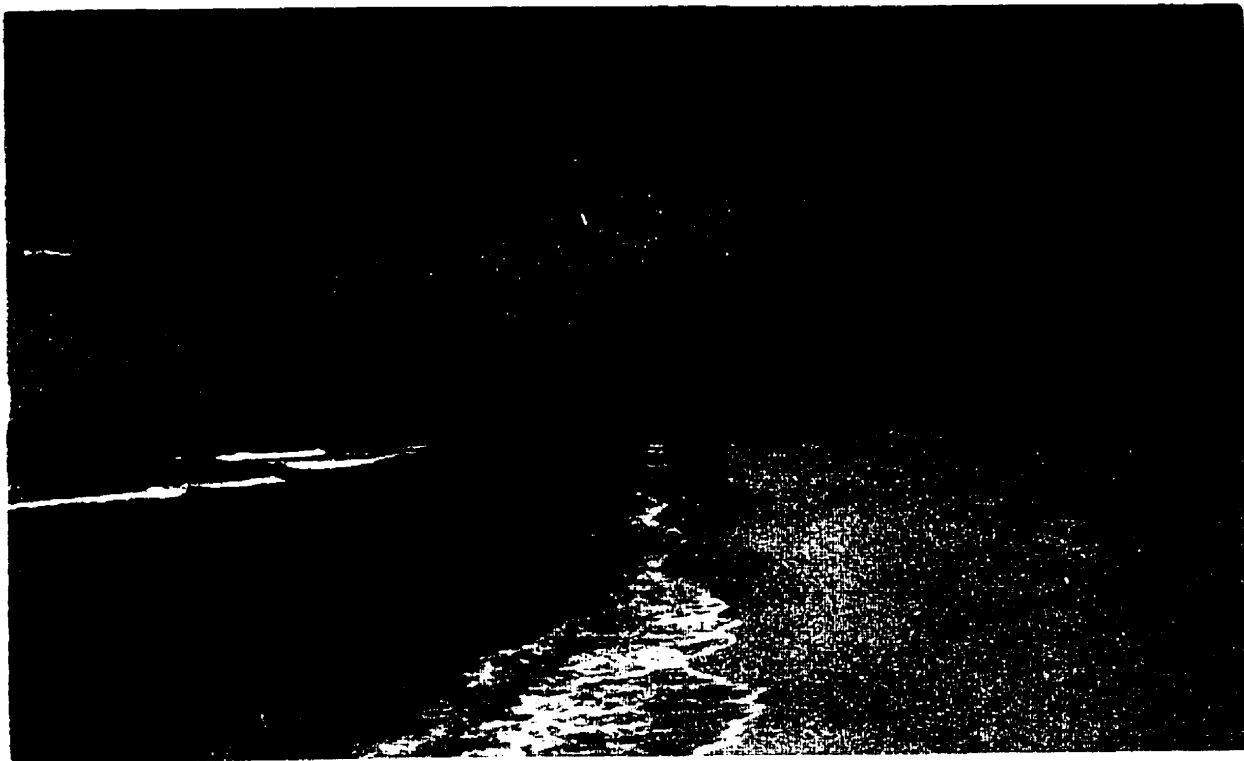
The chapter then mapped the various sources and power at play in co-management at the supranational, national, co-management institution, co-management institution-community, and community spheres, highlighting the complex and interconnected forces at play. It closed by examining the lessons Cahuita offers with regards to 'people as enablers of co-management'.

Chapter X

Conclusion: Implications, Opportunities and Lessons Learned

*There are two reasons why Cahuita is still in the hands of the people here:
1) Its leaders; and 2) Its dignity.*

- Claudio Reid, Cahuita 'cultural' leader (1998)



Playa Blanca, Cahuita National Park (Photo: Robert Bush)

Chapter X

Conclusion: Lessons Learned, Implications and Opportunities

10.1 Looking Back, Looking Forward

This project set out to document the experience of conflict and collaboration in Cahuita National Park. Its outcomes include the beginnings of a vision for the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park, and learning that is very relevant to other communities, practitioners, governments and academics in their respective attempts to understand and implement co-management. In this final chapter I review the main practical and theoretical lessons learned, implications and opportunities in the context of each of the project's specific objectives. In addition, I outline the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park's recommendations for others considering negotiating and implementing a similar arrangement. I close with some final reflections on the project process, outcomes and future challenges for the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park.

10.2 Practical Lessons Learned, Implications and Opportunities

10.2.1 Stakeholder Analysis

The stakeholder analysis revealed the divergent interests and power asymmetries that exist among actors at the local, provincial, national and international levels. At the local level, a 'Tragedy of the Commons' (McCay 1987) situation is occurring. The Management Committee is focussing on the tourism and development interests of Cahuita, rather than on the environmental integrity of the entire national park and the needs of all those who depend on the park's resources. Further, user groups are not organized (with the rather questionable exception of the Naturalist Guide's Association of Cahuita), and have no representation on the Committee. The lack of representation of people from Hone

Creek and Punta Riel is particularly worrisome; after all, exclusion from traditional territory and use – and threatened livelihood security – is what precipitated the 1994 conflict that gave rise to the establishment of the Management Committee in 1997. Care will need to be taken to ensure that the circle of 'ins' and 'outs' has not simply been redrawn to a new elite's advantage, and that learning has taken place about what co-management is intended to, and can, address.

With regards to the provincial, national and international levels, the stakeholder identification and analysis pointed to potential areas of conflict, and to asymmetries among actors in terms of their abilities to influence policy-making at the national level. For example, it might be very hard for subsistence users to tackle banana companies whose activities affect the environmental integrity of the park. Likewise, the multinational pharmaceutical company Merck, and its Costa Rican partner – INBio – have far more clout to influence policy-making and programs in favour of bioprospecting, than say, local residents who would like to receive compensation for their lands and continue with sustainable resource use in the park. These larger interests have an important influence at the local level; without two-way communication, confidence in the efficacy of co-management, and alliance- or coalition-building, local level participants in co-management may come to feel dis-empowered and that ultimately they do not have a viable decision-making role.

10.2.2 Evaluation of the Structure, Process and Outcomes of the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park

The Management Committee is undergoing many 'growing pains' in its transition from a Services Committee with a limited mandate to a Management Committee responsible for all aspects of management in the entire park. At present, the Committee is operating more as a governance institution than a management planning body. Much work is required to consolidate its process so that it becomes an effective natural resources management decision-making, and so that it successfully expands its vision from managing the Playa Blanca section to managing the entire park.

While the planning session worked to clarify and strengthen some of the Committee's present weaknesses, ongoing participatory planning processes supported by a third-party facilitator are advisable. In addition, the co-managers need to engage in regular reflection and adaptation of current practices in order to be more effective at conflict management and natural resources management. This is particularly important in light of the overt and latent conflicts regarding the use and environmental health of the park that will need to be addressed to prevent them from escalating further. Towards these ends, Management Committee members need ongoing skills-building in the following areas: participatory natural resources management processes; protected areas legislation and management; conflict management; fundraising and financial management.

Finally, while important strides have been made to move from conflict to collaboration in Cahuita, there is still much work to be done before the Management Committee becomes an institution in which there is a balance of power between community representatives on the one hand (i.e., including representatives from neighbouring communities), and community and state representatives on the other. However, the process is still very young, and is a new way of doing things for both the government and the community representatives. It might take some time before community members learn how to represent and voice their interests – and those of the community – more strongly, and before government officials learn to be comfortable with relinquishing more of their control. A conceptual problem that emerges is how to effectively represent the interests of the multiple and contradictory interests at the community level.

The evaluation demonstrated that the Management Committee also has some very important strengths that bode well for the future. These include the flexibility that is built into the Executive Decree providing the Committee's statutory backing with regards to changing the Committee's structure and the rules of use regulating the park; personal commitment on behalf of the Director, legal counsel and other senior staff in the Conservation Area; potential in managing conflicts; financial autonomy; and participation of respected community leaders.

Cahuita's vision is for the community to have more control over the park's management, and for MINAE to be relegated to the role of advisor and technical support.¹¹ The 1998 rules of use give the Committee legal sanction to change both its structure and rules governing use in the park, and is a very real basis for the Committee to start

I want Cahuita to be an example for other conservation areas. In 10 years I see the community managing the park, and MINAE giving us technical support.

– Community member, 1998

I see the future management of the park in a 80/20 split: the community would control 80%, and MINAE 20%.

– Management Committee member, 1998

working on making its vision reality. But this will not take place overnight. Critics have noted that successful community-based or collaborative management regimes are a long-term endeavour that require much patience, and trial-and-error before they can begin to operate efficiently, effectively and equitably (Ostrom 1987, 1997). The Committee might take the opportunity to address some of the above described weaknesses in anticipation of it coming to shoulder more responsibilities.

10.2.3 Lessons Learned and Replicability in Other Conservation Areas

The Cahuita case offers some very rich lessons with regards to elements that enhance the negotiation and implementation of co-management (Table 10-1).

¹¹In our community survey (n=39), 29 people agreed that in the future the park should be managed by MINAE and the community, with two saying it should be managed by the community alone (four said the park should be managed only by MINAE). In focus groups and in-depth interviews, it was clear that people favoured an increase in control in the long term.

Table 10-1: Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned: Key Elements that Enhanced the Process in Cahuita		
Community	Conflict Management and Negotiations	Collaboration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Political ties and know-how • Access to education • Organizational capacity • Flexibility and ability to adapt to new situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing: Knowledge of when to lobby, for how long and when to sit at the negotiating table • Mediation: The presence of a mediator trusted by both parties • Pressure tactics and political leverage • <i>“Ask for more than you want so in the end you get what you need”</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal backing • Respect and trust between the parties • Openness to listen to new positions • Mechanisms for conflict management • Political will and commitment • Visionaries in the state agency • Economic independence <p>Weaknesses: Information-sharing; representation; legitimacy; resources (human and financial); technical support; participatory planning</p>

With regards to replicating the experience elsewhere, five principal lessons are:

- 1) This conservation model was not imposed on the community. It is a model that emerged as a means to solving a conflict, and was rooted in the aspirations of both the community of Cahuita and the government.
- 2) The negotiation of the co-management arrangement involved leadership (both from the administration of the Conservation Area and the community), political know-how, the backing of the community, and access to a mediator trusted by both parties.
- 3) The Management Committee has managed to be financially independent largely because of the geographical location and accessibility of the park to tourism, and the large number of tourists it attracts. The arrangement has not cost the government additional monies, but has instead been helpful in terms of providing

additional staff people to care for the park at no cost to the government. Nonetheless, additional funds must be raised to engage in programming and management activities.

- 4) Members of the Management Committee live in very close proximity to the park, and can hold meetings at very short notice. This has been key in hands-on management and governance;
- 5) There has been a very large personal commitment and enthusiasm on behalf of the Director of the Conservation Area and several of his staff to making this arrangement work.

The above five points are key considerations in attempting to replicate the Cahuita model.

10.2.4 Recommendations and Advice from the Management Committee

Members of the Management Committee offered the following advice and recommendations for those interested in negotiating and entering into a similar arrangement :

- *"You have to negotiate things well, because you're negotiating with nomadic people who might leave with a change in government. You have to make sure that those things that are written are respected. We tried to ensure this beach belonged to Cahuita by means of a law. However, it never passed the Legislative Assembly."*
- *"Be firm in your demands. Don't let your arm be twisted...Always defend the interests of the community, and do not give in to the interests of the government."*
- *"The pueblo is the one that should manage the parks, right, because the pueblo knows the area, knows its needs, knows the environment, the ecology, they are the right ones to be involved in the management of the park."*
- *"It is key to become directly involved with people in the community. Don't look at the people in the community as potentially obstructing, but as people who can help to fulfil your goals. Its living with them; if they have problems, see how we [the government] can help. That doesn't mean giving them everything they want, but*

helping them to help themselves achieve some important objectives at the community level....And always be there. Presence is very important, and especially, attitude; that is very, very important."

- *"Work in an organized fashion as if you are dealing with a micro-business. You will have some income, and you will then be able to invest some of these into the adequate management of the resource, contracting personnel, etc. With previous training and an open attitude, the process could be successful..."*
- *"You have to be open. Open to new experiences, new expectations, forget problems and resentments; think that we all deserve the opportunity to re-write what we have done. It's the only option... to start a different process. Because both the government and the community of Cahuita had resentments for many years. And the moment came to sit down and put it all to one side and speak and envision the future. I think that's the only way."*
- *"Elect the right people, that is those people who are really ready to cooperate and give their best for the common good."*
- *"We would have to help others [thinking about entering into a similar process], that's for sure, and share our experience to see what they think of it. But we cannot impose anything. Because each pueblo has its own way of confrontation."*
- *"Be aggressive and decisive. Without those two qualities, you won't achieve anything. Of course, you also need intelligence."*
- *"You always have to include resource use. In other words, if you cannot fish, if you cannot use any of the resources, it will even become dangerous...[use] is part of the cycle."*
- *"The local person has a lot of opinions about everything... The native from here, the person who lives from the resources, has to have the first option."*
- *"There were many factors that favoured the process. I am culturally from the community, and was specified by the community. A big issue is how to immerse oneself in the community. In my case, I wasn't a stranger to the process, so I didn't have to sensitize or orient myself... Since I am from this area, things were facilitated a great deal. So if I were to make a recommendation to another Conservation Area Director, I'd say, be a part of the community.*

Also, in this process, it was necessary to take leadership. In other words, the institutional representative of highest ranking at the local level should lead the process. In critical moments one cannot risk things, or delegate to other government staff...who aren't 'married' to the idea, or don't have a clear vision. I think it's very important that at the beginning of this process I involved myself

directly in the process with Gina [the superintendent]. Then there doesn't have to be intermediaries for decision-making and agreements.

And of course, the whole question of circumstance. In other words, one... must show knowledge and desire to really negotiate, and not take rigid and closed positions. Always be exposed, open to all types of criticisms, because in these cases there is always more criticism than praise. Be mentally ready for a situation in which you are the bad guy from the movies, and that you also have to be able to deal with that load."

10.2.5 Implications and Opportunities for the Government of Costa Rica

Today there is a search for new models of involving local communities in the management of Costa Rica's protected areas for two reasons: 1) government cutbacks, and a lack of personnel to care for the large protected areas system in Costa Rica; and 2) the National System of Conservation Areas' belief that the principal economic beneficiaries of parks should be the local communities (Solórzano 1997).

There have been various proposals for how best to ensure that local people are the prime economic beneficiaries of protected areas. One is based on the notion of concession, whereby parks services are rented to local organizations. The potential danger of this proposal is that park services could end up in the hands of organizations that have little interest in conservation or stewardship, and have short-term financial interests at stake. Moreover, there is talk of handing over environmental services to private entities through concession. This would set a dangerous precedent in the sense that Costa Rica could end up leasing its natural heritage to NGOs or private organizations. While the concept of concession has not yet been clarified, it seems to be gaining momentum as a viable alternative.

The concept of co-management has also been gaining currency as an alternative. While there are numerous instances of public participation in protected areas management both in Costa Rica and regionally, the idea of co-management is still very new. In this context, the Cahuita case is important as it is the first instance of co-management within parks management in Costa Rica, and provides valuable lessons regarding key elements required to enhance collaborative management processes.

There is no doubt that Cahuita represents an opportunity for the Government of Costa Rica to do things differently with regards to protecting its natural resource heritage and involving local people. However, in order to seize this opportunity and develop a precedent-setting arrangement, two things need to happen:

1) The Committee needs to consolidate its structure, operations and process, and engage in skills-building in the areas mentioned in 10.2.2. In addition, local resource users from *both* Cahuita and neighbouring communities need to be directly involved in the development of a management plan and decisions about how the resources are used.

1) The government needs to accord the Committee autonomy and authority to make natural resource management decisions geared towards the situation on the ground, without being tied totally to national parks and

"The way this country and world is going...I think at some point our [arrangement will be backed by Law]. because the management of protected areas – and their subsistence – will not depend solely and exclusively on government will, but also on the efforts of communities."

– Management Committee member

international legislation. To use Pimbert and Pretty's (1997) observation, there needs to be a *"flexible national regulatory framework that can accommodate 'local peculiarities' with regards to the decentralization of control and responsibility for protected area management."*

Many have discussed the possibility of changing Cahuita's category of protected area to allow for subsistence use; but maintaining Cahuita as a national park, and recognizing the authority of the Management Committee in making resource management decisions that may go beyond national parks legislation to address the situation on the ground, would be a far more progressive move on the part of the government. One way to achieve this would be to work towards amending the National Park Law to allow for co-management arrangements.

10.3 Implications for Co-Management Theory

The Cahuita case study presents an opportunity to reflect on the increasing body of co-management theory. The examination of Berkes' (1997) hypothesis for conditions required for successful co-management through the lens of the Cahuita case study, suggested the following modifications/qualifications for consideration:

Table 9-4: Suggested elaborations/qualifications of Berkes (1997) hypotheses in light of the Cahuita case study

Assumption 1: Co-management is desirable and there is a need for it	Co-management is rooted in the aspirations and desires of the parties involved, and they perceive a need for it.
Assumption 2: Devolution of management power is possible and feasible	There is transparency about the 'bracketed' nature of the decision-making powers possible in co-management (of national parks), and parties are aware of the scope and limits of their decision-making authority.
Hypothesis 1: Appropriate institutions, both local and governmental	Appropriate institutions at the local, national and international level. <i>Comment:</i> This may be idealistic in light of the constraints imposed on the state (and therefore on co-management) by global 'structuring agents' and international commitments; the various agendas and power asymmetries among actors; and the inevitable inconsistencies (and contradictions) in decision-making.
Hypothesis 2: Trust between the actors	There is respect (for difference). Trust will be more likely if there is communication among the parties, legitimacy and accountability, and means to resolve potential conflict.
Hypothesis 3: There is legal backing for the co-management arrangement	There is legal backing for the co-management arrangement and protection for the rights of local resource users.
Hypothesis 4: There must be economic incentives for local communities to conserve the resource	There are social and/or economic benefits for all resource users to conserve the resource, including political empowerment to influence decision-making.

In addition, in the theoretical analysis – and at different points throughout the discussions in this thesis – the issue of power surfaced as central in co-management. In an effort to group the various observations, I developed a typology of power issues, sources and outcomes at the five main spheres of co-management: the supranational level, the national level, the Management Committee level, the Committee-community level, and the community level. This showed the extent to which co-management is at the

confluence of various agendas, and the level to which it is embedded in local and global structures.

However, this line of thinking about power issues in light of the Cahuita case led to the revelation that regardless of all the structuring agents and conceptual constraints, in the end – when all of the layers are peeled back – co-management has a human face. Many of the challenges and power issues are, as one co-manager has stated, “*in people’s heads*” (Weitzner 2000). But this is also where the strength of co-management lies: within people. With regards to ‘people as enablers’, the Cahuita case offers the following lessons. That co-management will be strengthened if:

1. There are ‘visionaries’ within the state agencies.
2. There are leaders of all types in the community, there is cultural identity and community spirit.
3. There is a willingness and commitment on behalf of the co-managers to work together, and they have the following powers: knowledge and education (regarding the resource, legislation, participatory processes, etc); representation (i.e., power vested in individuals, legitimacy); personality and ability/openness to understand (i.e., open attitude, respect); and ability to speak in public and negotiate (i.e., to participate and affect outcomes, manage conflict).

To help fulfill the board’s mandate, three additional factors surface: the importance of financial resources and independence; legal authority and responsibility; and the ability to forge alliances with external agents. If this is all couched in a nation-state where there is democracy and rule of law, then, I would argue that a co-management board is well positioned to become a vehicle for empowerment rather than co-option.

10.4 Final Reflections by Way of Conclusion: Project Process, Outcomes and Future of the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park

As several people have noted, this research project has influenced the outcomes of co-management in Cahuita, and has also spurred the adoption of the language of co-management at the field and even national levels (Buckles, pers. comm., 2000; Girot, pers. comm., 2000). Clearly, there are potential negative and positive aspects to these observations. On the negative side, we potentially made the Cahuita process fit into our academic and 'outsider' ideas of co-management. There is no denying that we brought our own assumptions and knowledge of co-management to the project. However, the Management Committee of Cahuita National Park was already in place, the outcome of a conflict process sparked by the community in response to an inequity, and a negotiation process in which both community and government stakeholders were at the helm. We tried to be as respectful of this process and outcome as possible. The influence we might have had was to make the members of the Management Committee aware that they are not alone in terms of going through this type of process. By using the language of co-management, I think we helped the Committee feel it had some direction and potential other experiences from which to draw on. Finally, making the Committee aware of its importance as the first collaborative management process involving a national park in Costa Rica, helped increase the pride members felt in being in such a precedent-setting arrangement.

With regards to the influence at the national level, co-management has only recently entered the vocabulary and dialogue among conservationists as a possible management alternative. The multiple presentations and dissemination about the Cahuita experience at national and regional events has provided the opportunity for policy-makers and practitioners to begin to extrapolate lessons learned, and to begin forging a potential course of action with regards to the management of protected areas and socio-environmental conflicts.

Finally, the institutional linkage between the University of Manitoba, Fikret Berkes and myself on the one hand, and the University of Costa Rica, Pascal Girot and Marvin

Fonseca on the other, has helped further the thinking on co-management not only in Costa Rica, but also in terms of what the Costa Rican context might offer regarding lessons at the international level. This type of linkage and ongoing dialogue is vital in ensuring that learning is taking place regarding how best to design and adapt co-management in different political, socio-economic and geographical contexts.

As outlined above, the experience of Cahuita National Park offers some very rich lessons with regards to negotiating and implementing co-management in the context of socio-environmental conflicts within Central America. But the Management Committee faces three major challenges for the future: 1) The procurement of funds to support management planning and capacity-building activities, in such a way that it does not divide and conquer members on the Committee, and does not alienate potential beneficiaries at the community level; 2) Working towards stronger legal backing for the arrangement, so the Committee can begin to work towards more appropriate natural resources management that addresses the situation on the ground; 3) Becoming aware of, and tapping the resources and potential allies with regards to training, third-party facilitation, and addressing latent conflicts affecting the environmental integrity of the park.

Already, there are opportunities for the Management Committee in all of these respects: 1) There is a trust fund for ACLACA which the Committee can channel. However, before such funds are channeled to the Committee directly, it will need to strengthen its organization, and engage in capacity-building to ensure the funds are spent appropriately; 2) There are resources the Committee can draw on to help it work towards a stronger legal agreement (e.g., the Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Law (CEDARENA), which houses the Costa Rican node of the Meso-American Socio-Environmental Conflict Management Network); 3) Potential allies with regards to training include MSECNM and others noted in the stakeholder analysis (e.g., universities, NGOs and research institutes). With regards to coalition-building to address powerful actors affecting the park, the Development Association of Hone Creek has expressed interest, and there are numerous other groups the Committee could work with, including government agencies such as the Office of Civil Society Participation of MINAE. The question is whether the Committee, the government and community members will see it as a priority to seize these opportunities.

Postscript

In March 2000, I had the opportunity to visit Cahuita very briefly after attending a conference in San José. Just before my arrival, two young American tourists had been killed in the area, and the news caught the attention of the international media. The morale in the town was quite low, and people speculated that this incident would most likely affect tourism not only in Cahuita – but nationally – for the next three years. Clearly, this was a big blow for a community working so hard to clean the tarnished image and reputation it has received over the years (from what many Cahuitan's think is unfair, incorrect and biased reporting). The repercussions for the Management Committee will no doubt be quite large, particularly with regards to the amount of donations received.

But my visit also concurred with three good news stories. The first is that the Management Committee has formed an alliance with two NGOs, FUDEU and The Nature Conservancy, and two regional initiatives, Proyecto Frontera Agricola and Corredor Biológico, in order to develop an integrated development plan for the area. Apparently, this alliance is using the outcomes of the planning session we undertook with the Management Committee to guide their planning process (Mora, pers. comm., 2000).

The second good news story is that members of the Office of Civil Society Participation of MINAE are talking of developing a working group of lawyers to begin working towards a more appropriate legal instrument for co-management in Costa Rica (Fonseca, pers. comm., 2000). And the third good news story is that Marvin and I printed up some copies of the brochure we wrote about the history and management of Cahuita National Park (using our own funds!), and delivered these to the Management Committee, along with a CD-Rom containing the electronic copy. There are plans to make this Cahuita National Park's official brochure, and to place it on the World Wide Web.

Already then, the Management Committee is seizing some of the opportunities available for it to move forward. This, coupled with what appears to be political will to create an even more enabling environment for co-management, bodes well for the future.

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Appendix I: Interview Guides

Management Comittee MINAE Organizations

Note:

**Most interviews were conducted using
the Spanish version of these guides**

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

OBJECTIVES:

- **To determine the background, role and objective of the Comité de Manejo**
 - **To determine the role of the Comité de Manejo's individual members**
 - **To identify the major interventions that have been made regarding park management (i.e. decisions and implementation of decisions)**
 - **To identify management plans – or rules of use – designed in collaboration with the community**
 - **To examine the perceptions of the impact of decisions on environmental health**
 - **To determine communication feedback mechanisms (dissemination of information, community input)**
-

Name of Member: _____
Organization Represented: _____
M _____ **F** _____

Background and Profile (this part of the questionnaire to be completed by the Chair)

Briefly describe the background, structure and objectives of the Comité de Manejo. *Get related documentation, minutes, etc.*

Date established: _____
Reasons/events leading to its creation: _____
Objectives: _____
Structure: _____
Members (names and affiliation): _____
Mechanism for selection of members: election _____ appointment: _____
If appointed, by whom: _____
Length of term each member sits on the Comité de Manejo: _____
Funding Source: _____
Budget: _____

This part of the questionnaire to be completed by all respondents

- 1) **How long have you been a member of the Comité de Manejo?**
- 2) **Who do you represent?**
- 3) **What is your role?**
- 4) **What is the Comité de Manejo's mandate**

Management of Cahuita National Park: Negotiation of the Agreement

- 5) Were you involved in the negotiation of the Agreement between MINAE and the community regarding the management of Playa Blanca? **If yes, continue with questions 6) - 10). If NO, go to question 11).**
- 6) What events led to the drafting of the Agreement between the community and MINAE with regards to the management of Playa Blanca?
- 7) Who negotiated the Agreement?
- 8) What negotiating processes were used?
 Open Forum_____

Working Group, with select individuals (If so, identify criteria for selection)_____

Mediation_____
- 9) How were decisions made regarding the substance of the Agreement?
 Consensus_____ Majority Vote_____ Other_____
- 10) During the negotiating process, did any points arise that were discarded in the final document? If so, what were they, and who were the proponents?

Opinion about Agreement and Representation

- 11) What is your opinion of the legal Agreement that established the Comité de Manejo?
- 12) How do you think the Agreement could be strengthened?
- 13) If you had the opportunity to include any additional group or individual in the Comité de Manejo, who would they be? Why?
- 14) In your opinion, has trust been established between a) the members of the Comité de Manejo b) the community and MINAE?

Process, Decision-Making and Implementation

- 15) How often does the Comité de Manejo meet, and who convenes the meetings?
- 16) How are decisions made, by consensus? Majority vote? Community consultation?
Other?
- 17) Who implements the decisions?
- 18) Who ensures that the decisions are enforced, and how?
- 19) Does the Comité de Manejo have any technical support for decision-making related to environmental issues, such as assessing the health of the resources, quotas for resource use, and when the resource can be used? Please describe the type of technical support received.

Topics Discussed and Outcomes

- 20) What types of issues do you discuss at meetings? (Environmental, social, economic, other) Please give examples.
- 21) Do you discuss issues only in relation to Playa Blanca, or do you also touch on issues that affect Puerto Vargas? Please give examples.
- 22) What are some of the major management decisions that have been made to date?
- 23) What are some of the most important outcomes of decisions made by the Comité de Manejo? (Environmental, social, economic, other -- get dates)
- 24) When the Comité de Manejo makes decisions concerning the environment, are the impact of these decisions on environmental health measured and monitored? If so, who monitors them, and how often?
- 25) Have the decisions of the Comité de Manejo improved economic and social conditions? How?

Communication/Feedback mechanisms

- 26) How do you inform the community about the activities of, and decisions made by, the Comité de Manejo ? (*Minutes of meetings, brochures, newsletters, presentations at community meetings, other*).
- 27) What vehicles exist for community members to express concerns and ensure that these are addressed at meetings of the Comité de Manejo ? (Word of mouth, or more formal means such as letters, etc.)

Overall Evaluation and Future Plans

- 28) How do you think the Comité de Manejo could be strengthened? (Representation, communication, etc).
- 29) What are the Comité de Manejo's environmental, social and economic goals and challenges in the short term? Medium term? Long term?
- 30) How will the impending change of government affect the Agreement between the community and MINAE?
- 31) If someone from another community approached you for advice on how to implement a similar collaborative process, what major lessons learned would you share with them?
- 32) If you had to give them one recommendation concerning the process, what would it be?

MINAE (MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY)

OBJECTIVES:

- **To identify the policies that affect the management of Cahuita National Park**
- **To determine MINAE's mandate and role with regards to the management of the park**
- **To identify the management plans and regulations currently used to manage the park, as well as how these are enforced**
- **To identify the types of activities and resource use that take place in Cahuita National Park**
- **To find out about the state of the environmental health of the park**

Information about respondent

Name: _____
Position in MINAE: _____
Length of time working this capacity: _____

MINAE, Decentralization and Management of Natural Resources

1. **What do you think of the movement towards the decentralization of natural resource management in Costa Rica?**
2. **What impact has decentralization had on MINAE's role with regards to the management of natural resources and protected areas?**

3. In your view, what are some of the outcomes of decentralization in terms of new management structures, and responsibility and accountability for natural resource management? *Comment on public participation, effect of funding cuts, etc.*
4. How do you think the impending change in government will affect the management of natural resources, particularly protected areas?

Management of Cahuita National Park: Negotiation of the Agreement

5. What events led to the drafting of the Agreement between the community and MINAE with regards to the management of Playa Blanca?
6. Who negotiated the Agreement?
7. What negotiating processes were used?
 Open Forum _____
 Working Group, with select individuals (If so, identify criteria for selection) _____
 Mediation _____
8. How were decisions made regarding the substance of the Agreement?
 Consensus _____ Majority Vote _____ Other _____
9. During the negotiating process, did any points arise that were discarded in the final document? If so, what were they, and who were the proponents?
10. What do you think of the Agreement? (strengths, weaknesses) How could it be strengthened?
11. Are there plans to make amendments to the Agreement?
12. Do you think that the upcoming change in government could affect the process of collaborative management in Cahuita? How?

Technical Aspects of Management

13. Have any environmental studies been conducted in the park recently?
14. If so, on what subjects?
 Forestry _____ Mangroves _____ Fisheries _____ Reef _____ Tourism _____
 Wildlife _____ Other _____
15. Does MINAE monitor the environmental health of Cahuita National Park? If so, how?

MINAE and Community Use of the Park

16. Are there management plans for Cahuita National Park?
 Tourism Management Plan _____ Wildlife _____ Community Use _____
17. What types of activities are allowed in the park?

	Forestry	Hunting	Fishing	Medicinal Plants	Tourism	Other
Formal						
Informal						

(Get documentation if possible)

18. How are the formal and informal rules of use enforced?
19. Do you know of any activities that take place in the park even though they are not permitted?

Vision of the Future and Lessons Learned

20. How do you envision the management of the Park in the near future?
21. What are the major lessons learned about collaborative management based on the Cahuita experience?
22. How could the collaborative process be strengthened?
23. If another conservation area were interested in implementing a similar process, what recommendation or advice would you give regarding the process?

ORGANIZATIONS

OBJECTIVES:

- To determine the role of community organizations
 - To examine their relationship or involvement with the management of the park
 - To determine whether the Comité de Manejo represents organizations' interests adequately
-

Organization: _____

Name of Member: _____

Length of time member has been active in the organization: _____

Background and Organizational Profile *(This section to be asked only of the leader/president of the group)*

Description of organization *(Get any documentation available)*

Date founded: _____

Type of organization: registered _____ for profit _____ not-for-profit _____

Objectives/mandate: _____

Activities: _____

Organizational structure: _____

Membership Profile: Number of a) members _____ b) women _____ c) youth _____

Funding Source: _____

Future Plans: In the short term _____ In the long term _____

Relationship with Park

The following questions are related to Playa Blanca (the part of the National Park managed in collaboration with the community) and Puerto Vargas (the part of the National Park managed only by MINAE, the Ministry of Environment and Energy)

1. Does your organization engage in any activities in the National Park (Playa Blanca? In Puerto Vargas?)
If so, what type of activities? How are these activities regulated?

2. Was your organization affected by the price hike that the MINAE tried to institute in 1994 (from \$5 to \$15)? If so, how?(economically, socially, etc.)
3. Does your organization receive any direct or indirect benefits from Playa Blanca? The rest of the National Park? What type of benefits? (economic, social, etc.)

(The following questions to be answered by all respondents)

4. From your organization's perspective, what are some of the most important issues facing the park (Playa Blanca? Puerto Vargas?)

Collaborative Management / Representation by the Comité de Manejo

5. If your organization disagrees with some activity taking place in the Park, where do you go to express your concerns?
6. Do you know about the Comité de Manejo?
7. What are the objectives and role of the Comité de Manejo?
8. Does your organization have any representatives that sit on the Comité de Manejo?
If yes: Who? Do you think your organizations concerns are adequately considered and reflected in the decisions made by the Comité de Manejo?
If no: Do you approach any other representatives who sit on the Comité de Manejo, and if so, who?
9. How (minutes, documents, word of mouth, etc) -- and from whom -- does your organization hear about decisions made by the Comité de Manejo?
10. How would you rate the work of the Comité de Manejo:
excellent _____ good _____ poor _____
Explain.
11. How do you think the Comité de Manejo could be strengthened? (Representation, communication, etc).
12. From your organization's perspective, how could the collaboration between the community and MINAE in the management of the park be strengthened?
13. From your organization's perspective, how will the impending change of government affect the relationship between MINAE and the community?
14. What is your vision of the park in the future – who would manage it?

Appendix II: Interview Guide

Cahuita Household Survey

Note:

**Most interviews were conducted using
the Spanish version of this guide**

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

OBJECTIVES:

- **To find out how the conflicts with the park have affected community members and their families economically, culturally and socially**
- **To identify how the community members used the park before and after its establishment (fishing, agriculture, medicinal plants, trees, hunting, etc.), and to determine what portion of their income depended – and still depends – on this use**
- **To determine whether community members know about the Comité de Manejo, and how they perceive it's role**
- **To identify the concerns of community members with respect to the current management of the park**
- **To identify community members' vision of the park and Cahuita for the future**

Information about respondent

- **Sex:**
 1. M___
 2. F___
- **Education:**
 3. Primary___
 4. Secondary___
 5. University___
- 6. **What do you do for a living?**
 - **Social Group (self-identification)**
 7. Costa Rican___
 8. Afrocaribbean___
 9. From the province of Limon___
 10. Foreigner___
 - **Place of origin:**

Involvement in Community Organizations

11. **How long have you lived in Cahuita?**
12. **Are you involved in any community organizations? If so, which? If not, can you list any community organizations? How do you think they are functioning?**

Before the park was established:

13. Did your family have any property in the park area? (If no, go to question 15)

14. Did you receive compensation for your land?

15. What type of activities did the family engage in:

Activity	Yes (comments – when, how much, what type, etc)	No
16. Fishing		
17. Subsistence agriculture		
18. Bananas		
19. Coconut groves		
20. Forestry activities		
21. Medicinal Plants		
22. Turtle use		
23. Hunting		
24. Driftwood		
25. Tourism		
26. Other		

• What type of help did you have with these activities?

27. Family: Yes___ No___

28. Hired help: Yes___ No___

29. What were the roles of women in these activities?

30. Did your family income depend entirely from the land you had in the park?

Yes___ No___

Comment

After the establishment of the park:

31. How did your life change after the park was established (economically, socially, culturally)?

32. How did the roles of women in your family change? Comment

Current use of the park (including Playa Blanca and Puerto Vargas:

33. Do you benefit from the park directly or indirectly?

- How do you use the park?

Activity	Yes (comments – when, how much, what type, etc)	No
34. Fishing		
35. Subsistence agriculture		
36. Bananas		
37. Coconut groves		
38. Forestry activities		
39. Medicinal Plants		
40. Turtle use		
41. Hunting		
42. Driftwood		
43. Tourism		
44. Other		

45. What percentage of your income depends on the activities you conduct in the park -- and how much does it represent if you do not conduct activities in the park, but benefit from it indirectly (e.g., tourism)?

- What other income-earning activities do you engage in?

45 a) What impact did the increase to \$15 have on you personally, and on Cahuita?

Value of the Park, Issues facing the Park

46. What do you consider the main advantages and/or disadvantages of the existence of the park?

Advantages_____ Disadvantages_____

47. What are the main problems facing the park?

48. Are there any issues in Cahuita that could lead to a conflict situation in the near future?

Yes___ No___

49. How do you think these latent conflicts could be prevented?

Collaborative Management, Communication and Community Participation

50. When you have concerns regarding the park, to whom do you voice them?

51. Have you heard of the Comité de Manejo? **IF THEY DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE Comité, GO TO QUESTION 56.**

52. What is the CDM's role?

53. Do you hear about any decisions made by the CDM? If Yes, How?___ By whom?

54. How do you think the Comité could be strengthened or improved?

55. Did you know that MINAE and community members collaborate in the management of Playa Blanca? Yes___ No___ (If no, go to question 56).

56. In your opinion, what are the best things about this collaboration?

57. How do you think the collaboration could be strengthened?

Vision of the Park

58. What do you imagine Cahuita will be like in the future?

What do you *think* it will look like in ten years? _____

What do you *hope* it will look like? _____

59. What will the park look like? Who would manage the park: MINAE? MINAE and the community? The community only?

60. What steps do you think could be taken to achieve your visions for Cahuita and the park?

Appendix III: Newsletters

El Arrecife



Boletín Informativo de Cahuita

vol 1, Abril 1998

Comunidad Resuelve Conflicto Arrecife

El Arrecife

es un boletín que pretende convertirse en un espacio de intercambio de las actividades de la comunidad de Cahuita.

Este primer volumen está dedicado al tema del aprovechamiento del arrecife. Subraya como la comunidad de Cahuita y el Comité de Manejo del Parque Nacional resolvieron un posible conflicto.

Durante la negociación, la participación comunal fue un factor muy importante para alcanzar una solución al problema. Este esfuerzo compartido es un paso determinante para el futuro de Cahuita. Señala una forma novedosa de trabajar por el bien comunal y natural del área.

El Contexto

La comunidad de Cahuita es, sin lugar a dudas, uno de los pueblos más comprometidos con su territorio. Este sentimiento de apego territorial lo ha motivado a librar muchas batallas con el objeto de proteger y conservar su patrimonio natural.

En este sentido, si una comunidad sabe resolver sus conflictos es la comunidad de Cahuita; ya sea ante representantes del Estado, como lo que sucedió en el año de 1995 con el Ministerio de Ambiente y Energía (MINAE); o situaciones a nivel local, como la que sucedió recientemente por el uso y aprovechamiento del arrecife por parte de los boteros de la comunidad.

De este último, vale resaltar la rápida y acertada resolución de un posible conflicto que hizo la comunidad y el Comité de Manejo del Parque Nacional Cahuita. Esto marca un paso muy importante para el futuro de Cahuita, porque la voz de la comunidad determinó la decisión final.

El Problema

La situación que provocó la incertidumbre de la comunidad de boteros fue un volante que empezó a circular por la comunidad. El volante

anunciaba que a partir del 16 de marzo de 1998 se iba cobrar a todos los turistas que visitaran el arrecife el pago por ingreso al área protegida. Es decir, \$6 por extranjero y ₡200 por nacional.

El Proceso

La situación se resolvió en cuatro grandes momentos: (1) Entrega del volante; (2) Reunión de los boteros con el Comité de Manejo; (3) Entrega de propuestas por parte de los boteros al Comité de Manejo; (4) Resolución del conflicto.

(1) Entrega del Volante

La entrega del volante se realizó con el objeto de comunicarle a la comunidad de boteros que se iba a hacer cumplir la ley vigente de Parque Nacionales por concepto de ingreso a un área protegida. Vale mencionar que hasta ese momento no se cobraba a los turistas por visitar el arrecife. El volante fue firmado por La Administración del Parque y el Comité de Manejo.

(2) Reunión de boteros con el Comité de Manejo

Con el afán de discutir las implicaciones del volante, y con la buena intención de buscar una solución que beneficiara las partes, se realizó la reunión.

Los boteros argumentaron que un pago de ese tipo provocaría un serio problema, debido a que aumentarían las tarifas normales por el tour al arrecife. Sin embargo, estaban dispuestos a contribuir con el mantenimiento del Parque Nacional y la protección y conservación del arrecife.

Al término de la reunión, el Comité de Manejo expresó en público que se suspendería el cobro dispuesto por visitar el arrecife. Se acordó que los boteros llevaran sus propuestas de contribución a la reunión ordinaria del Comité de Manejo, el miércoles 18 de marzo de 1998.

(3) Entrega de Propuesta de los Boteros

Se presentaron varias propuestas, que iban desde ₡ 600 por bote hasta ₡ 500 por turista. Posteriormente, se hizo una votación.

La propuesta con mayor aceptación fue la de ₡ 500 por persona. Después de la votación, el Comité de Manejo planteó que en los próximos días iba a comunicar la cuota de contribución oficial.

(4) El Resultado

Con base a las propuestas y la aceptación de la mayoría de los boteros, se acordó recibir una donación por parte de los boteros de ₡ 500 por cada turista que visite el arrecife.

Lo Relevante

Entre los puntos más importantes de la situación del cobro del arrecife es la gran capacidad de la comunidad y el Comité de Manejo para resolver rápida y eficazmente sus problemas latentes. Si se hubiera manejado este caso de otra forma, sin duda alguna, hubiese provocado un conflicto.

Comité de Manejo

Gina Cuza
Ministerio de Ambiente y Energía

Eduardo Pearson
Ministerio de Ambiente y Energía

Irma Humphries
Asociación de Desarrollo

Dexter Lewis
Asociación de Desarrollo

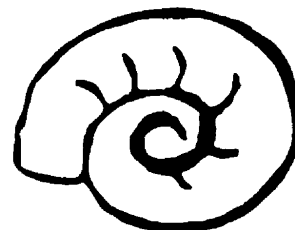
Enrique Joseph
Cámara de Turismo

Alpheus Buchanan
Miembro Adjunto, sin voto

Cabe resaltar que la toma de decisiones fue un fiel reflejo de la voluntad de la mayoría. Eso demuestra el gran compromiso de la comunidad y el Comité de Manejo por su recurso más preciado, El Parque Nacional Cahuita.

Este boletín fue diseñado por:

Proyecto de documentación de la experiencia de manejo de conflictos y manejo colaborativo en el Parque Nacional Cahuita



Objetivos

- Documentar y analizar la experiencia de manejo de conflicto en el Parque Nacional Cahuita
- Evaluar y fortalecer el proceso de manejo colaborativo entre la comunidad Cahuita y el Ministerio de Ambiente y Energía

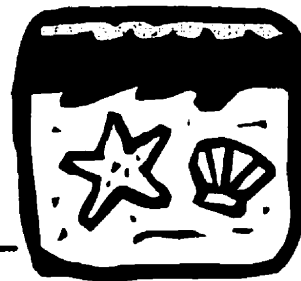
Equipo

- Marvin Fonseca, Departamento de Geografía, Universidad de Costa Rica
- Viviane Weitzner, Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

Proximas Actividades

- Entrevistas con el Comité de Manejo, Organizaciones y la comunidad Cahuita
- Foro Abierto para compartir con la comunidad lo que hemos aprendido
- Capacitación de personas interesadas en dar seguimiento al boletín

El Arrecife



Boletín Informativo de Cahuita

Nuestro Progreso es Responsabilidad de Todos

vol 2, Mayo 1998

Nuestras Organizaciones Comunales

El Arrecife

En nuestra comunidad hay muchos grupos organizados y personas trabajando para mejorar nuestro pueblo.

Esta edición resalta el trabajo de la Asociación de Guías Naturalistas de Cahuita, el Grupo de Mujeres EBANO, el Grupo de Teatro Los Innovadores de la Fraternidad y el Comité de Salud. En los próximos volúmenes de *El Arrecife* continuaremos hablando de cada uno de los grupos de nuestra comunidad.

El Arrecife es nuestro boletín informativo. Invitamos a todos los Cahuiteños a formar parte de nuestro equipo. Para más información comunicarse con el Comité del Boletín. Tel:7550017

Comité del Boletín:
Eva Rivera de Kaine, Mario Calderón, Enrique Joseph

Colaboraron en éste volumen:
Ana Cruz, Petrolina Herrera, Claudio Reid Brown, Mario Calderón, Asociación de Guías Naturalistas, Lucía Chavarría Ramírez y Mirna Vanegas López

Asociación de Guías Naturalistas de Cahuita

Fundación:

Nuestro grupo se inició en el mes de mayo, 1997 con la participación de 9 personas. Hoy tenemos 13 miembros.

Objetivos:

- Alcanzar un debido reconocimiento profesional.
- Vigilar y proteger los recursos del Parque Nacional Cahuita.
- Realizar actividades comunales para el mejoramiento del pueblo.
- Involucrar a los niños de Cahuita y comunidades aledañas al Parque Nacional Cahuita en actividades de protección y educación ambiental



Actividades:

- *En el Parque Nacional Cahuita:* caminatas, snorkeling, pesca deportiva, patrullaje y monitoreo de las tortugas marinas.
- *En la Comunidad:* Limpieza del cementerio, casa comunal y charlas de educación ambiental en las escuelas de Talamanca.

— Por Mario Calderón y La Asociación de Guías Naturalistas

Grupo de Mujeres Ebano

Fundación:

Nos constituimos como grupo en 1995, y fuimos el primer grupo organizado de mujeres en Cahuita.

El grupo esta formado por 10 miembros. Y nos sentimos bien, porque otras mujeres han aprendido de nuestra experiencia; han tomado nuestro patron organizativo y lo han adaptado para sus fines.

Objetivos:

- Tener un lugar donde las mujeres Cahuiteñas podamos distraernos, hablar de nuestras problemas, motivarnos y apoyarnos mutuamente.
- Crear una fuente de ingreso para nuestras familias.
- Involucrar otras compañeras en actividades sociales, con el fin de que juntas podamos ayudar a personas necesitadas.

Actividades:

- Construcción de una panadería a la par de la clínica.
- Panificación, costuras, pinturas en madera y otros artes manuales.

— Por Ana Cruz y Petronila Herrera

Comité de Salud

Fundación:

El Comité de Salud se formó hace un año, con la idea de colaborar, sostener, hacer más humana y satisfactoria la atención que recibe la comunidad del personal de salud. Además de apoyar y contribuir con trabajos voluntarios e informativos para mejorar la salud comunitaria.

En estos momentos nuestro comité lo formamos 3 personas: Claudio Reid Brown, Lucía Chavarría Ramírez, Beatriz Muñoz, Emilia Zeledon y Shirley Simon.

Objetivos:

- Integrar a la comunidad de Cahuita en actividades y proyectos que mejoren la salud comunal.
- Informar, orientar y organizar a la comunidad en temas de salud comunitaria.
- Educar sobre el uso racional de los servicios de salud.

— Por Lucia Chavarría Ramírez

Agradecimiento

El Comité de Salud les agradece por la valiosa contribución que recibimos de parte de cada uno de ustedes, para la compra de un aire acondicionado para la farmacia de Cahuita. Queremos informarles que gracias a todos ustedes ya se compró dicho aire.

Juntos Todo es Posible

Comité de Salud de Cahuita
Claudio Reid Brown
Presidente

Grupo de Teatro:

Los Innovadores de la Fraternidad Cahuita-Talamanca

Fundación:

Nos integramos en el año de 1982, bajo la dirección de Claudio Reid Brown. En estos momentos el grupo esta formado por 13 integrantes.

Vale la pena resaltar, que todas las obras de *Los Innovadores de La Fraternidad*, han sido escritas por el Maestro Claudio Reid Brown; y resaltan la historia, problemas y triunfos de nuestro pueblo y el país. En mayo, 1997 ganamos un reconocimiento de la Municipalidad de Talamanca por nuestro trabajo en el desarrollo del cantón.

Objetivos:

- Proyectar el grupo a nivel local, regional, nacional e internacional
- Integrar a la juventud en actividades recreativas y productivas para la comunidad.
- Dar a conocer la cultura del crisol de grupos etnicos de Cahuita, a través de nuestras obras y presentaciones.
- Obtener equipo y moviliario apropiados para realizar mejores presentaciones de nuestras obras.

Obras:

Pensión Alimenticia en Costa Rica,
Tragedia de Jimmy Jackson,
Hablemos al Estilo de mi País,
La Caída, *Kendo*, *¡Hay, Limón...!* (en proceso)

Principales eventos:

El Grano de Oro
(Tercer lugar, 1996. San José)



Palma de Oro
(Primer lugar. Limón)

Tambien hemos participado en eventos como el Festival Internacional de las Artes (Alajuela y Cartago).

El 30 de mayo presentamos Kendo en Eddy Bermudez a las 4:30p.m.
— Por Mirna Vargas López

Grupos Comunales

Asociación de Desarrollo
Irma Humphries 0261
Cámara de Turismo
Tony Mora 0232
Comité de Salud
Claudio Reid 0030
Comité de Manejo
Enrique Joseph 0017
Comité de Seguridad
Enrique Joseph 0017
Grupo de Mujeres EBANO
Ana Cruz 0030
Asociación de Mujeres Artesanas de Cahuita (AMACA)
Letty Grant Humphries 0206
Asociación de Mujeres DORCAS
Eva Rivera de Kaine 0243
Grupo de Mujeres Afrocaribeñas
Laura Wilson 0211
Asociación de Gulas Naturalistas de Cahuita
Mirna Vanegas López 0373
Grupo de Teatro Los Innovadores
Rodolpho Enriquez Pineda 0232
Grupo Musical Ashanti
Comité de Bandera Azul

Instituciones del Estado

Instituto de Alcoholismo y Farmocoddependencia
Ministerio de Ambiente y Energía
(Ministerio de Salud y EBAIS)
Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería
Acueductos y Alcantarillados

Nota: Si dentro de esta lista no se ha incluido su grupo o organización, por favor comuníquese con el Comité del Boletín El Arrecife.

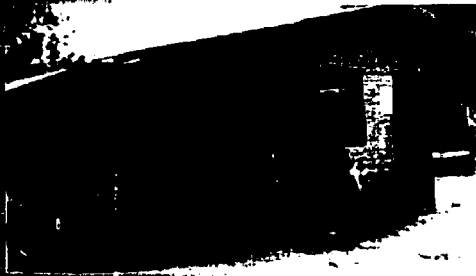
Appendix IV: Brochure



Luego, llegaron primero en busca de rutas para ferrovias y las plantaciones llegaron en un sitio para

del cielo. En aquellos tiempos viviamos del cultivo de coco, cacao y de la pesca. Todo lo que necesitabamos lo teniamos a la mano: huertas, plantas medicinales y árboles frutales.

Por su belleza e importancia ecológica, una parte de nuestro jardín fue declarado como Monumento Natural en el año de 1970 y en 1978 se creo el Parque Nacional Cahuita.



El Cambio

Con la creación del Parque Nacional y la pérdida de nuestros cultivos de cacao por la monilia, tuvimos que modificar nuestra forma de vida. Cambiamos nuestros machetes y secadores de cacao por cabinas y sodas. La transición al turismo fue muy difícil,

pero con el paso de unos años logramos adaptarnos al nuevo trabajo, luchando siempre por conservar nuestras raíces. La actividad turística atrajo a nuevos pobladores de todas partes del mundo. Hoy convivimos más de 1100 cahuiteños.

Del Conflicto a la Colaboración

En el año de 1994 el ministerio de ambiente propuso un aumento en la tarifa por ingreso al Parque Nacional, que hubiera acabado con el turismo en nuestro pueblo. Sabiamos que la gente que venia a gozar de nuestras playas dentro del

Parque bien vale la pena visitar. En nosotros mismos organizamos nuestros

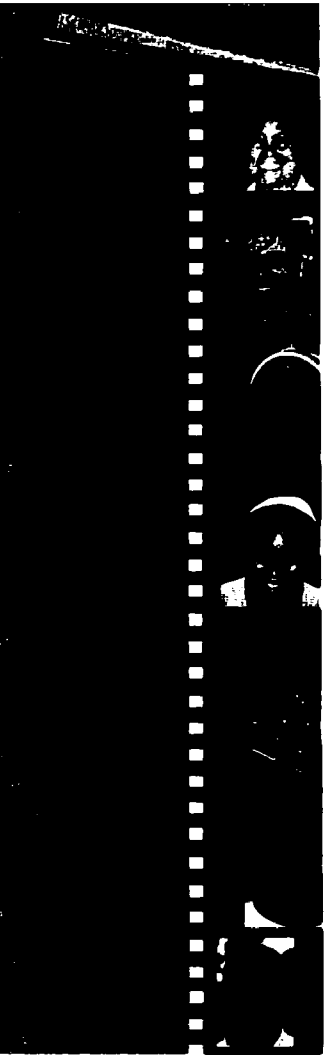
A partir del manejo del Parque, el interés en el área de negociación se solucionó ganamos tarifas por el Comité Playa Blanca

Hoy nuestros han estado desde 1994 Comité de toma de Nacional colaboramos dentro de galardón limpieza nuestros significan

Somos, comunidad directores Nacional modificado en Costa

no actual República, documento ordeno lo que Aunque durante a

de tiempos del Edén; las noches, caminos, bajado



Appendix V: Stakeholder Matrix

Stakeholders (Characteristics and/or mandate/objective where applicable)	Main Interests in Cahuita National Park
Local Level	
Hotels, restaurants and shop owners. There are approximately 70 businesses in Cahuita.	Commercial and tourism; some local restaurants buy the fish, lobster and turtle eggs from subsistence users, and therefore have an interest in continued subsistence use
Cultural groups, e.g., the Calypso band "Ashanti", the Afro-Caribbean Women's Association, the theatre group "The Innovators of Fraternity" (founded in 1982)	Cultural conservation
<p>Women's associations and cooperatives, and independent artists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Women Artisan's Association of Cahuita (AMACA), founded in 1984, with 6 members. Uses natural resources (driftwood, coconut, palm leaves) to create crafts, and trains interested women. - EBANO is Cahuita's oldest women's organization (although it was not officially founded until 1995). It has 10 members. Objectives are to create a space for Cahuita's women to motivate themselves, speak about problems and gain mutual support; create an alternative source of income; get involved in social activities. Has a bakery which produces breads and Caribbean baked goods. Also engages in some sewing activities. - DORCAs, founded in 1998 with the help of Namasol (a Costa Rica-Holland project explained later in this section), this group consists of some 20 women who paint T-shirts and make other crafts to sell to tourists. - Independent artists/craftspeople. There are a number of independent artists and craftspeople who sell their work in souvenir shops, or have stands near the entrance of Playa Blanca. 	Commercial and tourism
Furniture makers (approximately 2 in Cahuita)	Commercial and tourism; furniture makers are interested in the driftwood in the park
Landowners yet to receive compensation. To date only 15 of the 71 claims for compensation have been settled. There are 10 outstanding claims with valid documentation.	Property rights, receiving compensation, and in some cases continued subsistence use
Youth/Schoolchildren	Recreation, cultural and environmental conservation, potential future commercial involvement
Fishers and hunters. There are approximately 15 fishers in Cahuita who use the park, with more in the neighbouring communities. There are no estimates of the number of hunters who use the park, although most are from communities other than Cahuita.	subsistence use (some commercial); traditional rights

Turtle Users. There are approximately 13 turtle users in the community of Punta Riel, with an unestimated number from Hone Creek and Cahuita. In addition, during Easter, turtle egg gatherers from other parts of Costa Rica enter Cahuita National Park.	subsistence use (some commercial); food and traditional "medicine" (it is thought that eating turtle eggs increases sexual potency); traditional rights (some non-local, non-customary users)
Farmers. There are a few families who still live and/or use their plots in Hone Creek.	subsistence use (livelihood); property rights
Tour Operators. There are approximately 6 official local tour operators in Cahuita, although there are several more ad hoc tour operators. In addition, there are a number of companies from San José who organize tours in the park.	Tourism and conservation
Naturalist Guides. Founded in 1998, this "youth" group's membership has wavered from 3 to 13 due to internal conflicts and external pressures, discussed below.	Tourism and conservation (some are more interested in tourism and economic spin-offs than others)
Tourists (Costa Rican and international). Approximately 55,000 people visited Cahuita National Park in 1997.	Recreation, conservation, some fishing
Local resident park users	Recreation (including fishing), cultural and environmental conservation, property rights/sovereignty
Chamber of Tourism of Cahuita (CATURCA). Founded in 1993, CATURCA's objective is to promote tourism in Cahuita. CATURCA has approximately 40 affiliated members, out of some 70 businesses in Cahuita. It is financed by a 1000 colon membership fee (approximately \$4 USD) for month, as well as government funding.	Tourism and economic development; public relations
Development Association of Cahuita (ADIC), Development Association of Hone Creek (ADIHC). The development associations are the local governments, representing all residents.	Economic development, conservation
Management Committee of Cahuita National Park (currently comprised of members of CATURCA, ADIC, the Administration of Cahuita National Park and ACLACA)	Provision of services for tourists, waste disposal, conservation and tourism (to be discussed further)
Administration of Cahuita National Park	Biodiversity conservation and tourism
Namasol. Established in 1994, Namasol is a bilateral Costa-Rica Holland project that aims to consolidate or generate processes that support the sustainable development of communities, the sustainable use of natural resources, and the management of protected areas in the Caribbean sector of the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve. The project transferred its headquarters from San José to Cahuita in 1998. It has focussed the bulk of its activities to date working with Indigenous Communities in Talamanca (Piedrahita Yepes 1998).	Biodiversity conservation and economic development, training for guides, infrastructure, cultural "reclamation", sustainable livelihoods
Provincial/La Amistad Conservation Area Level	
La Amistad Caribe Conservation Area (ACLACA)	Biodiversity conservation and tourism
Ministry of Forestry, Talamanca sub-region	Maintaining the forest cover in Cahuita National Park; logging and reforestation in the sub-region

Municipality of Talamanca	Same as the interests of its constituents, particularly the people of Cahuita and other communities neighbouring the park
Environmental Commission for the Canton of Talamanca. A new civil society organization founded in 1998 to voice the concerns of people in Talamanca with regards to the environment.	Environmental health and conservation
Port Authority for the Economic Development of the Atlantic Coast (JAPDEVA).	Infrastructure making the park more accessible (e.g., better bridges, roads)
National Level	
Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAЕ) (National System of Conservation Areas [SINAC]; Office of Civil Society Participation); National Parks Foundation	Biodiversity conservation and Tourism; Civil society participation
Ministry of Health	Health (e.g., malaria, dengue prevention)
Ministry of Water and Aqueducts	Environmental health of the Park's beaches, creeks and rivers. Awards the Ecological Blue Flag (an award for uncontaminated and well-kept beaches and water). Also undertakes hydroelectric development, which affects the reef by increasing sedimentation and other environmental effects
Ministry of Tourism (ICT)	Tourism
Institute of Agricultural Development (IDA)	DOES NOT HAVE A DIRECT STAKE in the park, although its policies could clearly have an impact (for e.g., the policy that provides compensation to squatters who clear the land in protected areas).
Costa Rica's Ombudsperson (Defensoría de los Habitantes)	Protecting the rights of the residents and provision of mediation services.
Costa Rican Institute for Fisheries and Aquaculture (INCOPESCA). Regulates and promotes fisheries and aquaculture in Costa Rica. Engages in conservation, sustainable use of marine resources and aquaculture. Develops and enforces current legislation, zoning and quotas. Conducts biodiversity research and inventorying.	Sustainable use, protecting the interests of organized subsistence fishers, conservation
Universities and scientific institutions, e.g., INBIO, Fundación Neotropica, Tropical Studies Organization (OET)	Research, Biodiversity conservation and bioprospecting

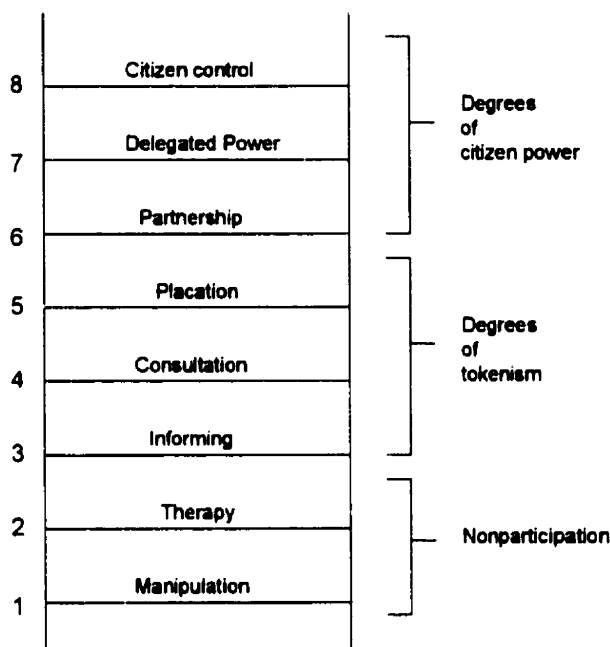
<p>Caribbean Conservation Corporation (CCC). Founded in 1959 by sea turtle expert Archie Carr, CCC is Costa Rica's oldest NGO. It helped the Costa Rican government establish Tortuguero National Park in 1970. It engages in turtle research and conservation, and has set up monitoring programs with local people in Tortuguero. CCC has played an active role in lobbying for legislative changes to protect Costa Rica's sea turtles, including a court case which put an end to the legal harvest of green turtles in 1998. It is also involved in regional activities.</p>	<p>Sea turtle conservation</p>
<p>Regional/International Level</p>	
<p>Merck and other Pharmaceutical Companies. Merck has an Agreement with INBIO to provide funds for bioprospecting. A percentage of these goes to the National Parks Foundation, which in turn funds the maintenance of Costa Rica's national parks.</p>	<p>Biodiversity conservation and bioprospecting.</p>
<p>Multinational logging and fruit companies</p>	<p>NO STAKE in the park, but activities in the region affect the park's environmental health. Sedimentation of reef, contamination due to use of pesticides, solid waste (plastic bags for bananas found near and in reef).</p>
<p>International mining and gas exploration companies</p>	<p>NO STAKE in the park. Mining companies have been undertaking exploration in the Talamanca area, which would affect the environmental integrity of Cahuita National Park. Years ago, gas exploration was undertaken in the park.</p>
<p>Corredor Biológico. A Central American initiative attempting to create a biological corridor linking Central American countries.</p>	<p>Conservation; linking Cahuita National Park to the Central American biological corridor. Recently appointed as an observer and "overseer" (<i>fiscal</i>) of Cahuita National Park's Management Committee.</p>
<p>The Caribbean Coastal Marine Productivity (CARICOMP). A regional scientific effort to study land-sea interaction processes, to monitor for change, and to provide appropriate scientific information for management. Focusses on mangroves, seagrasses and coral reefs. Central clearinghouse at the University of West Indies in Jamaica.</p>	<p>Interested in helping to establish community-based monitoring in Cahuita (pers. comm., Fonseca 1998).</p>
<p>Meso-American Socio-Environmental Conflict Management Network (MSECMN)</p>	<p>Capacity-building in conflict management; enhancing the collaborative management of the Park</p>
<p>Other international organizations, universities and research institutions. e.g., The Nature Conservancy, IUCN, WWF, FAO, Earth Council, Central American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD), University of Manitoba, IDRC.</p>	<p>Biodiversity conservation, sustainable livelihoods, public participation, community-based natural resources management, scientific and social research</p>
<p>Governments who have signed Multilateral Environmental Agreements, e.g., Convention on Biological Diversity, TRIPS, CITES</p>	<p>Biodiversity conservation; endangered species protection, etc.</p>

**Appendix VI:
Arnstein (1969), Borrini-Feyerabend (1996)
and Rocha's (1997)
Concepts of Participation and Power**

Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation and Borrini-Feyerabend's (1996) adaptation: Community Power Experiences

In her seminal essay on the types of citizen participation in decision-making, Arnstein identified 8 "rungs" in what she coined the "ladder of citizen participation", ranging from manipulation (non-participation) and consultation (tokenism) to citizen control (citizen power) (Figure 1).

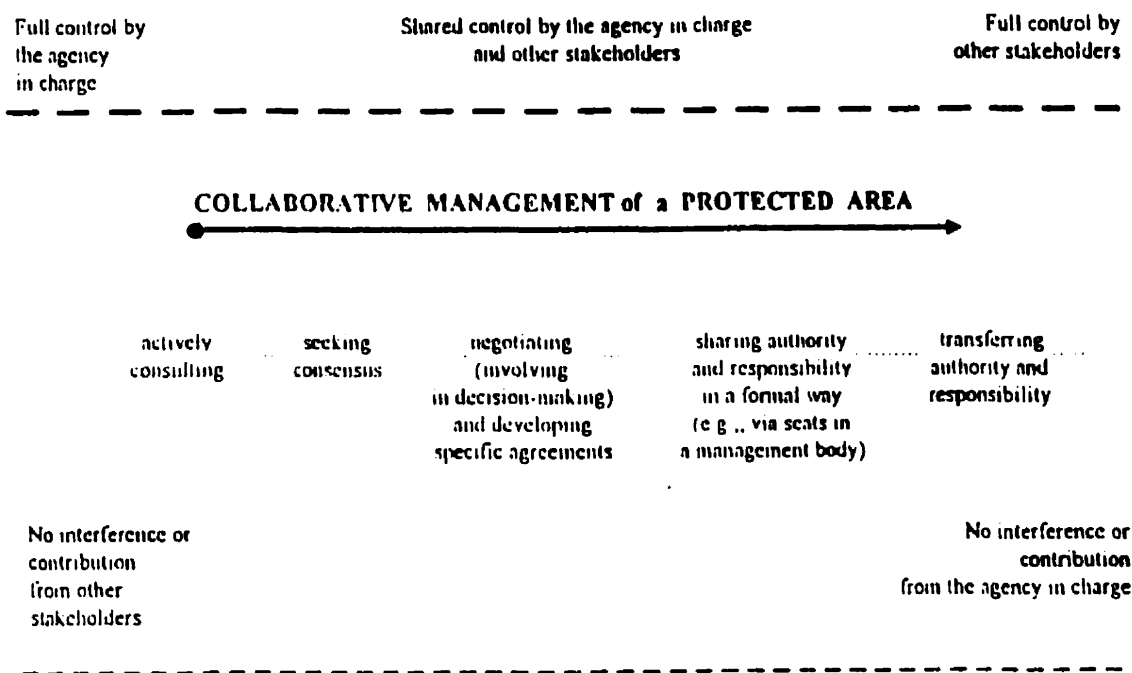
Figure 1: Arnstein's (1969) Ladder of Citizen Participation



At the bottom rungs of the ladder, powerholders "educate" the participants; in the middle rungs, citizens have the power to hear and be heard, but do not have enough power to ensure that those with power will heed to their views; and at the top of the ladder, citizens have a majority voice in decision-making, or full managerial power, and have the power to influence the outcomes of decisions. Arnstein defines citizen participation as *"the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future...it is the means by which they can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of an affluent society."* For Arnstein, citizen participation and citizen power are synonymous: only when there is a redistribution of power can one say that true participation has taken place. Power here refers to the classical Dahlian definition, i.e., *"the ability to affect the behavior of another – to prompt a person to 'do something he would not otherwise do'"* (in Rocha 1997). In other words, the *"underlying issues are [that] 'nobodies'...are trying to become 'somebodies' with enough power to make the target institutions responsive to their views, aspirations, and needs"* (Arnstein 1969). The locus of power in Arnstein's ladder is the community (Rocha 1997).

Co-management theorists have embraced Arnstein's (1969) ladder in their assessments of participation in co-management, as seen in Borrini-Feyerabend's adaptation for protected areas (Figure 2). However, as Rocha (1997) argues, there may be more types of power experiences within the individual and the community that have a direct impact on participation, and that influence the outcomes of co-management.

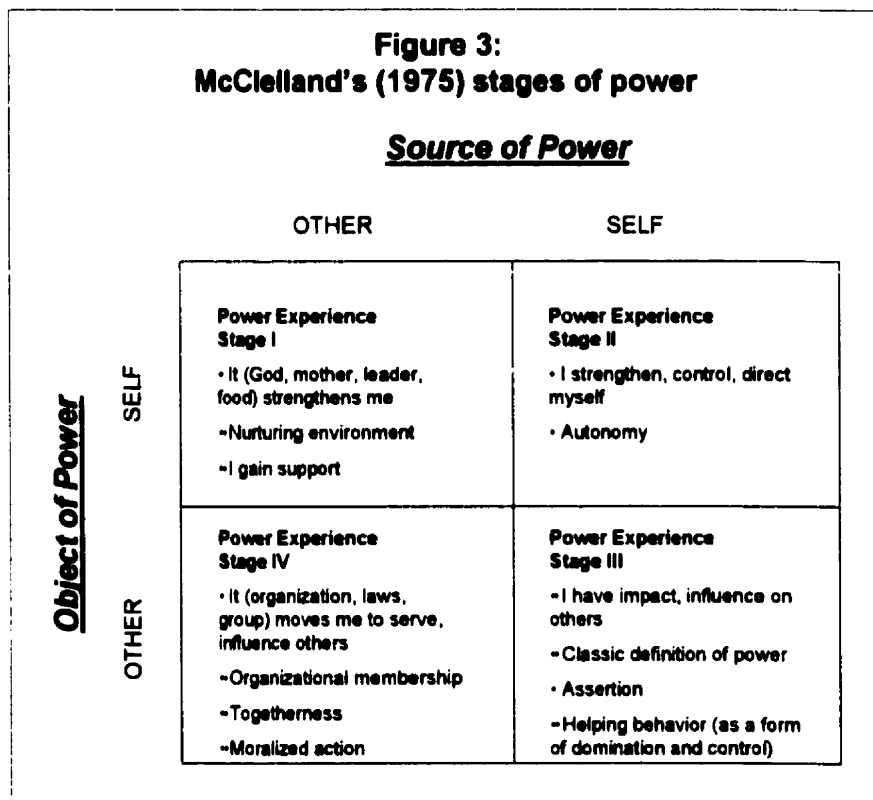
**Figure 2:
Borrini-Feyerabend's (1996) continuum of participation for protected areas**



Rocha's Ladder of Empowerment: Individual and Community Power Experiences

Rocha's (1997) ladder of empowerment differs from Arnstein's ladder and its adaptations in that it is based on the understanding that power is experienced in different ways: *"While Arnstein's ladder moved conceptually along increasing levels of the same type of power, the ladder of empowerment moves conceptually from a focus on individual to community experiences of power, wherein different experiences are combined to create individual and community outcomes."* Like Arnstein, the rungs in Rocha's ladder move from less to more, from individual to community empowerment. Empowerment is seen as a categorization of power experiences, in which the type of power Arnstein refers to -- i.e., power to control others -- is one category.

The ladder is based to a large extent on the work of McClelland (1975), who identified four stages of power experiences moving from individual to community (Figure 3).

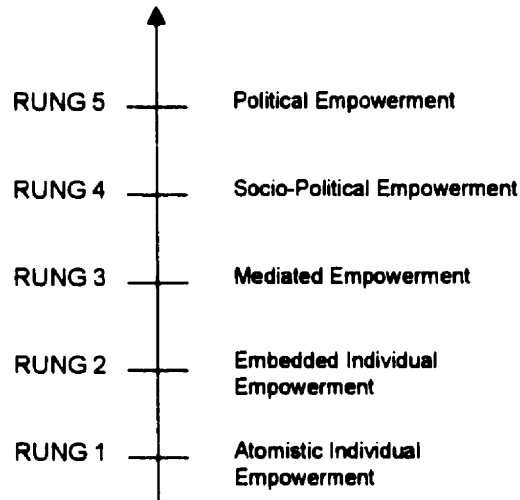


He saw these stages as developmental, i.e., each stage is experienced in a given succession. Earlier stages are not forgotten as the individual or community moves to the next stage of power experience, however, but serve as a resource to draw upon. In addition, both an individual and a community can move through these stages: *"The difference is that the community power experience will not be linear: it will consist of individuals and organizations moving through and experiencing modes of power in time frames that do not favour one mode over another"* (Rocha 1997). In stage 1 of McClelland's typology, "It strengthens me," where the object or target is self and the source is other; in stage 2, "I strengthen myself", where the object is self and the source is self; in stage 3, "I have an impact on others", where the source of power is self and the object is other (i.e., Dahl's definition of power); in stage 4, "I gain strength from serving/influencing others", where the object of power is other and the source is other.

Rocha develops five types of empowerment categories, each derived from a consideration of four dimensions: locus, process, goal and power experience (Figure 4). Rungs towards the bottom of the ladder focus more on individual empowerment, while those towards the top focus on community empowerment:

Figure 4: Rocha's (1997) ladder of empowerment

Community Empowerment



Individual Empowerment

	ATOMISTIC INDIVIDUAL	EMBEDDED INDIVIDUAL	MEDIATED	SOCIO-POLITICAL	POLITICAL
Locus	• individual	• individual	• individual • community	• individual • community	• community
GOAL	• personal satisfaction • increasing coping ability	• personal satisfaction • competence in negotiating daily environment	• knowledge & information for proper decision making	• individual development • expanded access to community resources	• expanded access to community services, goods & rights
PROCESS	• therapy • daily living skills • self-help	• organizational participation	• professional/client relationship	• organizational participation • collaborative grass-roots action	• political action, voting, protest • political representation
POWER EXPERIENCE	• nurturing support	• nurturing support • direct & control self	• support • strengthen self • control by helping • moralized action	• support • strengthen self • influence, coerce others • togetherness	• influence, coerce others • assertion

(1) The first rung is "atomistic individual empowerment", where the locus is the individual; the goal is increased individual efficacy; and the process consists of altering the emotional or physical state of the individual. *"This type of empowerment is most usefully applied to individual problems that do not require alterations in systems, social relations, or structural changes... for its success...thus while being of great use to the individual, atomistic individual empowerment may fall short when attempting to address social problems"* (Rocha 1997).

(2) The second rung is "embedded individual empowerment," where the locus of empowerment is the individual; the process includes recognition of the surrounding environment (i.e., that they are embedded in a given context); and the goal is *"to understand how what goes on inside one's head interacts with what goes on in one's environment to enhance or inhibit one's mastery and control over factors that affect one's life"* (Zimmerman 1990).

(3) The third rung is "mediated empowerment", where the locus of empowerment is either an individual or the community; the process is mediated by an expert or professional; and the goals are to provide knowledge and information necessary for individual and community decision-making and action (i.e., it is predicated upon a relationship of unequal knowledge). The power experience of the dominant power is as relevant as the power experience as those being empowered. In the absence of resistance to *"succumb to a mode of interaction that may invalidate a truly empowering process"*, there is *"potential for the unequal status and power between client and experts to negatively affect the empowerment process and outcome"* (Rocha 1997). The flip side, however, is that a strong working relationship can be established if these weaknesses are openly acknowledged and addressed.

(4) The fourth rung is "socio-political empowerment", in which the locus is both the individual and the community, and the empowerment experience focusses on the process of change within a community in the context of collaborative struggle to alter social, political or economic relations. *"It is developmental in nature in that places theoretical importance on stages of growth through knowledge acquisition and collaborative social action"* (Rocha 1997). Community is defined as consisting of individuals, groups and organizations. Rocha's category of socio-political community empowerment is based to a large extent on the work of Kieffer (1984) and Freire (1970), and consists of two core elements: *"1) critical reflection by the community and members-of-community (individuals) rethinking their relationship to structures of power and 2) collective action upon those structures. Without the development of critical awareness, action is empty. Without action, critical awareness is useless. It is in the combination of these two features that the strength of this model of empowerment lies"* (Rocha 1997). The individual and community go through four stages of engagement, occurring roughly in succession, following Keiffer (1984), which Rocha summarizes as follows:

"The first phase is that of entry: The individual or community becomes mobilized when faced with a tangible or direct threat to well being. This prompts engagement in the struggle, altering perception of power relations (and power holders). Phase two consists of three elements (external enablers-as-mentors, peer support within an organizational context, and deepening understanding of political and structural terms rather than individual or local). In phase three, the individual or community

*learns to cope with the permanence of institutional barriers and inertia. The process of change becomes an accepted long term process in which the defeats as well as successes are acknowledged as part of an extended struggle. Finally, in phase four, the skills, knowledge, and mastery gained in the previous stages are incorporated into other aspects of community or individual life. Kieffer refers to this as **adulthood** or **commitment**. The particular struggle may have been lost or won, but the commitment continues in similar or different forms."*

The power experience in this model therefore involves different types of power experiences as the individual and the community go through the various developmental stages. Essentially, two levels of development are occurring: *"The community is transforming itself from the inside into a powerful actor, capable of garnering resources for local benefit; at the same time, members-of-the-community are transforming themselves from bystanders into actors in and through this process"* (Rocha 1997).

(5) The fifth rung is "political empowerment", where the locus is the community, seen as a network of like-minded individuals with or without a geographic dimension as its defining characteristic. The process of empowerment *"is political action directed toward institutional change"*, and is comprised of voting and voter representation. Political empowerment involves expanded access to group resources (e.g., education, housing), and the focus is on visible outcomes rather than the process of change within the individual or group. Critics point out that this type of model does not build community capacity with which to challenge local power relations, or sustain momentum in seeking redistributive effects: *"This model does not intend to alter individual coping or efficacy, but to change the allocation of resources available at the local level"* (Rocha 1997).

Appendix VII: Planning Session Outcomes

Functional Area: Resources Management			
Functional Subareas	Activities	Total Points	Priority
Coastal Zone Management			
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turtle observation - Diving - Sport fishing - Identify which activities should and should not be permitted - Zoning - Identify the carrying capacity - Evaluate the quality of services available for tourists 	14	1
Reef	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protection and control - Regulations - Zoning - Research and monitoring - Restoration of the ecosystem and its populations - Studies on sedimentation - Define the carrying capacity - Study the impact of tourism - Study the impact of fishing in the reef 	12	2
Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conservation biology - Genetics - Connectivity - Promote alternative uses outside the park (e.g., breeding centres) 	9	3
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Studies to identify bioindicator species - Studies on land tenure - Zoning of ecosystems and states of succession 		4
Waste Management			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Studies to determine the nature of waste and its volume - Identify institutions or businesses that could help with waste treatment - Implement a recycling and waste separation system - Identify and implement practical measures for collecting solid waste and treating water 	15	1

Functional Area: Public Use			
<i>Functional Subareas</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Total Points</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Attention to Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distribute written information regarding what can and cannot be done in the park - Maintain an up-to-date registry of park visitors - Hold discussion groups and talks - Undertake guided tours - Conduct interviews with tourists to evaluate the services 	26	1
Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and design trails - Construct and maintain trails - Trail interpretation - Signage on the trail between Playa Blanca and Puerto Vargas 	26	1
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain an adequate number of pamphlets - Promote the National Park through mass media (press, TV, radio) - Create videos of the Park - Design signs 	24	2
Zoning	Implement, monitor, evaluate and adapt the zoning outlined in the Executive Decree	21	3

Functional Area: Resources Protection			
<i>Functional Subareas</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Total Points</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Attention to Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distribute written information regarding what can and cannot be done in the park - Maintain an up-to-date registry of park visitors - Hold discussion groups and talks - Undertake guided tours - Conduct interviews with tourists to evaluate the services 	26	1
Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and design trails - Construct and maintain trails - Trail interpretation - Signage on the trail between Playa Blanca and Puerto Vargas 	26	1
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain an adequate number of pamphlets - Promote the National Park through mass media (press, TV, radio) - Create videos of the Park - Design signs 	24	2
Zoning	Implement, monitor, evaluate and adapt the zoning outlined in the Executive Decree	21	3

Functional Area: Resources Protection			
<i>Functional Subareas</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Total Points</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Patrolling, Protection of natural resources and Security for tourists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and unify criteria and strategies - Coordinate with police - Involve neighbouring communities - Develop a patrolling plan identifying roles - Denounce violators 	18	1
Critical zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and map critical zones/areas - Develop a strategic plan to recommend for patrolling 	14	2
Delimitation of areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demarcation, signage and verification of the limits of the Park and use zones - Demarcate the following sectors: Punta Riel, maritime areas, area between Playa Blanca and Puerto Vargas 	13	3
Entrance Booths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Control visitation, register tourists and open and close entrance booth on time 	11	4

Functional Area: Research			
<i>Functional Subareas</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Total Points</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Research Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinate with the research department of ACLACA - Gain access to ACLACA's information system - Promote/encourage university research - Develop a list of research priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - carrying capacity - biodiversity inventories - environmental health of the resources, especially fauna - bio-indicators - marine populations, with an emphasis on fishery 	28	1
Management of Researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop research protocols and permits for research in the Park - Develop recommendations and give out permits to researchers - Follow-up and monitor research projects 	27	2
Information Management and Transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compile information - Analyze and track research - "Translate" research information into adequate formats and language, depending on the targetted public 	27	2

Functional Area: Training and Environmental Education			
<i>Functional Subareas</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Total Points</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Management Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify training needs - Focus on: legal aspects; management of protected areas 	34	1
Park staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify training needs - Natural history of Cahuita National Park - Manuals for new staff - English - Human relations - Management of natural resources - Management of tourists - Training in writing reports 	22	2
Neighbouring communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training in organizing - Training for local volunteers - Training regarding the importance of Cahuita National Park - Sustainable Management of resources 	22	2
Organized groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify target groups related to the Management Committee 	15	3
Educational centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold discussion groups, show videos - Visits to Cahuita National Park - Implement MINAE's environmental educational program in the educational centres in the area 	12	4

Functional Area: Administration			
<i>Functional Subareas</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Total Points</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human resources management and control - Organization and planning of human resources - Start a search for an environmental education trainer 	28	1
Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a plan for buying supplies - Establish a procedure for purchases - Maintain up-to-date inventories - Establish mechanisms for provision of the materials 	25	2
General Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a plan for general maintenance - Oversee the use of equipment 	22	3
Bookkeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define mechanisms for controlling incoming and outgoing funds 	22	3

Functional Area: Management Committee			
<i>Functional Subareas</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Total Points</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Internal regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revise and approve the Committee's internal regulations - Implement the internal regulations once they are approved 	33	1
Identification of funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify possible partners - Write fundraising proposals 	31	2
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a needs assessment focussing on: latrines, garbage bins, tables, signage - Define the physical location of the Management Committee secretariat 	30	3
Develop annual budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and propose to MINAE an annual budget for Cahuita National Park - Implement 	27	4
Executive Decree/ Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revise and adapt the Executive Decree - Consult the community with regards to the rules of use in the Decree - Examine the possibility of changing the Executive Decree for a stronger type of Agreement 	18	5
Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate the implementation of the annual strategic plan - Evaluate the staff (those hired by MINAE and CDM) - Regularly evaluate the progress and goals achieved - Conduct financial audits 	15	6
Administration			
Work manuals and descriptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a manual of activities, functions and responsibilities of Park wardens 	29	1
Technical resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a needs assessment - Develop a procurement plan - Develop manuals for controlling the inventory 	23	2
Criteria for selecting wardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and define profiles of wardens taking into consideration the functional areas of Cahuita National Park 	21	3
Criteria for selecting volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and define profiles of volunteers taking into consideration the functional areas of Cahuita National Park 	20	4
Evaluations of the wardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop forms for evaluating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Management Committee - the Park staff - the superintendent of Cahuita National Park - the work plan and achievement of objectives 	15	5