Conservation, Poverty and Indigenous Peoples:
are we learning from past mistakes?

Cambridge 12-13 December 2005
What causes indigenous poverty?

- USA: lack of rights and self-governance (Harvard study)
- Canada: Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
- General: MEA and repeated World Bank studies, Eversole et al.
- Any kind of imposition which denies voice and rights has this effect
Social Impacts of Exclusion (1)

- Denial of rights to land
- Denial of use of, and access to, natural resources
- Denial of political rights, validity of customary institutions
- Kinship systems disrupted
- Settlement patterns disorganized
Social Impacts of Exclusion (2)

- Loss of informal social networks, livelihoods, property, compensation.
- Poverty creation
- Disruption of customary systems of environment management
- Enforced illegality, subjection to petty tyrannies of officials
Social Impacts of Exclusion (3)

- Forced resettlement
- Leadership systems destroyed
- Symbolic ties to environment broken
- Cultural identity weakened

‘The cumulative effect is that the social fabric and economy are torn apart’

(World Bank)
Conservation: same political effect

- Conservation is the opposite of development?
- Wilderness is what needs to be preserved?
- People need to be kept out of ‘nature’ / PAs?
- N-S impositions: money and power
- Rights not respected
- People disempowered
- Made poor
Environmental Impacts of Exclusion

- Intensified pressure on natural resources outside the protected areas
- Ecosystem decline
- Loss of sense of stewardship
- Loss of traditional ecological knowledge
- ‘Incendiarism’, conflict and alienation
Rights based approaches (1)

- There are a lot of rights: individual vs State
- Equality before law
- Fair trial
- Life
- Protection of family and children
- Privacy and reputations
Rights based approaches (2)

- Right to peaceful assembly and association
- Information
- Take part in public life
- Rights of minorities
- Non discrimination
- Property
- Healthy environment
- Will they cut the mustard?
Rights of Indigenous Peoples (1)

**Collective** Rights of Peoples

- Self-determination
- Freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources
- In no case be deprived of their means of subsistence
- Own, develop, control and use their communal lands, territories and resources, traditionally owned or otherwise occupied by them
Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2)

- The free enjoyment of their own culture and to maintain their traditional way of life
- Free and informed consent prior to activities on their lands
- Represent themselves via own institutions
- Exercise customary law
- Restitution of lands and compo for losses
New Principles for Conservation

- ‘94 IUCN revised PA categories
- ‘96 WWF Principles: rights
- ‘96 IUCN Resolutions: rights
- ‘99 WCPA Guidelines co-management & negotiated agreements
- 2003 WPC ‘New paradigm’ Durban Accord and Plan
- 2004 WCC Endorses Durban Action Plan restitution by 2010
- 2004 CBD rights in PAs, no forced resettlement,
From Principles to Practice: FPP

- **Pucallpa Conf: 1997**
  16 Latin American case studies
- **Kundasang Conf: 1998**
  14 Asian case studies
- **Kigali Conf: 2001**
  11 African case studies
- **Mobile Peoples: 2002**
  Chatty and Colchester
- **GEF Review: 2004**
  10 Cases examined
Obstacles to Reform (1)

- Discrimination, denial of citizenship
- Continuity in policy, laws and institutions
- Assimilationist policies
- Weak policy and laws with respect to land
- Conservation policies/laws based on old model (few countries adopted revised IUCN categories).
Obstacles to Reform (2)

- Conservation NGOs lack appropriate training, staff and capacity to work with communities.
- No complaints/ redress mechanisms.
- Recognition of rights limited to ‘traditional’ technologies or conditioned on environmental performance.
GEF study

- Imposed PAs, No FPIC, no tenure
- Mitigation not avoidance
- Not participants let alone rightsholders
- Alternative livelihood model (cf ICDP)
- No IP policy
- Involuntary resettlement not proscribed
- Out of date OP s / no complaints mechanism
- No baselines, indicators or M&E
Major Gaps

- Which agencies are using rights based approaches successfully?
- Can Conservation change its approach?
- Where have Conservation and IPs partnered for effective national framework change?
- Restitution programme?
10c - **protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements.**

- Maps
- Document customary use
- Develop management plans based on TEK and western science
- Identify framework gaps
- National dialogues
10c project: Swedbio, DGIS, Hivos

- Venezuela: Sanema/Ye’kwana
- Guyana: Wapishana
- Suriname: Karinya
- Cameroon: Baka
- Thailand: Karen and Hmong
- Bangladesh: fisherfolk, mangrove dwellers in Sunderbans
- FPIC in practice: 4 countries - Guyana, Indonesia, Philippines, Peru
- Will Conservation partner?