

## Impact case study (REF3)

<b>Institution:</b> University of East Anglia		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 22 - Anthropology and Development Studies		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Mainstreaming social justice and equity in the management of Protected Areas and other conservation areas		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2009 - 2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Adrian Martin	Professor of Environment and Development	2001 – to present
Iokine Rodriguez	Senior Lecturer	2013 – to present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2013 – 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> No		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b>		
<p>Nearly 15% of the earth's terrestrial surface is already designated for Protected Area conservation and the UN is in the process of agreeing its Post-2020 biodiversity framework to expand this to 30%. But conservation often runs up against social justice concerns, for example where it conflicts with local and indigenous peoples' rights to livelihood or cultural practices. The UN and other global policymakers now recognise that such tensions are a major obstacle to tackling the crisis of biodiversity loss.</p> <p>UEA research has developed a robust conceptual framework to help overcome this obstacle, enabling the expansion of global conservation to be informed by rigorous analysis of justice concerns and to prioritise the rights and livelihoods of vulnerable groups, for example the Monkoxi indigenous peoples in Bolivia. This has already changed how area-based conservation is governed by promoting the inclusion of social justice objectives and assessments. This impact has been achieved on two main fronts since 2013. Firstly, the research has led to change in international policy by directly bringing about a decision by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in 2018 to issue guidance on 'effective and equitable conservation models' and subsequently by developing and launching (in 2019) a management tool that enables parties to implement this policy guidance. Secondly, UEA's justice framework has led to legislative change in one of our case study areas (Bolivia). The framework was used by government and other stakeholders to clarify and assess indigenous claims to territorial autonomy, facilitating the decision to grant autonomy to the Monkoxi indigenous people in 2018.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b>		
<p>Rates of biodiversity loss are unprecedented and continue to accelerate. This is a global crisis that is already undermining wellbeing for vulnerable groups, for example through zoonotic diseases like Covid-19. This crisis requires profound and urgent actions, including the expansion of area-based conservation. But it is well documented that expanding conservation areas has too often led to unfair outcomes for vulnerable groups of people, for example by constraining their rights to grow and harvest food or to manage their own territories. Conservation policymakers had become aware of this problem and as a result had expressed the desire for conservation to be more equitable but lacked a framework or tools to enable them to turn this desire into practice.</p> <p>UEA research, led by Professor Adrian Martin and Dr Iokiñe Rodriguez, with contributions from Professor Thomas Sikor, Dr Nicole Gross-Camp and Dr Neil Dawson (all at UEA), has addressed this problem through the development of a justice framework for conservation.</p> <p><b>Key research findings</b> have included:</p> <p><b>(F1) Why justice matters for conservation.</b> The importance people attach to justice is well established across many places and cultures. UEA research has also demonstrated, in specific contexts of biodiversity conservation, that there is an instrumental value to advancing more just or equitable conservation, by overcoming resistance and enhancing cooperation. For example, where local people consider that the costs and benefits from National Parks are fairly distributed, they are more likely to share the objectives of the park. [R1, R2]</p>		

**(F2) Multi-dimensionality of justice.** UEA research showed that existing efforts to respond to social justice concerns in conservation overwhelmingly focused on distribution – for example, a view that justice can be achieved through benefit sharing and compensation mechanisms. Building on traditions of research in environmental justice, the UEA group furthered understanding of different dimensions of justice by showing that procedure and recognition were often as important as how resources were distributed. This finding made it clear that any framework for assessing conservation justice/equity needs to incorporate procedural and recognitional justice dimensions, as well as distributional ones. [R1, R3]

**(F3) Diversity of justice beliefs and experiences.** UEA research demonstrated that different groups of people have different perceptions of what is just and unjust, and that protected area governance very often produces both winners and losers. It is therefore crucial for justice/equity assessment to be disaggregated to explore perceptions and experiences across multiple social categories such as gender, age and ethnicity. [R2, R5, R6]

**(F4) The special case of indigenous peoples.** The territories of indigenous peoples overlap with about half of terrestrial conservation areas. It has become widely recognised that the knowledge and governance systems of these peoples are key for the conservation of their territories. UEA research has demonstrated the need for particular methods of working in partnership with indigenous people to ‘co-produce’ knowledge about equity and cultural difference in the context of indigenous conserved areas. This can be achieved through a research approach that includes indigenous peoples as partners in the research and in the production of outputs that help to revitalise their identity and culture. It has also demonstrated the need for fostering dialogue within communities and with policy makers to help strengthen local environmental governance systems. [R4, R5, R6]

Over the past ten years, the research has undergone an evolution in modality. Early projects focused on largely empirical explorations of local perceptions of justice in the context of conservation initiatives, building the evidence base for the above findings. Later projects have focused more on knowledge co-production through engagement with non-academic partners, and more fully grounding and validating the emerging framework.

### 3. References to the research

- R1 Just Conservation: Biodiversity, Sustainability and Wellbeing.  
**Martin, A.**  
Earthscan Conservation and Development book series, **2017**. ISBN: 9781317657019
- R2 Assessing equity in protected area governance: Approaches to promote just and effective conservation.  
**Dawson, N., Martin, A.** and Danielsen, F.  
Conservation Letters, **2018**, 11(2), DOI: 10.1111/conl.12388
- R3 Unpacking equity for protected area conservation.  
Schreckenberg, K., Franks, P., **Martin, A.** and Lang, B.  
*PARKS*, **2016**, 22(2), pp.11-26. DOI: 10.2305/IUCN.CH.2016.
- R4 Justice and conservation: The need to incorporate recognition.  
**Martin, A.**, Coolsaet, B., Corbera, E., **Dawson, N.M.**, Fraser, J.A., **Lehmann, I.** and **Rodríguez, I.**  
Biological Conservation, **2016**, 197, pp.254-261. DOI: 10.1016/j.biocon.2016.03.021
- R5 Global environmental justice and biodiversity conservation.  
**Martin, A., McGuire, S.** and Sullivan, S.  
*The Geographical Journal*, **2013**, 179: 122-131 . DOI: 10.1111/geoj.12018
- R6 Territorios, justicias y autonomías: Un diálogo desde los gobiernos autónomos indígenas de Bolivia.  
Inturias, M., G. Vargas, **I. Rodríguez**, A. García, K. von Stosch, E. Masay Eds.  
Instituto de investigación científica social de la Universidad NUR. Bolivia. Editorial NUR: Santa Cruz de la Sierra: Bolivia, **2019**. ISBN 978-99974-292-0-9

**Selected grants:**

Project: *Academic-activist co-produced knowledge on environmental justice (ACKNOWL-ej). Transformations to Sustainability Programme.*

(PIs) **Rodriguez, I.** (Co-Is) **Martin, A.**

Funder: International Social Science Council. Value: EUR849,156.79 (EUR121,150.80 to UEA).

Dates: 2015-2019

Project: *Just Ecosystem Management: Linking ecosystem services with poverty alleviation*

(Co-Is) **Chhotray, V., Few, R., Martin, A.**

Funder: NERC. Value: GBP226,132.00. Dates: 2010-2013

Project: *Conservation, Markets and Justice: a comparative study of local and global conceptions.*

(PI) **Martin, A.**

Funder: ESRC. Value: GBP630,239. Dates: 2013-2016

**4. Details of the impact**

The research findings have produced impacts on two main fronts. Firstly, the conceptual framework for advancing just and equitable conservation has been adopted within the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the pre-eminent international policy framework for biodiversity conservation. Secondly, the framework has been used in partnership with the government of Bolivia and indigenous peoples to co-produce the case for indigenous territorial autonomy, leading to autonomy for the Monkoxi people. Connected to both these fronts, the framework has been developed into SAGE (Site-based Assessment of Governance and Equity), a toolkit for multi-stakeholder use.

**New Policy Guidelines adopted by United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**

The 2010 Aichi targets of the CBD represent the highest level of conservation guidance for governments worldwide. Target 11 is for protected areas to be managed 'effectively and equitably' by 2020. However, it was clear that whilst there were indicators and tools for assessing effectiveness, there was no clear understanding of how to define equity and this made it difficult for conservation managers to assess and advance equity at national and site level. UEA researchers joined forces with the International Institute for Environment and Development and key partners such as WWF, IUCN and GIZ to feed UEA research findings [F1, 2, 3, 4] into technical policy advice to enable 'equitable' management of conservation. This process is evidenced by a flagship impact story featured by the Ecosystem Services [S1] and Poverty Alleviation (ESPA) programme, the ~GBP50,000,000 RCUK programme and by an animated film also produced with ESPA [S2].

In 2018 UEA researchers worked with this academic-practitioner partnership to introduce the emerging justice/equity framework (building on findings F2, F3, F4) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). This included providing training on equity to CBD regional representatives, working with the CBD Secretariat to issue a CBD flyer on 'Aichi target 11 – equitable management' (directly reproducing the framework in R3), and submitting a document detailing the framework (CBD/SBSTTA/22/6) to the July 2018 meeting of the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) as well as reproducing a diagram from R3 [S3]. This document became a formal 'decision' at the December 2018 Conference of Parties (COP14) in Egypt [S4] and thus became a policy guideline for all UN states (except the USA). Despite Covid-19 delays, the framework has so far been used by protected area managers in 13 countries [According to the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) S5]

**Development of the SAGE toolkit for assessing and enhancing equity**

The existence of CBD policy advice in favour of using the justice/equity framework was important but UEA researchers realised that they also needed to provide tried and tested tools that enabled practitioners to act on this. UEA researchers developed a toolkit for the 'Site Level Assessment of Governance and Equity' (SAGE toolkit) through a series of multi-stakeholder workshops and through field testing with partners in East Africa [R3]. The SAGE indicator system is based on 10

equity principles that reflect findings F2 and F4 above; the multi-stakeholder process reflects finding F3 above.

The new CBD policy guideline created an opportunity for UEA researchers to design an assessment tool for use by conservation authorities and other stakeholders to facilitate policy implementation. UEA researchers therefore continued to work with their core partners, to develop the SAGE toolkit. The first edition of the SAGE User's Manual was produced in September 2019 and was piloted in 8 protected areas by December 2019, across Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe. These 8 cases were evaluated at a workshop held at UEA (14-16 January 2020). Users reported that the tool had filled a significant gap in their assessment needs, not only helping to understand performance in relation to equity indicators, but also for identifying actions to improve performance [S6]. The planned second phase of rollout was delayed by Covid-19, but a manual for online use of SAGE has now been developed, with 5 new countries already using this and 6 others in process. According to IUCN's Director of Global Protected Areas, "The current equity framework is an important step forward in helping to ensure that protected areas are governed equitably, especially as we are all engaged in the process towards a new post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework" [S5]. The Framework, originally planned for agreement at CBD COP15 in October 2020, has been delayed by the pandemic.

### **Legislative and governance changes in Bolivia**

UEA research in Bolivia [R4, R5, R6] has led to legislative changes at national level. UEA researchers used the SAGE multi-stakeholder approach and the equity principles to explore current tensions in Bolivian policy towards autonomous indigenous territories and jointly define possible solutions [F4]. The work UEA researchers have done in Bolivia has involved close partnerships with the Ministry of Autonomy, Vice Ministry of Justice, the national representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme, seven different indigenous nations and various conservation and indigenous rights Non-Government Organisations [R4, R6]. Use of the UEA researchers' justice framework facilitated understanding of the multiple dimensions of justice, including recognition [R4] of indigenous peoples' own environmental knowledge and governance systems. This more holistic and systematic analysis of justice issues made it much clearer to all stakeholders that the Monkox people's claim for territorial autonomy was strongly aligned with prospects for achieving social justice. This provided crucial knowledge that supported the Monkox as the first indigenous nation in Bolivia to seek political autonomy and to ensure a just and sustainable management of its homelands. Furthermore, the results from UEA researchers' work here helped to refine their justice framework, especially by improving and validating the understanding of the role of recognitional justice in conservation [R1].

The communal indigenous territory (TCO) of Lomerío covers 256,000 hectares and is home to around 7,000 indigenous Monkoxi living in 29 communities ranging in size from 100 to 1,500 inhabitants. By helping to build bridges between the Indigenous Union of Lomerío and the Vice-Ministry of Autonomy, UEA research boosted the profile of their claim both nationally and internationally and helped accelerate some of the procedures involved. Following a round-table (October 2015) with key stakeholders organised by UEA, NUR University and the Indigenous Union of Lomerío-CICOL (two UEA research co-partners) about the project results, the Vice Ministry of Autonomy invited UEA researchers to partner them in producing a book [S7]. This book used the UEA environmental justice framing to explore current tensions in Bolivian policy towards autonomous indigenous territories. This research was jointly presented by the Indigenous Union of Lomerío (CICOL), The Ministry of Autonomy, NUR University and UEA at the 2016 United Nations Permanent Indigenous People Forum in New York.

As acknowledged by the Vice Ministry of Autonomy in 2017 and all stakeholders [S8, 9], UEA research and associated impact activities are recognised to have made a significant impact in advancing the claim: "The round tables and joint efforts have helped to build bridges between the Vice-Ministry and CICOL. We continue to participate in the Lomeriano assemblies with the aim of strengthening their demand for territorial-based autonomy, which will be prioritized in our work agenda". (S8, Vice-Minister of Autonomies, Ministry of the Presidency, September 27, 2017). One year later, in May 2018, the Constitutional Court approved the Monkoxi Autonomy Statutes.

By applying the UEA justice framework, UEA researchers were able to show in their joint publications with the ministry of Autonomy and CICOL, the central importance that the indigenous

environmental governance rules and regulations play in ensuring a just and sustainable management of natural resources in Lomerío [S7]. Some of the key dimensions of this approach, which are centred in indigenous equity and justice values, involve: a) the defense of communal democracy as the main form of collective decision making, b) the emphasis given to principles, values and norms of communal and territorial life, such as freedom, sharing (*minga* or *bobikix*), equity, reciprocity, redistribution, and solidarity, c) the importance given to customary rules and norms and indigenous justice in regulating day-to-day communal life, and d) the definition of communal economy as the desired form of development, aimed at achieving the *Uxia Nosiboriki* (Vivir Bien) of the Monkoxi nation, respecting mother earth, the spirits of the forest (*Jichis*) and life in harmony with nature. Currently, many of these principles of equity and justice are being hampered by a municipal regime of territorial organization, national resource management laws and market dynamics that do not fully respect indigenous institutions and procedures. The granting of autonomy rights would help strengthen the governance structures already in place in Lomerío that seek a just and equitable use of natural resources.

Furthermore, UEA associated impact activities have inspired a wider process of linking the framework to new claims by at least a further seven indigenous nations in Bolivia, which has the support of the Minister of Autonomy and other key stakeholders [S8, S9]. A second roundtable (Dec 2018) that involved different indigenous nations of Bolivia, UNEP, the Ministry of Autonomy and the Ministry of Justice, helped to examine further the achievements and persistent challenges for a sustainable and autonomous model of indigenous territorial management in Bolivia and to continue pushing the different indigenous autonomy claims [R6].

Linked to the granting of autonomy, UEA research informed the co-production of training materials (a history book and film and two participatory videos about injustices in forest management that are credited with a significant impact on revitalising indigenous environmental governance practices. As said by the Chief General of CICOL, this and other videos that UEA researchers and research user organisations jointly produced “have allowed us to have more visibility and impact as an organization inside and outside our territory. They are our presentation cards” [S9]. The impact of these co-produced materials is also evidenced by wide use by CICOL with other of its partners and projects (e.g. CEJIS, TIERRA and Acknowl-Ej) in a variety of training activities for young Monkoxi leaders. A key example of governance change is the use of the UEA equity framework to guide the new 2020 Territorial and Natural Resources Unit of CICOL. As explained by its aforementioned Chief General, “The objective of this work is that all 29 communities and 7000 inhabitants enjoy equally the use and exploitation of our territory. That we all take equal advantage of the resources that the Lomerío territory provides us ... the unit will follow up on the control and good governance of the territory” [S10, min. 2’07’ to 2’47’].

##### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- S1 ESPA Impact brief, June 2018.
- S2 Animated film on ‘Protected areas for all: ensuring better outcomes for people and environment. Held on file at UEA.
- S3 CBD technical document: Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) CBD/SBSTTA/22/5) (7.7.18).
- S4 CBD decision CBD/COP/14/L (17-29.11.18).
- S5 a) Testimonial from IUCN, director of Global Protected Areas Programme (24.6.20).  
b) Email and attachment containing a list of countries using the SAGE framework provided by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) (7.1.21).
- S6 Example testimonial from SAGE user in Zambia (30.4.20).
- S7 Indigenous Sustainable Development webpage (accessed on 18.9.20).
- S8 Testimonial: former Minister of Autonomy, Bolivia.
- S9 Testimonials from a. Director, Union of Indigenous Communities from Lomerío (CICOL) (19.9.17), Bolivia, and b. Chancellor, NUR University, Bolivia (18.9.17).
- S10 Forest Governance in the Indigenous Territory of Lomerío, Bolivia Video, Chief General of CICOL (2.11.20). Held on file at UEA.