

Guidelines for Protected Area Management Categories

IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas
with the assistance of the
World Conservation Monitoring Centre

CATEGORY II National Park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation

Definition

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 inimical to the purposes of designation 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.

Objectives of Management

- to protect natural and scenic areas of national and international significance for spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational or tourist purposes;
- to perpetuate, in as natural a state as possible, representative examples of physiographic regions, biotic communities, genetic resources, and species, to provide ecological stability and diversity;
- to manage visitor use for inspirational, educational, cultural and recreational purposes at a level which will maintain the area in a natural or near natural state;
- to eliminate and thereafter prevent exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation;
- to maintain respect for the ecological, geomorphologic, sacred or aesthetic attributes which warranted designation; and
- to take into account the needs of indigenous people, including subsistence resource use, in so far as these will not adversely affect the other objectives of management.

Guidance for Selection

- The area should contain a representative sample of major natural regions, features or scenery, where plant and animal species, habitats and geomorphological sites are of special spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and tourist significance.
- The area should be large enough to contain one or more entire ecosystems not materially altered by current human occupation or exploitation.

Organizational Responsibility

Ownership and management should normally be by the highest competent authority of the nation having jurisdiction over it. However, they may also be vested in another level of government, council of indigenous people, foundation or other legally established body which has dedicated the area to long-term conservation.

Equivalent Category in 1978 System

National Park