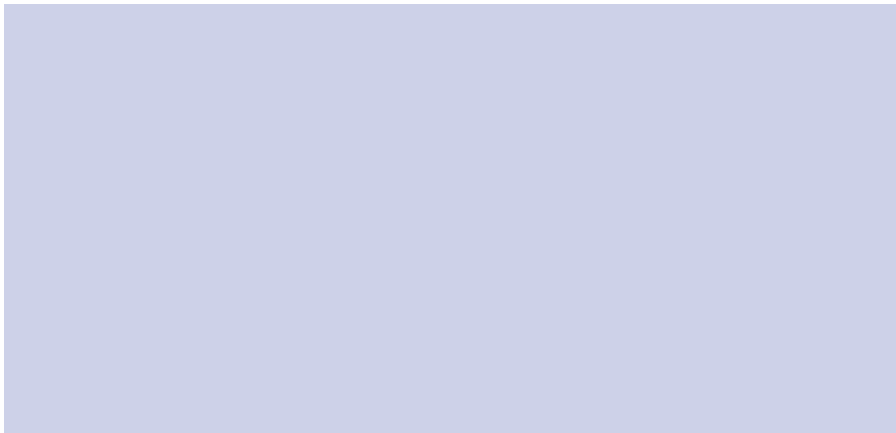


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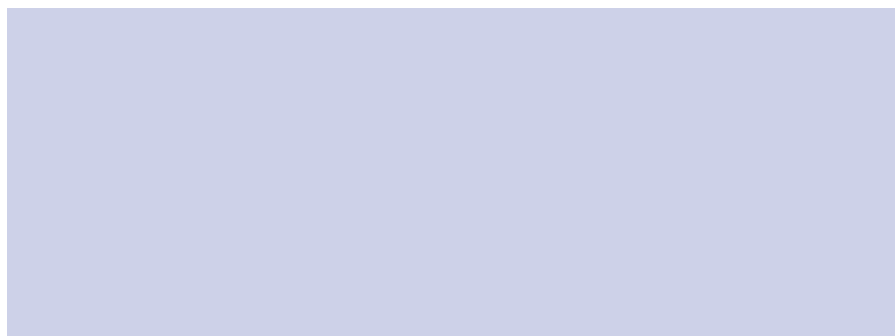
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how conservation and development activities can maintain — if not expand — livelihood options, or whether these activities leave the most marginalised trapped in a condition of “sustainable poverty”.







poverty persist, combined with a strong ethical commitment to support poverty reduction as a fundamental human right and development goal. The same principle should apply to the pursuit of economic growth.


In addition to this ethical imperative, there are practical reasons why conservation can and should address poverty reduction. Although integrated activities may not always result in optimum outcomes, many — such as forest landscape restoration initiatives — can produce positive results for both conservation and poverty reduction.

### Focusing on landscapes

Conservation has often been narrowly interpreted as requiring either complete exclusion of people or, at a minimum, limited access to resources. This has particularly been the case within protected areas (PAs). While PAs are important for implementing conservation, a broader range of tools and strategies is necessary to address conservation needs across the larger landscape.

The underlying causes of environmental degradation and poverty often originate far from where the effects are evident. Therefore solutions need to address root causes at the appropriate geographical and institutional scales in addition to the site level. Applying conservation and resource management objectives at a landscape scale creates opportunities for multiple objectives to be realised.

In practice, working at landscape levels will involve balancing those trade-offs inherent in land-use decision-making. Land-use ou



This paper is based on *Poverty and Conservation: Landscapes, People and Power*, a book to be released by IUCN in early 2005. The book argues that conservation can do more to address poverty without compromising its fundamental objective of maintaining the earth's biological diversity.

There are many cases where community action, motivated by livelihood needs, has led to improved conservation outcomes. People clearly benefit from the availability of natural resources.

Local action may not lead to perfect conservation outcomes, but the results are often better than any existing alternatives. It is often the failure of government policies and actions that leads to environmental degradation in the first place.

In order to understand the effects of development and conservation activities it is necessary to disaggregate affected populations, as different groups are affected differently (i.e. "women" is not a homogenous category). Poor people are poor for different reasons and their poverty may need to be addressed differently.

Improved conservation and poverty reduction outcomes are more likely to result from institutional changes at different levels (resource, tenure, policy, development of appropriate local organisations and networks, etc.).

The book suggests strategies for linking poverty reduction and conservation. These include the following:

- focus on removing institutional constraints, building supporting institutions that expand locally-adapted livelihood options;
- identify causes of environmental degradation and poverty beyond the site level; and
- address problems at appropriate geographical scales and institutional levels.



High levels of rural poverty in many of the world's most biodiverse regions makes it an ethical and practical imperative to find more equitable and realistic ways of achieving conservation. Livelihoods of the rural poor and options for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity are so intimately entwined that they are better addressed through an integrated approach irrespective if the primary motivation is one of development or one of conservation.

The question is not about promoting poverty reduction over conservation, but about acknowledging that both poverty reduction and conservation are important objectives and that it is often necessary to address both in order to achieve either:

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