



PROTECTED AREAS

LEARNING & RESEARCH COLLABORATION

Fostering excellence in governance and management of
protected areas in the Asia Pacific and Oceania regions

April 2015 update

Following the successful launch of the Protected Areas Learning and Research Collaboration by Professor Margaret Britz (Dean Faculty of Science, Engineering & Technology, University of Tasmania) at the IUCN World Parks Congress in Sydney, the first academic offerings are now available and the first course under the Collaboration's umbrella has been completed.

Please see the website for all the details of activities mentioned here www.palrc.com

In one of the most significant outcomes at the Congress for the Collaboration, the Australian Minister for the Environment, The Hon Greg Hunt MP, announced three-years' funding from the Director of National Parks to support the Collaboration's development. This sits alongside other donations and support received to date for the Collaboration's activities.

In addition the Collaboration was mentioned as an important outcome of the Congress in the closing addresses and in the Promise of Sydney.

We thank all those who staffed the booth for the duration of the Congress, including Sarah Clement, Rosalie Chapple, Carolina Garcia, David Newsome, Andrew Campbell, Amy Diedrich, Susan Moore, Michael Lockwood, Kate Rodger, Jim Mulchay, James Hattam, Leigh Walters, Andrew Cameron, and Jane Hutchinson.

In the course of the Congress:

- an e-poster was presented by PALRC Development Director Doug Humann and other PALRC and university representatives
- Doug Humann was part of a workshop on the role of universities in protected area management led by Eduard Muller, *A new paradigm for capacity development: the Global Partnership for Professionalizing Protected Area Management*
- Doug was also part of an interactive session led by David Reynolds from USA Parks/IUCN, *A Resource Fair- Capacity development tools and partners for Formal and Informal training*

Members of the Collaboration had productive meetings to discuss future collaboration with representatives from the Wildlife Institute of India, Peking University and the University of South Pacific together with delegates interested in the Collaboration from many different nations.

As we circulate this update, the three Australian universities with new course offerings for 2015 are open for enrolments.

Go to the webpage for information www.palrc.org

The first PALRC course completed

The first course offered under the Collaboration banner has been completed. The five day short course on Protected Area Planning was run in February by the Tasmanian Land Conservancy and undertaken in Hobart and as a field trip at the spectacular Five Rivers Reserve on the edge of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (<http://www.tasland.org.au/permanent/five-rivers-reserve>). There were 13 participants from a range of government and non-government organisations and private participants.

The short course can be taken on its own or as part of one of the University of Tasmania's courses. There were glowing comments from participants which will shortly appear on the website alongside some photographs. These include:

"I believe that every conservation practitioner needs to understand about Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation. It shapes and sharpens how we plan the conservation interventions. Following the course on Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation helps me to think more and more about how to develop strategic conservation planning. This course is indeed a good investment for everyone working as conservation practitioner."

Intan Ritonga

Program Development Manager

The Nature Conservancy - Indonesia Program

'The Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation course is one of the best I've been to. The course was well structured and ran exceptionally smoothly, as well as varied with presentations, exercise work and field trip components. It also brought together people with diverse experiences and knowledge of environmental reserve planning and management, which provided for excellent networking opportunities. I started implementing learnings from the course within the first week of returning, which was made all the more easy with the resources that were provided. I highly recommend the course to anyone developing conservation management plans.'

Lexie Webster

Senior Environmental Planner Planning

City of Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia

With the new academic year now underway in Australia, courses at Murdoch and James Cook Universities are also now underway.

Progress of James Cook University's MSc in Protected Area Management since the World Parks Congress

Since its involvement in the PALRC James Cook University (JCU) has redesigned its Master of Science and articulating degrees (Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma) in Protected Area Management to provide students the opportunity to take up to 12 credits with partner institutions. This interdisciplinary degree, which was established in the 1990s, specializes in conservation of tropical environments and allows students to focus on social and/or ecological dimensions of protected areas in marine or terrestrial environments. JCU currently has 30 students in the program, representing over 15 countries and all the world's continents (apart from Antarctica!). Since the World Parks Congress they have had 10 new students start the program and expect more to begin in the second half of the year. A number of students who are reaching the end of their study program are keen to take advantage of the opportunity to participate in subjects at partner institutions.

One student at James Cook University writes: "I am originally from Galapagos-Ecuador, and I came to James Cook University to study the masters in Protected Area Management. I choose JCU because its world standing in biodiversity research and conservation in tropical zones, thus, all the knowledge I am acquiring will be relevant back home. Additionally, I decided to do this masters because it will equip me with skills to understand and manage the complex relations between people and ecosystems coexisting in a protected area. Finally, I am very sure that after completing this master, I will be better qualified with technical and practical background to assist in the decision-making process that benefit the management of Galapagos and other protected areas of Ecuador."

And Andrés from Bolivia comments: "the MSc in Protected Area Management at JCU was a great academic experience, where I had the chance to interact with distinguished scientists in the field. The program drew on many different tools to manage PA and emphasized the importance of community based approaches and different governance regimens to successfully accomplish biodiversity conservation. My personal interest is conservation planning and the University has a renowned lab that specializes in that area. I am now back home about to start an expedition where we intend to prove that Bolivia is home to the most biodiverse protected area in the world. An associated communication campaign will focus on connecting people globally to this unique place aiming to create new constituencies for conservation, especially among children and young people, who can both positively affect local environmental issues and make a global difference as the next generation of decision makers, environmental advocates, and scientists."

The University of Tasmania has a commitment to global engagement and learning through an internationalised curricula and collaborative partnerships aimed at fostering teaching, student mobility opportunities and research – see <http://www.utas.edu.au/global-engagement>. The University contributes to resolving global challenges in four thematic

areas, all of which intersect with protected areas: Creativity and Society; Health and Wellbeing; Environment and Sustainability; and Marine, Maritime and Antarctic.

The University of Tasmania has student exchange agreements with many Universities from around the world, including 20 in Asia. Postgraduate course work students from China, India, Nepal, Japan and Thailand come to the Hobart campus to take courses in protected area and environmental management and planning. Staff involved in the protected area courses have particular collaborations with Tsukuba University and Shanghai Oceans University. A recent graduate, Yuxuan Li, who did her research on marine protected areas, noted that the partnership agreement with Shanghai Ocean University made the transition to Tasmania easy, and six of her former classmates are now studying environmental management at the Hobart campus.

Murdoch University has a strong core commitment to sustainability and the triple bottom line (environmental, social and economic). This commitment underpins all research and teaching efforts - see <http://www.murdoch.edu.au/About-us/Strategic-plan/>

Countries of particular importance to Murdoch University are China, Vietnam, Singapore (with a campus in this country), Malaysia, Thailand and India. Murdoch is actively recruiting students, both undergraduates and postgraduates, for these important partner countries. This recruitment is building on strong research partnerships already established in China, Vietnam and Malaysia. Murdoch sees itself as a gateway to Indian Ocean countries, as well as sharing a similar time zone with many of its Asian partners, in particular China.

The Graduate Certificate at Murdoch is based at the School of Management and Governance and the Master of Protected Area Management has a brand new unit developed for it. Students include senior practitioners from Pakistan, South Africa, Indonesia and Australia.

One of Murdoch's new protected area masters students is a senior manager from Wakatobi National Park, a marine national park south-east of the Indonesian island of Sulawesi. It is the third largest marine national park in Indonesia and has been described as an "underwater Nirvana". Acknowledged as having the highest number of reef and fish species in the world, it is threatened by over-fishing and fish bombing. Our new student will focus his masters research on how to engage all stakeholders, including those undertaking illegal fishing, in conserving the region's reefs and fish. He will also develop a management effectiveness evaluation framework for this international biosphere reserve, a new and important contribution to marine conservation in Indonesia.

The Steering Group of the PALRC and its various committees will be convening shortly to plan the next steps in the Collaboration's journey and we will update you when this has occurred.

Please circulate this email to interested parties and we invite comments and participation from prospective students, institutions, funders and the like.

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