

**Asia-Pacific Environmental Innovation Strategies (APEIS)  
Research on Innovative and Strategic Policy Options (RISPO)  
Good Practices Inventory**

**Community-based tourism at Gunung Gede Pangrango National Park,  
Indonesia**

**Summary of the Practice**

**Keywords:** Gunung Gede Pangrango National Park, west java province

**Strategy:** Facilitating community-based tourism in protected areas

**Environmental areas:** Ecosystem and biodiversity conservation, Forest conservation

**Critical instruments:** Awareness/capacity building, Design, planning and management, Partnerships, Self-regulation,

**Country:** Indonesia

**Location:** West Java

**Participants:** NGOs (Conservation International Indonesia, Alami Foundation, Eagle Volunteer Club) and the Gunung Gede National Park Authorities

**Duration:** 1998 – ongoing

**Funding:** Gunung Gede National Park, Conservation International Indonesia, Alami Foundation



Source: Indecon

**Background:**

Gunung Gede Pangrango National Park (GGPNP) lies in three different regencies in Indonesia: Bogor, Sukabumi, and Cianjur. This area is one of the first national parks created in Indonesia (founded 1980). There are more than 40 national parks in Indonesia and its functions include conservation of natural resources, and the promotion of scientific knowledge, education and nature recreation. As it is situated near population centers, the recreational function of this park is dominant. Among the 74,115 visitors to the national park in 1983, for example, 98 percent visited it for recreation.

The park consists of mountainous area on the island of Java. The park ranges between 1,000 and 3,000 meters above sea level, has an area of 15,000 hectares, and more than 80% covered by forest. Rainfall ranging between 3,000 and 4,200 millimeters per year.

Gates to enter the Gunung Gede National Park include Cibodas, Bodogol, Gunung Putri and Situ Gunung. The park received around 70,000 visitors per year. The area where Bodogol Conservation Education Center (BCEC) located takes up 300 ha forest within the utilization zone of the National Park. It lies near the Bodogol gate, along the western edge of the park. It was set up in 1997 in order to provide quality educational services for schools and recreational visitors. The center's program is primarily focused on

conservation education and ecotourism. Educational outreach programs are directed at local communities to help decrease encroachment and poaching activities on park land. As the park is in close proximity to major cities and easily accessible, it also serves as an ideal location for educating governmental officials and city residents.

The driving force behind the creation and management of the center was a collaborative effort of three institutions, the government (The Gunung Gede National Park itself), national organization (ALAMI Foundation), and international organization (Conservation International Indonesia). The three institutions collaboratively work under a scheme of consortium. The rules and regulations regarding roles and responsibilities of the Consortium for the center's management are put in to a Memorandum of Understanding. The National park plays key role as the authority of the area, the Conservation International plays a role as facilitator toward fund raising, and the ALAMI Foundation, a conservation education local NGO, plays the role as developer of conservation education programs.

#### ***Objectives:***

The objectives of the Bodogol Conservation Education Center are as follows:

1. to create a model for buffer zone management of a national park;
2. to introduce, promote and develop the concept of low-impact ecotourism, using qualified conservation and education programs within the national park;
3. to increase the community awareness about the importance of conservation and education; and
4. to establish a model of partnership among non-governmental organizations, government and the private sector.

#### ***Description of the activity:***

The BCEC conservation education program is designed as an educational activity with a recreational atmosphere. Besides the center's beautiful scenery, diversity of flora and fauna, and trails marked with useful information, it also has a canopy walkway as its glowing attraction. In developing the overall education and ecotourism programs, BCEC recruits people from the local community to volunteer. The role of volunteers is to help deliver educational material and attain the goal of the center effectively. A group of park staff, people from the local community and nature interpreters has conducted a series of trainings for this purpose.

In applying the low-impact concept, the BCEC is applying two approaches. First, the concept of "low volume, high value," emphasizes the use and respect for traditional knowledge and local values. Based on this concept, while the park earns revenue from visitors, the number of visitors to the BCEC is maintained at a level that ensures low impact on the environment. The second approach is the "reservation system," which is aimed toward visitors that spent the night at the BCEC. Using this system, BCEC can control access to the park, making it possible to control the impacts of visitors and protect the natural beauty of Bodogol—which is the main attraction. Besides these restrictions, visitors are able to enjoy and absorb the conservation education material to the utmost.

Regular monitoring is designed to collect scientific data about flora and fauna in the BCEC. Data is analysed and used as material for the conservation education program. The material is interestingly packaged and combined with games to learn about nature. The monitoring of natural richness in an ecotourism area produces reciprocal benefits—on one hand, the result of monitoring can help anticipate the impacts that might have resulted from visitors, on the other, the search for scientific data creates an incentive for the visitor to spot a target species. This monitoring approach helps marketing of the conservation education package

### **Critical Instruments**

#### **Overview**

The critical instrument of this case is the partnership between three different institutions (in this case, GGNP personnel, Conservation International Indonesia and the ALAMI Foundation) that can create a local system for national park design and can plan to establish self-regulatory instruments and increase capacity building.

### **Awareness/capacity building**

The development of this ecotourism area with a touch of conservation education through the active involvement of volunteers is an added feature when marketing the programs of the BCEC. The visitor's high appreciation of the dedication of volunteers' (mainly from the local community) is one of the core foundations for the sustainability of the BCEC overall.

### **Design, planning and management**

The design and planning process in the first step of creating the BCEC involved the stakeholders and set the foundations for the development of the BCEC. The low-impact concept of the BCEC is implemented by two approaches, the “low volume, high value” concept, and the reservation system for park visitors. Using these two systems, the BCEC can control access to the park from the Bodogol gate , which enable it to control the impact that might be caused by too many visitors, and protect the natural beauty of Bodogol. Besides these restrictions, visitors are able to enjoy and absorb the conservation education material to the utmost.

### **Partnerships**

The basic idea of the establishment of the Bodogol Conservation Education Center is to implement a model of development in the utilization zone of a protected area, through partnership between the government, and international and local NGOs. Based on the principle of facilitation, in this model the international and local NGOs support and empower the park staff in order to create a professional administrative body of the park that can be self-sustaining in managing the protected area. Support for this partnership instrument includes a matching fund system between the partners.

### **Self-regulation**

The consortium has developed an innovative local system for reservations, entrance fees and monitoring. The reservation system helps maintain the number of visitors and to decrease the impacts of visitors. The entrance fee system helps to make the BCEC self-sustaining. Entrance fee includes a ticket fee to enter the park (goes to the government of Indonesia), and a maintenance fee for the park (operational, equipment, capacity building and promotion) that goes to the management board in Bodogol. The monitoring system is to keep the data about the area up to date and enhance a positive relationship with visitors.

### **Impacts**

There is a positive impact of the distribution of benefit to stakeholders, but the amount that reaches the community is still small. The BCEC is known for its cleanliness, but there has been no new innovation yet in the waste and garbage management system within the area. So far, garbage still has to be carried outside the park.

No	Impacts	Positive			Negative		
		1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>I</b>	<b>Economic</b>						
1	Supplementary income from tourism	√	√	√			
2	Stimulation of tourism business	√	√	√			
3	Distribution of benefits		√				
<b>II</b>	<b>Environmental</b>						
1	Enhancement of villagers' awareness of the conservation	√	√	√			
2	Increase in the capacity of community for conservation	√	√	√			
3	Waste and garbage management		√				
4	Visitor awareness and appreciation in a natural environment	√	√	√			
5	Reducing the impact by limiting the number of visitors	√	√	√			
<b>III</b>	<b>Social</b>						
1	Potential conflict between communities				√		
2	Increased coordination between stakeholders	√	√	√			
3	Decreased tourism business competition between stakeholders		√				
4	Enhancement of the government's awareness of the community's capacity	√	√	√			

Note: 1: Villagers' point of view  
2: Park Official point of view  
3: Reviewers point of view

### Lessons Learned

The establishment of a consortium consisting of three different institutions to achieve one goal in a national park is a positive step for conservation in Indonesia. During the process of establishment, the consortium has produced innovative approaches to park management, including cooperation in design and planning, the reservation system, increases to entrance fees (to be invested in the educational program and a cross-subsidy for the local elementary school program), a nature interpretation system, involvement of the local community to become interpreters, and the conduct of biodiversity monitoring.

Meanwhile, the consortium still has some obstacles to be resolved. The working partners have various visions, strengths and limitations, and with them are creating a unique working pattern. But common objectives can only be reached if each party shares the same vision and goals, and has open attitude, respects each other, has clear membership roles, open management and a work scheme agreed by all parties. Differences between the three parties in ways of thinking has slowed down the optimal development of the area, in some cases, so it is important to improve the situation with better understanding, communication and information. These factors need to be maintained during any project to empower the other stakeholders.

The process in building the capacity of the local community to become BCEC volunteer has also provided many lessons. Volunteers are trained to be interpreter and guide visitors at the BCEC. Their active role has helped develop the social aspects of the conservation education program. Since it was officially opened in 12 December 1998, the next one and a half years saw a significant progress from the point of human resources development. Four volunteers with good ability in spoken English had been trained and have good capability in interpreting for the English-speaking visitors to the BCEC.

The establishment of the biological monitoring from the start has helped set indicators on the impacts resulting from visitors and measure the impacts. Regular monitoring is designed to collect scientific data of flora and fauna, then the data is analysed and used as material for the conservation education program. The material is interestingly packaged and combined with nature games to attract and involve the visitors in flora and fauna monitoring in order to stimulate their sense of belonging to the nature. The monitoring

system also assists with tracking the correlation between visitors and the presence of animals, provides input for new management policies, and is used to determine the direction of future infrastructure development.

### Potential for Application

The development approach, including design and planning through a low-impact concept that involves the stakeholders using a participatory process, has helped to create innovative systems for the national park, such as the reservation system, the financial system, the guiding system, and monitoring and evaluation systems. The reservation system of the BCEC has been applied in the GGPNP overall. Before the reservation system was established in Cibodas, up to 3,000 persons visitors climbed the mountain per day. Now the park limits the number of climbers to 300 persons per day to enter the park from the Cibodas gate, and they have to reserve one week in advance.

The simple system of biological monitoring is one of the products of efforts in the park. The approach of involving park visitors in the implementation of biological monitoring can be applied any place, with any type of ecosystem.

The development of the system of inviting volunteers from the local community has given support to the national park in terms of capacity building and social aspects. Besides increasing their awareness of nature conservation, volunteers also receive appreciation from visitors, enjoy new experiences and the opportunity for self-development, not to mention the appreciation showed by some visitors to the volunteer in the form of money. A voluntary system such as this can be applied in other locations.

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