

The World Leaders Conservation Forum

Expert meeting 4 –

Peace: Facilitating Transboundary Conservation (TBC) and Peace-building

Tuesday, 7 July 2015, 14:00-16:30, Halla B, ICC Jeju, 3F

(Organizer: IUCN, National Institute of Ecology, Korea National Park Service)

Lead Expert: Peter Shadie (Director, Odonata House Consulting; Senior Advisor Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group) (“**PS**”)

Moderators: Jae C. Choe (President, National Institute of Ecology) (“**JC**”)

Speakers:

- Kevan Zunckel (Regional Coordinator: Eastern and Southern Africa, IUCN WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group) (“**KZ**”)
- Duk Haeng Lee (Senior Policy Cooperation Officer, Ministry of Unification, Republic of Korea) (“**DHL**”)
- Eun-Jin Park (Head of Future Planning TF., National Institute of Ecology) (“**EP**”)

Panellists:

- Munqeth Mehyar (President and Jordanian Director, EcoPeace Middle East) (“**MM**”)
- Anna Grichting (Assistant Professor, Qatar University) (“**AG**”)
- Dongwon Shin (Former Executive Director, Korea National Park Service) (“**DS**”)
- Jin-Han Kim (Director, National Institute of Biological Resources) (“**JK**”)
- Eun-Jin Park (Head of Future Planning TF), National Institute of Ecology)

Objectives:

1. Review the status of global transboundary conservation (TBC) initiatives and articulate future trends with an emphasis on initiatives that foster international peace and security.
2. Provide a focus on TBC and Parks for Peace challenges and opportunities facing the DMZ.
3. Capture and relay to the WLD what it is that the world’s leadership can do to advance more effective transboundary conservation in the pursuit of international peace and coordination.

A. Welcome and overview of the session

Welcome from Peter Shadie – The objective is to understand the status and trends for TBC worldwide; focus on the TBC opportunities within the DMZ; and lastly, take the opportunity to think about how we craft and relay these messages to world leaders. The Forum is designed to target the world’s leaders so who are those people with the reputation, influence and capacity to effect change We hope that we will continue to see the WLCF as a regular event in Jeju thereby building profile and a momentum of influence for TBC, peace and cooperation. In addition, he encouraged participants to frame their ideas in a positive way, articulating the broadest benefits from TBC to gain the attention of diverse sectoral leaders.

He explained the format for the session, which will end with participants providing technical input into tomorrow’s dialogue.

Mr Shadie introduced the moderator, JC, who then introduced the keynote speakers.

B. Keynote speakers:

a. Global trends in transboundary conservation and peace building (KZ)

Kevan Zunckel covered the growth in TBC and the perceived benefits. He outlined current definitions of TBC, TBC benefits, global trends, a future vision and a call to action, all in context of newly published IUCN guidelines on TBC. The latest publication is a revision of an earlier publication and involved a large network of contributors and reviewers. The report was pre-launched at the WPC in 2014, then published in May 2015.

The guidelines took a systematic and integrated approach, so the first part looked at underlying TBC history and concepts. The global trends show the numbers of TBC publications since the late 1990s, many of them have been limited to parks, but one can see the global trend is increasing. While most work to date has been on international efforts, the connectivity principles behind TBC can be more regional – it does not have to be limited to the international realm.

TBC is defined as *“a process of cooperation to achieve conservation goals across one or more international boundaries.”* The sub categories of TBC are noted in the Background Paper for the session.

The benefits range from equipping partners with a better understanding/what it involves and giving them the tools to motivate decision makers. “TBC is a mechanism.....and it can help address the way we live.”

He presented the example in Cabinda, Angola, and noted it is important to look at what we do on the other side of the boundary. TBC enhances ecological functionality. It enhances the number of shared ecosystems. It can help overcome divided cultural significance. It provides a framework, and importantly, a foundation for peace and security. The governance of these areas ranges from informal to formal and anything in-between.

Part 2 of the guidelines moves from principles to actions. Finally, it looks at what monitoring system to use and how the benefits need to be distributed.

Noting several recommendations in the guidelines, the Call to Action includes establishing better monitoring & evaluation to understand benefit flows; developing a framework for a database; and, using the guidelines to develop capacity building and courses for all levels.

b. Conservation and sustainable development opportunities in the DMZ (DHL & EP)

Mr Duk-haeng Lee, from the Ministry of Unification, gave a brief history and state of play concerning the DMZ and World Eco-Peace Park from the South Korean perspective. He noted the DMZ is about 250 km long and 4 km wide. Despite its name, it is the most heavily militarized zone in world. But thanks to cooperation, it has become a repository of natural ecosystems and species.

In 2013, a proposal for the DMZ to become an Eco-Peace Park was announced by the ROK President and put forward to both the South and North Korean governments, as well as at the UN General Assembly. The concept of the park is to establish a natural area without barbed wire, mines and weapons – and instead, create a corridor for life and peace. The underlying ideas are based on ecology, cooperation and peace.

There are three candidate areas in the western, central and eastern regions, all of which would produce a range of different benefits.

However, the current thinking is only to create a small park of 1 sq km (100ha) – equally divided, and then expand it step by step. He presented a process for creating this park once the North and South agree, including creating plans for construction, legal and institutional requirements, etc., in the first phase, which could allow the park to open within 18 months provided the North agree.

Some of the expected results would be reconnecting the peninsula and promoting intra-Korean cooperation. Thus far, the response from the North has not been positive, but then with the current standoff, there have been few chances to discuss it further. Earlier this year, through Ramsar, the first direct contact took place. But further dialogue is needed.

In the meantime, the preparatory works for the park continue. .

Eun-Jin Park highlighted ways of maximizing the ecological value and peace within the DMZ. As it is very unique area, she highlighted that this area should not be a cause of conflict. However, it demands change in the political situation and it is necessary to make it clear that its success as an Eco/Peace park is dependent on this happening.

It is important to remember this is a temporary military buffer within a divided nation – not a permanent border area. The TBC definition calls for creating a global symbol of peace and conservation, so this area is not ready yet. However, it could become a symbol....

The presentation questioned if we have to wait until the political process is resolved before proceeding? What can be done when conservation issues are not attracting interest in North Korea? It will take a process of conservation cooperation, but it could be turned into a natural peace memorial park. South Korea could start by preparing a vision and North Korea could eventually join, but this would require a step by step approach, which could eventually support complementary benefit programmes, such as eco-tourism; enable more education, scientific research and a sustainable economy in the corridor areas.

Note: Participants/panellists later questioned this approach, saying it was important that any vision be co-created with NK, even if it meant bringing in a third party/organisation to help facilitate it.

c. Polleverywhere to audience building on key points raised during speeches.

- Most of our audience have no professional experience in this area yet.
- What evidence of benefits would be most compelling to convince high-level leaders to get behind TBC.—most common responses were that ‘economic benefits’, ‘peace and security’ are more compelling than those around environment.
- In which two areas of this framework have you experienced greatest barriers – the results showed that identifying the need for TBC is the biggest challenge.

**C. Moderator opened Panel building on speeches:
“TB conservation and Peace-building – lessons from practice” (Moderator JC)**

Panelists included: Anna Grichting, Munqeth Mehyar, Dongwon Shin, Jin- han Kim and Eun-jin Park.

In response to a question on their vision of Peace Parks by 2050, Anna noted she would like to see this based less on human needs, as well as less political, and more about ecological flows like flyways, corridors and driftways.

Munqeth Mehyar noted that coming from the Middle East, the need was urgent so while a long term vision is important, the idea would be to work together right now and set small achievable goals to maintain motivation. Barriers included the incompatibility between conservation and development as well as lack of knowledge. There is a need to work on 'sustainable conservation' not 'sustainable development' to get beyond business as usual.

Dongwon Shin presented a review of the earlier speeches, raising more questions and putting forward his support for an academic debate.

Jin-han Kim responded to a question on barriers, noting the lack of knowledge and cooperation is one of the main barriers in South Korea. He proposed a new paradigm, new approach and new action to achieve these goals that he called sustainable conservation because he said if we fail at Sustainable Development then Sustainable Conservation is gone! And, we need to change many things to make it happen, i.e., leaders at the local level/authority are crucial for achieving the vision and he provided a good example of where this has happened.

On ideas for DMZ breakthroughs, Anna suggested having some meetings with scientists and academics – in perhaps a neutral city like Geneva, facilitated by a neutral organization such as IUCN - where nature and biodiversity issues could be discussed. She also suggested a possible digital platform where people could engage.

Mr Mehyar noted how he used art and photography to evoke inspiration and political good will. On leadership, he said you need local leaders who can serve as champions and influence government as well. And, he said trust is a key factor in establishing TBC.

Mr Shin called for any future Peace Park to be comprehensive, not just based on biological ideas but philosophical, taking on board economic aspects as well, such as a green growth approach.

Mr Kim reiterated the need for more discussion because there are no meetings at present with North Korea on the idea of a Peace Park. He also said the proposed park needed to be enlarged and connected to sites outside the DMZ (so we should not be restricted to the corridor of the DMZ itself). He mentioned the International Crane Foundation is operating in the area, so already demonstrating what is possible.

Dr Grichting concluded saying it was important to ensure the park was co-created with North Korea, not developed in the South and imposed in the North.

The participants were then invited to look at 3 key messages to leaders tomorrow.

Facilitated Roundtables – What do we want the world's leaders to do to advance TBC and peace building? (Chair – CZ)

- a. Questions discussed during the roundtables ranged across:
 - i. What is the global vision for TBC and Parks for Peace that we want to achieve
 - ii. Who are the likely key leaders we need to influence to advance the vision?
 - iii. What are the barriers to achieve that vision and how can leaders help overcome those barriers?
 - iv. How can leaders ensure TBC capacity is built, eg how can the IUCN Guidelines be used to this end?
 - v. How can TBC be better packaged, communicated and promoted to decision-makers?
 - vi. What role can IUCN play in demonstrating leadership? RCFs, WCCs, WPCs, IUCN Programme etc?

- vii. What role can Korea play in demonstrating leadership ? DMZ as a global symbol of conservation and peace, role of future WLCFs, support from Korean's IUCN Framework Agreement etc.
- viii. What role can area-based MEAs play – WH, CBD, Ramsar, MAB?
- ix. What role can CMS play
- x. How can a shared vision be achieved for conservation of the DMZ, initially in Sth Korea and then in North Korea?
- xi. How can international organisations play a brokerage role between the two Koreas to achieve a TBC outcome in the DMZ?

D. Wrap up and close – Each table submitted responses electronically, but this was not reviewed in plenary.

E. What is the main message to be relayed to WLD (summarised by the WL Dialogue moderator for day 2)

See Chair's remarks below.

F. Closing remarks from session technical expert Peter Shadie

Mr Shadie reflected on the rich discussions and summed up the key findings he had heard throughout the session adding a few new areas for participants to think about as well:

There was a call for better measuring the attributable benefits of TBC because up to now there have been a lot of assumptions that any TBC initiative was a good thing. More evidence is needed to see how TBC contributes to people's livelihoods, biodiversity, etc. Furthermore what the costs are. We need to better assemble and market the benefits of TBC across a range of areas.

There is a need for a better knowledge base for TBC. Since 2001, there has been no consolidated global database on TBC initiatives, hence there is a clear need for this to be updated. Many international calls have been made to establish a better knowledge base to capture this information.

We need to better support the networks of TBC practitioners, upscaling the TBC Specialist Group and promoting the uptake of the new TBC guidelines.

We had an interesting discussion on the DMZ and it raised questions on how we might be able to achieve a breakthrough. After many years we are still at the very start of the collaborative model process – establishing communication. We can ask leaders to prioritize how to do this and hopefully build trust carefully, step by step. Trust needs to be built respectfully, with patience and consistency. It was also noted that it is important that North Korea feels like equal partners in this process, and bringing together stakeholders to make a regional master plan could be one way to achieve this goal.

We need to think outside the box to tap into other sectors and their leadership in order to promote the merits of TBC on our behalf. For example, linking integrated water basin management across international borders supports TBC and links to strong economic arguments for the water sector; similarly engaging the fishing sector in arguments that support functioning large marine ecosystems; and reaching out to the military in areas subject to military activity such as DMZ.

Mr Shadie suggested it is time to try and move beyond World Leaders' Dialogues to World Leaders' Action. We are seeking leaders' views but the follow-through needs to go beyond

dialogue to collaboration and joint execution, and this idea needs to be translated to the leaders themselves.

Lastly, he noted that the future for society is all about connectivity: for people and communities, for technology – the rapidly emerging Internet of Things (IoT), for trade and economic prosperity and above all for linking nature and culture. TBC provides the opportunity to change the conservation landscape from the green dots of protected areas in a sea of development to green threads of conservation connectivity, thus repairing the worn fabric of life on earth.

Expected Outcome:

It was noted that the Polleverywhere tool would capture specific issues regards the question areas and on-going input would be welcome.

Results will be collated and referred to the WLD on 8th July. The question is can we be clear about what we want the world's leaders to do with respect to TBC/peace parks?

Inspire – *Great stories/examples of what could be possible.*

Concrete actions – *Questions from participants for the leaders (provided by the facilitator Lizzie Crudginton) below:*

- *Who are the IUCN TBC guidelines written for? Who do you expect to read and use them?*
- *When will the guidelines be translated and into which languages?*
- *Should 'sub-national' be added to the TBC definition? (i.e. international and subnational boundaries)?*
- *Is the idea of a TBC peace park 'until unification' with transition to a 'memorial' park an approach consistent with the IUCN TBC guidelines? Has IUCN thought through such an interesting approach?*
- *Can IUCN help with negotiations with North Korea on DMZ transboundary cooperation, if so how best?*
- *Was the announcement by the South Korean President for a DMZ World Eco-Peace Park widely publicized in South Korea and is there agreement from all in the south that this is the best approach?*