

to individuals without having conducted interviews with them; notably, he did not speak to Sherri Goodman and Gary Vest, whose insights

I believe would be central to understanding the opportunities for and impediments to greening the U.S. military.



Peace Parks: Conservation and Conflict Resolution

Edited by Saleem H. Ali

Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007. 377 pages.

Reviewed by ROLAIN BOREL

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In *Peace Parks: Conservation and Conflict Resolution*—brilliantly conceived and edited by Saleem H. Ali—31 authors explore the multiple ways in which environmental conservation zones can facilitate the resolution of territorial conflicts. Ali concludes with “a sense of optimism” because the concept of international peace parks (sometimes known as transboundary protected areas or trans-frontier conservation areas) is expanding rapidly (p. 341). The 17 case studies gathered in this volume show that ecological factors have the potential to become instrumental in peacebuilding; however, much of the evidence is not fully conclusive, and the role of peace parks in international affairs remains in the realm of the possible, not of the certain.

Peace Parks is both broad and deep: Part I provides a historical overview and methodological and theoretical perspectives; Part II presents cases of bioregional management and economic development in existing peace parks; and Part III offers several visions of future peace parks. While most chapters are engaging, some contributions are too long and burdened by unneces-

sary digressions. Although the majority of the authors are from the United States, and only seven are from the Global South, the cases cover a wide geographical range.

Two main factors explain the growing interest in international peace parks. Anne Hammill and Charles Besançon claim it reflects on the growing commitment to bioregionalism and the need to increase the geographic scale of conservation areas beyond national borders. On the other hand, Rosaleen Duffy argues that peace parks are being promoted as a form of global environmental governance, reflecting the wider shifts in global politics from state governance to networks of international organizations. According to Duffy, this governance model is also related to the “extension of neoliberal market-oriented forms of economic management”—i.e., revenues generated by ecotourism (p. 57).

Several of the articles address territorial issues: Raul Lejano stresses that “territoriality has been the subtext for violent conflict” and that it is “ironic that territory is now being turned on its head as an instrument of peace” (p. 41). In their respective chapters, Ali, Michelle Stevens, and Ke Chong Kim point out that international peace parks can act as physical buffers (e.g., the Sierra del Condor between Peru and Ecuador; the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea) or as sites of collaborative exchange (e.g., “the informal exchange of

information on elephant poaching and security matters” between Tanzania and Mozambique, described by Rolf Baldus et al. on p. 125).

The case of the Kuril Islands, which lie between Japan and Russia, illustrates that territorial problems are unlikely to be “solved by piling up historical arguments based on international law,” argues Jason Lambacher, who asserts that a “new approach needs to unsettle nationalist thinking, and defuse historical grievances” as well as offer a “form of political compromise over the sovereignty issue” (p. 269). In fact, it would be irrelevant which country is formally designated the “owner” of the islands, as joint environmental stewardship will require the other’s cooperation.

For international peace parks to be effective, certain conditions must be met. Two chapters conclude that post-9/11 “security” measures pose, for example, a definite threat to international peace parks straddling the borders between the United States and Canada or Mexico, in spite of a long history of cooperation between the countries. In less favorable situations, such as the proposed peace park on Afghanistan’s borders discussed by Stephan Fuller, the critical security situation poses an almost insurmountable obstacle.

Border areas have their own peculiarities, a life of their own independent from the policies of the respective countries. In their chapter on Liberia, Arthur Blundell and Tyler Christie point out that people on either side are often linked by kinship and marriage, as well as by local trade and culture. Relationships between actors in the immediate vicinity of the border are usually very fluid. In their report on the Selous-Niassa elephant corridor in East Africa, Rolf Baldus and his co-authors state that border inhabitants more frequently share common underdevelopment conditions than conflicts. Therefore, international peace parks must not impose externally designed processes on local stakeholders.

The second section of *Peace Parks* assesses existing international peace parks by identifying their impacts and attempting to separate their effects from other influences. As Maano

Ramutsindela and Ali point out, the “peace” in peace parks is not automatic, because it implies a purpose and an impact that are not always present. According to Hammill and Besançon, since peace parks represent the “confluence of several mutually reinforcing interests, namely those of biodiversity conservation, economic development, cultural integrity, and regional peace and security,” integral assessment tools—such as the Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA)—could be harnessed to measure progress toward such broad objectives (p. 25). The experience of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park in southern Africa, discussed by Anna Spenceley and Michael Schoon, illustrates the difficulty of assessing the effectiveness of such complex initiatives in economic, environmental, and equity terms.

Chapter authors attribute many positive impacts to existing peace parks, including:

- Improving the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation in protected areas;
- Symbolizing ongoing cooperation (which, I argue, could also be attributed to joint efforts on many other issues, such as transportation, mail, or the electric grid);
- Changing the symbolic meaning of a border (see chapter by Ramutsindela); and
- Reducing diplomatic tensions through joint monitoring, collaborative research projects, or joint funding proposals (see chapter by Yongyut Trisurat on Indochina).

Several of the authors also identify negative impacts. Ali points out that just as national conservation efforts can create conflicts, so can international peace parks. In addition to exacerbating political inequalities between local communities and state actors, international peace parks can emphasize disparities between countries, note Hammill and Besançon. Aissetou Dramé-Yayé and her co-authors document the security threat posed by criminals who find the “W” Peace Park in West Africa a safe haven for their activities.

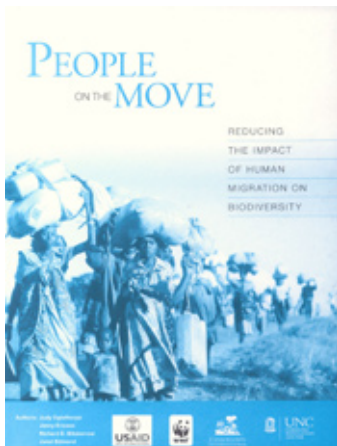
The chapters in the book's third section identify proposed peace parks and their possible benefits. While all the proposals demonstrate potential, the feasibility of several is questionable—not due to lack of resources (as donor interest is high), but because of lack of political interest. This section, while inspiring, is weaker than the first two, because the feasibility of implementing the proposed parks depends heavily on external factors.

A number of chapters discuss the different processes that have been and could be used when creating an international peace park. Some level of decentralization is inherent—and in itself problematic in most developing countries, points out Dramé-Yayé et al. The decision-making capacity of communities and a cooperation model driven by bottom-up technical and situational demands are critically important to the success of such efforts, some authors argue. However, Duffy contends that

efforts to decentralize and link up with local communities are just window-dressing for top-down, market-oriented interventions by international bureaucracies.

As mentioned earlier, donors find the international peace parks model attractive and may help galvanize the establishment of shared management between border communities, for which state governments are not well-equipped. For example, Blundell and Christie call on international partners to provide the funds for a proposed international peace park along Liberia's borders in order to promote dialogue between West African countries.

Ali concludes that “environmental cooperation is both a result of conflict mitigation and leading to conflict reduction itself, in a dialectical process of a non-linear and complex series of feedback loops in the conflict de-escalation process” (p. 6). *Peace Parks* is a must-read for anyone interested in transboundary conservation areas.



People on the Move: Reducing the Impacts of Human Migration on Biodiversity

By Judy Oglethorpe, Jenny Ericson, Richard E. Bilsborrow, and Janet Edmond

Washington, DC: World Wildlife Fund & Conservation International Foundation, 2007. 93 pages.

Available online from <http://www.panda.org>

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prompted and stymied by factors such as political boundaries, population growth, and environmental damage. As they work to protect Earth's biological diversity, conservation planners and practitioners must increasingly consider the effects of human migration.

In *People on the Move: Reducing the Impacts of Human Migration on Biodiversity*, co-authors Judy Oglethorpe, Jenny Ericson, Richard Bilsborrow, and Janet Edmond point out that “responding to migration is a relatively new concept for the conservation sector” (p. viii). To help focus this

People have been migrating from one place to another since the first humans walked out of Africa into an uncertain future. Over the millennia, our movement has become increasingly complicated. Human migration today is both