

## Workshop on Assessing Governance for PA systems

Some impressions Day 1 Trevor

Thanks again for the great opportunity to be with you here in the mountains. This is the first time in years that I have been able to escape my telephone and email, and sleep so well!

It was great to participate yesterday and hear a wide range of views. Most importantly it was interesting to hear that people were prepared to be honest about their positions and to have respect for the opinions of others.

### A. The first big set of issues was about recognition of the role of Indigenous Peoples in the conservation of nature.

1. We heard from traditional leaders of their views regarding nature conservation and their assertion of the role that they play. It seems that this role is not fully recognized, and nor are the areas recognized (at least formally) by the relevant authorities. Both sides may claim that this is not necessary, but clarifying the roles and this recognition would also help to address some of the frustrations being felt by both sides.
2. Related to this is **who are these relevant authorities**. We had strong representation from the DoE, but it was clear that there were other authorities responsible for Natural Resource Management who have to be included in the conversation (agriculture, forest rangeland and watershed development, etc) (so it is good to see representation from these agencies today).
3. Closely associated with this is **whether or not conservation outcomes are achieved**. We heard about specific nature conservation objectives and activities, for example the restoration of the river system Ali Darwish and the re-establishment of the red spotted trout population. Being clear about what conservation objectives are being achieved is a really important step in clarifying responsibilities.
4. The question of **who should have the authority** – whether fully that of the traditional authorities or that of government - was contentious. What I perceived was a willingness from both to negotiate this authority possibly in the form of shared governance. Being hard negotiators may be a good political strategy, but it doesn't necessarily build the trust that is required.

### B. The second big issue related to **development, and the processes of authorisation of development activities**.

1. At one level, there is an issue with **land-use planning processes** where it seems that development is being driven by commercial interests rather than long-term sustainability. The frustration being felt in the absence of a clear spatial development framework, is that decisions are not in everyone's interests and that rightsholders and stakeholders are not enabled to participate fully in the discussions. It also seemed that there was not full transparency about the decisions.
2. At the level of EIAs, there was concern about whether proper EIA processes were being followed (at all) or whether they were being done properly. In many countries, the **involvement of civil society** is a good way to ensure the better scoping of the potential impacts of development proposals, and when projects are commissioned, to ensure that they uphold the environmental safeguards that an EIA should put in place.