

TRANPAREA WP2, Interdisciplinary workshop

Oslo, 25/11/13

1 Participants

- Per Angelstam, Landscape governance
- Peter Fredman, Economics
- Marek Giergiczny, Economics
- Isabel Seifert, Economics
- Askill Harkjerr Halse, Economics
- Iratxe Landa Mata, Tourism

2 Main issues discussed

Different views about nature protection

In Białoweża, forestry industry defends multi-functionality (productive, recreational and environmental) whereas environmentalists think that certain areas should have a dominant environmental function under the argumentation that multi-functionality always underestimates the environmental function, so that there is a need for securing that some areas can (primarily) fulfill the environmental function.

Whether we adopt a biocentric or anthropocentric vision depends on how much information we have about the environmental function of natural spaces (e.g., the importance of dead wood).

Differences between the cases and between the countries

In Białoweża there are strong differences between the two sides of the border with regards to how protection is regulated, due to the differences in the political regimes:

- Belorussia: state-management is easy due to political dictatorship.
- Poland: local authorities have to be consulted and have to agree to protect nature.

The relationship between forestry industry and the State is more controversial in Poland than in Sweden and Norway (although the forestry sector does have considerable influence on environmental policy in Norway).

Differences in citizens' knowledge about the two case studies

Białoweża is very well known, while Fulufjellet (at least in Norway) is relatively unknown.

Citizens' perceptions about protection of natural habitats

A previous study conducted in Poland and Belorussia, to assess the public opinion about how forest should look like with the help of visualization techniques, showed that:

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- There is a high correlation between protection and recreational value.
- Dead wood as such was perceived rather negatively. However, under provision of ecological functions they reacted positively towards visualization of dead wood.
- Opinions about whether or not to enlarge the protected area depended on the distance to the park:
 - Locals associated enlarging the park with lowering income (and thus, reacted negatively),
 - Non-locals saw park enlargement as something positive.
 - Those who had income from tourism saw it neither as negatively as locals nor as positive as non-locals (activities such as berry picking were not prohibited in the scenario).

Future developments including threats

- There are signs for a political change towards enabling more profit making from nature and less recreational focus in Sweden.
- There have existed plans to expand a ski resort in Norway (Fulufjellet Alpinsenter), but they cannot expand into the national park area.

Alternatives to increasing the strictly protected area

Integrating low human activity zones into the strictly protected area

There is no zoning in Norway and it does not make sense in Sweden from an environmental perspective.

Improving connectivity

Although we protect more, fragmentation is not improving and it is even increasing. In this sense, improving the functional connectivity may be a reasonable alternative to increasing the quality of the protected area from an environmental perspective.

However, creating scenarios that involved improving functional connectivity increase the probability of having a use value and make more difficult to isolate the non-use value.

Besides, in Bialoweza this would not make sense because the benefit out of improving connectivity is very queerly distributed. Poland will benefit most out of it because Belorussia is the source of biodiversity. Would it make sense in Fulufjellet?

Protect other areas (additionally)

However, this would need a labeled choice experiment, which might make the questionnaire too complicated.

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3 Conclusions about possible scenarios and the questionnaire

As long as we achieved the main two goals of the project, which were to determine:

- whether we have a public good or not, and
- whether Norwegians are willing to pay the same for the Swedish part and vv. (and the same for Polish and Belarusians) (free rider problem),

we may develop different scenarios for the two case studies.

It is a matter of increasing the quality of the environmental function. Increasing the quality in Fulufjellet and in Białoweza can have different meanings and, thus, imply different approaches.

However, we reach some consensus about the following with regards scenarios for Fulufjellet:

- It does not make sense to integrate zone III and II into I (on the Swedish side) because it provides no ecological value.
- It makes sense to enlarge both sides (the Norwegian area to the west and the Swedish area to the east) in one patch.
- We might consider including other protected areas in the Norwegian/Swedish case study, possibly linking them to the connectivity issue.

Further important conclusions were:

- Knowledge plays an important role on how nature and protection of natural habitats are perceived. So, there is a need to describe comprehensively the background from the scenario development. We need to know what people already know.
- We should carefully select all questions but especially those at the beginning of the questionnaire that may motivate participants not to tell the truth, disproportionately increasing the share of participants who “apparently” care about the environment.
- We should include questions about the prior knowledge of the park since many are not aware of it.

4 Next steps and status

- Check the Swedish and Norwegian management plans for the Fullufjellet National Park and contact management authorities to find out more about the future plans and possible differences between the understanding of national parks (*Ongoing*)
- Find out more about the state of forestry in the Norwegian side of the National Park as well as if there are (and if so which) are the compensation (subsidies and incentives) mechanisms. Compare it to the situation in Sweden to find out possible differences (*Ongoing*)
- Find out the state of old forest in the Norwegian side and specify the old growth forest in Sweden. (*Ongoing - TOI will contact Erik Framstad from NINA*)

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5 Open for discussion

- There is the possibility of cooperating with Peter Fredman to include a sample (both visitors and locals) in the Fullufjellet case study.
- According to Per Angelstam we should consider contributing to public education by means of informing well about the choices and enhance awareness about the need for protecting areas.

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