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PROMOTING COMMUNITY-LED CONSERVATION

Opportunities, challenges and measures

ABSTRACT

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Promoting community-led conservation – Opportunities, challenges and measures
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The topic of this thesis is community-led conservation. The study sheds light on opportunities and common challenges in community-led conservation and reflects the measures to promote it. The thesis was carried out for World Vision Finland and World Vision Peru. The aim of the study was to provide ideas for integrating environmental aspects and conservation into their work in communities around Ayacucho. An executive summary in Spanish can be found in appendix three.

The methodological approach of the thesis was qualitative. The goal was to understand and describe the interconnections between people, activities, situations and events in relation to community-led conservation. The data of the research was collected through a literature review and six expert interviews. The peer-reviewed articles used in the review were narrowed down to Latin American context, but interviewees' experiences in the matter also from other countries in the Global South were included. The findings were analyzed with content analysis.

The main findings of the research can be divided into opportunities, challenges and measures. According to the study, the central opportunities that community-led conservation can bring to a community are enforcement of existing assets and additional income. Through conservation, natural resources, cultural heritage and traditional knowledge can sustain and strengthen. It can also enhance social aspects in the community by building cooperation and goodwill, promoting participation, empowering community members and building their capacity in many ways. Conservation also helps to create sustainable livelihoods, such as ecotourism. The challenges in community-led conservation include inequality, contradictions with other benefits, top-down approach and weak governance in the society in question. The main motivation to oppose conservation is that it contradicts with livelihoods. Land tenure rights are also a major concern, as without them the fair and sustainable use of natural resources cannot be guaranteed. Corruption, nepotism, illegal activities and ignorance of legislative processes are closely linked to this. Promoting functioning social structures, good governance, democracy, transparency and inclusive processes promotes also conservation. Other measures include education and capacity building, participation and economic incentives. Different kinds of compensation mechanisms, for example, can help to overcome the negative impacts of conservation on livelihoods and turn concerns into opportunities.

In conclusion, community-led conservation is a complex issue with many dimensions. As participation is a fundamental aspect of community-led conservation, this study would ideally be followed by a further research with a participatory approach – as soon as the covid-19 pandemic is over, and the world is open again.

Keywords: Community-led conservation, Peru, sustainable livelihood, environmental education

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1 INTRODUCTION

The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.

- Robert Swan, Polar Explorer and Environmentalist

Today, over 1 billion people live in extreme poverty. At the same time, the growing world economy and overconsumption have caused a massive environmental crisis. To protect the future of our planet and our own existence, we need to conserve the nature and secure the functioning of Earth's key processes, such as cycles of water, nitrogen and carbon, and find ways to live in a more sustainable way. (Sachs 2015, 2-3.) Promoting sustainable ways of using land and forests helps to protect the environment and achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the year 2030.

There are many policies that guide the work on environmental issues, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development being among the most important ones. It has been described as a landmark achievement providing a shared global vision for sustainable development for the whole world (European Commission 2020). The Sustainable Development Goals have been adopted by all 193 Member States of the United Nations, including Peru (United Nations 2020). Because of this, the Sustainable Development Goals form the framework for this thesis.

The goal of the thesis is to find ways to promote community-led conservation and identify opportunities and challenges related to it. Community-led conservation means conservation that is led by the community members instead of outside actors. It can give access to resources or new livelihood and enhance political or cultural identity of the community. (Berkes 2007, 1-6.) The reason for focusing on community-led conservation is carefully considered. Despite our deep interest in environmental issues, we are not environmental experts. Instead, as future community development professionals, we focus on conservation in the everyday life in the communities, rather than expert-led initiatives.

The geographical context of the thesis is Ayacucho, Peru and the aim is to identify ways to promote community-led conservation in the area. The thesis is done for World Vision Finland and World Vision Peru to support them in finding ways to integrate environmental aspects into their work. The interest in the subject came from our own concerns over environmental issues and attraction for Latin America, especially Peru, as a geographical area. After discussing with World Vision's representatives, it became clear that there are no consistent habits of conservation in the communities in Ayacucho, even though agriculture is the main livelihood in the area. As conservation is essential for people's livelihoods in the area also in the future, it is important to study how community-led conservation could be promoted.

In the beginning, the working life partners of the thesis are introduced shortly. Then specific development context and the general environmental issues in Peru are described. Community-led conservation, environmental education and sustainable livelihood are the main concepts of the study. The research questions aim to identify opportunities and challenges in community-led conservation and find ways to promote community-led initiatives regarding conservation.

The methodological approach of the thesis is qualitative. The data of the research is collected through a literature review and six expert interviews. The peer-reviewed articles in the review are narrowed down to Latin American context, but interviewees' experiences are also from other countries in the Global South. The findings are analyzed with content analysis. Using the findings, we bring together useful information and ideas about conservation for our working life partners. This can support them in their work in the communities of Ayacucho. An executive summary in Spanish made for World Vision Peru can be found from the appendix 3.

2 CONTEXT

The geographical context of this research is Peru. World Vision is one of the nonprofit organizations that work in development in the country. The local national office of World Vision in Peru together with World Vision Finland are the working life partners of this research. Therefore, World Vision is generally introduced in the beginning of this chapter. After this, the development work of the World Vision in Peru is presented. Because the research aims to find ways to promote community-led conservation, the environmental issues in Peru are introduced shortly at the end of the chapter.

2.1 Working life partner – World Vision

This thesis is done for World Vision Finland and World Vision Peru. World Vision International was founded in 1950 and is today one of the world's biggest international nongovernmental organization with Christian values. Their work addresses poverty and injustice in the world's poorest communities in nearly 100 countries. Their special focus is in the well-being of children. World Vision International works in various sectors, such as in child protection and child participation, education, disaster management, economic development, health and food assistance. (World Vision International. Our work. Sectors.)

World Vision Finland is one of the biggest development cooperation organizations in Finland, and an independent part of the World Vision International. It concentrates on protecting the most vulnerable children by improving their living conditions and defending their rights. Child protection, health and nutrition, clean water, education and livelihoods are the core competencies in their work. World Vision Finland operates on three continents, which are Africa, Asia and Latin America. (World Vision Suomi. Työomme kehityksmaissa.)

In Latin America, World Vision Finland's focus is in Peru. It works there in close collaboration with World Vision Peru on two regional programs – El Salvador and Renacer. (World Vision Suomi. Toimintamaat.) In these programs, World Vision Peru is

responsible for the implementation of the regional development program and the use of funds. There is also cooperation with local partners, such as village development committees, other grassroots associations and governmental actors. (World Vision Suomi. Näin autamme Renacerissa.)

2.2 Development context – Ayacucho, Peru

Regional program of Renacer operates in the highlands of Andes around the city of Ayacucho. Ayacucho is in the middle of Peru, 300 kilometers from the capital Lima. Population there is close to 18 000. The main livelihood in the area is agriculture, and families grow mainly corn, quinoa and potatoes. Some families have cows, lamas and guinea pigs bringing them additional income. In general, their life is very modest and big part of the population lives in poverty. (World Vision Suomi. Renacer aluekehitysohjelman.)

In recent years, the Renacer program has focused particularly in improving the learning outcomes of children and youth, developing child protection in the area and increasing entrepreneurial skills of young people. In the beginning of the program, World Vision established several early childhood education centers, that have now been transferred under the responsibility of the Peruvian state. Currently, the focus of the work is in advocacy and strengthening the participation of children and youth in schools, student unions, local decision-making and local government's budget meetings. Communities' own development plans have also been promoted. The program has also made cooperation with the region's health authorities. This collaboration helps them meet their responsibilities in health care of the children and youth. (World Vision Suomi. Näin autamme Renacerissa.)

In the region parents may have harmful perceptions about children. These perceptions are inherited from one generation to the next. World Vision Peru has made efforts to identify and eliminate these disadvantageous beliefs. Parents have been provided with special training about affection. This training educates parents that showing affection to children and youth is important for their development and learning. Fathers and community leaders have also taken part in these trainings, although, getting men to participate in such

events has been one of the challenges of the program. (World Vision Suomi. Näin autamme Renacerissa.)

Conservation is not on a solid base in the area, although nature and farming give livelihood for majority of the population in Ayacucho. According to the World Vision Peru's Regional coordinator in the Renacer program (Celia Cerda, personal communication, March 6, 2020), there are no consistent habits of conservation, only very few and limited initiatives regarding reforestation.

2.3 Environmental issues in Peru

According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Peru has rich ecosystems and lots of natural resources. Yet, extractive industry like mining, unplanned urbanization and deforestation increase pressure on Peru's natural heritage and the wellbeing of the Peruvian people. Peru and its development model are highly vulnerable to environmental changes, such as climate change and extreme weather events. As ECLAC and OECD state, Peru would need to develop its environmental strategy to find a balance between the economy and environmental protection. Promoting the sustainable use of natural resources and preparing for environmental changes is crucial in order to improve country's resilience. (ECLAC & OECD 2016, 5-6.)

In 2016, ECLAC and OECD introduced a collection of recommendations for Peru in their Environmental Performance Review. Recommendations were to help Peru on a progress towards achieving environmental goals together with economic and social development and tackle the main environmental challenges. In addition to strengthening and increasing environmental institutions, management systems, policies and taxes, they highlight the importance of environmental education, participation and raising awareness of sustainable development throughout the country. (ECLAC & OECD 2016, 5-6.)

According to the Sustainable Development Report 2020 and Peru's SDG Index (SDR2020 2020), that was prepared by independent experts at the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and the Bertelsmann Stiftung, Peru still has a long way

to go to achieve the SDGs. As the picture 1 below demonstrates, Peru has major challenges in three of the goals that are SDG3 on good health and wellbeing, SDG 10 on reduced inequalities and SDG16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.



PICTURE 1. Peru's SDG Dashboard (SDR2020 2020)

In addition, there are significant challenges in eight of the goals. One of them is SDG15 on life on land. The goal together with the 2030 Agenda as a framework will be introduced in more detail in the next chapter.

3 FRAMEWORK AND MAIN CONCEPTS

As stated in the first chapter, there are many policies that guide the work on environmental issues. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is one of the most recognized global frameworks (European Commission 2020) and thus forms the foundation for this study. Introduction to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and monitoring them together with short presentation of Peru's Strategic National Development Plan form the first part of this chapter.

Next, the key concepts of this thesis are introduced. They are community-led conservation, environmental education and sustainable livelihood. Thesis' focus on community's perspective derives from asset-based community development, which seeks to build capacity within a community by strengthening its assets instead of focusing on its problems and needs (Haines 2014, 47). Community-led conservation as a main concept is a natural choice, as it is at the core of this study. Environmental education again is a tool to increase understanding of conservation in the communities and was chosen for one of the main concepts for that reason. Finally, sustainability is a crucial part of all community development. In order to develop communities in a sustainable manner continuity, holistic perspective, context and ecological limits of the specific place need to be taken into account (Philips and Pittman 2014, 76-77). To fulfil basic human needs, livelihood opportunities are essential. The third main concept of the thesis is therefore sustainable livelihood.

3.1 Sustainable Development Goals

The framework of this thesis leans on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations (UN). SDGs are a continuation to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Millennium Declaration that was set at the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000 and was endorsed by 189 world leaders at the time. For 15 years MDGs served as a road map for its implementation. The key goal of the Declaration was to reduce poverty and improve the lives of the poor people across the world by 2015. The MDGs served as a framework for collective actions towards the goal. The SDGs were built on the

lessons learned from the MDGs and to address unfinished issues by 2030. The goals were set in September 2015 and they are the core of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda seeks to achieve sustainable development in economic, social and environmental dimensions while integrated UN's three key pillars – peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. The goal is to end poverty by 2030 and pursue sustainable future through 17 measurable goals. (United Nations 2017; Sachs 2015.)

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are universal and valid for all countries. To achieve them, actions are needed on global, national, regional and local level by all the people around the world. The SDGs are divided into 169 more detailed targets and 230 indicators, that are interdependent and thus need to be implemented in a unified manner. As the picture 2 below demonstrates, there are seventeen goals that are closely related to each other. The goals include for example no poverty; quality education; clean water and sanitation; reduced inequalities; sustainable cities and communities; responsible consumption and production; climate action; life on land and peace, justice and strong institutions. (United Nations 2017; Sachs 2015.)



PICTURE 2. Sustainable Development Goals (UN Brussels, 2018.)

In this thesis, the primary focus is on SDG 15 – life on land. SDG 15 calls to

protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. (United Nations 2017, 157.)

Nature is crucial for our own existence. It provides us with the oxygen we need, pollinates the crops we grow, produces the food we eat and provides the raw materials we use. According to the UN, 52% of the land used for agriculture is affected by soil degradation. This has a direct impact especially on the poor, whose livelihoods often depend on agriculture alone. Still, human actions have altered almost 75% of the earth's surface and have put our planetary boundaries under increasing stress. Around one million animal and plant species are at risk of extinction. The rapid deterioration of the ecosystems affects the foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and general quality of life across the world. The deforestation and desertification impact the lives and livelihoods of millions of people. Additionally, intrusion to fragile ecosystems increases the risk of diseases, as wildlife pathogens start to spread among livestock and humans more easily in closer contact. (United Nations. Sustainable Development Goals. 15 Life on Land.)

SDG 15 consists of several smaller, more detailed targets. There are both short-term and long-term targets, some of them more urgent than others. Some of the immediate objectives are to ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems, such as forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands. They also aim to promote sustainable management and restoration of forests, halt deforestation, and increase afforestation and reforestation considerably across the globe. Also, urgent actions are needed to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the biodiversity loss and prevent the extinction of threatened species, as well as ending poaching and trafficking of protected species and illegal wildlife products. Long-term goal is to combat desertification and restore degraded land and soil, reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems, and conserve mountain ecosystems and their biodiversity. (United Nations. Sustainable Development Goals. 15 Life on Land.)

To achieve all the above mentioned, values need to be integrated into all national and local planning, development processes and poverty reduction strategies. Global support and capacity building in communities is crucial in the pursuit of sustainable livelihood opportunities. Establishing conservation habits, reforestation initiatives, sustainable forest management and fair use of resources in developing countries also requires financial support and incentives. (United Nations. Sustainable Development Goals. 15 Life on Land.)

3.2 Monitoring the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals

To monitor the achievement of the goals, the UN General Assembly has established a High-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF). It is a platform for follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. It provides guidance and addresses new and emerging challenges in sustainable development. The backbone of the forum are the voluntary national reviews (VNRs), through which both developed and developing countries share experiences and lessons learned from the implementation of the SDGs. The goal of the forum is to engage world leaders and other stakeholders, including civil society and private sector, and to maintain sustainable development agendas in global, regional and national levels. In addition, the forum administers the global SDG progress report and other relevant documents. (United Nations 2017, 132.)

According to the SDGs progress report 2019 (United Nations 2019, 2), positive progress has been made during the first four years of the implementation of the Agenda 2030. Extreme poverty has declined, access to electricity has increased, marine protected areas have doubled and over 300 policies and instruments supporting sustainable consumption and production have been set in 71 countries. Still, there are lot of issues that need to be addressed. The environment is relapsing as sea levels and temperatures are rising. One million plant and animal species are approaching extinction and land degradation continues. Human suffering and global hunger are rising. As we suffer from violent conflicts and natural disasters, 50% of the world's population do not have access to necessary health services, and more than 50% of the world's children are illiterate.

In addition to VNRs and annual SDGs progress report, a new global Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) has been created. It helps to solve the sustainable development challenges related to health, education, agriculture, energy, biodiversity and more. The network consists of hundreds of universities, governments, businesses and non-governmental organizations around the world, and it has several regional and national chapters. As all countries and contexts are different, The UN General Assembly emphasizes that each country should choose its own national targets and set their own priorities in pursuing the achievement of the SDGs (Sachs 2015, 484-485).

3.3 Peru's Strategic National Development Plan

Peru has produced a voluntary national review about their implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development first in 2017 and then again in 2020. In Peru's 2020 VNR (United Nations 2020), Peru introduces its update on the formulation of the Strategic National Development Plan. Peru started the formulation process in 2017, clarified the framework for national policies in 2018 and in 2019, the plan was approved by the National Agreement Forum as a society-state agreement. The plan points out five specific development objectives for the country, which are people, planet, prosperity, peace and alliances. The plan is meant to be used as a tool for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Unfortunately, according to Peru's 2020 VNR (United Nations 2020), the breakout of covid-19 pandemic during the first half of 2020 has brought unexpected challenges to the formulation of provincial and departmental development plans. Due to the pandemic, the typical dialogue processes in policy making have not been able to take place. Lots of Peru's resources are currently needed for fighting against the pandemic and the damages it has caused. However, Peru plans to continue the formulation of the plan in the remaining months of 2020 and revise its national priorities. The idea is to keep people, households and communities at the center of the plan and integrate economic, social and environmental objectives and institutional policies around their lives. Priority will be given to safety, hygiene and prevention in sectors such as agriculture, fishing, livestock, commerce, transport and tourism. (United Nations 2020.)

3.4 Community-led conservation

Conservation has many definitions. It can be preservation of natural ecosystems and species. It can also refer to the right of all species to a living space or maintaining of the diversity of life. It can be seen as series of actions that sustain natural resources and the environment and preserve our well-being. Community has many definitions too. Essentially, a community means a set of people living in a same locality or geographical area or sharing common interests e.g. religion, history, ethnicity or sexuality. Communities tend to be diverse and are constantly changing. In community-led conservation this community usually has shared local environmental issues and collective response towards solving them. (Velasquez, Yashiro & Yoshimura 2006; Western, 1994.)

Community-led conservation is conservation that is led by the community members instead of outside-directed initiatives. Community-led conservation is a complex issue that has long history, as livelihoods have always depended on long-term sustainability of local natural resources. What makes it controversial, is the question whether conservation should be entrusted to communities instead of state-managed conservation. In the 1990's, the main trend in community-based conservation was to connect conservation with local benefits in a way that a direct incentive would become the driving force of conservation for local people. This type of conservation was more inclusive and delicate to local needs than previous top-down models, but at the time, the concept became too popular leading to overemphasizing the place of local communities in conservation efforts. (Berkes 2007, 1-6.)

However, community-led conservation can be beneficial when done right. It can give locals the access to resources or give livelihood for example with ecotourism or forestry. It can enhance political or cultural identity and strengthen the community, encourage community-level governance, and build social capital. Local participation presents better prospects of lasting use of biodiversity and other natural resources, because locals profit directly from the sustainable use of the resources. The sense of ownership intensifies the commitment and responsibility. Additionally, local actors bring diversity of skills, expertise and knowledge to conservation and might have more information about local ecology and means to manage the resources in a traditionally acceptable way. However, the knowledge of the community may not be enough to tackle all the issues. External agents,

from government or civil society, can help in policy issues, share insights from modern science, help the community to get their voices heard in policymaking, introduce technologies and help with local conflicts. Decision making should be made at the local level, but the partnership with the state or an NGO is important, especially at larger geographical measures. Still, burden of rules or institutions, or financial factors can weaken local processes. (Kothari, Camill and Brown 2013, 11 – 13.)

Community-based conservation can be valuable when the users of the natural resource have exclusive rights to it and have therefore an interest in conserving the resource. Nevertheless, conservation cannot be implemented only at community level. Institutions that connect the community level to the numerous higher levels of social and political organization are very important. (Berkes 2007, 3-6.)

The coexistence of people and nature is a central doctrine in community-led conservation. It can help us find more holistic approach to conservation and get rid of the division between nature and culture, and the artificial gap between ‘wild’ and ‘domesticated’ biodiversity. (Kothari et al. 2013; Western 1994.) In this thesis, the focus is on the assets and possibilities that community-led conservation could bring to the communities in Ayacucho. At the same time, its limitations and challenges are acknowledged.

3.5 Environmental education

The concept of environmental education was first introduced somewhere in the mid-20th century, but similar ideas have occurred already in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. One of the biggest milestones of the environmental education was UNESCO’s First Inter-governmental Conference on Environmental Education in Tbilisi, Georgia in 1977. Delegations of 66 UNESCO member states and numerous NGOs attended the conference to prepare recommendations and goals for environmental education. The publications of the event are still used today in environmental education. According to the conference, environmental education should promote awareness about the inter-dependence of economy and social, political and ecological issues. It should also enhance opportunities to get the knowledge, values, attitudes and skills to conserve the environment and generate

the behavior of individuals, groups, and society with respect to environment. (Palmer 1998, 15 – 21.)

Currently we are facing severe environmental challenges, such as climate change, deforestation, and the extinction of species. Many of these problems are caused by human action, population growth, industrial development and expansion of agriculture. Environmental education can be a tool to change attitudes towards a more sustainable lifestyle. In order for it to be effective it should look at both physical/biological and socio-economic environment and human development. Environmental awareness, knowledge, and attitudes are assumed to change behavior towards environmental responsibility, but the relation is not so straightforward. Socially critical view on environmental education stresses the influence of cultural norms and structures of the society on people's behavior. Participatory approach to environmental education is needed. (Kopnina 2012; Pinn 2017; Urban Environmental Education Review 2017.)

3.6 Sustainable livelihood

The idea of sustainable livelihood (SL) was first introduced in the Brundtland Commission on Environment and Development. In 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development expanded this concept of sustainable livelihoods to be the broad goal for poverty eradication. Livelihood is considered sustainable when it can deal with unforeseen shocks and uncertainties and maintain capability in the present and for future while preserving natural resources and social stability. Sustainable livelihood approach combines poverty reduction, sustainability and empowerment methods. It differs from a conventional poverty reduction by not only focusing on aspects like low income but also the vulnerability and social exclusion. (Krantz 2001; Sengupta & Datta 2014.)

The sustainable livelihood approach holds a holistic perspective to livelihood. It makes a distinction between economic growth and poverty reduction. While the two are connected the economic growth does not automatically lead to poverty reduction. The capability to take advantage of the economic opportunities plays a role too. Because of this, it is important to find the reasons that constrain the poor. Sustainable livelihood approach sees the poverty as more than low income. Poverty consist of bad health, illiteracy, inadequate

social services and the feeling of powerlessness. All these aspects of poverty are connected and improvement in one can affect the others. The poor are considered the experts of their own lives and should be involved in the poverty reduction processes. (Krantz 2001, 6, 10-11.)

Sustainable livelihood approach and asset-based community development (ABCD) have a lot in common. They both focus on how people cope and survive rather than concentrate on what they lack. They aim to strengthen the potential for sustainable livelihood and the ability to survive. Both approaches acknowledge that all communities have strengths and assets that can improve their quality of life. They are sensitive to different ways of living and are holistic in nature. Both approaches attempt to identify the assets and the impacts of environmental, economic or social shocks. They are aware of the effects of the political, legal and economic systems to community. The sustainable livelihood however works more in a top-down manner as the ABCD is more bottom-up. Additionally, SL approach does not emphasize the discovery of assets as much as the ABCD. Because of this, it makes sense to integrate the ABCD approach to the SL approach. The ABCD approach adds more awareness and use of the assets. It expects that when people discover their strengths, they take more responsibility of their lives and are more able to reach their goals. ABCD is sometimes criticized of putting too much emphasis on the community and forgetting the impact of policies and institutions to people. The SL approach realizes the role of the government and professionals in development. This way the two approaches complement each other. (Nel 2015, 511 – 513.)

4 METHODOLOGY

In this thesis, the methodological approach is qualitative. Qualitative research can be described as a way of learning about social reality and exploring, describing or explaining social phenomena. It is creating understanding of interconnections between people, activities, situations and events in different contexts. Qualitative research is an umbrella term for several types of research practices. (Leavy 2014, 1-2.)

4.1 Research objective and questions

The goal of the thesis is to find ways to promote community-led conservation and identify opportunities and challenges in relation to it in Ayacucho, Peru. The aim is to identify measures to promote community-led conservation and give useful information and ideas that World Vision could use in their work in the communities. The objective is to offer relevant information for the employees of World Vision Peru that would encourage them to take conservation to their agendas. The aim is to support them to develop everyday conservation practices in the communities together with the community members. By examining community-led conservation and environmental education, this thesis contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, especially the realization of the SDG 15.

The research questions are:

1. What kind of opportunities can community-led conservation bring to the communities?
2. What kind of challenges are there in community-led conservation?
3. In what ways can community-led conservation be promoted?

4.2 Integrative literature review

The data collection of this thesis starts with a thorough literature review. As Dawidowicz (2010, 5) states, a literature review represents available theory on a specific subject that is based on research-based information. Literature review is a crucial part of all research processes. Without a thorough theoretical understanding of the topic, it is not possible to know the need and suitable approach for the new study.

There are several types of literature reviews. The literature review of this thesis is mainly integrative. It aims to examine the literature on the topic in a way that enables new perspectives to emerge by combining insights from different fields. Typically, integrative approach works well, when the purpose is to criticize and synthesize, use a combination of research articles, books and other published texts and the search strategy is not systematic. When the topic has been studied within diverse disciplines and research questions require more creative collection of data, integrative search strategy is more suitable than systematic review approach. The idea in integrative approach is to combine perspectives – not to cover all possible publications on the subject. (Snyder 2019, 1-7.) As the topic of this thesis regards several disciplines, integrative approach in the literature review is justified.

4.3 Semi-structured interviews

In qualitative research some typical research methods are narrative inquiry, in-depth interview, semi-structured interview, focus group interview, case study and daily diary research, to name a few. (Leavy 2014, 3-4.) In this thesis, semi-structured expert interviews were chosen to complement and challenge the findings of the literature review. Interview structure and questions were formulated based on the research questions and the findings of the literature review. Interview questions are found in the appendix 1. The aim was to interview people that work with environmental issues and environmental education in the Global South, so that their points of view can be applied in the context of Peru.

The interviews aim to find in-dept information to the research questions and complement the findings from the literature review. Compared to fully structured interview, the semi-

structured interview gives more room for following interviewees viewpoints. Furthermore, the interviewer can become a knowledge-producing participant in the process, instead of hiding behind strictly set interview questions. The advantage of the semi-structured interviews to unstructured interviews is that a certain structure makes it easier to focus on the issues most important for the research project. (Leavy 2014, 286.)

In their book *Qualitative research methods for community development*, Silverman and Patterson (2014, 61 – 62) recommend the use of interview guide as a tool to semi-structured interviews. The interview guide ensures continuity across the interview while at the same time keeps it flexible. The interview guide has open-ended questions of the desired themes that can be adjusted or changed during the conversation. The interview guide has three elements starting with *informed consent statement*. It ensures the confidentiality of the interviewee and explains the reason for the study. It helps to build a bond between the interviewer and the interviewee and to familiarize with the research project. The consent for the interview can be given verbally or in a written form. In this research, the consent was given verbally at the beginning of the interviews. Permission to use interviewees name in the thesis and to record the interview were asked together with the consent.

The grant-tour questions and probes are the second and the biggest element of the interview guide. Grant-tour questions include open-ended questions about the themes of the research in a logical order. The probes are follow-up questions to get more detailed information of the matter. The order of the questions can be changed during the interview, but the rule of thumb is to begin with general ice-breaking questions and continue to more specific and sensitive issues. (Silverman & Patterson 2014, 63.) The questions of the interviews in this thesis were formulated using the research questions and the knowledge obtained from the literature review.

The last of the elements is *the demographic and closing questions*. The demographic questions include information such as educational background or the occupation of the interviewee in a community. Demographic questions should be asked at the end because some of the information may come up already during the interview making it unnecessary to ask them again. Additionally, these questions might be uninteresting for the interviewee causing an early withdrawal from the interview. The closing question gives the interviewee a change to add anything to the interview or express concerns. This can bring

relevant information to the interview and should not be forgotten. In the end, the interviewer will give debriefing statements including contact information and information how the interview will be published. The debriefing also includes thanking the interviewee for their participation. (Silverman & Patterson 2014, 64-66.) The demographic and closing questions of the interviews conducted in the research were done according to the principles mentioned above.

Due to the covid-19 pandemic going on during the research, the interviews of the thesis were executed as virtual interviews. This solution has its pros and cons. Web-based interviews consume less time and money than face-to-face interviews. The interviewer can easily make notes on the computer while interviewing. The downside of web-based interviews is that the verbal and non-verbal cues might go unnoticed and the rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee might not develop. The lack of access to internet might reduce the participants of the low-income or indigent people. (Silverman & Patterson 2014, 72 – 73.) The lack of access to internet was not an issue during the interviews of this research.

4.4 Research strategy

The literature review was done using advanced search in ProQuest Social Science Premium Collection including five different databases and EBSCO Academic Search Premier. The subject terms used were *community-led* OR *community-based*, *conservation* and *Peru*. The results were limited to peer reviewed journals within ten years' time from the present. Search in ProQuest gave 54 results and 21 in EBSCO. The preliminary elimination of the articles was done reading the headings of the articles to see whether they were relevant or not. The use of two different databases gave duplicate articles which were also eliminated at this point.

As the figure 1 demonstrates, after the preliminary elimination, 32 articles from ProQuest and 5 from EBSCO remained. From these 37 articles 26 were left after further elimination on the basis of the abstract. These 26 articles were read throughout. After reading these articles, 19 of them remained to be used in the literature review.

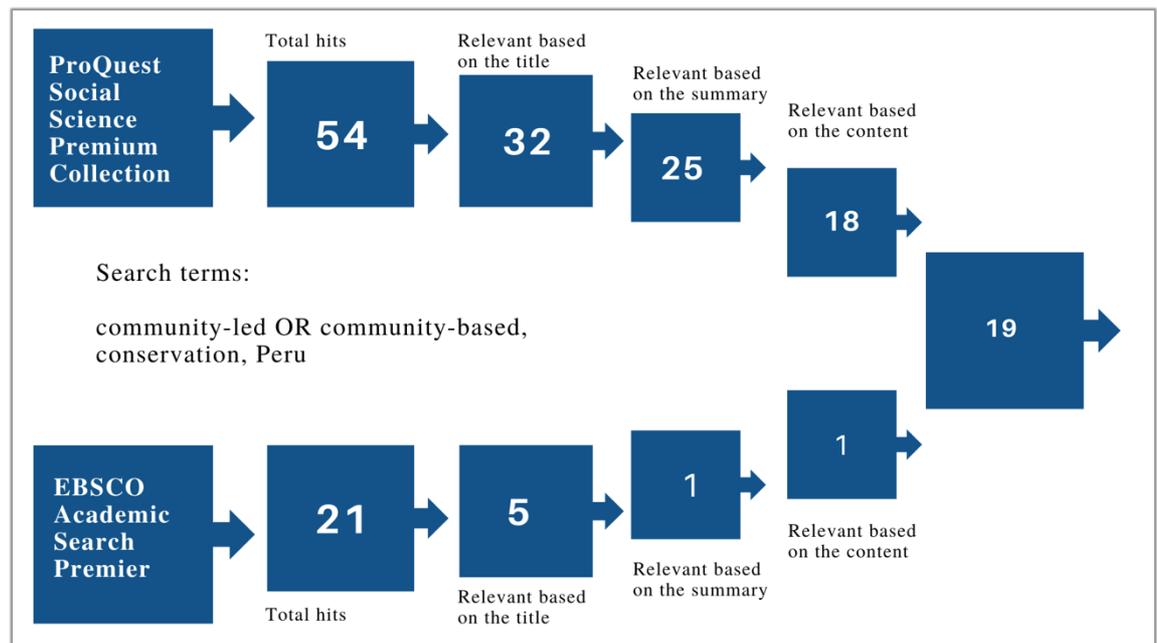


FIGURE 1. Search results from the literature review

As inclusion criteria, five criteria were used: language, context, year of publication, theme and type of publication. To be included in the literature review, the article had to be written in English and involve Peru or other Latin American country as a context. In addition, articles had to have been published between 2011-2020 and be relevant to search terms. Only peer reviewed articles were used.

TABLE 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

CRITERIA	INCLUSION	EXCLUSION
Language	English	Other
Context	Peru and other Latin American countries	Outside Latin America
Year of publication	2011-2020	Before 2011
Theme	Relevant to search terms	Non relevant
Type of publication	Peer reviewed articles	Non scholarly articles

As the table 1 illustrates, articles that were excluded were the ones written in other language than English. If the context of the article was outside of Latin America, it was not used in the review. Articles that had been published before 2011 were eliminated. If the theme of the article was not relevant to search terms, it was left out. In addition, all non-scholarly articles were excluded.

As a data analysis method, content analysis was used. Content analysis, as a qualitative technique, suits well to interpreting and analyzing non-numeric secondary data. As Silverman and Patterson state (2014, 95-98), analyzing secondary data corresponds well with community development and its discipline, as secondary data is helpful in identifying the development of processes and implementation of social programs. At its best, content analysis can provide new ideas and insights to community development projects and empower community members, which are the main goal of this thesis.

In this research, the analysis started with giving each article a number between 1-19. Then, relevant sentences from each article were collected into tables based on three different themes derived from research questions. These three table included opportunities and challenges related to community-led conservation and the measures to promote community-led conservation. At first the raw material was collected without further categorization into the three tables. After obtaining all the information related to opportunities, challenges and ways to promote community-led conservation a more detailed analysis was made. The content was examined to find similarities and common factors within the data of each table. These became the sub-themes of tables. The numbers of articles were marked on the tables after each finding to indicate from which article it was found. The three tables including the preliminary findings can be found from the appendix 4.

When carrying out the literature review, it came clear that there has not been precisely similar research that would look for ways to promote community-led conservation. The research articles found regarded conservation and communities, but the emphasis was different. To get confirmation to the findings of the literature review expert interviews were conducted. Furthermore, the purpose of the interviews was to get additional information and see if the experts would challenge the findings already found. The questions for the interviews were formulated according to the findings of the literature review. In the literature review the context was limited especially to Peru, but research papers with

relevant content from other Latin American countries were also included in the data collection. In the interviews, there was also a desire to gain understanding about the community-led conservation as a phenomenon. Therefore, the interviewees were chosen according to their expertise and field experience in the Global South. The results of the interviews met the objectives set for them by complementing the findings of the literature review and giving further information. The additional contribution of the interviews was that they gave priority to certain findings. Questions of the interviews are introduced in detail in the appendix 1.

When selecting interviewees for the research, a snowball sampling was applied. In snowball sampling the interviewer asks the interviewee suggestions for the next person to interview (Leavy 2014, 542). During this particular research, suggestions and ideas for the next interviewee were requested at the end of each interview. This method worked well and helped finding connections that would not have been otherwise found.

In total, six people were interviewed. Interviewees included development cooperation and environmental experts and academics with versatile backgrounds in different organizations, such as the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation, Siemenpuu Foundation, Dodo ry and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). Their expertise together includes environmental science, development and international cooperation, agricultural science, conservation, environmental rights, environmental politics, indigenous rights, monitoring and evaluation. Two of the interviewees have field experience from Peru. Other field experiences include for example Honduras, Nicaragua, Brazilian Amazon, Liberia, Mozambique, Indonesia, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Somalia, Finland and Russia. Originally, the intention was to interview Peruvian experts as well. Unfortunately, finding interviewees within the timeframe turned out to be challenging and the few connections found did not lead to a successful interview.

As a data analysis method, content analysis was used also with the interviews. First, the interviews were transcribed. Next, the transcribed content was split into parts based on which research question they were answering to. After that, the material was carefully reviewed, similarities searched, and main categories and sub-categories created. The relevant information was then gathered into three figures presenting the opportunities, challenges and measures to promote community-led conservation. In each figure, the sub-

categories include information how many of the interviewees brought up the same issue. This way, the similarities and differences between the answers were noticed, and emphasis could be given for the aspects that were seen important by all or most of the interviewees and for the ones that sparked dissenting opinions. In addition, comparison with the findings from the literature was clearer in such way.

After the analysis, the material was sent to the interviewees so they could review it for misinterpretations. Like mentioned before, the interviewees have given permission for using their names and background information in the thesis. However, the names of the interviewees are not used when presenting the findings to make it easier to follow the analysis. Also, using the names of the interviewees would not have added much value to the findings, because the interviewees participated as experts of the subject. Referring to them according to their expert role was considered, but because many of the interviewees have experience in many organizations and projects, it did not seem relevant to present them according to the current position either. However, for the sake of credibility and transparency, the interviewees are introduced shortly in appendix 2.

5 OPPORTUNITIES OF COMMUNITY-LED CONSERVATION

The following three chapters present the findings that answer to the three research questions of the thesis. The table 2 below gives an overview of the main findings that rose from the literature review. More detailed tables about the findings are found in each of the chapters.

TABLE 2. Main findings according to the literature

OPPORTUNITIES OF COMMUNITY-LED CONSERVATION	CHALLENGES OF COMMUNITY-LED CONSERVATION	WAYS TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY-LED CONSERVATION
Enforcement of existing assets	Inequality	Environmental education / capacity building
Additional income	Contradiction between conservation and other interests	Participation
	Top-down approach	Economic incentives
	Attitudes	Structural changes
	Challenges with tourism	

In this chapter, the opportunities of the community-led conservation are presented. The next two chapters introduce the challenges of community-led conservation and ways to promote it. Findings from the expert interviews are presented at the end of each chapter. These findings are compared with the findings of the literature.

When analyzing the articles for opportunities in community-led conservation, two main themes were found. As the following table 3 demonstrates, these themes were enforcement of existing assets and additional income. Based on them, community-led conservation initiatives have a positive impact on communities themselves, not only on the environment surrounding them.

TABLE 3. Opportunities of community-led conservation according to the literature



Strengthening the existing assets in the communities makes the communities more resilient. Additional income supports the livelihoods and helps to develop the communities further. According to literature, especially ecotourism is widely seen as a potential way of connecting conservation and economic benefits, even though it has some harmful environmental impacts as well. The findings of the interviews support the literature and give new insights for example by emphasizing the positive attitudes of the locals towards conservation and nature and giving attention to the importance of networks and local initiative.

5.1 Enforcement of existing assets

Doughty (2016, 2187-2188, 2193) sees a lot of potential in local knowledge and engagement in the fight against climate change. Local communities have expertise about their environment, such as weather patterns, microclimates and plants. They often have already experience with adopting to changing climate. Local organizations concentrating on conservation and development benefit from understanding the local processes and having a

long-term involvement with communities. This helps them to create adaptive social–ecological systems. Larson and Poudyal (2012, 919, 923, 927) recognize the importance of local knowledge and propose the use of community-led conservation as a part of the sustainable tourism. In fact, promoting ownership and control of the local communities has been a critical component of ecotourism in the rural Andes.

According to Licona, McCleery, Collier, Brightsmith and Lopez (2011, 206-207, 210-211), participation of the local people is essential in protected areas. Community-led conservation includes indigenous peoples' knowledge in the management of the resources. It has also helped to create official reserves possessed and maintained by indigenous communities. Doughty (2016, 2187-2188, 2193, 2195-2196) also emphasizes the participation of the communities and their role as leaders in conservation. With participation the communities get ownership of the development projects and conservation. This contributes to climate change resilience. Building networks between communities and outside organizations adds to this resilience. Local, regional and international cooperation promotes collective action and reduces risks for example by providing tools for the communities against threats, like extreme weather.

Conservation policies are likely to work best when they are matched with local conditions. Engaging local communities in resource management makes the quality of the environmental operations better, as well as the quality of the knowledge utilized in decision-making. It also improves the implementation of the plans and diminishes the probability of conflicts. Conservation actions benefit from strengthening existent local conservation practices and ethics. Working with locals supports sustainability and might be the most long-lasting and effective way. (Scullion, Vogt, Winkler-Schor 2016, 295, 298, 303.) Also, tourism can benefit from local assets and at the same time help the local communities. With its bottom-up approach, community-led tourism can enhance the collective capacity, decision-making and self-awareness along with empowering and strengthening the communities. It can also reinforce participation of under-represented groups, such as indigenous people and women, and alter gender and power relations among different classes and ethnic groups, especially in areas with limited development options (Raftopoulos 2020, 143-145).

5.2 Additional income

When it comes to additional income, community-led conservation has both economic and social benefits that can create economic development for locals (Licona et al. 2011; Millner, Peñagaricano, Fernandez & Snook 2020). According to Puhakka, Salo and Sääksjärvi (2011, 1), globally most of the areas in urgent need of biodiversity conservation are also the key regions for tourism development. Sustainable forms of tourism, such as ecotourism, can create alternative livelihoods and economic incentives for communities to conserve the nature and protect valuable habitats. The additional income tourism might bring can, for example, change the hunting habits, as it makes it possible to buy alternative sources of protein instead of hunting. The additional income can also be used when developing waste management systems, recycling and composting. The compost soil can again be used as a fertilizer (Raftopoulos 2020, 151). Many traditional livelihoods, like potato harvest, are affected by climate change, and tourism can provide additional source of income alongside it. (Doughty 2016, 2195.)

As Raftopoulos (2020, 150) describes, adding economic value to conservation raises support for environmental protection, conservation of natural resources and environmental appreciation. It makes conserving the environment more valuable to the local community than destroying it. It can foster long-term ecological consciousness and address both development and conservation objectives especially in rural, unprotected areas. At its best, combination of conservation, education and tourism transforms the communities to live more sustainably. (Rasmussen 2019, 1381.)

According to Scullion et al. (2015, 304), Peruvian government has a low taxation rate on tourism, which has increased the possible profit margins in relation to ecotourism. This makes ecotourism a good opportunity for additional income especially in Peru. In addition, fair markets can support biodiversity conservation. Increased value of native varieties can work as an incentive to conserve them. (Velásquez-Milla, Casas, Torres-Guevara & Cruz-Soriano 2011, 18.)

5.3 Opportunities of community-led conservation according to the interviews

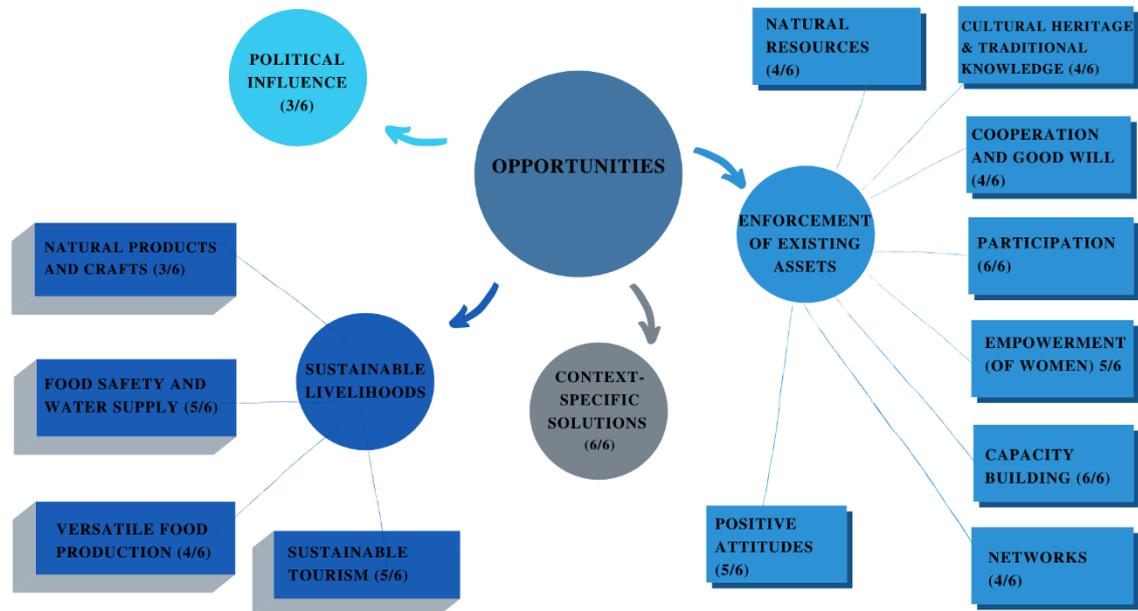


FIGURE 2. Opportunities of community-led conservation based on the interviews

In the literature, the local knowledge about the environment was emphasized. As demonstrated in the figure 2, four of the interviewees reinforced the assumption that conservation benefits from local insight. In two remaining interviewees the subject did not come up. According to the interviews, communities should lead and have ownership in conservation because their livelihood and wellbeing depend on the natural resources. Nature provides communities with basic commodities. The traditional ways maintain and strengthen sustainable use and protection of natural resources. Intact environment for example regulates water balance and microclimates and prevents extreme weather conditions.

Spiritual identities and world views of the indigenous peoples are intricately linked to environment. Environment is connected to their livelihood, economic situation, health, knowledge and cultural identity. Communities have protected nature for centuries or even millenniums. According to one interviewee, the international research community would take ages to gather such a substantial amount of information that traditional knowledge holds. However, climate change reduces the accuracy of the existing knowledge as the

nature is not acting like it used to. In any case, communities or indigenous people do not automatically have knowledge and may need more information. The assessment of the existing knowledge should be done in a respectful manner.

The attitudes of the local communities were seen as a challenge according to the literature review. Contrary to this, five interviewees mentioned local attitudes as a positive factor. The relationship between indigenous people and nature has traditionally been harmonious. People generally like nature and understand the importance of conservation. Children and youth are also motivated about conservation. If the conservation initiative comes from the community, they are naturally more willing to conserve. Village communities or indigenous people generally do not want to destroy their environment or sell their territory to outsiders.

According to the literature, building networks between communities and outside organizations adds to resilience. Four of the interviewees endorsed the idea of networks. Impacts on the environment and political influencing are stronger when doing together. Communities get tools, practices, experience and inspirations from each other. This helps them overcome their obstacles or challenges. There is no need to reinvent the wheel. One of the interviewees gave an example from a conservation project in Sub-Saharan Africa:

In our case, the village associations turned out to be an essential part of the empowerment of the local communities. Before they did not have any similar structure, where they would put their heads together to make decisions.

Two interviewees had also witnessed empowerment of women during a conservation project. Conservation may not always empower everyone in the community, but for example women's groups can give skills that help women to make money. This again makes them more independent. Empowerment of women reinforces the opportunities and courage to influence in decision-making, be it in the villages or even in a government level.

Findings from the literature review state that participation of the local communities is essential and also builds resilience against climate change. Participation was frequently mentioned also during the interviews. Conservation cannot be sustainable without involvement of the communities. In fact, community-led conservation is by nature participatory and enables region specific solutions. Conservation is more likely to succeed when

communities are the key actors with ownership and power in decision-making. It has to be done in their terms following their culture, reality and priorities. Leadership in conservation builds self-esteem and produces self-empowerment. Community-led conservation can also build capacities and strengthen the political power. This has an effect on all aspects of life besides conservation. Other assets arising from the interviews, were modern technology such as cell phones, internet and GPS. Even in rural areas and primitive conditions the locals may have them, which too can be deployed in the conservation.

As the figure 2 demonstrates, in addition to enforcement of existing assets in the community, community-led conservation can create sustainable livelihoods to the community members. This notion is in line with the literature review. As several of the interviewees mentioned, conservation has a direct effect on food safety and water supply in the community. It promotes more versatile food production and thus their own wellbeing. In addition to growing food for community's own use, enhanced food production brings additional income too through selling the products. Other sustainable livelihood mentioned in the interviews was making crafts and other natural products, such as soap.

In the literature review, tourism was mainly considered an opportunity, with some downsides. According to the interviews, tourism was seen as controversial issue. While the literature strongly supported ecotourism as a sustainable livelihood, five of the interviewees considered combining tourism and sustainability very challenging and one interviewee questioned if tourism, even ecotourism, can ever be totally sustainable.

However, the interviewees pointed out that with careful planning, clear rules and restrictions the negative impacts of tourism can be minimized. The local cultures and identities need to be protected and the profits have to go to the locals. One interviewee underlined that international tourism is not the only form of tourism. Instead, domestic travel is the main form of tourism in many places. She also highlighted that international tourism has its positive sides too and gave an example on National Parks now that covid-19 pandemic has put tourism on hold:

Many of the National Parks around the world, especially Africa's large parks, have functioned on the income brought by international tourism. The annual number of tourists and amount of income, it is now totally over. That is a huge risk now. People that are dependent on tourists now have to get

their income from somewhere else, for example by starting to farm again. There is a risk that crops spread to nature reserves and forests. Or that people start to poach animals to get food or to sell them. This is a big and serious threat also from conservation point of view.

The interviewee explained that local communities living near the parks get often some share of the entrance fees. They usually have also additional small businesses, like guide services, shops and kiosks for the tourists. Now that tourism is on hold, people's livelihoods are in danger. Therefore, tourism gets also support as an option for sustainable livelihood. While tourism inevitably has negative impacts on the environment, it also creates necessary resources to conserve the nature.

6 CHALLENGES OF COMMUNITY-LED CONSERVATION

One of the aims of the literature review was to find out what challenges there are related to community-led conservation. The findings showed distinct themes that recurred throughout the articles. As the table 4 below demonstrates, these themes were divided into following challenges: inequality, top-down approach, attitudes, contradictions between conservation and other interests, and challenges of tourism. Within each theme there are more detailed sub-themes. These are explained in more depth in this chapter.

TABLE 4. Challenges of community-led conservation according to literature



Similar to the previous chapter, the findings of the interviews are presented after the findings of the literature review. Top-down approach, inequality and contradictions came out also in the interviews. The biggest difference to literature review was that the interviewees highlighted the importance of land tenure rights in conservation and the difficulty of combining tourism with conservation.

6.1 Inequality

As the table 4 above shows, inequality is a challenge in community-led conservation. Community-led approach does not automatically lead to equality. Communities are not homogeneous and different actors in the community have different interests. As Millner et al. explain (2020, 4), the communities have different power, social and financial structures. For a favorable outcome the patterns of social exclusion need to be addressed, for example the position of the women. Conservation actions made without better understanding of the structures of the community may cause conflicts and worsen the existing social exclusion (Doughty 2016, 2187). Conservation benefits may apply only to small section of the community and empower already existing spokespeople. Conservation through ecotourism can benefit only the local elites instead of the whole community. As Raftopoulos (2020, 145, 154) states in her article, tourism has formed a new hierarchy and power structures, where residents of the community linked to tourism have benefited economically and socially and become those in charge of the decision-making.

Besides the inequality inside the community, the inequality between the community and other actors causes challenges. Decentralization of the policymaking from the government may reconfigure power relations without empowering locals. Instead, it can benefit the elites (Millner et al. 2020, 4). Often locals are seen as a problem instead of contributors to the solution. They are excluded from protected areas in order to achieve better environmental protection. This increases the risk for resource-related conflicts between the authorities of the protected area and the local communities (De Pourcq, Evert, Patrick & Léon-Sicard 2017, 1).

Additionally, the discrimination of the indigenous cultures changes customs, diet and ways to use natural resources. This risks the traditional agriculture, which in turn dangers the agrobiodiversity. A study by Velásquez-Milla et al. (2011, 18) found that traditional Andean agricultural management conserves more tuber varieties. Thus, the loss of traditional ways of agriculture reduces the farmer diversity. The lack of tenure rights hinders collective action in a local level. Alternatively, giving tenure rights to local communities helps to achieve forest conservation and gain social benefits. The tenure rights of the indigenous communities are being tackled by many active programs, but the process is slow and bureaucratic (Millner et al. 2020; Roucoux, Lawson & Baker 2017).

6.2 Top-down approach

Another challenge found in the literature review is the top-down approach. The top-down approach is closely related to the inequality, as the decision-making is then not equally made. The top-down approach does not give locals a change to influence. On the other hand, communities might not express their disapproval, because they fear the reduction of the benefits directed towards them (Doughty 2016, 2188). Conservation attempts that do not include locals are more likely to fail, because they contradict local interests. The involvement of the international actors can cause social conflict and deteriorate community control (Licona et al. 2011, 206-207).

According to Larson and Poudyal (2012, 923-924, 927) the success of the sustainable tourism in the rural Andes is due to the increased ownership and control of the local residents. Sustainable tourism has only limited success, when using top-down systems that rely on expert opinion rather than local knowledge. Contribution of the locals is essential for accomplishing long-term goals but focusing on centralized decision-making has been a hindrance for promoting community participation in tourism. Due to the history of authoritative government-led practices, the local communities may see the incentive-based conservation programs as an exercise of power and social control rather than participatory in nature (Kowler, Pratihast, Pérez Ojeda, Larson, Braun & Herold 2020, 15).

6.3 Attitudes

The communities and outside actors can have attitudes against conservation. In order for the community-led conservation to work, the attitudes of all actors need to support it. Community-based approaches tend to support short-term plans that rely excessively on international expertise (Millner et al. 2020, 4). The value of the local knowledge is not always appreciated. Developers of conservation projects oftentimes assume they have the superior knowledge and displace the local wisdom. Furthermore, the communities might already have experience in dealing with climate change. Acknowledging the local insight does not mean that conservation efforts should rely solely on locals. The local knowledge can be limited so there is also demand for expert interventions (Doughty 2016, 2188).

Conservation policies that lack the support of the local land-users will not succeed. They have to be compatible with local conditions to get locals' approval (Scullion et al. 2016, 298). One of the examples of this by Millner et al. (2020, 2) is how the disconnection of the local ways and national regulations inhibit long-term community forestry. Kowler et al. (2020, 1, 12) also talk about the importance of the community engagement in conservation. However, it can be challenging to get the communities involved in conservation, if it limits their livelihood. Benefits should therefore exceed the costs of participation.

According to Narloch, Pascual and Drucker (2012, 2096, 2104), conservation intervention where formal institutions are involved might affect the attitudes of the locals by altering already existing social norms favoring conservation. The payments for ecosystem services (PES), with which people are directly paid for conserving the nature, may likewise reduce the motivation for environmental protection and inhibit existing conservation attempts. Scullion et al. (2016, 303) reinforce this concern in their article concluding that PES may unintentionally influence local land-user motivations for conservation and perceptions of ecosystem value.

6.4 Contradiction between conservation and other interests

Sometimes conservation conflicts with other interests. According to Scullion et al. (2016, 295-296, 302-303), it is challenging to find sustainable solutions when economic development conflicts with conservation efforts. The contradiction between local socio-environmental conditions and activities and policies hamper the success e.g. in cases where more lucrative uses of land compete with forest conservation. The attitudes of the local land-users are not anti-environmental rather their actions are due to economic circumstances. PES contracts have been suggested as one of the incentives for conservation, but with its current rates it is not a competitive alternative to gold mining and other land-uses. And even if a landowner would want to participate in PES programs, the existing agreements with miners may prevent it. In his article, Rasmussen (2019, 1371-1372) points out how, as the climate change continues, it affects conservation priorities as well as raises concerns for local livelihoods.

In cases where the livelihood of the people relies on the forest, the lack of alternative means of getting wood or different agricultural practices forces people to continue ecosystem-degrading practices. Even when there are alternative sources of livelihood, they might be only complementary and do not replace the degrading activities. There has also been criticism of community conservation saying that it is not cost-effective. (Cranford & Mourato 2011, 89-90). For instance, the community forestry is not always economically or ecologically successful (Millner et al. 2020, 1).

Modern ways of farming and taking care of livestock often conflicts with conservation because they usually favor a narrow spectrum of agricultural varieties. This endangers the genetic resources' diversity, as well as jeopardizes the indigenous culture and its traditional techniques (Velásquez-Milla et al. 2011, 9). The community-led conservation has helped to create nature reserves managed by indigenous peoples. However, these self-managed indigenous areas can in parts threaten the conservation of the wildlife because the human accessibility has increased hunting on wildlife (Licona et al. 2011, 207).

The illegal activities in Peru are a threat to conservation. There is a danger of armed conflict in the areas where illicit cash crops like coca are grown. These coca-related conflicts can risk the success of conservation efforts. There are different mechanisms in Peru that help the rural communities to found local conservation areas for ecotourism. The fear of the conflicts also affects the willingness to invest in tourism in the area thus affecting the livelihoods of the locals (Puhakka et al. 2011, 12-13). The inadequate coordination between agencies together with corruption and scarce funding make controlling of the illegal activities in the buffer zones of the Amazon challenging. Supervising illicit activities demands strengthening local officials and community-based institutions (Weisse & Naughton-Treves 2016, 309).

6.5 Challenges with tourism

Ecotourism can help to conserve the environment and give livelihood opportunities but there are disadvantages as well. Doughty (2016, 2195) argues that the economic gains of ecotourism are limited and can deteriorate reciprocity or increase social conflicts. Raftopoulos (2020, 143, 145, 152) also talks about effects on social relationships. The

competition of tourism revenues and unequal distribution of benefits disrupt social reciprocity and community solidarity. Tourism can produce structural violence to humans and nature and has increased conflicts about land use. Furthermore, it can be too fixated in development of commerce, thus failing to focus on empowerment and social justice.

Puhakka et al. (2011, 13) reinforce the findings of the above-mentioned researchers. The unevenly distributed revenues of tourism including the transfer of revenues away from the local economy cause tension and decreases the motivation to preserve tourist sites. Moreover, the hope of gaining tourism revenues can attract excessive number of entrepreneurs creating pressure to an area and inspiring greenwashing, giving a false impression of the environmental-friendliness of the services.

According to some reports the ecotourism has contributed substantially to conservation while others report how it can deteriorate wildlife. There is a contradiction between economic growth and limited natural resources. If the nature is valued because of its economic value, the tourism products will lose financial support when their demand declines. This threatens long-term conservation strategies because environmental protection tends to have short life expectancy after external resources cease to exist. (Raftopoulos 2020, 143, 145.)

In addition, Puhakka et al. (2011, 13) mention how tourism can negatively affect environment through littering and by damaging nature. Larson and Poudyal (2012, 922) give an individual example of how ecotourism can work for the disadvantage of the nature. Inca Trail is a popular path to Machu Picchu taking 3-4 days to walk. This scenic path is an authentic and ecologically friendly way to reach the historic site. But the eco-travelers taking the Inca Trail contribute to the degradation of the path because the Inca Trail cannot accommodate the number of visitors it receives.

6.6 Challenges of community-led conservation according to the interviews

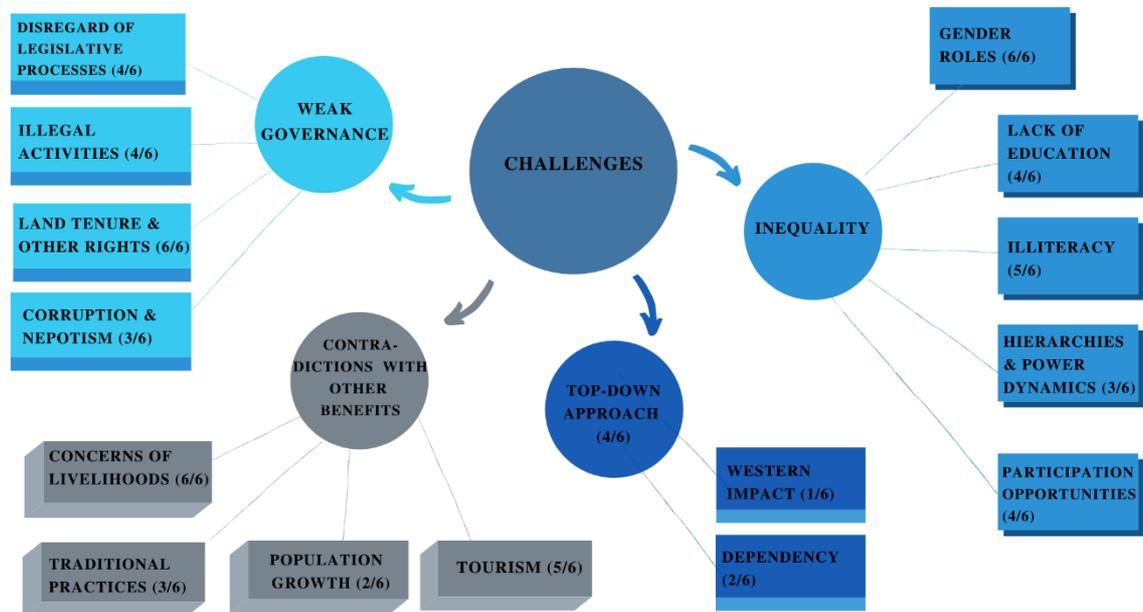


FIGURE 3. Challenges of community-led conservation based on the interviews

The interviews brought out challenges that complicate community-led conversation. The main challenges found were inequality, weak governance, top-down approach and contradictions with other benefits. Figure 3 above demonstrates these challenges in more detail and gives information of how often each of the finding occurred during the interviews.

The findings from the literature review indicate that there are challenges in the equality inside communities and between communities and other actors. As the figure 3 above demonstrates, the interviews support this notion. Participatory approach to conservation can improve equality. However, one of the interviewees points out the following:

Local communities may also have power politics or even local mafias or anything. Local level does not guarantee democracy. It can be very undemocratic... Problems in administration and decision-making are not limited to higher levels. They run through society, everywhere people are involved.

Communities are not homogenous and can have social and economic inequalities. There can be hierarchies and the strongest may dominate. Some may only pursue their own

interests and there can be corruption or nepotism. In many places, the men are in the decisive position and women's literacy rate is often lower than that of men. Illiteracy in general hampers the ability to participate in the public discourse. Contradicting interests may hinder participation. People may also be excluded because of their disabilities.

Conservation can also cause inequality in a marriage or inside the village. Additionally, conservation projects might bring educational opportunities only for some. Literature review findings also indicate that conservation may only benefit part of the community. However, one interviewee says that she has never seen inequality problems in conservation initiated by local communities. Project led by external actors are more likely to have such challenges. Another interviewee, on the contrary, thinks that outside control is needed to ensure equality in situations where the strongest dominate.

According to the literature, tenure rights are important in community-led conservation. Findings from the interview emphasize this importance even more. International legislation calls for states to give tenure rights to indigenous people. However, it depends on the country whether these rights are granted or not. One of the interviewees even says that tenure rights and ownership are more important than community-led approach. It is not enough that a certain area is in the possession of the community. The ownership needs to be clear. Decision-makers do not always execute the legislative processes needed. For example, in some places in South America communities often lack tenure rights and even if the rights are on paper, communities still have no access to these rights. Securing of tenure rights through law enforcement does not work.

Lack of democracy enables violence and illegal activities that can disrupt tenure, resource and human rights of the communities. Many countries have several administrative structures from national to regional bodies that affect how grassroot communities are given justice and rights. For example, if a district level official has their own interests regarding natural resources, there can be corruption and communities may be seen as enemies. Furthermore, the political and geographical marginalization of the communities causes challenges. A lack of mutual language can cause difficulties and transport from distant areas can be problematic. Communities are often very alone and poor connections complicate communications. They lack information and networks to better ensure their rights.

An interesting perspective regarding community participation was brought up during one interview. The interviewee stated that governments might also be in favor of community-led conservation. Giving the task to the communities leaves them with less responsibility. Other interviewee gives a differing example from a South American country, where the government is against conservation. Conservation there can even be dangerous. Dialogue between different actors is needed to enable sustainability and conservation.

Four of the interviewees talked about the top-down approach. The risk of top-down approach is especially present in development context. If the idea, funding and initiative for conservation comes from the top-down it does not create ownership in the communities. When local knowledge, culture and needs are not addressed, the projects are more likely to fail in the long term. One interviewee underlines the advantages of the local initiative and the disadvantages of the outside-led initiatives in a following way:

It affects numerous aspects besides just environmental outcomes... When local communities are given full rights to self-determination and ownership of the process, they become key actors rather than mere recipients of some externally defined and driven development project, which is actually very disempowering and just renders communities to easily become passive and dependent on external initiatives, financing and ideas.

Top-down approach to conservation creates dependency and increase the risk for political manipulation. Sustainability is jeopardized if external support is withdrawn. To avoid this the support should be concentrated in helping communities to help themselves. Communication between communities and outsiders can be challenging, especially in situations where the goal is to change community's old habits of using the nature reserve. This requires good alternative livelihood options. The findings about top-down approach from the literature are in line with the findings of the interviews.

The data from the literature review suggest that the attitudes of the locals can be a hindrance to sustainable conservation, and it is challenging to get the communities involved in conservation if it limits their livelihood. Interviewees stated that if there are negative attitudes, it is likely due to lack of knowledge or the fear it might affect livelihoods. People in general understand the importance of conservation but it might be difficult to change old habits. Additionally, burdensome living conditions make it difficult to act for the good of the environment, as food is more important. The climate change can also

change attitudes over time. Bad experiences with previous conservation projects may reduce willingness to participate.

According to one of the interviewees, the most important factor influencing the will to conserve in a negative way is the outside initiative. Communities are more likely doubtful or uncertain about actions that do not come from their own interests. They may also feel skeptical or angry when westerners tell them to conserve, when they themselves are destroying the environment. According to the same interviewee, it is unethical and degrading as well as contradictory. The concept of conservation is artificial and created upon western culture, which has lost its connection to nature. The more important question to reflect on is how to sustain the relationship that the local communities and indigenous people already have with the nature.

Findings from the literature review suggest that conservation often contradicts with other interests such as livelihoods. Interview findings confirm this and state that sustainable conservation should always include livelihood perspective. Conservation can hinder the livelihood of others but promote the livelihood of others. For example, sustainability is a necessity for indigenous peoples' livelihood but livestock, palm oil or soy farmers have different interests. Interviewees give many examples of destructive practices e.g. illegal hunting or gold mining, fire-fallow cultivation, turning wetlands into rice fields, the use of the forest for things like firewood or illegal wood felling. Better livelihood practices are needed, but restricting traditional customs is challenging. Unsustainable population growth is also connected to environmental challenges.

One of the interviewees talks about the challenges with western influence. Globalization and technology have reached even the most remote corners of the earth. Following western development can cause loss of cultural identity, traditional knowledge and livelihood methods in the communities. As a result, they become poor and are forced to use natural resources in an unsustainable way. Especially the young generation is tempted to follow western behavior. Consumerism, including clothing, electricity, technology, such as cell phones, and new eating habits have direct impact on the environment. These new habits also increase the costs of living and demand bigger incomes.

Ecotourism can have many benefits as the literature review shows. Literature findings also identify many detriments including social issues, increased risk for conflicts and

altering the attitudes of the locals. Other disadvantages mentioned in the literature are deterioration of wildlife and disturbance to nature. Five of the interviewees thought that it is challenging to combine travelling and conservation. Tourism itself, especially flying, is harmful for environment and can deteriorate local environment. Choices made by individual tourists and package tour operators affect sustainability. Mass tourism demands trade-offs with environment. And if all the tourists would engage in sustainable tourism, would it be sustainable anymore?

Ecotourism should be ecologically sustainable from transportation to food and should not increase waste. One of the interviewees tells having never seen a project that would fulfill these criteria. There usually are no sustainable options, therefore tourism is bound to burden the environment. She adds that tourism can only be sustainable if it is run by the community. There can be collaboration, but the community must lead the project to avoid dependency on external actors.

According to the interviews the impact on the culture and ethical questions are important. Tourism have to be designed to work in the terms of the local communities so that they do not lose their integrity, culture and identity in the process. Additionally, working in ecotourism can take time from traditional livelihoods. This can increase the loss of traditional knowledge and skills. If culture changes rapidly, so changes the relationship with the nature.

7 WAYS TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY-LED CONSERVATION

When analyzing the ways to promote community-led conservation, four main methods were found from the literature. As the table 5 below illustrates, these methods were environmental education and capacity building, participation, economic incentives and structural changes. Each of them has its own focus, but the measures have interconnections and work best when used together. For example, environmental education and capacity building in the communities are not enough, if the locals are not involved in decision-making processes and participate actively in the initiation and implementation of the conservation projects. Also, economic incentives do not work well without some structural changes that would better guarantee that the benefits do not end up only to the hands of few in the communities.

TABLE 5. Ways to promote community-led conservation according to the literature



As done also in the previous chapters, after presenting the findings of the literature review in more detail, the interview findings are introduced. For the most part the findings are similar in both forms of the research data.

7.1 Environmental education and capacity building

As Cranford and Mourato (2011, 96) state, cognitive interventions, such as education and social influences, can lead to behavioral change. Engaging community leaders to promote conservation and making harmful environmental practices unacceptable can change the way community members behave. Recognizing the importance of the conservation efforts can have a significant impact on the motivation of community members. Social and cultural dimensions can also act as an important incentive in community-led conservation (Kowler et al. 2020; Thomas, Reed & Clifton 2018).

According to Caitlyn Doughty (2016, 2194), raising awareness about the benefits of a healthy environment tend to increase communities' willingness to conserve the environment. This in turn has a positive impact on their livelihoods through ecosystem services, like saving water and contributing to nutrient-rich soils. Also, the awareness of the surrounding environment and for example climate change effects can strengthen community's resilience and reduce its vulnerability. The improved ability to observe helps the community in adapting to environmental changes. Therefore, environmental education helps to build more sustainable and resilient communities.

Studies show that experience with forests, for example, increases one's value of them (Cranford & Mourato 2011, 95). Andean culture typically preserves agrobiodiversity in its farming habits. Because of this, transforming the role of formal education in the area into reinforcing traditional culture could also promote conservation practices (Velásquez-Milla et al. 2011, 19). However, to make the locals and visitors truly value the environment and become active in its protection, it is important that environmental education communicates the science behind the conservation (Rasmussen 2018, 1375). It is important to strengthen the existing conservation habits, give technical knowledge, build capacity and acquire resources. This helps to implement sustainable farming, forest conservation and development (Scullion et al. 2016, 299).

7.2 Economic incentives

Community-led conservation can be promoted also through economic incentives. As Cranford and Mourato (2011, 96) state, just as cognitive interventions also financial-economic stimuli can lead to behavioral change. Alternative job opportunities and additional income can act as a driver to conservation (Scullion et al. 2015, 303). For example, sustainable forms of tourism and ecotourism can provide alternative livelihoods and incentives for communities to protect environment and valuable habitats and wildlife (Raftopoulos 2020; Dinerstein et al 2013; Puhakka et al 2011).

Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) is an incentive-based conservation intervention where people are directly paid for conserving the nature, either by direct cash or by other indirect benefits. According to Cranford and Mourato (2011, 89-97), PES is an effective mechanism especially in community conservation and in its cognitive and structural interventions supporting the uptake of new behaviors and attitudes. Later on, it could be used to augment new conservationist behavior with more explicit market-based mechanisms, such as carbon credits and price premiums on green commodities.

However, there is research evidence that PES-like reward systems have also limitations. According to Narloch et al. (2012, 2103-2105), individual rewards seem to increase conservation efforts more than collective rewards. Collective rewards can trigger free-riding behavior and thus undermine pro-social norms in the community. Because of this, collective PES-like rewards may do more harm than good within certain social contexts, and thus using them has to be carefully considered and planned.

7.3 Participation

According to several studies, participation is an important part of promoting community-led conservation. Involving local stakeholders into decision-making processes and supporting development projects that community members want to pursue themselves, promotes community-led conservation practices. It is essential to use local processes when deciding how the conservation projects occur. Direct local participation in the

implementation of activities throughout the projects is also important. (Millner et al. 2020; Doughty 2016; Roucoux et al 2017.)

As Puhakka et al. (2011, 12-13) describe, there are various mechanisms in Peru allowing different actors like rural communities, individuals, NGOs or consortia between them to initiate local conservation areas based on tourism activities. On public land, permits can be leased for both conservation and ecotourism. On the private or communal lands, conservation can be done through private conservation areas or conservation easement. Conservation easement is relatively new mechanism in Peru and was initiated in 2005, but it has been used in other Latin American countries for longer. It is a legal agreement between landowners or a landowner and the state, where a landowner voluntarily restricts the land use in their territory to protect its conservation values. This kind of mechanisms should be promoted, because through their active participation they have potential for both conservation and empowerment of local communities.

7.4 Structural changes

As governments' capacities regarding conservation are often limited, community-based actions are also needed (Weisse & Naughton-Treves 2016, 306). Still, structural changes in governmental policies and processes are necessary when promoting community-led conservation. For a start, incentives like fuel subsidies should be removed, as they encourage unsustainable practices, such as excessive tillage (Thomas et al 2018). Regulations and enforcement are important factors in conservation because they can make behavioral change. By setting prohibitions on the use of forests or land, more environmental-friendly practices could be promoted in communities. (Cranford & Mourato 2011, 94)

Equality is an important factor in promoting community-led conservation. Profound societal inequalities in relation to, for example, water availability, land tenure rights and distribution of tourism revenue affect the ability and motivation of communities to conserve the environment (Rasmussen 2018; Puhakka et al. 2011). Because of this, promoting equality and democratic processes also promotes conservation. The mechanisms enabling conservation are related to many politically sensitive issues, such as indigenous

rights. Because of this, a profound attention of local context is always required. Depending on the context, conservation projects could be used by local communities to support land tenure claims or the stance of legitimately established communities. (Puhakka et al. 2011, 13.) Also, Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) program can strengthen tenure rights and help to keep unwanted miners off the land and thus contribute to the conservation of the environment (Scullion et al. 2015, 302).

As Puhakka et al. (2011, 12) state, it is critical to find synergies between conservation goals and other local level development initiatives to achieve both short-term and long-term results. Public policies are valuable in designing the conservation plans and strategic actions. To develop such policies, contributions and support from different sectors of Peruvian society, such as farmers, NGOs and scientists, are needed. (Velásquez-Milla et al. 2011, 19.)

7.5 Measures according to the interviews

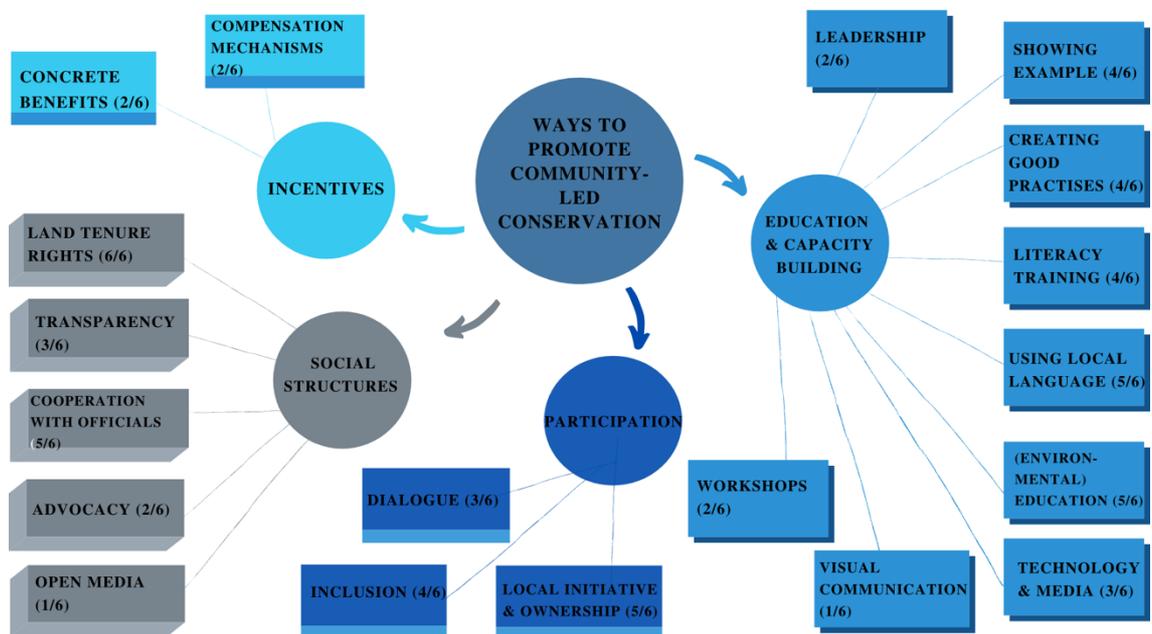


FIGURE 4. Ways to promote community-led conservation based on the interviews

When it comes to measures promoting community-led conservation, the interviews gave support to many of the findings of the literature review. The role of environmental

education, local participation and different kinds of incentives were brought up and the need for just and democratic social structures was emphasized. However, also new aspects were brought into discussion.

Environmental education was considered important by most of the interviewees, but the importance of education in general was emphasized. Four of the interviewees brought up the often high illiteracy rates in the Global South and the significance of literacy training. Women's ability to read is often at a lower level than men's literacy. Increasing literacy and education in general builds one's capacity significantly and increases the ability to participate in wide range of societal activities. Because of this, some of the environmental projects, where the interviewees were involved in, included literacy training. This strengthened the local ownership and lead, as more people could participate. One of the interviewees gave an example from Sub-Saharan Africa:

Women's position strengthened through our project, even though it was not the goal in the beginning, like the conservation and diversification of livelihoods was. Women supported each other a lot... In the cooperative of our project, women from different villages cooperated. Their networks grew stronger... First there were community gardens, literacy trainings and business trainings. Then a cooperative was formed, which women now manage.

Like the example demonstrates, all kind of education promotes community-led action, which is the foundation also for community-led conservation. Environmental education specifically increases knowledge in environmental issues and can help to create more environmental-friendly habits in the community.

As the figure 4 demonstrates, education in communities is not only formal education. It can also be informal communication and action, like showing example and creating good practices within the community. Two of the interviewees mentioned good leadership as a crucial aspect, as people tend to follow the lead of strong and charismatic persons. A good leader can have a significant impact in adapting new sustainable habits into community's everyday life. Five of the interviewees also underlined the importance of using local language in all communication, as not everybody speaks official languages. It is also advisable to avoid difficult terminology. One interviewee recommended also visual communication in areas where illiteracy is common. With the help of technology and different sources of media lot of people can be reached, as radio, television and smart phones are

nowadays common even in remote areas. Educating children in environmental issues was seen especially important, as they carry the information into their homes, and thus educate the whole community.

In addition to educational aspects and participation in general, the local initiative and ownership was pointed out in most of the interviews. One of the interviewees stressed the psychological and political significance of the local initiative. She underlined the difference between community-led conservation projects, where the idea and the initiative come from the community and the initiatives where they come from outside, but the lead of the project is given to the community. The second scenario is better than entirely external-led initiatives, but the success and sustainability of the initiatives are far more probable in the first scenario. If the idea and initiative of the project come from the community and are based on community's own priorities, the community members become active and self-empowered. However, three other interviewees pointed out that community-led project does not automatically lead to success, as communities can be very undemocratic and have challenges in their hierarchies and power dynamics – even mafias within the community. There is a risk that the strongest will dominate in the decision-making. Because of this, external support and monitoring was seen necessary even if the project or initiative is led by the community. Supporting open dialogue and inclusive ways of working in the community can be the added value of external actors in community-led initiatives.

Like the figure 4 demonstrates, according to interviewees community-led conservation can be promoted through well-functioning social structures. This notion is in line with the literature review. All of the interviewees mentioned land tenure rights in their interviews. If the community does not have the rights to the land and natural resources in it, the livelihoods and sustainable use of the resources cannot be protected. One of the interviewees highlighted:

Conservation should be linked to the rights of the community, but often they do not have them. And even if they did have them on paper, they often cannot access these rights... If they could use these rights, they could live by their traditional ways of thinking, which sustain and strengthen the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources. This way they could also get their livelihoods in a way they want. Conservation should enable the communities to live in a way that enhances and protects their subsistence.

According to the interviews, advocacy and open media can be efficient tools in promoting transparent processes and good governance, which are fundamental factors in securing land tenure and other rights. Without functioning social structures community-led conservation is challenging. Cooperation with the officials is important.

When it comes to incentives in promoting community-led conservation, two of the interviewees brought up the importance of concrete, short-term incentives. The value of conservation has to be shown somehow to the community, if it restricts their traditional practices and livelihoods. Different kind of compensation mechanisms, like PES or climate offset schemes, are one option. As one of the interviewees pointed out, some communities face challenges with wild animals. Big animals, such as rhinos and elephants, might trample crops and predators attack cattle, which has a direct effect on livelihoods of the people. Restricting the hunting of this kind of wild animals, including endangered species, might be difficult to justify to the people whose livelihoods are affected. Establishing compensation mechanisms to overcome the negative impacts could be one solution.

8 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the thesis was to find answers to what opportunities and challenges there are related to community-led conservation and in what ways can community-led conservation be promoted. The information gathered in the research would be used for integrating environmental thinking into the current activities of the World Vision Peru and in the planning processes of their future work.

The basis of the research was built on the findings of the literature review. The interviews reinforced the findings in many aspects, which supports the reliability of the results. Nevertheless, the method of drafting the questions must be considered. Drafting the questions based on the findings of the literature review might have led the interviews to the same direction as already obtained findings. Still, we argue that the formulation of the questions left space for individual thinking and thus were open enough to enable differing views.

Further benefit of the interviews was that they helped to structure the information and comprehend the material as a whole. Interview findings gave more emphasis on the tenure rights, the importance of a bottom-up approach, the local initiative and the positive attitudes of the locals towards the environment than the articles. On the other hand, the interviews gave a more skeptical view on tourism than the literature review. The literature review concentrated more on the financial incentives, which were only mentioned by two of the interviewees. All in all, the research gave plenty of relevant information. This chapter combines the main findings from the interviews and the literature review.

As a conclusion, community-led conservation is a complex issue with many dimensions. To truly understand the essence of it, one has to pay attention to the formulation of the term, which already underlines the community's role as a leader of the action. Community-led conservation is by nature participatory.

An important aspect in community-led conservation is to recognize how Western conservation discourse differs from the one in Global South. As one of the interviewees pointed out, conservation is a Western concept. It is defined by people who have lost their connection with the nature. For example, in Latin America 8% of population are indigenous

people (De Dios 2020). Their spiritual identities and world views are often intricately linked to environment. Environment gives communities their livelihood and their existence and wellbeing depend on the natural resources. Still, local knowledge, culture and needs are not always addressed in conservation projects. Top-down approach to conservation is disempowering and creates dependency, whereas participation and inclusive approach creates ownership within the community by building capacities and strengthening the political power of individuals. Conservation initiatives based on community's own priorities motivate communities to be active actors, instead of passive recipients.

The developers of conservation projects often assume they have superior knowledge over local wisdom. However, local communities have substantial amount of knowledge. Their traditional ways maintain and strengthen the sustainable use and protection of natural resources. Many communities have also experience in coping with climate change. That is why the emphasis should be in helping communities to help themselves while maintaining the relationship they already have with the nature. Nevertheless, local ownership alone does not guarantee democracy. For a favorable outcome the patterns of social exclusion, such as discrimination because of gender or disabilities, need to be addressed. External actors can add value to conservation initiatives by supporting open dialogue and inclusive ways of working in the community.

Other relevant factors in community-led conservation are equality and democratic, inclusive processes. Political and geographical marginalization of the communities and weak governance are common challenges. Discrimination of the indigenous cultures changes customs, diet and ways of using natural resources. Remote communities often lack information and have poor connections and networks to ensure their own rights. This reinforces the existing unequal structures. Therefore, increasing literacy and education builds capacity and increases the ability to participate in the society. All kind of education contributes to community-led conservation, while environmental education specifically increases knowledge on environmental issues and can help to create more environmental-friendly habits in the community.

Another important issue in community-led conservation is the land tenure rights. The importance of the tenure rights is especially emphasized by the interviewees. International legislation calls for states to give tenure rights to indigenous people. However, it depends

on the country whether these rights are granted or not. If a community does not have rights to the land and natural resources surrounding them, livelihoods and sustainable use of the resources cannot be assured. The lack of tenure rights also hinders collective action. Advocacy and open media can be efficient tools in promoting transparent processes and good governance, which are fundamental factors in securing land tenure and other rights.

When it comes to promoting community-led conservation, good leadership in the community is important. People tend to follow strong and charismatic leaders. A good leader can have a significant impact when adapting new, more environmental-friendly habits. Inclusion and democracy are important in community leadership. Thus, the leadership style should be done in a participatory manner. Cooperation in a local, regional and international level and building networks with outside organizations is also important, because it promotes collective action and strengthens resilience of the communities. Networks between communities add to this resilience and reduce risks by providing tools, exchanging good practices, experiences and inspirations from each other.

Sustainable conservation should always include livelihood perspective, because contradiction between conservation and livelihood and economic development are the main factors preventing people from participating in conservation. It is important to remember that long-term conservation goals are not enough if daily livelihoods are not assured. Communities need short-term benefits as well. Luckily, both literature and interviews indicate that community-led conservation can create sustainable livelihoods to community members. Alternative job opportunities and additional income, for example via ecotourism, can act as a driver to conservation. Establishing compensation mechanisms could be one solution in situations, where conservation actions have negative impacts on people's livelihood.

Measures to promote community-led conservation include economic incentives like Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) or climate offset schemes. PES is an effective mechanism especially in community conservation and can support the uptake of new behaviors and attitudes. It can also strengthen tenure rights and help to keep distractions, like unwanted miners, off the land and thus contributes to the conservation of the environment. However, PES-like reward systems have also limitations. At its current rates PES is not a competitive alternative to gold mining and other land-uses. Additionally, individual

rewards seem to increase conservation efforts more than collective rewards. PES may unintentionally influence local land-user motivations for conservation and perceptions of ecosystem value.

The attitudes of the locals affect the outcome of conservation. Conservation should be compatible with local conditions to get locals' approval. Preferably the initiative should come from the community. People, including children and youth, generally appreciate nature and understand the importance of conservation. Village communities or indigenous people do not want to destroy their environment, but burdensome living conditions sometimes make it difficult to act for the good of the environment. If there are negative attitudes, it is likely due to lack of knowledge or the fear it might affect livelihoods.

When it comes to tourism, practicing it in a sustainable way can be challenging. Tourism always burdens environment and economic growth contradicts with limited natural resources. If the nature is valued because of its economic value, the tourism will lose financial support when their demand declines. Economic gains of ecotourism can deteriorate reciprocity or increase social conflicts. Transfer of revenues away from the local economy decreases the motivation to preserve tourist sites. Tourism can also attract excessive number of entrepreneurs to an area and inspire greenwashing. However, community-led tourism can enhance sustainability, collective capacity and empower communities. It can create alternative livelihoods and reinforce participation of under-represented groups and alter power relations. However, tourism has to be designed to work in the terms of the local communities, so that communities do not lose their integrity, culture and identity in the process. Additional income gained from tourism can be used for developing e.g. waste management systems, recycling and composting. On the other hand, ecotourism also takes time from traditional livelihoods. This can increase the loss of traditional knowledge and skills.

As a conclusion, according to the literature and interviews community-led conservation brings benefits to communities especially by enforcing existing assets and by creating additional income and livelihood opportunities. Through conservation, communities can become more competent and resilient in many ways. Therefore, it can be stated that community-led conservation can have a positive impact on communities themselves, not only

on the environment surrounding them. However, it is important to acknowledge its limitations and challenges.

9 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, the main findings of the research are reflected to the Peruvian context and to the current goals and activities of World Vision in Ayacucho. Based on them, some recommendations are given to World Vision. The aim of the recommendations is to give practical proposals how to integrate environmental aspects into their activities without major financial contributions.

When reflecting how to promote community-led conservation in Ayacucho, it is utmost important to consider the local context first. At the moment, World Vision's Renacer program in Ayacucho focuses on improving the learning outcomes of children and youth. Current focus of the work is in advocacy and strengthening the participation of children and youth in schools and student unions, in local decision-making and in local government's budget meetings. The communities' own development plans have also been promoted. The program has also included work with the region's health authorities to help health care of children and youth. In addition, efforts have been made to identify and eliminate harmful practices and perceptions about children that the parents may have. (World Vision Suomi. Näin autamme Renacerissa.)

Current focus of the World Vision Peru's work in Renacer does not include environmental aspects even though the lack and need for consistent habits of conservation is acknowledged by the local representatives of the organization. Like stated in the chapter 2.3 *Environmental issues in Peru*, the modern industries, urbanization and deforestation are threatening the rich ecosystems in Peru. This urges to add environmental issues as a cross-cutting theme into all development schemes. This is in line with World Vision International's global guidelines to include conservation as a cross-cutting theme in all development programs (Merja Tikkanen-Vilagi, personal communication, November 21, 2020). Additionally, Peru is committed to the Sustainable Development Goals and has, according to their own Strategic National Development Plan, people and planet as its specific development objective. The success of the goals requires implementing sustainable practices and conservation also in local level processes and planning. Therefore, World Vision could contribute to Peru's commitment by integrating the SDGs more as a guiding framework into their work. Cooperation with the local government could be one option to

increase financial support for the activities. Also, we argue that the communities in the area and their current focus of the work would benefit from integrating conservation into the program.

One of the current goals of the regional development program is to improve child protection and learning outcomes of the children and youth. (World Vision Suomi. Näin autamme Renacerissa.) As World Health Organization argues, poor nutrition, recurring infections and inadequate psychosocial stimulation cause stunting, which is also linked to poor educational performance. Stunting has far-reaching effects into adulthood. These effects include low wages, lost productivity and increased risk of nutrition-related chronic diseases. Stunting can begin already in the womb, so the nutrition of the pregnant women is also important. (World Health Organization. Stunting in a nutshell.) Many children in the remote Andean villages are malnourished, anemic and suffer from diarrhea (World Vision Suomi. Renacer aluekehitysohjelman). This is why food security is essential part of child's development and learning. It is also an investment in the future. According to our research, conservation improves food security, water supply and versatile food production in the communities. Even though health and alimentation are not the current focus of the work in Ayacucho, it would be advisable for the World Vision Peru to integrate conservation into their work in the communities, as enhanced alimentation supports the wellbeing and learning outcomes of the children and youth. Additionally, as the findings of our study show, community-led conservation can create new income possibilities through sustainable livelihood opportunities, such as ecotourism. While enhancing livelihoods is not the current focus of the work in the area, improved livelihoods and additional income obtained through conservation could help local parents to provide for their children and support the achievement of World Vision's other goals in relation to wellbeing of children.

World Vision's program in Renacer aims to enhance participation, organizational skills and capacity building in the communities, focusing specifically on youth and their entrepreneurial skills (World Vision Suomi. Näin autamme Renacerissa). According to the findings of the literature review and the interviews, participation, organizational skills and capacity building are all important parts of successful community-led conservation, thus the activities of the World Vision already help to build a foundation for conservation. As the research shows, the initiative for successful conservation has to come from the

community. Environmental education can raise awareness on environmental issues and give practical examples of how to tackle them. This can wake the desire to work for the benefit of the surrounding environment. Adding environmental education in the activities of the World Vision could be useful.

In the implementation process, it is important to plan the environmental education in a respectful way that strengthens the traditional practices of the local communities. In the context of Ayacucho, it is essential to use Quechuan language in the education, as it is the mother tongue of the majority of people. Additionally, it could be valuable to have non-written material suitable for those who cannot read, because many of the adults in the area have only studied for a few years and are sometimes even illiterate (World Vision Suomi. Renacer aluekehitysohjelman). Like the interviewees pointed out, the education in general is beneficial, since it enables participation in all kinds of activities in the society. Ability to read also makes it possible to get to information about important issues, such as health, environment or tenure and human rights. It can also increase livelihood opportunities.

World Vision's work in increasing the entrepreneurial skills of the local youth in Ayacucho is a vital aspect of the empowerment and independency of the young Peruvians. By integrating environmental education and sustainability into the trainings, sustainable livelihoods could be created. When guiding the youth, alternative livelihood opportunities for degrading practices should be encouraged and environmental-friendly values promoted even if youth's interests would be in professions that are not directly linked to the environment. According to Tikkanen-Vilagi (Personal communication, November 21, 2020), youth's interests in the area typically include engineering, accounting and law. In our opinion, youth could be encouraged to consider environmental aspects in those fields. When it comes to engineering for example, World Vision could support the youth to find ways to practice engineering in a manner that does not harm the nature or even helps to conserve the environment. New innovations and businesses can have a fundamental role in addressing the environmental issues and climate change. Focusing on supporting careers that youth are interested in while educating them about environmental issues could wake youth's desire to work for the benefit of the surrounding environment in one way or another. This approach would also help World Vision Peru to avoid top-down structures and support them to operate on the terms of the youth. When the young gain

environmental knowledge and learn new practices, they can teach them forward to their families and the community as a whole.

As important as integrating conservation to World Vision's activities is, the impact of social structures should not be overlooked. Social inequality and the motives of the different levels of society, such as state and local administrative bodies, affect conservation opportunities. The responsibility for the wellbeing of the environment should not be born only by communities or the organizations working with the communities. Like the findings of the research show, the public policies are valuable in designing the conservation plans and strategic actions. Contributions and support from different sectors of Peruvian society are needed. In this the World Vision can partake in. However, conservation and the sustainable use of the natural resources is a global matter and cannot be dependent only on the individual choices. Peru is committed to international environmental policies, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the state must be the primary duty-bearer in integrating sustainability into its decision-making. As Berkes (2007, 1-6) states, community-led conservation can complement the state-managed conservation, but the role of communities in conservation efforts should not be overemphasized. With this in mind, we argue that principally, community-led conservation should be looked at as an opportunity and moral responsibility of communities more than an actual obligation. Its most significant value is raising awareness on environmental issues and its many benefits for the communities themselves.

10 ETHICAL ISSUES AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Whenever doing research, ethical issues need to be considered. In the following chapter, the general ethical issues and the specific ethical questions related to this research are discussed. After the ethical reflection, some possibilities of future research in relation to the subject are introduced.

In qualitative research the ethical focus should be in how people are treated. Principles that guide the research are minimizing harm, respecting people's autonomy and preserving their privacy. Serious harm, such as psychological or material damage, damage to reputation or damage to a project to which people belong to, can be caused during the research. This risk has to be acknowledged when planning the research. The sensitivity of the research topic and vulnerability of the participants affect the risk of doing harm. (Leavy 2014, 62 – 65.)

In this thesis, first part of the data was collected through a literature review. This is secondary data, so the autonomy and the privacy of the participants were not relevant. Second part of the data came from expert interviewees, selected because of their knowledge of the research subject. Interviewees were not in a vulnerable position. The autonomy of the interviewees was respected by asking their consent for the interview and for using their name and background information in the thesis. The importance of privacy of the participants is based on the sensitivity of the subject. One way of protecting the privacy of the participants is anonymization (Leavy 2014, 62 – 65). In our interviews, the subjects addressed did not concern personal life or sensitive issues and interviewees spoke in their expert role, so there was no need for special discretion or anonymization. However, the answers of each individual were not specified because it did not contribute to the results and this way of presenting the results made them more readable. To make sure that there were no misunderstandings, the analysis of the findings of the interviews was sent to the interviewees so they could check the text for misinterpretations before publishing the research. Also, before publishing the study, the thesis was sent as a whole to World Vision's representatives for the final check and comments.

One specific ethical issue which rises from this research is the threat of top-down approach. Due to the covid-19 pandemic, we were not able to go to Ayacucho to interview the locals, as intended in the beginning. Because of this, the original focus of the study had to be changed slightly. Instead of a participatory research, the research was implemented by a literature review examining the secondary data from previous research. The literature review was complemented by expert interviews. This is not an ideal approach, when researching a topic with a focus on community-led action, local ownership and empowerment. It also contradicts with the findings of the research that highlight the importance of respecting local knowledge. To compensate the lack of community participation, the experts chosen for the interviews had field experience specifically in community-led conservation. That way we could draw from their experiences and gain a theoretical understanding of the best practices in relation to community-led conservation. However, the limitations of the research have to be acknowledged. Ideally, the study would be followed by a further research with a participatory approach.

Further thought related to top-down approach is the western influence in Global South. As one of the interviewees of the research stated, conservation is a Western concept. Western world sees the environment as something separate from humans whereas the indigenous people are living in harmony with the nature. This calls into question the justification of conservation initiatives. Is conservation just another epitome of ethnocentrism? And who are we to tell others to preserve when we do not respect environment in our own way of living? The western influence changes cultures in the Global South and traditional practices are disappearing as a result. The expansion of western consumerism to Global South increases unsustainable way of life. Every year we exceed the annual natural resources in abundance. This is unsettling for the sustainability of the environment, and for the future of our planet. Yet, it is hypocritical to deny traditional cultures the right to enjoy the modern way of life like we do.

The findings of the research show that participatory approach is essential in community-led conservation. In our research we have mapped the research information and expert knowledge about community-led conservation. Because we were not able to carry out any field studies, the next step forward could be a participatory research done in cooperation with village development committees and other grass roots organizations in the communities around Ayacucho. Research could find answers to questions such as what kind of

knowledge and assets the communities in question have and what would they wish to be done to their surrounding environment. It could also look for ways to implement conservation activities in practice in the everyday life of the people in communities. Other interesting subjects to explore could be the equality in a community. A participatory research could be done to look if there are inequality issues in the community and search for ways to tackle them.

Because climate change, degradation of environment and loss of biodiversity are a global concern, the findings of the thesis could be reflected to other localities and countries where World Vision operates. This would require further research of the context specific challenges and circumstances. The ongoing massive environmental crisis needs to be addressed in all parts of the world and in all levels of the society. As famous Polar Explorer and Environmentalist Robert Swan states, the greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.

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APPENDIX 1. Interview questions

1. What kind of opportunities and benefits can community-led conservation bring to communities?
2. In what ways could the existing assets in the communities be enforced with conservation?
3. How to advance livelihoods using conservation?
4. What kind of challenges are there in community-led conservation?
5. What kind of attitudes people have in the communities towards conservation and how does it affect your work? How could people become more receptive towards conservation?
6. In your work, have you encountered situations where conservation has contradicted with other benefits, such as livelihoods?
7. In what ways can community-led conservation be promoted?
8. How can environmental education promote community-led conservation?
9. How could community-led conservation promote participation, equality and engagement in decision-making in communities?
10. How do social structures affect community-led conservation?
11. How could conservation and tourism be combined in a sustainable way? What could be the obstacles for that?

12. The name and a short background of the interviewee

APPENDIX 2. The Interviewees

1. Kirsi Chavda, Master of Social Sciences, experience in development cooperation since 1999. Field work experience in Honduras, Nicaragua, Brazilian Amazon, Liberia, Mozambique and Indonesia. Program Coordinator at Siemenpuu Foundation. The Foundation provides support to environmental and democracy initiatives of the civil society in the global South. The projects supported by Siemenpuu tackle poverty and inequality and reduce the loss of biological diversity and climate emissions.

2. Kaisa Torppa, Biologist, Worked in the field in Madagascar in one of the conservation and community development programs by Dodo Ry.

3. Olli Turunen, Biologist, Coordinator in regional and development cooperation in The Finnish Association for Nature Conservation. Has worked in conservation programs for example in Finland, Russia and Madagascar. Long experience in development cooperation and conservation.

4. Meri Paunonen, Master of Arts, Specialized studies in Volunteer Management and NGO management. Wide experience in international work. Has worked for example in Belgium, Peru, Mali, Guinea and Somalia.

5. Aili Pyhälä, Adjunct Professor in Development Studies, with a background also in Environmental Sciences and Ethnoecology. Specialized in biodiversity conservation and Indigenous peoples rights globally, with in-depth fieldwork also in Peru. Many years working on environmental justice issues, political ecology, conservation challenges, human-nature relations, local environmental knowledge, and more. Many years actively engaged in international networks, platforms and organizations working on these same issues.

6. Maija Kaukonen, Master in Agriculture and Forestry, focusing on tropical forestry and forest questions in the Global South, and a Master in Social Sciences, focusing on Development Studies. Conservation and development officer at WWF Finland, coordinates WWF Finland's international programs e.g. in Indonesian Borneo, Laos, Nepal,

Bhutan, Tanzania, Kenya, Madagascar and Uganda. Professional focus on community-based conservation, village forestry and integration of livelihoods, conservation and social development.

APPENDIX 3. Resumen Ejecutivo en español

El tema de la tesis

Hoy en día, más de mil millones de personas viven en la pobreza extrema. El crecimiento de la economía mundial y el consumo excesivo han provocado una enorme crisis ambiental. Para proteger el futuro de nuestro planeta y nuestra propia existencia, necesitamos conservar la naturaleza, asegurar el funcionamiento de los procesos clave de la tierra y encontrar formas de vivir de manera más sostenible. Por eso, además de las iniciativas de conservación dirigidas por expertos, la conservación dirigida por la comunidad es importante en todo el mundo.

El tema de esta tesis es la conservación dirigida por la comunidad. En la misma se desarrollan las oportunidades y los desafíos relacionados con ello, y se reflexiona sobre las medidas de promoverla en Ayacucho, Perú. La tesis está hecha para World Vision Perú con la intención de ofrecer ideas para su trabajo con relación a iniciativas de conservación en las comunidades de dicha región. El campo de estudio de los escritores, en desarrollo comunitario, derechos humanos y resolución de conflictos, hace que el enfoque de esta tesis sea en desarrollo comunitario en vez de en ciencia ambiental. Además, debido a la pandemia de covid-19 durante el año 2020, la tesis está realizada a distancia sin haber podido visitar Ayacucho. El marco teórico de esta tesis se basa en la Agenda 2030 y en los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) adoptados por las Naciones Unidas.

Muchísimas gracias a la Señora Celia Cerda Vasquez y el Señor Juan Carlos Ayla Saldaña de World Vision Perú y a la Señora Merja Tikkanen-Vilagi de World Vision Finland por la oportunidad y por todo el apoyo. Muchas gracias también a la Señora Elsa Keskitalo y el Señor Ari Nieminen por la supervisión de la tesis.

La metodología

En la tesis, el enfoque metodológico es cualitativo y se intenta entender y describir las interconexiones entre personas, actividades y situaciones en relación a la conservación dirigida por la comunidad. Los datos de la tesis fueron colectados mediante una revisión bibliográfica y con seis entrevistas a expertos. La revisión de la literatura se realizó

mediante la búsqueda avanzada en ProQuest Social Science Premium Collection y en EBSCO Academic Search Premier utilizando como términos de búsqueda *community-led* o *community-based*, *conservation* y *Peru*. Los resultados se limitaron a los artículos de investigación revisados por pares. Para ser incluido, el artículo también tenía que estar escrito en inglés y tener a Perú u otro país latinoamericano como contexto. Además, los artículos debían haberse publicado entre 2011-2020. Finalmente, 19 artículos cumplieron estos criterios y fueron utilizados en la revisión de la literatura.

En relación a las entrevistas, al seleccionar a los entrevistados se aplicó un muestreo de bola de nieve. Al final de cada entrevista, se solicitaron sugerencias e ideas para reclutar al próximo entrevistado. En total, se entrevistaron seis personas. Los mismos incluyeron expertos en cooperación al desarrollo y medio ambiente y académicos con antecedentes versátiles en diferentes organizaciones, como la Asociación Finlandesa para la Conservación de la Naturaleza, la Fundación Siemenpuu, Dodo ry y el Fondo Mundial para la Naturaleza (WWF). Su experiencia conjunta incluye ciencias ambientales, desarrollo y cooperación internacional, ciencias agrícolas, conservación, derechos ambientales, políticas ambientales, derechos indígenas, monitoreo y evaluación. Además, los entrevistados poseen experiencia de campo en Perú, Amazonia peruana, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Borneo, Laos, Nepal, Bután, Tanzania, Kenia, Uganda, Finlandia y Rusia. Como método de análisis de datos, se utilizó el análisis de contenido.

Hallazgos principales del estudio

Según del estudio, las oportunidades principales que pueden atraer la conservación dirigida por la comunidad a las comunidades locales son el fortalecimiento de los bienes existentes y los ingresos adicionales. A través de la conservación, los recursos naturales, el patrimonio cultural y los conocimientos tradicionales pueden sobrevivir y fortalecerse. Además, la conservación dirigida por la comunidad puede reforzar aspectos sociales, creando cooperación y buena voluntad, promoviendo la participación, empoderando a los miembros de la comunidad y desarrollando su capacidad de muchas maneras. Cuando se trata de los medios de vida, la conservación ayuda a la creación de los medios de vida sostenibles; a parte de apoyar la producción de alimentos y otros bienes necesarios en la comunidad, la conservación y sus buenos efectos en la naturaleza puede diversificar la producción de alimentos. Eso tiene un impacto positivo especialmente en el crecimiento

y en el desarrollo de los niños. La venta de alimentos y otros productos naturales puede traer ingresos adicionales a la comunidad. Combinar la conservación y ecoturismo puede ser una buena oportunidad de ganarse la vida, aunque asegurar la sostenibilidad del turismo es inevitablemente difícil.

Los desafíos principales en la conservación dirigida por la comunidad, según este estudio, son la desigualdad, las contradicciones con otros beneficios, el posible enfoque de arriba hacia abajo y un gobierno débil en la sociedad. Las desigualdades, los roles de género, jerarquías y dinámicas de poder en las comunidades pueden crear desafíos en relación con iniciativas lideradas por la comunidad. La oportunidad de participar puede depender del puesto o de la educación de la persona en la comunidad. En las comunidades pobres, hay mucha gente analfabeta. En general, el analfabetismo limita la capacidad de participar en la sociedad. El enfoque de arriba hacia abajo puede dañar todas las actividades dirigidas por la comunidad. A menudo se necesita apoyo externo, pero el liderazgo y la propiedad de los proyectos deben ser en la comunidad o los resultados no se mantendrán. Las contradicciones con otros beneficios, como medios de vida, son normalmente la mayor razón de oponerse a la conservación. La importancia de conservar el medio ambiente está bien entendida, pero las preocupaciones por ganarse la vida pueden empujar a tomar decisiones no amigables con el medio ambiente. Además, algunas prácticas tradicionales en la comunidad pueden ser perjudiciales para el medio ambiente, y cambiarlas requiere tiempo y diálogo. La gobernanza débil también trae desafíos a la conservación dirigida por la comunidad. Los derechos de tenencia de la tierra son fundamentales para las comunidades en relación con la conservación, sin los mismos no se puede garantizar el uso justo y sostenible de los recursos naturales. La corrupción, el nepotismo, las actividades ilegales y el desconocimiento de los procesos legislativos son desafíos comunes según este estudio.

A pesar de los desafíos, hay varias formas de promover la conservación dirigida por la comunidad, como la educación y el desarrollo de la capacidad, la participación, los incentivos económicos y las estructuras sociales. La educación no significa solamente educación formal, sino también mediante el ejemplo, creando buenas prácticas dentro de la comunidad. El buen liderazgo es la clave. La educación ambiental ayuda a crear conciencia en relación con las cuestiones ambientales, pero todo tipo de educación es importante. La formación en alfabetización también contribuye a la conservación, ya que aumenta las

oportunidades de participación en general. Es importante utilizar los idiomas locales, la comunicación visual y diferentes medios de comunicación y tecnología para llegar a la mayor cantidad de gente posible, en ubicaciones remotas, por ejemplo, la radio es bastante común y se la usa mucho para difundir información.

La conservación dirigida por la comunidad también se puede promover a través de incentivos económicos. Según este estudio, los estímulos económico-financieros pueden promover un cambio en comportamiento y actuar como impulsores de la conservación. Diferentes tipos de mecanismos de compensación, como el pago por servicios ecosistémicos (PSA) o esquemas de compensación climática, son una opción. Por ejemplo, algunas comunidades pueden tener problemas con los animales salvajes que pueden pisotear los cultivos o atacar al ganado, eso tiene un efecto directo a los medios de vida y restringir la caza de este tipo de animales salvajes, incluidas las especies en peligro de extinción, puede ser difícil de justificar para las personas cuyos medios de vida son afectados. Establecer mecanismos de compensación para superar los impactos negativos posibles podría promover una actitud más positiva hacia la conservación.

Cuando se trata de las estructuras sociales, se puede decir que están profundamente interconectadas con la conservación dirigida por la comunidad. Las desigualdades estructurales, la gobernanza débil y las ambigüedades en los derechos de tenencia de la tierra dificultan la conservación. Si la comunidad no tiene los derechos de la tierra y los recursos naturales que contiene, no se pueden proteger los medios de vida ni el uso sostenible de los recursos. Por eso, al promover procesos transparentes e inclusivos, buena gobernanza y democracia, se promueve también la conservación. La participación, iniciativa y liderazgo local es fundamental.

Como conclusión, la conservación dirigida por la comunidad es un tema complejo con muchas dimensiones. Para comprender realmente la esencia del tema, hay que prestar atención a la formulación del término, que ya subraya el papel de la comunidad como líder de la acción. La conservación dirigida por la comunidad es participativa siempre, no puede existir sin el papel activo de la comunidad.

Un aspecto importante en relación a este tema es entender cómo el discurso occidental sobre conservación difiere del de Sur Global. Como señaló uno de los entrevistados, la

conservación es un concepto occidental y está definido por personas que han perdido su conexión con la naturaleza. Por el contrario, en el Sur Global, las identidades espirituales y las visiones del mundo de los pueblos indígenas a menudo están intrincadamente vinculadas al medio ambiente. Es posible que ni siquiera tengan una palabra para la naturaleza, porque son parte de ella. El medio ambiente les da su sustento, y su existencia y bienestar dependen de los recursos naturales. Sin embargo, el conocimiento, la cultura y las necesidades locales no siempre se abordan en los proyectos de conservación. En ocasiones, las comunidades locales quedan excluidas de las áreas protegidas, lo que puede provocar conflictos relacionados con los recursos. El enfoque de arriba hacia abajo para la conservación es desempoderador y crea dependencia. En las iniciativas dirigidas desde el exterior, la sostenibilidad no tiene una base estable ya que es posible que posteriormente se retire el apoyo externo. Debido a esto, la conservación funciona mejor cuando se combina con las condiciones locales y es más probable que las iniciativas lideradas por la comunidad tengan éxito a largo plazo. La participación y el enfoque inclusivo en la conservación crea propiedad dentro de la comunidad, desarrolla sus capacidades y fortalece el poder político de los individuos. Siendo esto muy empoderador para la comunidad en cuestión ya que tiene un efecto en todos los aspectos de la vida. Las iniciativas de conservación basadas en las prioridades de la comunidad motivan a los miembros de las mismas a ser actores activos, en lugar de receptores pasivos.

Las recomendaciones para World Vision

En este momento, el programa Renacer de World Vision se enfoca en mejorar los resultados del aprendizaje de niños y jóvenes, desarrollar la protección infantil y aumentar las habilidades empresariales de los jóvenes en Ayacucho. Además de todos los beneficios y oportunidades que la conservación trae directamente a las comunidades y al medio ambiente, argumentamos que la integración de la conservación a su trabajo en las comunidades apoyaría estos objetivos.

Cuando se trata de mejorar la protección infantil y los resultados del aprendizaje de los niños y jóvenes, según varios estudios la mala nutrición causa retraso en el crecimiento. Esto también está relacionado con un bajo rendimiento educativo y tiene efectos de gran alcance en la edad adulta. Estos efectos incluyen salarios bajos, pérdida de productividad y mayor riesgo de enfermedades crónicas relacionadas con la nutrición. El retraso en el

crecimiento puede comenzar ya en el útero, por lo que la nutrición de las mujeres embarazadas también es importante. Como sabemos, muchos niños en los pueblos andinos remotos están desnutridos, anémicos y sufren de diarrea. Por eso, la seguridad alimentaria es una parte esencial del desarrollo y el aprendizaje del niño, pero también es una inversión de futuro. Según nuestra investigación, la conservación mejora la seguridad alimentaria, el suministro de agua y la producción versátil de alimentos en las comunidades. Por lo tanto, sería recomendable que World Vision Perú integre la conservación a su trabajo en las comunidades. Las nuevas posibilidades de ingresos y las oportunidades de medios de vida alternativos, como el ecoturismo, podrían mejorar la situación de los padres para mantener a sus hijos.

Otro objetivo actual de World Vision en Ayacucho es mejorar la participación, las habilidades organizativas y el desarrollo de capacidades en las comunidades, centrándose específicamente en los jóvenes y sus habilidades empresariales. Según los hallazgos encontrados en la revisión de la literatura y las entrevistas, la participación, las habilidades organizativas y el desarrollo de capacidades son partes importantes de la conservación exitosa dirigida por la comunidad, por lo que las actividades de World Vision ya ayudan a construir una base para la conservación. Como muestra la investigación, la iniciativa para una conservación exitosa debe provenir de la comunidad. La educación ambiental puede crear conciencia sobre las cuestiones ambientales, y dar ejemplos prácticos de cómo abordarlos. Esto puede despertar el deseo de trabajar en beneficio del medio ambiente circundante. Por eso, agregar educación ambiental en las actividades de World Vision podría ser útil.

Es importante planificar la educación ambiental de manera respetuosa que fortalezca las prácticas tradicionales de las comunidades locales. En el contexto de Ayacucho, es fundamental utilizar el idioma quechua en la educación. Además, podría ser valioso tener material no escrito adecuado para aquellos que no pueden leer, ya que muchos de los adultos en el área solo han estudiado durante unos años y a veces incluso son analfabetos. Como señalan las entrevistas, la educación en general es beneficiosa porque permite y promueve participación e influencia. La capacidad de leer permite obtener información sobre la salud, el medio ambiente o la tenencia y los derechos humanos; asimismo también puede aumentar las oportunidades de subsistencia.

El trabajo de World Vision por las habilidades emprendedoras es vital para el empoderamiento y la independencia de los jóvenes peruanos. Al integrar los principios de los medios de vida sostenibles en su trabajo, podrían aumentar los ingresos y reducir la vulnerabilidad y la exclusión social. El enfoque basado en activos para la formación en habilidades empresariales podría desarrollar la capacidad ya existente de los jóvenes. También ayudaría a World Vision Perú a evitar las estructuras de arriba hacia abajo y les permitiría operar en los términos de los jóvenes. La educación ambiental ayuda a lograr modos de vida sostenibles. Al orientar a los jóvenes en habilidades empresariales, se deben promover oportunidades de medios de vida ambientalmente sostenibles y oportunidades de medios de vida alternativos para prácticas degradantes. Las prácticas enseñadas a los jóvenes deben dar siempre beneficios a corto plazo para motivarlos a ponerlas en marcha. Cuando los jóvenes adquieren conocimientos ambientales y aprenden nuevas prácticas, pueden enseñarles a sus familias y a la comunidad en general.

Las cuestiones éticas e investigación futura

En la investigación cualitativa, el enfoque ético debe estar en cómo se trata a las personas que forman parte de la investigación. Los principios que guían la investigación son minimizar el daño, respetar la autonomía de las personas y preservar su privacidad, ya que debido a ésta pueden producirse tanto daños graves, como daños psicológicos o materiales, daños a la reputación o daños a un proyecto al que pertenecen las personas. Este riesgo debe reconocerse al planificar la investigación. En esta tesis, la primera parte de los datos se recopiló a través de una revisión bibliográfica. Estos datos fueron considerados como secundarios, por lo que la autonomía y la privacidad de los participantes no fueron relevantes. La segunda parte de los datos provino de entrevistados expertos, seleccionados por su conocimiento del tema de investigación. Los mismos no se encontraban en una posición vulnerable y se respetó su autonomía pidiéndoles su consentimiento para ser entrevistados. Los temas no se referían a la vida personal ni a temas sensibles y los entrevistados hablaron en su rol de expertos. No hubo necesidad de una discreción especial o el anonimato de los participantes. Sin embargo, nos referimos a los entrevistados según su posición de expertos y no especificamos qué respuesta fue dicha por cada individuo. Para asegurar que no hubo malentendidos, se envió el análisis de los hallazgos de esta etapa a los entrevistados para que pudieran verificar el texto en busca de malas interpretaciones antes de publicar la investigación.

Una cuestión ética específica que surge de esta investigación es la amenaza del enfoque de arriba hacia abajo. Debido a la pandemia del covid-19, no pudimos ir a Ayacucho a entrevistar a la gente local, como era la intención primeramente. Debido a esto, el enfoque original del estudio tuvo que cambiarse. En lugar de una investigación participativa, la investigación se implementó mediante una revisión de la literatura que examina los datos secundarios de investigaciones anteriores. Esta etapa se complementó con entrevistas a expertos. Este no es un enfoque ideal cuando se investiga un tema con un enfoque en la acción liderada por la comunidad, la apropiación local y el empoderamiento. Contradiéndose así con los hallazgos de la investigación que resaltan la importancia de respetar el conocimiento local. Para compensar la falta de participación comunitaria, los expertos elegidos para las entrevistas tenían experiencia de campo específicamente en conservación dirigida por la comunidad. De esa manera, podríamos aprovechar sus experiencias y obtener una comprensión teórica de las mejores prácticas en relación con la conservación dirigida por la comunidad. Sin embargo, hay que reconocer las limitaciones de la investigación ya que idealmente, el estudio tendría que haberse completado con una investigación adicional con un enfoque participativo.

Otro pensamiento relacionado con el enfoque de arriba hacia abajo es la influencia occidental en el Sur Global. Como afirmó uno de los entrevistados de la investigación, la conservación es un concepto occidental. El mundo occidental ve el medio ambiente como algo separado de los humanos, mientras que los indígenas viven en armonía con la naturaleza. Esto cuestiona la justificación de las iniciativas de conservación. ¿Es la conservación solo otro epítome del etnocentrismo? ¿Y quiénes somos nosotros para decirle a los demás que conserven cuando no respetamos el medio ambiente en nuestra propia forma de vida? La influencia occidental cambia las culturas en el Sur Global y, como resultado, las prácticas tradicionales están desapareciendo. La expansión del consumismo occidental al Sur Global aumenta la forma de vida insostenible. Cada año superamos los recursos naturales anuales en abundancia. Esto es inquietante para la sostenibilidad del medio ambiente y para el futuro de nuestro planeta. Sin embargo, es hipócrita negar a las culturas tradicionales el derecho a disfrutar del estilo de vida moderno como lo hacemos nosotros.

Los hallazgos de este trabajo muestran que el enfoque participativo es esencial en la conservación dirigida por la comunidad. En nuestra investigación hemos mapeado la

información y el conocimiento experto sobre el tema. El próximo paso adelante podría ser una investigación participativa realizada en cooperación con los comités de desarrollo de las aldeas y otras organizaciones de base en las comunidades alrededor de Ayacucho. De ese análisis se podrían encontrar respuestas a preguntas tales como qué conocimientos y activos tienen las comunidades y qué desearían que se hiciera con el entorno que las rodea.

APPENDIX 4. Preliminary findings of the literature review

Theme	Sub-themes
Enforcement of existing assets [1, 2, 13, 17, 19]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local organizations might have an advantage in creating adaptive social–ecological systems because they understand local processes and are involved with communities for extended periods of time [17] • Community-led conservation includes indigenous peoples’ knowledge in the management of the resources [1] • Local knowledge and experience adapting to climate e.g. weather patterns, microclimates and plant species useful for construction and medicinal purposes [17] • Conservation policies are likely to work best when they are matched to local conditions [19] • Input of residents’, with local knowledge and concerns, is critical component to sustainable tourism [13] • Promoting community participation, bottom-up approach and involving the local community has the potential to empower and strengthen communities by enhancing their collective capacity for action, decision-making and self-awareness, and increase the communities’ capacity to achieve collective goals [2] • Increasing participation of under-represented groups, such as indigenous people and women, and alter gender and power relations among different classes and ethnic groups, especially in areas with limited development options [2] • Participation of the local people is essential in protected areas [1] • Create officially designated reserves owned and managed by indigenous inhabitants [1] • extensive use of participation can lead to community ownership of the conservation and development projects [17] • The communities’ close connections to a project contribute to resilience through creating networks, extending the local environmental ethic, supporting projects that diversify and strengthen community sustenance, and contributing to the growth of economic activities [17] • Communities as leaders of development and conservation contributes to resilience for climate change by building networks between communities and outside organizations. Expanding networks facilitates collective action which reduces risks. Local, regional and international networks provide tools for the community against e.g. extreme weather [17] • Engagement of local communities in resource management improves the overall quality of the environmental management and the quality of information used in decision-making. It also leads to better implementation and decreases conflicts [19]
Additional income, e.g. eco-tourism [1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 17, 19]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable forms of tourism can provide alternative livelihoods and incentives for communities to protect valuable habitats in key localities, given the right circumstances and proper planning [6] • Community-led conservation can combine conservation and economic development for local people [3] • Community-led conservation has economic and social benefits [1] • Peruvian government’s low taxation rate on tourism has increased profit margins for the regional ecotourism industry [19] • Globally most of high-priority areas for biodiversity conservation are also key regions for tourism development [6] • Fees to enter a community-owned private conservation area [9] • Fostering long-term stewardship and transformations in ecological consciousness among “campesino” communities in rural, unprotected areas [2] • Raising support for environmental protection, the stewardship of natural resources and environmental appreciation by adding economic value to ecosystem preservation and making the preservation of natural resources more valuable to the local community than their destruction [2] • Addressing both development and conservation objectives [2] • Additional income: hunting no more needed if financial possibility to buy protein, ability to develop waste management systems, recycling and composting (can be used as a fertilizer) [2, 6] • Combining conservation, education and tourism [8] • Tourism can provide additional source of income to traditional livelihoods, like potato harvests, which are affected by the climate change [17] • Fair markets might support biodiversity conservation, particularly because it can be an incentive for conserving native varieties through increasing their value, and because it may generate alternatives to destructive income-generating schemes [11]

Theme	Sub-themes
Inequality [2, 3, 5, 10, 11, 12, 17]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation policies that exclude people from conservation areas in order to achieve better environmental protection. This results to resource-related conflict between local communities and protected area authorities [5] • land ownership of indigenous communities – active programs exist with the aim of conferring land title to indigenous communities, but the process is highly bureaucratic and slow [3, 12] • Factors negatively affecting the indigenous Andean culture represent general risks for conservation of traditional agricultural systems and agrobiodiversity. Cultural discrimination influences changes in language, customs, food and used patterns of natural resources [11] • Community-led conservation may empower existing spokespeople, rather than new ones [3] • Benefits of the conservation may only apply small section of the population [3] • Risk of seeing a community as a homogenous unit instead of a group with different interests, complex social and financial structures, and different power dynamics e.g. exclusion of women. [3, 17] • Decentralization may reconfigure power relations in new ways that are not necessarily empowering for local actors [3] • monopolization of benefits of the tourism by local elites [2]
Contradiction between conservation and other interests [3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 14, 19]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development conflicts with efforts to conserve intact forest landscapes and mismatch between local socio-environmental conditions and the introduced activities and policies [19] • The progressive loss of traditional techniques and agriculture intensification influences the loss of traditional farmer varieties diversity. Expansion of the modern agriculture and livestock oriented predominantly to commercialization may have unfavorable consequences for conservation of the genetic resources' diversity since commercial systems generally favor a narrow spectrum of varieties, but also determine risk for the indigenous culture [11] • Self-managed indigenous lands and protected areas face anthropogenic encroachment e.g. human accessibility to hunt wildlife [1] • Forest loss not due to anti-environmental attitudes of local land-users but personal economic circumstances [19] • Community forestry is not always successful economically or ecologically [3] • climate change affects conservation priorities that are directly linked to local livelihoods concerns [8] • Not cost-effective, not sure if conservation occurs and alternative livelihoods might be complementary instead of substitutes to eco-system-degrading activities [9] • Lack of alternative agricultural practices [9] • Alternative high value land-use works as an incentive against forest conservation [19]
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potential for armed conflict in areas where illicit cash crops, especially coca (<i>Erythroxylum coca</i> and <i>E. novogranatense</i>) are grown [6] • PES payment at the existing rates are not competitive with some land-use alternatives e.g. gold mining and existing cooperative agreements with miners may prevent PES contracts [19] • Lack of coordination between agencies, problems of corruption, and inadequate funding [14]
Top-down approach [1, 3, 4, 13, 16, 17]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top-down approach to public participation that does not give a chance of influencing decision [17] • Incentive-based programs can be understood as an exercise of power or social control [4, 16] • Involvement of international actors may cause social conflict and fade the authentic community control [3] • Top-down conservation plans contradict local interests and are destined to fail [1] • Top down approach in sustainable tourism has only limited success [13] • Emphasis on centralized decision-making has been a major constraint to promote community participation in the tourism industry [13] • Communities might not express their disapproval of a project because they fear the reduction of the benefits directed toward them [17]
Attitudes [3, 4, 7, 16, 17, 19]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without changes in the behavior of local land-users, sustainable conservation and development outcomes are unlikely to be realized. Risk of failure if policies are incompatible with local conditions or lack the support of locals [19] • The undervalue of the local knowledge. However, sometimes there is need for expert interventions because of limited local knowledge [17] • tendency to support design formats that are short-termist and over-reliant on international expertise [3] • Division between local "rules" of forest management and national regulatory frameworks [3] • Interventions of formal institutions may supersede existing pro-social norms for conservation [7] • The benefits must out weight the costs of local participation to sustain motivation – it is often not enough that supplies etc are covered if the time used is not compensated [4] • Why community members would want to participate in their own surveillance and in actions that are likely to limit their livelihood uses? [4,16] • PES may unintentionally influence local land-user motivations for conservation and perceptions of ecosystem value [19] • PES may provide little additional incentive for conservation but could instead affect deontological or moral incentives for conservation [7]

**Challenges with
tourism**
[2, 6, 13, 17]

- The impact of tourism on nature and threats it poses to wildlife and habitat deterioration, such as disturbance and littering [2, 6]
- Market-based approach to conservation limits the ability of tourism to act as a long-term protection strategy because it is aligned to consumer demand [2]
- Tourism revenue itself or hopes to gain it might attract too many entrepreneurs along with too much touristic pressure to the area or encourage greenwashing [6]
- Tourism can result in structural violence both to nature and human, create competition and tensions among local residents, increase individualism and decline solidarity, social reciprocity and the kinship ties, and lead to conflicts over the rights to use common resources (=lack of community consensus) [2, 6]
- Unequal distribution of tourism revenue could cause tension between local actors and reduce their motivation to conserve the touristic attraction [6]
- Low life expectancy after external funding ends [2]
- Being too focused on industry development rather than social justice and empowerment [2]
- the economic benefits of the ecotourism are limited [17]
- The so-called eco-travelers that make the Inca Trail in an authentic and ecological way contribute to degradation of the historic path because the path cannot accommodate as many travelers as are hiking there [13]

Theme	Sub-themes
Environmental education / capacity building [2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 17, 19]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive interventions such as education, social influences and changing values or morals (e.g by engaging community leaders to promote conservation practices and making it unacceptable to deforest) can lead to behavioral change [9] • The awareness of the benefits of a healthy environment increases communities' desire to protect the environment, which in turn supports their livelihoods through ecosystem services, like saving water and contributing to nutrient-rich soils [17] • An environmental awareness and ethic can strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability, as improved ability to observe climate change and its impacts on surrounding environment can help the community better adapt to the changes [17] • In addition to monetary compensation for conservation efforts, capacity building and social and cultural dimensions are an important incentive and benefit [4, 10] • Environmental education targets both visitors and locals, and ideally communicates the science behind conservation if these audience are to value the conservation landscape and become active in its protection [8] • The experience with forests increases one's value of them. Characteristics affecting the experience of the benefits of the forest; amount of reforestation in the community, gender (women tend to value more) [9] • Transforming the role of formal education into reinforcing Andean culture that conserves more tuber varieties and preserves agrobiodiversity [11] • Some causality between the introduction to community conservation and the probability of being a conservationist [9] • Giving technical knowledge and acquiring resources to implement sustainable farming [19] • Strengthening existing conservation practices in ways that support forest conservation and human development [19] • The recognition of the conservation efforts motivates community members [4]
Participation [3, 6, 8, 12, 17]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local participation [12, 6] • Involving local stakeholders into decision-making processes [3, 8] • Conversation about the ways a conservation project will occur using local processes [17] • Direct participation in the implementation of the project [17, 6] • Supporting the development project that the local communities want to pursue [17] • Participation of the community throughout the project [17] • In Peru, there are several mechanisms that enable different kinds of actors, such as rural communities, individuals, NGO's or consortia between them to establish, through their own initiative, local conservation areas based on tourism activities. [6]
Economic incentives [2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 19]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-based tourism / bio business – sustainable forms of tourism can provide alternative livelihoods and incentives for communities to protect valuable habitats, given the right circumstances and proper planning [2, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 17, 19, 6] • Globally most of high-priority areas for biodiversity conservation are also key regions for tourism development [6] • Finding of alternative job opportunities [19] • Financial-economic stimuli can make behavioural change [9] • Economic incentives and benefits of tourism can encourage local conservation of wildlife [and make communities more tolerant of the presence of large mammals [15] • Payments for ecosystem services (PES) as an incentive. Individual rewards seem to increase conservation levels more than collective-level payments, however collective rewards may enhance bonding and linking social capital [9, 19, 7] • Amount of the income dependent on treks increases one's value of them [9]
Structural changes [2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 19]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of perverse incentives such as fuel subsidies that encourage unsustainable practices, such as excessive tillage [10] • Public policies are relevant for concerting visions to support planning and strategic actions oriented to the integral management of agrobiodiversity [11] • Governmental prohibitions on the use of the forest [9] • Policies designed to build on an existing land ethic may be more effective than alternative strategies [19] • The mechanisms enabling conservation work are related to many important and politically sensitive issues such as land tenure, land use and indigenous rights, which require careful consideration of local conditions. Depending on e.g. the local situation of land tenure, these types of projects could either be used by local communities to support land ownership claims in the case of them being informal dwellers or to strengthen the position of legally established communities. [6] • Finding synergies between conservation goals and local level development initiatives is fundamental for both the short-term protection of important sites and their long- term conservation [6] • Promoting equality and democratic processes – water availability, land tenure and distribution of tourism revenue are also a matter of institutional arrangements and affect the ability and motivation to conserve the environment [4, 8, 10, 6] • Structural interventions, such as provision of alternatives (e.g. greenhouses), regulation, enforcement and organizational change can make behavioral change [9] • PES program could strengthen tenure rights and more easily keep miners off the land [19] • Limited capacities by governments -> community-based actions supporting conservation [14]