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Success in Community Conservation Partnership Initiatives on Public Conservation Land: A Case Study of a Successful West Coast Community-based Conservation Trust

A thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Environmental Management
Institute of Agriculture and Environment
Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand



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2015

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As this thesis was approaching the finish line I found myself thinking about the plethora of people who have supported me.

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Janet Reid, who has provided guidance, expert advice and more importantly humour and patience. Janet perfected the fine art of getting me back on track after many distractions such as work commitments and the whitebait season.

A special thanks to my family and friends who have contributed to this thesis through their support. Although too many to name, a few come to mind; my 96-year-old grandmother for giving me advice the other day to “just finish the bloody thing”, my Mum, Dad, Ken, Aunty Nadia, Brother and family, and my good mates Gary, Kylie, Andy, Jane (aka Dr Marshall), Jackie, Chris, and Wendy.

Last, a big thanks to the Conservation Trust, which was studied and all the people out there making conservation happen.

ABSTRACT

The New Zealand Department of Conservation administers 8.5 million hectares of public conservation land and is focused on growing conservation by increasing partnerships with the community.

Limited research exists on the Department's engagement with the community and, more specifically, on what enables successful conservation partnerships. This research aims to change that and provide a greater understanding of the characteristics underpinning success in conservation partnerships on public conservation land. By identifying these characteristics favourable conditions for success can be established increasing the likelihood of success. Success is defined as achieving predetermined conservation outcomes.

The characteristics found to underpin success were: early engagement with the local community; the Department having the flexibility, expertise, and capacity to assist the community group; the preconditions identified by Plummer and FizGibbon (2004a); building capacity within the community group; strong trusting relationships; and open communication.

The challenge for the Department is to develop these underpinning characteristics when the Department is not integrated into the community and where there is resistance from the community.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Foreword

This study investigates the underpinning characteristics for success in community-based conservation initiatives on public conservation land. This investigation is accomplished by exploring, in depth, the journey of a West Coast community-based conservation initiative and interviewing key members to discover the foundations for its success.

Practical recommendations are drawn from the study and can be applied to increase the probability of future success of community-based conservation projects.

1.2. The Department of Conservation

The Department of Conservation¹ administers public conservation land and is focused on growing conservation by engaging more with the community (Department of Conservation, 2014). Community engagement is provided for in legislation and conservation policy.

The main guiding policy for the Department of Conservation is the Conservation General Policy 2005, which was prepared under s17(c) of the Conservation Act 1987 (Conservation Act, 1987). This policy provides regulations for integrated implementation for the lands, waters, and natural and historic resources administered under New Zealand's main conservation legislation (Department of Conservation, 2007). The main conservation legislation the Department of Conservation administers includes the Conservation Act 1987, the Wildlife Act 1953, the Marine Reserves Act 1971, the Reserves Act 1977, the Wild Animal Control Act 1977, and the Marine Mammals Protection Act 1978 (Department of Conservation, 2007).

Policy 3 of the Conservation General Policy 2005 specifically outlines a commitment to develop relationships and partnerships with people, communities, and organisations to enhance conservation (Department of Conservation, 2007).

Another guiding policy for the Department is the General Policy for National Parks 2005. Section 3 of this policy states that the management of national parks is a formidable task that needs the support and involvement of all New Zealanders (Department of Conservation, 2005) and that "effective partnerships between the Department, people, and organisations can enhance the preservation of national parks" (Department of Conservation, 2005, p. 18). This policy specifically defines the importance of people volunteering their time and resources.

The policies in the Conservation General Policy 2005 and General Policy for National Parks 2005 are made operational in Conservation Management Strategies such as the West Coast *Te Tai O Poutini* Conservation Management Strategy 2010 (Department of Conservation, 2010).

¹ The Department of Conservation is referred to as 'the Department' and 'DOC' in this research.

Conservation Management Strategies are written by the Department of Conservation to ensure both a consistency with implementing conservation policy and a clear operational direction. The strategies are specific to particular locations and set out the objectives for integrated conservation management, policy and strategic direction (Department of Conservation, 2010).

The West Coast *Te Tai O Poutini* Conservation Management Strategy 2010 states in section 3.2.2 that the Department provides a range of opportunities for people and organisations to actively participate in conservation management (Department of Conservation, 2010). It emphasises facilitation and support of conservation projects and acknowledges the skills and knowledge that people in the community hold.

The West Coast *Te Tai O Poutini* Conservation Management Strategy 2010 also outlines desired conservation outcomes for the area. The West Coast *Te Tai O Poutini* Conservation Management Strategy covers the area west of the main divide in the Southern Alps and extends from Big Bay *Tihei Mauri Ora* in South Westland north to Kahurangi point in the Kahurangi National Park (Department of Conservation, 2010). A desired outcome for this area is to have successful partnerships with external stakeholders and conservation initiatives that help with the management of the conservation estate (Department of Conservation, 2010).

The number of partnerships in which the Department is formally involved throughout New Zealand has increased dramatically since June 2010. There were 133 partnerships for the year ended June 2010, and these have risen to 605 for the year ended June 2014 (Department of Conservation, 2014). No definition for the term ‘partnership’ was provided with these figures. The Department has made a strong commitment to further increasing the number of partnerships, which is evident from internal Department correspondence, in which Sue Cosford, the former Deputy Director of Operations for the Department of Conservation (2010-2013), stated:

[The Department of Conservation] will grow conservation by doing more work with others, and getting more people involved in their own conservation projects. Under the new model, working with others is as important as [the Department of Conservation’s] traditional work of managing natural heritage, and historic and recreational assets (Department of Conservation, 2013a, p. 1).

The Department of Conservation’s new business model, as articulated by Cosford, shifts the focus from “carrying out conservation work to one that leads and enables the work of others” (Department of Conservation, 2013a, p. 12).

This model is backed up in the Department’s Statement of Intent, 2011–2014, which sets out the Department’s long-term direction and management priorities. One Department aim is to increase conservation by “helping more people to participate in conservation through

working with others to identify and promote a range of activities in which people and organisations can get involved” (Department of Conservation 2011b, p. 32).

The most recent Statement of Intent, 2013–2017 states that:

Partnerships, volunteer opportunities, training and on-the-ground support enable more people to participate in conservation activities [...]. Conservation is not done by the Department of Conservation alone [...]. Developing collaborative partnerships with iwi, business, local authorities and communities is essential if we are to halt the loss of biodiversity [...]. Increasing the resources for conservation means building on the increasing public interest in conservation and willingness to do conservation work (Department of Conservation 2013b, p. 32).

1.3. Research justification

Research is described by (Hurston, 1942, as cited in O'Leary, 2010, p. 2) as “formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose”.

The motivation for poking and prying into the Department’s focus on partnerships stems from the researcher’s work as a community relations ranger for the Department of Conservation. This work involved working at the ‘flax roots’ level on a variety of conservation initiatives in the field with communities, schools, and volunteers. In addition, it involved working on initiatives ranging from habitat restoration to maintenance of historic relics, to biodiversity surveys and pest control. This has meant seeing first-hand the enthusiasm and passion the community can have for conservation initiatives and the sizeable conservation outcomes that can be achieved.

In the most recent restructure of the Department it was made clear a future shift was to increase partnerships with external stakeholders (Department of Conservation, 2013a). This is backed by the Department of Conservation’s Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2014, which states:

“Department of Conservation (DOC) was restructured in 2013 to grow conservation by working in partnership with others” (Department of Conservation, 2014, p. 7).

If the Department is going to achieve this shift in direction successfully and increase conservation outcomes by increasing partnerships then arguably the Department needs to step back from driving initiatives and hand the ownership over to the community to implement and sustain. This research argues that insights can be gained, into how this stepping back and handing over can be achieved by the Department, by exploring the characteristics underpinning a current successful community partnership with the Department.

1.4. Problem statement

The Department of Conservation's new business model is focused on increasing conservation outcomes by increasing community partnerships. Overall there is limited research into the Department's engagement with the community and more specifically into what enables successful partnerships on conservation initiatives. This research aims to change that and provide greater understanding on how successful partnerships can be achieved in conservation initiatives.

1.5. Research question

How can successful conservation partnerships be achieved on public conservation land by the New Zealand Department of Conservation?

1.6. Objectives

- Identify and describe the characteristics underpinning successful conservation partnerships with the Department of Conservation. (What assists conservation partnerships?)
- Identify and describe the specific attributes of the Department of Conservation that have encouraged conservation partnership initiatives to be successful.

1.7. Thesis structure

The remainder of this thesis is structured as follows.

Chapter two examines and reviews research on conservation partnership initiatives through a literature review. Definitions of key terms are explored and an understanding of current research is examined.

Chapter three outlines the case-study research approach used, including case selection, data collection method and data analysis.

Chapter four describes the West Coast Conservation Trust chosen for the study and recounts their journey from inception to 2014. In this chapter there is also a brief description of the Department of Conservation and the West Coast region.

Chapter five presents the study results, which are discussed in chapter six.

Chapter seven concludes the thesis and a number of recommendations are presented that this thesis argues will help successful conservation partnership with the Department of Conservation on public conservation land in New Zealand.

2. CHAPTER: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

'Partnerships' is a term used synonymously with collaboration, community-based management, participation and the co-management of common pool resources (Carlsson & Berkes, 2005). All these different terms, as well as the term community-based natural resource management, are encapsulated in the term 'community-based conservation'. The term 'community-based conservation' is used for the remainder of this thesis; however, where authors have been quoted or their concepts explained, the authors' original term has been used for authenticity.

No single clear-cut definition was found for 'community-based conservation' but common themes emerged and are explored in the literature review.

There is much international literature on community-based conservation initiatives (e.g., Agrawal and Ostrom (2001), Armitage, Plummer, Berkes, Arthur, Charles, Davidson-Hunt and Wollenberg (2009), Berkes, George and Preston (1991), Sen and Raakjaer-Nielsen (1996), Pretty (1995), Adams and Hulme (2001), de Beer (2013), Measham and Lumbasi (2013). Community-based conservation initiatives are reported to have first been popular in developing countries and then extended to developed countries (Dougill et al., 2006; Stringer, Twyman, & Gibbs, 2008). This resulted in a large amount of published material focused on developing country case studies, particularly with regard to common property (see, for example, Berkes (1987), Pinkerton (1989), Hersoug and Raner (1997), Short and Winter (1999), and Ostrom (2002)).

The main focus of the literature review is to investigate the specific characteristics underpinning success in community-based conservation initiatives. The first step to accomplishing this was to define terms such as 'success' and 'community', as well as look at catalysts, support and uncertainty for community-based conservation initiatives.

As community-based conservation is a form of 'governance', the term 'governance' is also explored in the literature.

2.2. Governance and community-based conservation

Co-management is viewed by Jentoft, McCay and Wilson (1998) as a decentralisation of management responsibility and thus a form of governance. Agrawal and Gibson (1999) have a similar view and describe community-based management as the most widespread form of participatory governance for natural resource management.

According to Short and Winter (1999, p. 614) governance is defined as:

“the decision-making structures, mechanisms and systems of administration which influence the operation of management systems”.

The authors distinguish clearly between governance and management; with governance being concerned “with long term strategic land management planning” and management connected with the “every day practices” (Short & Winter, 1999, p. 614). Short and Winter (1999) admit the distinction between governance and management is often blurred.

Farazmand (2012) believes the term governance has a plethora of meanings. Lu and Jacobs (2013, p. 80) also believe governance has a number of different meanings and for this reason refer to it as a “slippery” term. Lu and Jacobs (2013, p. 81) define governance very broadly as:

“a variety of horizontal, place-based, collaborative decision-making practices by a broad spectrum of people, private groups and public organisations”.

A broad definition of governance is applied to the literature relevant to conservation partnerships. This is evident from both the varied situations to which the term ‘governance’ is applied and the lack of distinction between governance and management activities in the literature. The definitions in the international literature do not distinguish between governing and management: it appears that community-based conservation captures aspects of both governing and management.

Political scientist Elinor Ostrom (1990) argues the three ways to govern natural resources are: state run, privatised, and collaborative management. She was referring specifically to common property natural resources used by communities as part of their livelihoods and she observed that collaborative management offered the most success over the long term by avoiding what Hardin (1968) famously described as the ‘tragedy of the commons’ and the degradation of the natural resource (Ostrom, 1990).

2.3. Defining community-base conservation

A number of terms are used in the literature to capture the many power sharing arrangements between central government and the community in governing and managing natural resources (see Appendix 1 for detailed analysis). Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004b) emphasise the inclusiveness of the different terms and conclude that “a partnership represents collaboration: collaboration may occur within co-management; and/or collaboration and co-management are forms of partnerships” (Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004b, p. 67). According to Brooks, Waylen and Mulder (2012) these terms and the term ‘community-based natural resource management’ are captured in the term ‘community-based conservation’.

These terms are widely recognised as having no consistency in definition or use (Agrawal & Gibson, 2001; Brinkerhoff, 2002; Carlsson & Berkes, 2005; Castro & Nielsen, 2001; Jentoft et al., 1998; Lawrence, 2006; Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004b; Pretty, 1995; Reed, 2008). However, authors such as Carlsson and Berkes (2005), Brinkerhoff (2002), Castro and Nielsen (2001), and Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004b) argue that the terms can be used interchangeably.

Although there is no single clear cut definition or use, common themes have emerged from the terms. Central to community-based conservation is the concept of shared decision making (Hart, 1992; Hovik, Harvold, & Joas, 2009; Lawrence, 2006; Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004b), delegated power (Goodwin, 1998; Lawrence, 2006; Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004b), participation (Lawrence, 2006; Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004b), empowerment (Lawrence, 2006), and a dynamic process (Selin & Chavez, 1995).

The literature shows that there are varying degrees of power sharing, and handing over of governing authority and management. Berkes (2009) agrees and believes there can be a wide range of arrangements, degrees of power sharing, and decision making involved.

Two New Zealand research publications claim that in the indigenous community in New Zealand the term co-management means shared decision making and power rather than mere consultation (Belgrave, Henare, Kawharu, Henare, & Williams, 2004; Durie, 2003). Tipa and Welch (2006) agree and take a duality view of co-management in their research on indigenous people and State management of freshwater resources in New Zealand. They define the 'co' in co-management as meaning 'dual management' between the government and citizens (Tipa & Welch, 2006, p. 378). This is consistent with the international literature definitions of community-based conservation management, which identifies shared decision making as a central element.

2.4. Catalyst for community-based conservation

A number of authors have acknowledged that since the 1990s there has been a world-wide push towards the collaborative management of protected areas (Borrini-Feyerabend, Pimbert, Farvar, Kothari, & Renard, 2007; Brinkerhoff, 2002; Gruber, 2010; Hall, 2009; Mandell, 1999; Michener, 1998; Pinkerton, 1989; Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004a, 2004b; Pomeroy & Berkes, 1997; Reed, 2008; Ribot, 2003; Wells & Brandon, 1992). This push was particularly prevalent in developing nations, where it is reported over 60 countries devolved some form of governance for natural resource management to non-governmental actors, during the 1990s (Ribot, 2003). This trend spread to developed nations (Stringer et al., 2008) and Natcher, Davis and Hickey (2005, p. 40) argued in 2005 that this form of governance should be used to "guide the stewardship of the world's natural resources into the future".

Various authors propose different reasons for the trend towards community-based conservation. Some argue that protected areas are too complex to be effectively governed by one actor (e.g., Bene & Neiland, (2006); Borrini-Feyerabend et al., (2007); Pimbert & Pretty, (1995); and Zurba, Ross, Izurieta, Rist, Bock & Berkes (2012)). Other authors argue the reasons for community-based conservation are weak government policy (Wells & Brandon, 1992) and government budget cuts (Agrawal & Ostrom, 2001; Mandell, 1999). For a more detailed analysis of the catalysts for devolving governance of natural resource management see Appendix 2.

2.5. Uncertainty with community-based conservation

In the past authors have expressed uncertainty about why governments choose to devolve power or enter into community-based conservation arrangements (Agrawal & Ostrom, 2001; Lawrence, 2006; Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004a; Reed, 2008).

Some uncertainty stems from limited evidence that community-based conservation works in practice (Gruber, 2010; Hogg, Kvarda, Nordbeck, & Pregernig, 2012). For this reason community-based conservation has been referred to as a “fashion” (Pretty, 1995, p. 1251) and “short-term political fads” (Hogg et al., 2012, p. 59). Further, Agrawal and Gibson (2001, p. 5) argue that the increase in democratic policy and participation could result in a negative effect, with conservation projects being viewed as unattractive and impractical.

Despite the cynicism, the importance of community-based conservation has been recognised by authors such as Brinkerhoff (2002), Daniels and Walker (1996), Pierre and Peters (2000), Pinkerton (1989), Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004a), and Selin and Chavez (1995). Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004a) recognise collaborative management as an important complement to central government and not an alternative.

2.6. Support for community-based conservation

Collaborative management was supported by Hart (1992) because he believes it is central to the foundation of democracy. Brinkerhoff (2002), who draws on and supports the work of Arnstein (1969), shares the belief that decisions that affect communities should be made at the community level. In Brinkerhoff’s opinion “governments should steer, or at least facilitate, and the private sector should row” (Brinkerhoff, 2002, p. 19). McCay and Jentoft (2008) also agree, and state “the democratic principle that affected interests should have a say in the decision-making process is a challenging one. Nevertheless, it has some merits from democratic [...] rationality and proficiency perspectives. A management system positioning users passively at the receiving end of the decision-making process will most likely fail” (McCay & Jentoft, 2008, p. 247).

2.7. Defining Community

In the literature on community-based conservation there are few definitions of ‘community’. Several authors believe misconceptions of the term are a cause of community-based conservation initiatives failing (e.g., Agrawal & Gibson (1999); and Mulrennan, Mark & Scott (2012). Tipa and Welch (2006) believe this lack of definition opens the term up to ambiguity and to being interpreted differently by the State and the community.

That community is a difficult term to define, is articulated by Smith, who states:

Of all the words in sociological discourse ‘community’ is most obviously the one that comes from wonderland, in that it can mean just what you want (Smith 1966, as cited in de Beer, 2013, p. 560).

Community as defined by Kearney et al. (2007) includes the norms, identity, values, and sense of meaning people have in a particular area. However, others challenge this. As pointed out by Jentoft, McCay and Wilson (1998) there are also virtual communities where there is no particular geographic or social focus beyond shared participation.

The community, according to Agrawal and Gibson (1999) and Pretty (1995), is often idealised as homogeneous, small, territorial, with shared norms and values or as Brookes (2012) describes it as one harmonious unit. This unified view of communities can ignore the differences within a community, and Agrawal and Gibson (2001, p. 7) label it the 'mythic community' as it is rarely true. In the 'mythic community' there is no accounting for multiple interests, uneven power, or multiple actors (Agrawal & Gibson, 1999). Carlsson and Berkes (2005) believe a 'mythic community' ignores different ethnicities, socioeconomic groups and gender in communities.

Agrawal and Gibson (2001) sum up communities as:

[...] complex entities containing individuals differentiated by status, political and economic power, religion and social prestige and intentions. Some operate harmoniously, others do not. (2001, p. 1).

Agrawal and Gibson (2001) emphasise that communities consist of numerous actors with countless interests that can change as new opportunities arise. Therefore, they argue, communities and the groups within the communities are dynamic (Agrawal & Gibson, 1999). It is this dynamic nature of communities that leads Agrawal and Gibson (2001) to deduce that a community or community group that holds a conservation belief one day, may not hold that same belief the next day. Carlsson and Berkes (2005, p. 67) agree and describe communities as "constantly changing". The changing nature of communities has led Stevens (1997) to believe that highly successful community-based conservation projects one year may not be successful the next year or could even fail. This is consistent with Measham and Lumbasi's (2013) research that warns that success in the past does not guarantee success in the future.

Power dynamics can also cause a community group to fail, according to Waddock (1989), who warns that community groups are based on cooperation and this leads them to become susceptible to power dynamics and fragility. If a relationship breaks down in a community group then the group is in peril, whereas government agencies can continue without main members or even during restructures (Waddock, 1989).

Community groups are viewed by Pretty (1995) as having the potential to deliver powerful results. Pretty bases this on the premise that central to community groups is participation, which is inherently a collective action. This is backed up by Agrawal and Gibson (2001, p. 1) who argued that community groups are viewed as "champions of decentralisation, meaningful participation, cultural autonomy and conservation".

Agrawal and Gibson (2001) also argue that community groups have the ability to introduce conservation norms into a community, which external actors cannot do. Measham (2006) provides evidence for this from his research on two rural case studies in northern Queensland, Australia. He found the way adults interact with the environment is developed as a child and is learnt from family, culture and community.

2.8. Success in community-based conservation

In 2004, Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004a) claimed that co-management arrangements had mixed success. In 2013, in community-based natural resource management, Measham and Lumbasi (2013) believed failure was more common than success.

But what is success and how is it defined in community-based conservation literature? Some authors, for example Selin and Chavez (1995), have a broad view of success and define it as the empowerment of communities and an increase in social responsibility in the management of natural resources. Pretty (1995), based on his research into participation in agricultural development, viewed empowerment and collective action not so much as a success but rather as a fundamental right.

A number of authors define success with communities and resource users as an increase in power sharing (e.g., Kruse, Klein, Braund, Moorehead & Simone, (1998)), knowledge sharing (e.g., Berkes, (2009)), and decision making (e.g., Castro & Nielsen, (2001)).

Shared decision making is a success because it is more efficient and effective, according to Castro and Nielson (2001). Kubo (2008) on the other hand, argues it is a success because it results in the community group having increased ownership, increased responsibility, and greater acceptance of decisions, and therefore leads to less disruption. However, these authors assume all users and affected parties are involved in the decision making process.

Efficiency, equity and sustainability of natural resources were the measures for evaluating success in a study by Sen and Raakjaer-Nielsen (1996) aimed at developing a model for fisheries co-management. The study analysed 22 case studies of small-scale fisheries co-management projects in developing and developed countries. However, they were unable to come to a conclusion on whether efficiency and equity were present in decision making due to a lack of information on stakeholder representation, capabilities, and participation in decision making (Sen & Raakjaer-Nielsen, 1996).

Brooks, Waylen and Borgerhoff Mulder (2012) examined how national context, project design, and local community characteristics influenced success in community-based conservation projects. The authors examined 136 community-based conservation projects in 40 countries. They defined success as resulting in positive changes in community group views on conservation goals, decreased off-take, and improved benefits for species, habitat, and livelihoods. The authors do not explain what they mean by the term 'decreased off-take'.

Mountjoy et al. (2013) argue that achieving environmental outcomes is the most important measure of success in community-based natural resource management. This was found to be the case in research carried out in community-led kiwi recovery work in Northland, New Zealand. This research showed “where communities are motivated, state led, authoritarian practices are not essential for conservation” (Blue & Blunden, 2010, p. 120).

As indicated in the examples above, success can have a wide variety of definitions in community-based conservation initiatives. This could be due to the diverse types of initiatives that exist and because evaluating success can be very difficult. Mulrennan, Mark and Scott (2012) recognise that, when success is measured as conservation outcomes changing group dynamics make success unpredictable as the outcomes are often different from what were originally planned. Horwich and Lyon (2007) believe that as there is often not the capacity, definitive data or funding for monitoring community-based conservation outcomes, it is rarely carried out adequately.

The difficulty in defining success with community-based conservation initiatives could be a reason for it not being defined in some research. Gruber (2010) found, in his review of 47 case studies and journal articles focused on the characteristics that contribute to the success of community-based conservation, that success was often not defined. He recommended further research to define success, particularly over longer time periods.

It is possible that the perception of a community group being successful or unsuccessful could be based on how success is defined and who is defining success.

2.9. Characteristics underpinning success in community-based conservation

A number of authors have researched the characteristics underpinning success in effective community-based conservation (e.g., Brooks, Waylen and Mulder, (2012); Plummer & FitzGibbon, (2004a); Measham & Lumbasi, (2013); Gruber, (2010); and Mountjoy, Seekamp, Davenport & Whiles, (2013)). According to Ostrom (2007) there can be no one formula for successful community based natural resource management due to the wide variety of factors involved. Brooks, Waylen and Mulder (2012) similarly agree that there is no consistency with success in community-based conservation.

Ostrom’s (2007) and Brooks et al.’s (2012) views are consistent with an earlier study undertaken by Pye-Smith, Borrini-Feyerabend and Sandbrook (1994). Analysing 10 case studies of communities engaged successfully in primary environmental care in Calcutta, Nepal, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Mauritania, Krakow, Los Angeles, Costa Rica, Ecuador and the Philippines, they concluded “we found no single condition that plays an important role everywhere” (Pye-Smith et al., 1994, p. 173). This could indicate that success in community-based conservation is context specific or, as Ostrom (2007) believes, too many varied factors are involved. Some common conditions found in the 10 case studies were: communities having a major role in resource management; respecting traditional associations;

celebrating success no matter how small; working together and tackling big problems first. Although there appears to be no single common condition that plays an important role in the success of the 10 case studies, the research did show that success was more likely in communities in “effective partnership with external individuals and institutions” (Pye-Smith et al., 1994, p. 179).

Preconditions for Success

Preconditions for success in the co-management of common pool resources are presented in a framework by Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004b). Based on a review of literature, the framework was also heavily influenced, according to Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004a), by the work of Waddock (1989), who identified and described environmental forces that compel organisations to form partnerships to solve social concerns.

Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004a) recognised that preconditions originated from either the external environment or a human dimension. The preconditions from the ‘external’ environment only led to successful co-management if they triggered a reaction from people. For example, they prompted people to take action. The preconditions associated with the ‘human dimension’ involved the relationships connecting people and the willingness of people to take action.

The ‘external’ preconditions, according to Plummer and FitzGibbon’s (2004a) framework, are:

- A real or imagined crisis important enough to get people involved by identifying areas of common concern and resulting in joining people together to take action.
- Legally mandated by government, brokered by a third party or encouraged through incentives. This includes where legislation requires public involvement, or public involvement is recommended by third parties such as mediators.

The ‘human dimension’ preconditions are:

- A willingness by local users to contribute by being hooked into the purpose. Some partnerships will end when the initial goal is achieved unless new goals are set and people are re-hooked into contributing.
- An opportunity for negotiation. Unfortunately, the authors have not elaborated on this term and it is too broad to draw any conclusions.
- A leadership or energy centre. Selin and Chavez (1995) state this is often a person who mobilises others to participate by sharing the ‘vision’ of what the partnership can achieve. Gray (1985) describes such people as a ‘Champion’ and a crucial driver for getting partnerships moving.

- A common vision about an issue and a shared understanding on the way it should be solved. Selin and Chavez (1995) believe there is usually a network of communication already existing that can be utilised.

Pinkerton (1989) argues the success of co-management is directly related to the human dimension rather than the external preconditions. She views the social relationships of the “human actors” involved as the most important precondition for success.

Communities Initiating Projects

Measham and Lumbasi (2013) researched what factors led to success in two community-based natural resource management case studies. One case study was based in Kenya on community-managed land and focused on species recovery. The other case study was based in Australia on privately owned farm land and focused on vegetation conservation. The case studies were chosen as examples of successful community-based natural resource management because conservation outcomes were being achieved and community participants stated they felt empowered by the projects.

The authors argue that both case studies were successful due to the residents, who initiated the projects, having had a strong attachment to the local landscape and project species, and also autonomy at the start of the project when it was initiated (Measham & Lumbasi, 2013). They concluded the most important factor was communities initiating the projects as this resulted in a high level of community ‘ownership’ from the beginning and strong local relevance to the community (Measham & Lumbasi, 2013). Any external parties who came on board after the establishment phase did so on conditions set by the local community (Measham & Lumbasi, 2013). Both projects were supported by local Non-Government Organisations who provided expert advice and funding; however, the authors emphasise that the projects were still designed and implemented by the community groups.

Measham and Lumbasi’s (2013) findings are consistent with those of Sen and Raakjaer-Nielsen’s from 1996, stating that community-initiated projects or bottom-up conservation initiatives need less government involvement. In bottom-up conservation initiatives the community group’s role is greater and there is more community ownership (Sen & Raakjaer-Nielsen, 1996).

Participation

In a large comparative study undertaken by Gruber (2010) that analysed the characteristics underpinning the success of community-based natural resource management projects, participation was found to be essential. In this study, participation included local community participants as well as all parties affected by the community-based natural resource management project. The study does not define success, but identifies which characteristics are most frequently associated with successful community based natural resource management. Gruber (2010) reviewed 23 published reports and 24 case studies and participation was cited by many of the authors as the most critical element for success.

Gruber states that the higher up on Arnstein's (1969) citizen participation typology, the higher the chance of success.

Arnstein (1969), critiquing participation and the many forms in which it appears, developed a typology of citizen participation based on findings in three federal social programs in the United States. Several authors, such as Hart (1992), Pretty (1995), Sen and Raakjaer-Nielson (1996), and Lawrence (2006) constructed typologies based on Arnstein's (1969). These typologies offer useful frameworks for analysing participation by illustrating and classifying the different types of participation. The typologies show that in practice participation can cover a range of forms of community engagement and power in decision making. At the lower levels of the typologies are token forms of participation such as manipulation and consultation, and at the higher levels are community empowerment, full control, and a true sharing of power.

Pretty (1995) constructed a typology of participation by analysing the different ways that development organisations interpret, define, and use the term participation. At the lowest level (manipulative participation) people are told what to do and they effectively have no power to make any decisions. At the highest level (self-mobilisation) people are independent from the regulatory agent and have the power to make decisions (Pretty, 1995). In between these levels are passive participation (information is shared with people), consultation (people answer questions but there is no obligation by the external agency to consider their views), material incentives (people contribute resources and in return receive incentives), functional participation (people are a means to achieve project goals set by an external agency), and interactive participation (joint analysis and development of action plans where participation is seen as a right and not just as a means to achieve project objectives) (Pretty, 1995).

In Pretty's (1995) typology the term 'participation' can have a number of interpretations. He believes the term should be qualified to as whether it is mere consultation or actual interaction with shared decision-making power (Pretty, 1995). He concludes that the term participation can be used in situations where people have no power as long as this lack of power is transparent. Horwich and Lyon (2007), however, believe that the "nature and extent of participation is rarely clarified" (Horwich & Lyon, 2007, p. 380).

This lack of clarification was illustrated in an internal study carried out by The World Bank, which found that many of The Bank's projects that were described as 'participatory' did not comply with The World Bank's definition of participation (World Bank, 1994, as cited in Pretty 1995, p. 1253). The World Bank's definition of participation included power sharing but in practice the stakeholders had no power to influence outcomes or make decisions (World Bank, 1994, as cited in Pretty 1995, p. 1253).

The World Bank is not the only case where there has been a lack of clarity in the definition of participation and where participation has not resulted in any devolution of decision-making power. Below are further examples:

- Research into Canada's participatory management of coastal and ocean areas showed that, despite participatory governance being part of the Ocean Act 1997, there was no devolution of decision-making power and no meaningful role for communities (Kearney et al., 2007).
- Guijt (1991, as cited in Pretty, 1995, p. 1253) points out that in a study of 230 rural development institutions in Africa participation was often simply having discussions or citizens providing information to officials (Pretty, 1995).
- In a study on participation in the management of Greek Natura 2000 sites, despite a shift towards participatory methods, the results indicated "stakeholders' participation exists mainly on paper whereas community participation is practically absent" (Apostolopoulou, Drakou, & Pediaditi, 2012, p. 308).
- Farrington (1998) studied farmers' participation in agricultural research and concluded that participation had become a 'devalued' term and was used without any substance as participants had no decision-making powers.

A number of authors believe that sometimes governments are not willing to devolve power (Berkes, 1994; Brooks et al., 2012). Kubo (2008) argues this was the case in a rural forestry project in Indonesia where a study found the local people had become a proxy to state policy (Kubo, 2008). Gray (1989) illustrates that in some cases the obstacles are too great for power sharing, for example, where there are basic ideological differences, unilateral power stands with one stakeholder, legal precedents are sought, and past interventions have failed. Other reasons cited for not devolving decision-making power include a dominant centralised institutional culture (Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004a), lack of flexibility in large government bodies for implementing agreements (Gray, 1989), and a view that compromising with other stakeholders means watering down objectives (Mulrennan et al., 2012; Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004a). Not devolving decision-making power has been associated with project failure (Mulrennan et al., 2012), unwieldy decision-making process (Jentoft, 2000), and conflict (Castro & Nielsen, 2001).

Pretty's typology is an adaptation of a typology developed by Hart (1992) to rank children's participation from tokenism to citizenship. However, Hart (1992) argues that if there is no meaningful role or the children's opinions are not considered then these levels should be labelled 'non-participation'. Applying this view to Pretty's typology would result in the first four levels being labelled as 'non-participation'.

Lawrence (2006) took a similar view in developing a typology for participation in voluntary biological monitoring and left out the "overtly exploitative types" (Lawrence, 2006, p. 283). She has four levels of participation: consultative, functional, collaborative, and transformative.

Having non-participation at initial levels is consistent with the original ladder of participation developed by Arnstein in 1969, on which Hart (1992), Lawrence (2006), and Pretty (1995) have based their typologies. Arnstein's (1969) typology calls the bottom two rungs 'non-

participation', with the focus on education or 'curing' the participants. The next three rungs are referred to as 'degrees of tokenism' and while they involve informing and consultation, citizens have no power to ensure their views are considered. The top three rungs are true participation, where there are degrees of citizen power from partnership to full citizen control. These top rungs are where the redistribution of power begins and citizens have full managerial power and decision-making rights. Arnstein (1969) describes citizen participation as having real power to make decisions and shape the process as opposed to an "empty ritual of participation" (Arnstein, 1969, p. 216). Arnstein (1969) believes that in reaching these rungs citizens have often had to demand the power as it is never proffered. Agrawal and Ostrom (2001) argue that people constantly need to pursue power-sharing opportunities or risk the withdrawal of decentralisation.

In reality there would be many rungs on Arnstein's ladder of participation and both the State and citizens would not fit neatly into eight boxes (Arnstein, 1969).

Arnstein's (1969) typology is one dimensional and does not account for the many forms of power and associated factors, such as knowledge, social inclusion, and social capital (Goodwin, 1998). Berkes (1991, 1994) constructed a multi-dimensional typology of co-management that combines different processes, organisational structures and outcomes; however, Tipa and Welch (2006) argue that although this is the most comprehensive analysis of co-management, it is difficult to differentiate, given all the different categories, and thus is problematic in practice.

It is worth noting that Tipa and Welch (2006) also comment that in practice differentiating between one-dimensional simple typologies is also problematic because of the broad categories. In Sen and Raakjaer-Nielsen's (1996) one-dimensional typology developed from research into fisheries co-management in Asia and Africa, there are five broad categories: instructive, informative, consultative, cooperative, and advisory. Due to the broadness of the categories it is difficult to distinguish between the consultative, cooperative, and advisory categories.

Tipa and Welch (2006) believe that co-management agreements, may in reality, fit in all categories in a typology. While this is consistent with Sen and Raakjaer-Nielsen's (1996) findings in fisheries co-management in 1996, Sen and Raakjaer-Nielsen also highlight that co-management agreements can potentially change typology categories from year to year.

All the typologies argue that participation is essential for success in projects involving the engagement and cooperation of people. As community-based conservation initiatives are reliant on community engagement it is a rational assumption that participation will therefore also be an important factor.

The typologies also highlight and help identify what levels and types of participation contribute to success. Pretty (1995) argues that the higher the project is on the participation typology ladder, the more likely the project will be successful. Research by Arnstein (1969),

Sen and Raakjaer-Nielson (1996), Hart (1992), and Lawrence (2006) came to similar conclusions.

Adaptive Co-Management

According to Olsson, Folke and Berkes (2004), adaptive management techniques are seen as underpinning success in community-based conservation by being able to respond to ecosystem dynamics, uncertainty, and change. Adaptive co-management originates from applied ecology and is founded on the premise that ecological and social uncertainty in governance is best addressed through collaboration (2009). This type of co-management connects experiential and experimental learning with collaboration for effective governance of natural resources (Armitage et al., 2009).

The characteristics of adaptive co-management are learning by doing, trust building, and the exchange of perspectives (Pinel & Pecos, 2012). According to Armitage et al. (2009), adaptive management builds effective linkages for exchanging information, problem solving, shared understanding, and develops a process for social learning by connecting networks of actors. Catalyst conditions for the adaptive co-management process are identified by Olsson, Folke and Berkes (2004) as being enabling legislation, financial support, monitoring and responding to environmental feedback, information flow and social network building, combining various sources of information, and collaborative learning.

In case studies carried out in Sweden and Canada on catchment-based management it was argued that adaptive co-management was a bottom-up self-organising system for problem solving rather than a top down formal arrangement (Olsson et al., 2004). Armitage et al. (2009) highlight that adaptive co-management is a flexible management technique tailored to specific locations, projects, scales, and organisations, where empowerment is a core characteristic.

Capacity Building

Mountjoy, Seekamp, Davenport and Whiles (2013) argue that the reason some community-based natural resource management groups fail while others succeed is due to capacity. Their research was aimed at furthering understanding on how the type of capacity affects success in community-based natural resource management. Success was defined as achieving the planned goals and conservation outcomes. The research focused on the link between capacity and the successful implementation of natural resource management plans in Illinois, U.S.A. They defined capacity as “the collective ability of a group to combine various forms of capital to produce desired results or outcomes” (Mountjoy et al., 2013, p. 1548). Capital is defined as including human capital (skills, knowledge, core attitudes, motivation and leadership), bonding social capital (trust, reciprocity, shared values, attitudes, respect and common values), bridging social capital (networks, voluntary associations, density of acquaintanceships, outreach and marketing), organisation capital

(membership structure, protocols, procedures, vision and communication), and economic capital (financial resources, funding, fundraising and equipment).

From this large list of capital Mountjoy et al. (2013) recognised the most important indicators of capacity as being:

- Leadership (strong, committed, effective, visionary and experienced leadership is necessary)
- Motivation (individuals within the group are inspired, work hard, are dedicated and stimulate the group into action)
- Respect (often discussed in combination with trust and a necessary component of collaboration and group cohesiveness)
- Common values (shared values and interests; like mindedness in achieving the same end results)
- Outreach (building external relationships, community support and collaboration with diverse groups)
- Marketing (increasing public awareness through labels, slogans and advertising)
- Shared Vision/Plan (long-term plan, goals, objectives and quality work programmes)
- Funding (effective internal fundraising skills and the funding to meet goals)
- Equipment (equipment necessary for carrying out the on-the-ground work as well as office supplies).

The recommendation for success is to focus initially on building outreach, respect, and common values (Mountjoy et al., 2013). To become highly successful there also needs to be a focus on leadership, motivation, and vision. The results proved that community-based natural resource management groups with high levels of capacity had increased success in natural resource management plan implementation. Further to this, the degree of success could be predicted from the level of capacity. Funding was also identified as being important but not as critical, and should only be focused on in addition to other capital (Mountjoy et al., 2013). In contrast, Brewer (2013) recognised in 2013 that funding is an important factor and Arnstein (1969) argued in 1969 that projects are unlikely to succeed without sufficient financial resources even when true participation has occurred and power sharing is happening. Goodwin (1998) also believed that funding was essential for community groups to expand and achieve outcomes.

Authors such as Baral (2013), Measham and Lumbasi (2013), Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004a), Agrawal and Ostrom (2001), and Brooks, Waylen and Mulder (2012) agree that capacity building is essential for success. Baral (2013) believes capacity building can lead to organisations with several drivers, which makes them better at responding to uncertainty. Agrawal and Ostrom (2001) reason that capacity building leads to community groups self-organising, and similarly Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004a) believe capacity building results in the empowerment of the community to have an increased involvement in resource management.

In 2008 the Canadian government recognised the importance of capacity building in collaboratively governed biosphere reserve projects (Edge & McAllister, 2009). The government allocated \$2 million from the federal budget solely towards capacity building within these programmes (Edge & McAllister, 2009). Likewise, in a study on integrated coastal and ocean community-based management in Canada, a central recommendation was that community participation be strengthened and developed by focusing on capacity building within the community (Kearney et al., 2007).

Most community-based conservation studies look at one specific resource area (for example forestry or fisheries), one specific geographical location or one specific outcome (Brooks et al., 2012). Ostrom's (2007) belief that researchers need to consider the complex multivariate nature of socioecological systems inspired Brooks, Waylen and Mulder (2012) to undertake a multivariate study on how national context, project design, and local community characteristics influence success in four outcomes (attitudes, behaviours, ecological, and economic). Success was defined as positive changes in views on conservation goals, decreased off-take, and improved benefits for species, habitat and livelihoods (Brooks et al., 2012). The authors used a global comparative database of 136 community-based conservation projects in 40 countries (Brooks et al., 2012), and cases were chosen through a systematic literature review and included conserving forests, grasslands, wildlife, and fisheries. Although this research is based on conservation projects focused on development there is still some value in it for New Zealand. The research concluded that project design, in particular capacity-building and participation, were the most important links to success in all four outcomes (Brooks et al., 2012).

Interconnection of Characteristics

The five main characteristics identified in the literature as underpinning success in community-based conservation initiatives all have elements in common.

Leadership and a shared understanding in solving an issue are pre-conditions for success and also elements of capacity building. Trust is both an element of capacity building and a central element to adaptive co-management. Adaptive co-management is a bottom-up self-organising system, which makes it directly related to communities initiating projects and capacity building.

The empowerment of the community group is fundamental to participation, adaptive co-management, communities initiating projects and capacity building. This illustrates that empowerment is a significant characteristic underpinning success. Horwich and Lyon (2007) see empowerment as critical and are adamant that community groups must be empowered to manage their own community projects and that the State and Non-Government Organisations "must strive for working themselves out of a job" (Horwich & Lyon, 2007, p. 380).

2.10. Conclusion

The literature produces a number of terms that capture the many power-sharing arrangements between the State and the community in governing and managing natural resources. Central to all the terms are delegated power, shared decision making, participation, and the empowerment of the community. While the literature on community-based conservation seldom defines the term 'community', several authors define community as consisting of numerous actors with countless interests.

Success in community-based conservation has been defined as an increase in power sharing, knowledge sharing, decision making, positive changes in community group views on conservation projects, improved benefits for species and habitat, community empowerment, and the achievement of environmental outcomes. Some authors believe there is no one characteristic underpinning success, while others have identified the following characteristics:

- Preconditions for success in community-based conservation initiatives: These are a real or imagined crisis, the partnership legally mandated by government, a willingness by locals to contribute to an initiative, an opportunity for negotiation, a leadership or energy centre, and a shared understanding on how an issue can be solved.
- Community groups initiating projects: Projects initiated by the community have been attributed to resulting in a high level of community ownership and strong project relevance to the local community.
- Participation: For true participation to occur there must be a sharing of power between the State and the community, not just consultation. The higher up the participation typologies, the more likely it is that a community-based conservation initiative will be successful.
- Adaptive co-management: The characteristics of adaptive co-management are learning by doing, trust building, exchange of perspectives, and empowerment. Adaptive co-management is reported to be a flexible management technique that can be tailored to specific locations and initiatives.
- Capacity building: This is the ability of a group to combine various forms of capital to produce the desired outcomes. The most important forms of capital have been identified by Mountjoy et al. (2013) as leadership, motivation, respect, common values, outreach, marketing, shared vision/plan, funding, and equipment. Community-based natural resource management groups with higher levels of capacity had greater chances of success. Thus capacity can act as a predictor for success.

A common element to many of the above characteristics is the empowerment of the community group. Other common elements are trust, leadership, a common vision, and communities initiating the project.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

Research has been described as “the systematic process of collecting and analyzing information (data) in order to increase our understanding of the phenomenon with which we are concerned or interested” (Leedy, 1997, p. 3).

This chapter presents the framework for collecting and analysing the information concerned with answering the thesis question: How can successful conservation partnerships be achieved on public conservation land by the New Zealand Department of Conservation?

The research design method used was a case study. Blaikie (2009) argues that case studies provide an opportunity to examine causal processes and the mechanisms that can lead to change. This is because case studies allow the researcher to delve deep into detail and scrutinise social phenomena. Likewise, Flyvberg (2006) also supports the use of case studies and believes they allow the researcher to focus on real-life situations and phenomena as they occur.

While factors that contribute to success can be inferred from researching cases that have failed, Measham and Lumbasi (2013) believe that, in order to understand the surrounding circumstances for success in community-based natural resource management, it is necessary to focus on a successful case study. Similarly, to explore how successful conservation partnerships can be achieved on public conservation land by the New Zealand Department of Conservation, it is necessary to study a successful partnership.

A range of potential partnerships existed. The critical criterion for selection was that the partnership must be a community-based conservation initiative that involved the Department of Conservation.

O’Leary (2010) states that there are three characteristics to case selection – pragmatics, purposiveness, and intrinsic interest. In this particular study all three played a factor. The Conservation Trust chosen was a pragmatic choice as it was easily accessible for research due to its physical location and the willingness of members to participate. Purposiveness was evident in that the group has been operating a long time, has achieved some significant conservation outcomes, and so could be viewed by the Department as being successful. Intrinsic interest was manifest with the Conservation Trust changing focus and direction several times by diversifying into different species recovery projects.

The data collection method used was semi-structured, face-to-face interviews. The advantage of semi-structured interviews is that they are flexible enough to include any unexpected data that may not have been considered when the interview questions were constructed (O’Leary, 2010). Face-to-face interviews not only allowed a rapport to be established but also provided opportunities for clarifying answers. As recommended by Pretty (1995), the interview method was set up to be more of a structured conversation than an interview.

Five semi-structured interviews were carried out with key members of the Conservation Trust to uncover both insights into the characteristics underpinning successful community-based conservation initiatives with the Department of Conservation and the specific attributes of the Department that encourage the initiatives to be successful. The criterion for selecting the key members was identifying those in the Conservation Trust who would most likely hold the answers to the research objectives and thus the research question. The selected members were recognised as having the relevant information, knowledge and/or experience to provide credible, rich, qualitative data that would offer the most valuable insights. Interviews were carried out with:

- Two founding members of the Conservation Trust: One a permanent employee of the Department of Conservation in the community relations role who is referred to in this chapter as '*DOC Trustee*'; the other, a former Department of Conservation employee who is currently employed by the Conservation Trust as a coordinator and is referred to as the '*Champion*', a term used by Gray (1985) to describe someone who is crucial for driving an initiative.
- Two part-time staff contracted to the Conservation Trust in an operational role: Both have been with the Trust for a number of years but were not involved during the establishment phase. One of these is a Department of Conservation employee who works part-time for the Conservation Trust, referred to as '*DOC Operations*'. The other has no background with the Department and was trained by the Trust. This person is called '*Trust Operations*'.
- Last, the chairperson, who is a relatively new addition to the Conservation Trust and has been in the role for approximately one year, hence called '*New Chairperson*'.

Where the person interviewed still works for the Department this has been tagged in the interview name, i.e. [*DOC Operations*] and [*DOC Trustee*]. Although the Champion is an ex-Department contractor this connection has not been reflected in her interview name and it was considered more appropriate to use the term [*Champion*] and be consistent with Gray's (1985) research.

All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were then analysed using qualitative data analysis to identify key themes across the participants. This essentially entailed a process of discovery by examining the transcripts and drawing out themes, patterns, relationship dynamics, and insights.

This research qualified as a 'low risk' research project. In such projects harm to participants is minimal – no more than is normally encountered in daily life. Low risk research projects do not need approval from Massey University's Human Ethics Committee but are recorded on a database to which the committee has access.

Although the researcher had worked in a community relations role for the Department on the West Coast there was no professional connection with the selected Conservation Trust before this study.

Brunckhorst (2010) warns that care is needed when transferring general lessons from one case study to another because of the difference in project scale, circumstances, locations, community, and resource. This is particularly true for community-based conservation where there is a broad variety of conservation initiatives.

This thesis explores the characteristics that underpin success, but does not explain how to implement them. It does not rank the characteristics or investigate the interactions between them. It also does not answer the question why people participate in community-based conservation, nor does it consider the complications and interactions between local level initiatives and regional levels. Prager (2010) states that empirical evidence indicates that the benefits of collaborative management can be lost when up-scaling to the regional level unless particular care is taken to develop a communication link.

Extending the focus of future research to answer these questions would have value in providing greater knowledge and understanding of success in community-based conservation initiatives.

4. CASE DESCRIPTION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter gives an account of the West Coast Conservation Trust studied, the Department of Conservation and the West Coast community. It outlines the establishment and development of the Conservation Trust and the key milestones that have been achieved. It describes the West Coast community where the Conservation Trust operates and offers a brief background on the Department of Conservation. The Department of Conservation's current organisational structure was implemented on 2 September 2013. In this case study, the Department has been described according to the organisational structure that was in existence before 2 September 2013. This structure was in place when the Conservation Trust was established and for 7 of the 8 years that it has been operating.

4.2. Department of Conservation

The Department of Conservation, *Te Papa Atawhai*, is the central government authority responsible for managing the conservation of New Zealand's natural and historic resources on behalf of all New Zealanders (Department of Conservation, 2014).

Before the Department's establishment in 1987, a number of individual government departments were responsible for conservation. These were the Forest Service, Wildlife Service, Department of Lands and Survey, Historic Places Trust, and the Department of Internal Affairs (Napp, 2007). The commercially productive land, under the management of these departments, was transferred to state owned enterprises. The land deemed to have conservation values was transferred to the Department of Conservation (Napp, 2007).

Two years later, in 1989, the Department was restructured, and again in 1996 (Napp, 2007). In 2013, when this research began, the Department was restructured yet again to grow conservation by working in partnership with the community (Department of Conservation, 2014).

In 2014, the Department administered 8.5 million hectares of public conservation land throughout New Zealand (Department of Conservation, 2014). The Department is responsible for 14,000 km of track, 976 huts, 1,950 toilets, and 24 visitor centres (Department of Conservation, 2014). It is also responsible for safeguarding indigenous threatened species and works with birds, reptiles, marine mammals, invertebrates, and both marine and fresh water fish (Department of Conservation, 2014).

The West Coast *Tai Poutini* Conservancy is unique as it is the largest and most protected region in New Zealand. A massive 84% of land on the West Coast is classified as public conservation land and administered by the Department (Department of Conservation, 2010). Almost 25% of all public conservation land in New Zealand, or 1.912 million hectares, is reported to be located within the West Coast *Tai Poutini* Conservancy (Department of Conservation, 2010).

The West Coast *Tai Poutini* Conservancy covers the area west of the main divide in the Southern Alps and extends from Big Bay *Tihei Mauri Ora* in South Westland north to Kahurangi point in the Kahurangi National Park (Department of Conservation, 2010). It covers 650 km of coast line and extends 200 nautical miles to the outer boundary of the exclusive economic zone in the Tasman Sea (Department of Conservation, 2010). Biodiversity values are high, with a number of threatened species and unique ecosystems (Department of Conservation, 2010).

4.3. The West Coast region

The West Coast region is defined by its isolation, rugged landscapes and rainforests. With a population of only 31,000 residing on the coast, it is one of the most sparsely populated regions in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). The West Coast Regional Council describes the West Coast as a region of rainfall and rivers (West Coast Regional Council, 2015). The economy is reliant on natural resources such as coal, gold, timber, fisheries, and pastoral resources, as well as a growing tourism industry (West Coast Regional Council, 2015).

4.4. The West Coast and the Department

A nationwide qualitative research study was commissioned in 2011 to look at how the public views the Department. The study canvassed 3,614 New Zealanders (Department of Conservation, 2011a). Overall the Department was rated highly by respondents, with 86% citing conservation as important to them (Department of Conservation, 2011a). The majority of people interviewed maintained that conservation is as important as health, and law and order. The study produced some surprising results in relation to the West Coast Conservancy. While the Conservancy scored highest for visits to conservation estate and awareness of the role of the Department, of those interviewed on the West Coast, only 41% believed the Department was making good use of taxpayer money; nationally, the rating was 71% (Department of Conservation, 2011a). The West Coast Conservancy also received the lowest rating for how well the Department works with communities. Conclusions drawn from the interviews by the Department were that the West Coast *Tai Poutini* Conservancy needed to go “back to basics” and start building support among the community (Department of Conservation, 2011a).

4.5. The West Coast Conservation Trust

Based on data from interviews and Conservation Trust documents, this section outlines the objectives, projects, and history of the West Coast Conservation Trust, describing its development from an initial idea to its current state.

In 2006 the Department of Conservation called a community meeting to investigate the level of interest in setting up a predator-trapping line to protect a bird species² (referred to as species A) that had declined in the area (Department of Conservation Programme Manager, pers. comm., 30 July 2014). There was sufficient interest in the community to form a small group focused on maintaining a predator trapping line, and before long a key community member was driving the group and formed it into the Conservation Trust. This key member was also influential in steering the direction and worked hard to include a second species (species B) recovery programme (Department of Conservation Programme Manager, pers. comm., 30 July 2014). The Conservation Trust now consists of nine people and runs two different species-recovery programmes (official website of the Trust³).

The mission statement for the Conservation Trust is:

To be recognised as a professional conservation organisation fostering community involvement and ecological enhancement (official website of the Trust).

The vision of the Conservation Trust, as stated on the Trust's website, is to have self-sustaining populations of two particular species within a set geographic area by engaging communities and stakeholders to drive recovery efforts (official website of the Trust). The goals and primary objective of the Conservation Trust emphasise the importance of a broad-based, committed and skilled team working towards the recovery of two particular species and towards securing funding and project promotion (official website of the Trust). According to its website, the Conservation Trust recognises the significance of involving the local community and identifies the key elements to achieving this as "ownership, educational benefits and enjoyment" (official website of the Trust).

The Conservation Trust utilises volunteers for activities such as monitoring, maintenance of predator trapping lines, administration and funding applications (official website of the Trust). Volunteers are generally locals from the surrounding area (Department of Conservation Programme Manager, pers. comm., 30 July 2014).

The Conservation Trust is supported by a number of organisations that sponsor in-kind as well as financially. Major in-kind sponsors are the Willowbank Wildlife Reserve, the Department of Conservation, and several local businesses (official website of the Trust). Financial sponsors include the Bank of New Zealand, World Wildlife Fund for Nature, Pub Charities, Lion Foundation, New Zealand National Parks and Conservation Foundation, the New Zealand Conservation Trust, and a local West Coast mining company (official website of the Trust).

² To ensure the Conservation Trust remains anonymous the particular type of species being protected has been kept confidential.

³ For confidentiality reasons the Conservation Trust's official website has not been referenced.

The Conservation Trust consists of an operational team and a team of Trustees. The operational team is responsible for the day-to-day field-based work and for providing recommendations to the Trustees on project direction. In the operational team are four paid part-time contractors:

- Field-based contractor employed by the Conservation Trust to carry out field-based activities such as data recording and species monitoring. In the interviews this person is referred to as '*Trust Operations*'.
- Department of Conservation employee who for the last 4 years has worked for the Trust for 20 hours per week on field-based tasks and providing technical advice. Initially this position was funded by the Conservation Trust but it is now funded by the Department. In the interviews this person is referred to as '*DOC Operations*'.
- Contractor who maintains a facility used by the Conservation Trust in the species-recovery programme and assists with field work when required.
- Project co-ordinator who is involved with field work and administration tasks such as funding applications. This person is an ex-Department of Conservation employee who had contracted to the Department over a number of years and in several different locations to undertake species-recovery projects. This person has also been credited as the driver behind the establishment of the Trust and in the interviews is referred to as the '*Champion*'.

The Conservation Trust also consists of five Trustees who are local to the area and responsible for decision making, governance, and the Trust's promotion. The operational team report to the Trustees. One of the Trustees was heavily involved with the establishment of the Trust and works full time for the Department. This person is referred to as the '*DOC Trustee*' in the interviews. Another Trustee is also the Chairperson and has only been with the Trust for over a year and a half. This person is referred to as the '*New Chairperson*'.

Former Trustees were a politician, a runanga representative, and several West Coast business men. However, they either did not live locally or were not available to give their time to the Conservation Trust. In 2013, the Conservation Trust was described by the DOC Trustee as having gone into an "operational standby mode" where only the operational team were actively involved in the Trust. The DOC Trustee realised that a new Board of Trustees needed to be established.

Initially, the Conservation Trust was founded with a primary focus on protecting one specific bird species (species A). A predator-trapping programme was set up to protect the remaining population in the area. The trapping line was 9.3 kilometres long and consisted of 100 weka-proof tunnels each containing a trap (Department of Conservation Programme Manager, pers. comm., 30 July 2014). The predator control line was then extended and is now over 23 kilometres and follows two popular walking tracks (official website of the Conservation Trust). It has approximately 230 traps placed every 100 meters (official

website of the Conservation Trust). In the first 2 years of having 23 kilometres of traps more than 180 mustelids and 430 rats were caught (official website of the Conservation Trust). Local volunteers regularly check the traps and kill rates and locations are recorded. This project has raised the population of species A from 3 in 2006 to 15 in 2004 (official website of the Conservation Trust).

The second bird species (species B) is ranked as a chronically threatened species and the aim of the project is species recovery (official website of the Conservation Trust). In May 2008 a strategic plan was constructed by the Conservation Trust to identify the best method for the species recovery. Monitoring was also identified as being important to increase knowledge on the species. Some of the research areas targeted were population density and distribution, breeding frequency, incubation behaviour, and hatching success in captivity (official website of the Conservation Trust).

Under this project approximately 15 pairs of adult birds are monitored (official website of the Conservation Trust). Eggs are removed and taken away to another facility for hatching. While hatched eggs were initially taken to a predator-free island elsewhere in New Zealand, the Conservation Trust now uses a predator-proof mainland island.⁴ The mainland island is approximately 12 hectares, privately sponsored and home to approximately 9 chicks (official website of the Conservation Trust). The Conservation Trust is scaling down this recovery programme to focus on extending trapping lines.

⁴ A predator-proof mainland island is an area of land that is free from mustelids and rats and securely fenced so that mustelids and rats cannot enter the area.

5. CASE STUDY RESULTS

5.1. Introduction

Some distinct themes relating to the Conservation Trust's success were consistently present throughout the interviews; for example, a passion for the project and the selection of the right people to be involved, as summed up by the DOC Trustee:

You've certainly got to identify who the key people are, or the key person, or where the passion is, because without it, it doesn't go far [*DOC Trustee*].

Other factors that were credited to the Conservation Trust's success were skills and expertise, respect and trust,⁵ community, and funding.

Within these themes were other deeper underpinning characteristics that contribute to the success of the Conservation Trust: the flexibility and capacity of the Department to support the Conservation Trust; the Department being embedded in the Conservation Trust and the community; the strong networks and connection between the people and organisations involved; the lack of organisational constraints with support organisations; and a strong connection to the local environment.

5.2. People with a passion

One of the main factors identified as leading to the success of the Conservation Trust was a passion for the project. People's passion was identified as playing a significant role in establishing the Conservation Trust, steering the direction, contributing to the Conservation Trust's longevity, and enticing other organisations and individuals to become involved.

The word 'passion' was constantly used throughout the interviews, nowhere more so than when describing the establishment phase of the Conservation Trust. Initially a small group of people focused on maintaining a trapping line; from there the group was driven to establish a formal Trust and undertake a considerably larger scale species-recovery programme. The DOC Operations ranger credits one particular person as having the passion to get the Trust up and running – the person referred to here as the 'Champion':

[The Champion] set the project up [...] [the Champion] pushed it along, [the Champion] was the driver, [the Champion] was the key player [*DOC Operations*].

The DOC Operations ranger, acknowledging the Champion as having the drive to make the Trust successful, explains:

⁵ The word 'trust' has two meanings in this thesis. The first is as a shortened name referring to the Conservation Trust under study, which in this context is referred to as 'Trust'. The second meaning is the more traditional one of having confidence in the honesty, goodness, and skill of a person or organisation. This meaning is written as 'trust'.

What made it successful is probably a key individual, having someone who's passionate and who has a vision and is prepared to work towards that pretty single-mindedly [*DOC Operations*].

Another Department of Conservation staff member, the DOC Trustee, was involved during the Trust's establishment period and describes the Champion as having driven the project "tenaciously" [*DOC Trustee*].

It was the passion of the Champion that not only drove the Conservation Trust during the establishment phase but also steered the direction. The original aim of the group was to protect species 'A' but it was not long before the main focus became species 'B', and this is attributed to the Champion. The DOC Operations ranger explains:

[The Champion] had a passion for [species 'B'], probably not so much for [species 'A'] [*DOC Operations*].

The Champion likewise describes her preference for species 'B':

My passion was [species 'B'] [...] so I really wanted to do [species 'B']. I basically pushed the [species 'B'] project through [*Champion*].

In addition to the tenacious driving of the Conservation Trust, the Champion had the ability to convince other individuals and organisations to get involved and contribute to the Trust's projects. The importance of recruiting into the Conservation Trust others who share the same drive and dedication to make the project work was recognised by the Champion:

I think it's important to find the right people [...] that are actually going to be prepared to put effort into [the project] [...] it matters to have people that are actually more than just enthusiastic, they're actually going to commit to it wholeheartedly [*Champion*].

People who share these values were attracted to the Conservation Trust. The DOC Trustee stated that recognising key people who are passionate about a project and getting them on board can attract people with a similar passion, and this is what occurred with the Trust. The DOC Trustee describes the process:

[...] once you've identified those people they can quickly get people, like-minded people around them [...] [*DOC Trustee*].

It would appear from the level of support within the local community that this approach has worked well for the Conservation Trust. The DOC Operations ranger explains that the local community can be really motivated when it comes to projects in their own backyard:

They're locals; they've got a passion for that environment. So they're bringing that [*DOC Operations*].

This passion and drive are what helped persuade the Department of Conservation to become involved. Initially some founding members of the Conservation Trust felt they had

“the brakes put on [...] a lot by DOC” and that DOC was “unsupportive”. The Champion not only convinced the Department to become involved but persuaded it to support the protection of a particular species that had not previously ranked as a priority for biodiversity work. This illustrates a flexibility within the Department to prioritise resources and in this case support a community-based conservation project focused on the recovery of a species that was not considered a priority by the Department. The DOC Trustee describes what occurred:

Talk about the tail wagging the dog, when DOC say no you can't do something because it's not a high enough priority, [the Champion] changed their mind and said well why would you wait until the species was really so threatened? [*DOC Trustee*].

The DOC Trustee admits in the interviews that the Department can be swayed:

DOC actually at the end of the day find it quite hard to say no when there's a passionate group out there [*DOC Trustee*].

The DOC Trustee has been involved with the Trust since its inception and over the years observed that the Trust's enthusiasm and passion grew even more once the Department came on board:

[The Conservation Trust has] got the passion, yeah, absolutely got the passion, and that gets fired up more when DOC come on as a partner, and give them that advice and grant them the wildlife permit to undertake the work [*DOC Trustee*].

The drive and passion of the members of the Conservation Trust has been attributed by the DOC Trustee as the reason the Trust has been successful over the last 8 years.

Well the [Conservation Trust is] successful because [...] it's been driven hard by people like [the Champion] [...] who are passionate about the project [*DOC Trustee*].

The DOC Trustee recognises that community projects have different phases and require different levels of drive and different roles among members. He argues that drive is essential at the establishment phase, after which it can move along without needing major Champions. The DOC Trustee explains:

I think it had come to the stage where it was up and running, and it just needed a steady group then to actually get in there and manage it. [The Champion] had done the moving and shaking, and convincing DOC that it needed to happen, and so it's happening. It just needs that steady hand on the wheel now to keep it moving forward [*DOC Trustee*].

It was clear from the Trust Operations and DOC Operations rangers that they believe sustaining the passion to drive a conservation initiative is draining and there is a risk of burn-

out in Trust members. They offered some solutions to prevent burn-out of the key people and sustain the drive of the Conservation Trust in the longer term:

I think you need key people to run it and be dedicated and give themselves say a certain number of years that they'll be committed to it, and then reassess that, because people do get burnt out [*Trust Operations*].

Sustaining it is another thing [...] if you've got one or two key drivers, then they're probably prone to burning out, you need to widen the workload or widen the expertise, or widen the support around those people to keep it going [*DOC Operations*].

The passion of the Conservation Trust members has been credited with providing the drive to start the Conservation Trust, steering the direction of the Trust, attracting others to the Trust; it has also underpinned the longevity of the Trust. It also illustrates both the strong connection the members have to the local environment and their commitment to protecting it.

5.3. Skills and expertise

The high level of skills and expertise within the Conservation Trust was recognised as being another factor that has led to the success of the Trust. Technical biodiversity skills and knowledge of the Department's processes were required. Having members in the Conservation Trust who were either current Department employees or ex-Department employees helped the Trust carry out the work in accordance with the Department's processes and expectations. These Trust members were also able to train other members. The way the Department expects biodiversity work to be carried out has shaped the Trust, and by now is entrenched in it. The Department has also been shown to have the capacity and flexibility to step into different roles within the Trust when the need arises.

The Conservation Trust is split between an operational team and a governance team. At the time of the interviews this was a relatively new structure for the Conservation Trust and it was still settling in. The operational team and the governance team actually require different skill sets.

The operational team were referred to as the "experts" by several trustees in the interviews. The Conservation Trust is fortunate that one of the operational team (the Champion), who drove the project from the outset, has skills and experience from previously working with the Department undertaking similar biodiversity work. The value of this is recognised and articulated by the DOC Operations ranger:

The unique thing to the Trust, is they had [the Champion] who had all the expertise from [her] former work situation, so [the Champion] could go straight into it and just do it [*DOC Operations*].

The DOC operations ranger also works for the Department and believes that “it all comes down to the skill set” of the people in the Conservation Trust, and that without this skill set “the project might not get off the ground”.

Having a Champion who had knowledge of the DOC systems and procedures necessary to undertake these types of projects helped in the planning phase and the Champion stated that “DOC never argued [...] because [we were] doing what DOC would do anyway”.

Having worked for the Department also helped the Champion in applying for the necessary concessions and permits required to undertake work on public conservation land. The Champion explains the benefits of her experience in applying for DOC concessions and permits:

Nobody wants to do the behind the scenes work, all the planning and applying for grants, and applying for permits when it comes to working on DOC land and all that. I could do that [*Champion*].

The Champion was also able to pass on her skills and knowledge when circumstances changed and she was no longer available to carry out the majority of the field work. Another part-time Conservation Trust ranger (Trust Operations) was trained and mentored into the role. The Trust Operations ranger has taken over the majority of the field-based work over the last couple of years. Attempts to train other members of the public to help undertake this work have not been successful. The Trust Operations ranger cited the reasons for this as being that a part-time position does not provide enough remuneration and there was not enough support for the role from within the Conservation Trust.

This lack of support was the catalyst for the Champion to approach the Department for assistance. A Department ranger (DOC Operations) was recruited to the Conservation Trust in a part-time position. This position was initially funded by the Conservation Trust, but the Department was flexible enough to take over resourcing this position for the Trust. It has since been scaled down due to funding constraints within the Department. The DOC Operations position is a good example of the strong connection and synergy between the organisations.

The DOC Operations ranger recruited to the Conservation Trust saw the role as benefiting both the Department and the Trust:

DOC wanted to create a fulltime position, they probably didn't have quite enough work to do that, but with taking on the Trust work as well it created a win-win situation for both parties [*DOC Operations*].

The DOC Operations ranger had the skills and expertise to adapt the role as required over the years. Initially it was planned as a coordinator role, then as support out in the field, and now as a technical advisor to the Conservation Trust. The Trust Operations ranger

appreciates the additional support and says the move to get a part-time DOC ranger involved “[...] was fantastic [...]”.

This is not the only example of where the Department has had the resources, expertise, and flexibility to assist the Conservation Trust:

DOC have had a few team work days out there, where we've done gorse control and the likes, just because we have got the numbers when we have an area work day, it really works well [*DOC Trustee*].

Another significant example of the assistance and flexibility provided by the Department is the continuation of the recovery programme for species ‘A’ when the Conservation Trust changed its focus to species ‘B’.

Despite the fact the Department has acquired additional tasks, there is an expectation from the DOC Trustee that working with the Conservation Trust will not cause any large impacts on current workloads, particularly as capability increases within the Trust. The DOC Trustee believes working with the Conservation Trust:

...shouldn't actually increase the DOC [...] workload. It should actually almost slightly decrease it, as the Trust gets more community expertise coming on board. That's the hope [*DOC Trustee*].

However, the DOC Trustee also acknowledges that when community groups undertake work such as protected species programmes that need high levels of technical expertise, from his perspective there is a continuous need for support from the Department:

I think that [DOC involvement] will always have to be there while the Trust is doing the sort of work it's doing. If it was only doing predator control work on trap lines, the Department could just pull right out and just receive the information [on the numbers caught in the traps] [*DOC Trustee*].

The Department has had the flexibility, skills, and expertise to play a strong role in assisting and shaping the Conservation Trust at the Trustee level. This indicates a strong Department ownership of the Trust:

I chaired the Trust, was interim chair for a while once we'd got the new Trustees all established and set up and that. Now I've stepped aside from that and we've had an annual general meeting and got a new Trust chair set up [*DOC Trustee*].

The Department has also found the expertise within the organisation to provide guidance to the Trustees at the strategic level. An example of this is when a Department facilitator was brought in during the induction phase of the new Trustees and ran a workshop outlining the journey of the Conservation Trust and brainstorming key ideas for future directions. This was triggered by several Department staff who felt the need to review the direction. The DOC Operations ranger highlighted the need to keep the overall direction in focus:

In the Trust you've got people who are very passionate, and maybe when you're really passionate, you [...] potentially lose sight of that bigger picture [*DOC Operations*].

The Department has had the skills, expertise, and flexibility to respond to the different needs of the Conservation Trust and support it by filling a number of roles at different levels. This has provided the Conservation Trust with the capacity (skills and expertise) to carry out the work. The Department's processes are embedded in the way the Conservation Trust carries out the work as three key Trust members have worked or continue to work for the Department. This has contributed to the Department viewing the Conservation Trust as being successful.

5.4. Respect and trust

The Conservation Trust and the Department have been working closely together for a number of years. Both within the Conservation Trust and between the Trust and the Department there is a strong level of respect and trust. This is evident in the collaborative decision-making process within the Conservation Trust. The Department is embedded in the decision-making process by providing scientific knowledge, advice, and best practice procedures. Respect and trust are also evident in the high level of knowledge sharing, the close collaborative relationship, and the sustained relationship between the Department and the Conservation Trust.

The Chairperson believes that all members of the Conservation Trust feed into the decision-making process, usually through the operational team making recommendations to the Trustees as described in the following quotes by the DOC Operations ranger and New Chairperson:

When we get to a point where we feel like there's a few decisions to be made, or there's a lot of information on the table, then we'll either distribute it by email to the group, or else we'll actually just sit down and have a face to face. Normally that's the best, is just sitting down at the table and just having a chat about it. That normally works the best [*DOC Operations*].

We've got an expert panel [...] they can chew and fight amongst themselves to what they think, and then give it to us and we'll decide what we think [*New Chairperson*].

In the above quote the New Chairperson was referring to the operational team as the expert panel.

Decisions are reached by consensus as explained by the DOC Trustee:

I guess there's always an element of serious discussion around some points before you get consensus to move forward on something. I think you'll always have that, because you have different viewpoints on things [*DOC Trustee*].

The New Chairperson, who had only been in the position for a year at the time of the interview, said that to date all decisions have been made unanimously.

In the DOC Operations ranger's view, having clear aims helps the consensus process:

I think it's important to have clear aims, so that everyone's got something to refer to [...] there's a lot less room for big difference of opinions if you've got good clear achievable aims [*Trust Operations*].

The Department provides a great deal of technical information to the Conservation Trust, which is often the basis for decision making. By providing this information the Department is having a hand in directing and shaping the decision-making process. The DOC Operations ranger sums up how the Department approached presenting significant technical information which was instrumental in a change of direction for the Trust. The word 'we' in the following quote refers to the DOC Operations ranger and a Department biodiversity manager:

We just laid all the things down on the table and said 'look these are the facts, these are the numbers, this is the results we've got, this is the amount of time and effort, dollars that we've been putting into this'. It's like can you sustain that? [...] not trying to push them in any way, but just saying this is the situation, we need to do something to make it work more effectively [*DOC Operations*].

Although the final decision might be made by the Conservation Trust, the Department at times can strongly guide the decision-making process by attempting to steer Trust members in what the Department views as the right direction:

We can provide them with pros and cons [...] and at the end of the day they can make a decision. We're not going to discourage them unless it's completely out there. If we can see some benefit in it, then we're not going to tend to say no, we'll just try and steer them along on the best path, whatever that may be. It's quite hard to always make the right decision [*DOC Operations*].

The Trust Operations ranger appears to respect and value the technical advice that the Department offers. The Trust Operations ranger commented:

If DOC says there's no way you can do that, then there's no way you can do that [*Trust Operations*].

As well as advice from the DOC Operations ranger, DOC Trustee, and local Greymouth Department staff, technical specialists from the wider Department also provide advice to the Conservation Trust. The New Chairperson described a situation where a DOC technical specialist from Wellington was used as an "arbitrator" to make the final decision on what types of traps would be most appropriate.

The Department representatives (DOC Trustee and DOC Operations) within the Conservation Trust are the main conduits for transferring knowledge. Information on

trapping numbers and species monitoring is regularly reported back to the Department and recorded on a database. This information is combined with data from another seven organisations that are also carrying out recovery work on the same species. The pooled data is then analysed by a scientist at the Department's national office in Wellington and reported back to the groups.

In the past the Department has coordinated an annual meeting for the seven organisations doing similar work on the same species as the Conservation Trust, which has helped establish a strong network. The Department plans the agenda, invites the guest speakers, and provides technical staff to present and offer advice. The Trust Operations ranger sees this experience as valuable and describes the last meeting:

We have a meeting once a year with all the groups, over 2 days. We take turns at hosting it, last year we held it up at Waiuta, which is fantastic; that was very successful. We usually get somebody, some of the DOC staff, they arrange all the agenda and everything and the contact, and we had [name] come down last time [...]. [They're] from Wellington. [They're] one of the DOC scientists [...] and they're fantastic. So it was really good to have [them] there on hand to give us feedback, we can ask [them] questions [*Trust Operations*].

The Department is also able to help the Conservation Trust directly to access current scientific research. In the view of the Trust Operations ranger this is appreciated by the Trust and assists them greatly with biodiversity work:

[The Department provides a] [...] huge amount of advice about how to go about that, all the most up to date theories and stuff that a community group would find very hard to access what was [sic] the best practice and current practice [*Trust Operations*].

The Department is viewed by the Trust Operations ranger as operating as an information hub, exchanging information and inquiries between parties, and facilitating networks by connecting people and organisations. The Trust Operations ranger summarises:

DOC knows everything that's going on, so they just flick on the inquiries; that works really well [*Trust Operations*].

It is not just the Department providing knowledge and information to the Conservation Trust. This is a two-way process and the DOC Trustee believes that the Conservation Trust has passed on learnings to the Department. The DOC Trustee provided an example of when the Conservation Trust had to alter the species-recovery programme due to a number of deaths from predation. The Conservation Trust came up with a practical solution that was passed on to the Department to be shared to help other species-recovery projects.

The Conservation Trust and the Department have established a long working relationship that stretches over eight years. In one instance, this relationship was in place before the

Conservation Trust was established, with the Champion having worked with the Department and its rangers before. A long period of working together has established a high degree of trust. This is explained by the DOC Operations ranger:

[DOC manager] had worked with [the Champion] in the past [...] so there was already a rapport there, or a working relationship [...], They probably didn't have to work too hard to build the relationship, the relationship was already there [DOC Operations].

The DOC Trustee believes trust is essential for the Department to work with any community group:

I think you've just got to create that relationship of trust, a lot of trust [DOC Trustee].

The DOC Trustee elaborates on this and emphasises that without trust community projects would not take place:

It is a trust thing, absolutely, and I think trust, if you haven't got the trust it ain't going to happen. Because if there's no trust there, the community group will soon disintegrate and go somewhere else where they're listened to and their passion is embraced [...] [DOC Trustee].

A strong connection exists between the Conservation Trust and the Department, which the DOC Trustee describes as:

[...] absolutely a close liaison and partnership there between DOC and the community group. One couldn't operate without the other, in a sense [DOC Trustee].

This is supported by comments from several other interviewees:

[...] basically now we're very much partners with DOC [...] [Champion].

I'd say we're partnering with DOC now [...] we couldn't do it without them now I don't think. They've really come on board [Trust Operations].

Comments from the DOC Operations ranger made it clear that the two organisations work very closely together and involve each other in discussions. The DOC Operations ranger commented with surprise that he had not been in contact with the New Chairperson in the last 10 days:

To be honest I haven't talked to him for probably the last 10 days [...] he's been in the office quite regularly, we just sit down and talk [...] we'll be talking once a week, whether it be by phone or whether [New Chairperson] drops in and we have a chat [...] [DOC Operations].

From the DOC Trustee's perspective the Department respects and views very highly the work the Conservation Trust does. The DOC Trustee believes community groups add value

to achieving conservation outcomes and their work assists the Department in protecting biodiversity. This was articulated by the DOC Trustee:

DOC [...] can't do it all, and this is where the community groups fit in beautifully. There's species out here that's getting no hands on, then suddenly [they] get a guardian angel [*DOC Trustee*].

Respect and trust have been identified as characteristics underpinning the success of the Conservation Trust. This is evident from the close, collaborative working relationship between the Conservation Trust and the Department and it has contributed substantially to the longevity of the relationship.

5.5. Community engagement

It is evident from the interviews that there is a real willingness from all levels of the Conservation Trust and the Department to engage with other organisations in the community and to build up strong networks. Both the Conservation Trust and the Department work on building up linkages and leveraging-off other organisations' conservation initiatives to become more effective. The willingness of the community to get involved demonstrates a strong connection with the environment and an eagerness to protect it.

There appears to be a solid understanding of becoming more efficient by developing synergies with programmes run by other organisations. For example, part of the current predator trap lines were set up around an existing mining company's predator control programme, as described by the DOC Trustee:

[...] when the Trust was set up, [mining company] were going at the time, and they had their big predator control programme in place [...] so we looked at filling in the middle [*DOC Trustee*].

The DOC Trustee reports that the Conservation Trust also dove-tails into another mining company's proposed biodiversity off-set programme. The mining company had invested much ground work in setting up an offset area; however, it never went ahead and since the research had already been completed the Conservation Trust decided to carry out the programme.

Local networks are used to connect with other organisations that have shown flexibility and a lack of organisational constraint when assisting the Conservation Trust. For example, the pest-control board, as explained by the DOC Trustee:

[...] we've got two farmers that are on the Trust, and they spoke to [the pest control board] to see if they could get their control area extended, so they obliged and extended it right back into the [name] ecological area. So we had the spin-off from that [*DOC Trustee*].

The Conservation Trust also works with an international volunteer organisation, the local polytechnic, a water taxi company, and an adventure company, all of which have provided volunteers to maintain the traps and help out. Attracting volunteers to help the Conservation Trust has not been easy, as described by both the Conservation Trust Operations ranger and DOC Operations ranger:

It's really hard to get volunteers on the coast to do things [...], it's not a real conservation type community [*Trust Operations*].

It requires finding people who are keen and willing to give their time, and it's not easy [*DOC Operations*].

The DOC Operations ranger identified the importance of a greater volunteer base. The DOC Trustee reports that the Conservation Trust aims to increase engagement with other community-based conservation groups within the same geographic location:

The Predator Free [location name] concept is a big picture thing, but the whole idea of that is to get other community groups [...] come into being and grow, that would end up surrounding the [location name] [*DOC Trustee*].

There is also a long history of the Department having worked with the local community before, with the DOC Trustee having been the Department's Community Relations Programme Manager for the area. The DOC Trustee proves to be a strongly connected member of the community, perhaps due to a previous role but also from having lived for a considerable time within the local area. The Champion says:

[DOC Trustee] knows as lot of people in the district, so he brought people together [*Champion*].

The DOC Trustee recognises the value in engaging with the community and states:

The community has [...] a whole array of expertise that can come to the party. So I think it's just a whole different dynamic [...] [*DOC Trustee*].

There's some real expertise out there in the community, and just heaps of passion. It's a matter of just harnessing all that and getting it heading in the right direction. When that happens, amazing things happen [...] [*DOC Trustee*].

The DOC Trustee also believes that to fully engage with the community, one needs to listen to them:

I think when you empower them you're listening to them. Even though you might start off with a few no, no, it's not a priority and that, there's always somebody in the community who's a mover and shaker. So they will generally convince DOC [*DOC Trustee*].

The DOC Trustee also acknowledges that in general the Department has a lot of ownership in initiatives and may not know when it can hand ownership over to a community group:

The thing that we've got to be really clever about, is knowing when to start pulling back and giving that total ownership to the community. Just being there as an adviser in the background for the community groups [...] [DOC Trustee].

This could be true in this case, and the Trust Operations Ranger believes the Conservation Trust could be viewed more as a collection of key people heavily influenced by the Department than a community group:

[...] but as far as it developing into an effective community Trust, with community ownership sort of thing, I don't think – that hasn't developed yet, and I'd really like to see that develop [*Trust Operations*].

I think it was less of a community group, it was more of a little group doing, it was almost like a little DOC group doing the work, with very little public involvement [*Trust Operations*].

A recent change in the Trustees may encourage more in the community to engage in Conservation Trust activities. The current group of Trustees were selected by the DOC Trustee and the New Chairperson primarily for being local so that locals could start to take ownership of the project:

I was pretty keen personally that locals take ownership [...] so we've got a new set of Trustees, a completely new set of Trustees and just people who are interested locally [*New Chairperson*].

The Trust Operations ranger is also hopeful that the change in Trustees will result in a more community orientated Conservation Trust:

[...] with the Trustees becoming more community people [...] they've picked [it] up by the scruff of the neck and going to make more of a community group I hope [*Trust Operation*].

The Conservation Trust has been credited with building strong networks in the community and linking with other organisations. This could partly be due to the DOC Trustee and other Trust members having strong connections in the community. However, these connections are limited to specific targeted organisations and there is an aim to increase the engagement with the wider community.

5.6. Funding

Fundraising and sponsorship were identified as being critical in the establishment and on-going work of the Conservation Trust. Species-recovery programmes are considered expensive to run and funding has essentially dictated the level of work the Trust can carry out.

From the outset the Champion knew funding would be an important factor in achieving any planned conservation outcomes, so she specifically set up a Charitable Trust so they qualified to apply for community funding rounds:

So we quickly talked about forming a group [...] thinking that if we're a Charitable Trust [we] would be easily able to access money [*Champion*].

According to the Champion, funding played a significant role in the start-up of the project and kick started the Conservation Trust into action:

[...] I kept doing fundraising and project planning and eventually we started getting funding. So that's how we started [*Champion*].

It was not only fundraising that was important for the Conservation Trust but support from a major sponsor has been credited by the Trust Operations Ranger as having contributed to the success of the Trust:

The other thing that's made it very successful, as far as I'm concerned, is the involvement of the [name] as our major funders. They keep supporting us [*Trust Operations*].

Money raised by fundraising and sponsorship was used for operational work, and the DOC Operations Ranger explained that the species-recovery work the Conservation Trust undertakes involves a substantial amount of money:

You're talking probably tens of thousands of dollars per bird [...] They might have been spending \$100,000 per annum [...] for a community group it was a significant lump of money [*DOC Operations*].

The DOC Operations Ranger also believes that without any funding a community group could not undertake this type of work:

[...] it's costing you thousands of dollars per bird, or per egg, however you want to look at it, to actually do that work. So basically [if you] haven't got the funding, it's not going to happen [*DOC Operations*].

The DOC Operations Ranger expects that the Conservation Trust would obtain its own funding and believes it is up to the Trust to decide where this money will be spent”

At the end of the day they're applying for their own funding streams [...] generally we don't provide any decisions in terms of spending. We just lay down this is what you could do, this is what it's going to cost you, and then they obviously dictate financially how they're spending the money. So from that perspective they're their own entity in terms of that side of things [*DOC Operations*].

In some instances it appears funding has dictated the direction of the Conservation Trust and the level of work that it can undertake. In one instance, increasing the focus on one

particular programme meant decreasing the size of another project due to limited funding, as the DOC Operations Ranger explains:

In terms of resources we probably can't do the trapping as well as maintain a large transmitter fleet. There needs to be a trade off, unless of course there's more money, and they can employ more staff to do that work [*DOC Operations*].

From the interviews it appears that some of the members of the Conservation Trust feel there is a very strong correlation between the amount of funding a community gets and the level of work it is able to undertake. This is summed up by the DOC Operations Ranger:

[...] probably a lot of it does come back to just sheer dollars [*DOC Operations*].

Funding has also been credited with ensuring the Conservation Trust is always focused on the most effective way to operate, and this includes which species protection methods are adopted. If a project is not producing the expected conservation outcomes, or if it becomes too expensive to run, the Conservation Trust is prompted to review that programme:

So as [species protection] became more expensive and with less results, we decided that we didn't want to keep doing that if it wasn't really producing the goods, and it would be better if we spent our money on pest control, because then we could protect all [species] in that area [...] [*Champion*].

The DOC Trustee reports that it was the amount of funding the Conservation Trust received that partly impelled them to get a new set of Trustees and kick start the Trustee level of the Conservation Trust back into action. The funding also motivated them to think of ways they could expand the Conservation Trust's operations:

[...] we got right down to two Trustees left, and they weren't having meetings, and we had all this sponsorship money coming through, and grant money, and that. So we needed to have some accountability for that, and just start growing the business again [*DOC Trustee*].

The importance of funding to community groups was emphasised when several of the Conservation Trust members interviewed commented on how the amount of funding available to community groups had decreased, which meant some of the groups were no longer operating. The Trust Operations Ranger commented:

[...] other projects have fallen, they've stopped [...] they've run out of funding [*Trust Operations*].

Funding in the form of fundraising and sponsorship has been credited as playing a critical role in getting the Conservation Trust started and keeping it going. Funding has directly influenced the operations of the Conservation Trust by steering its direction and determining the type and level of work that can be carried out.

5.7. Conclusion

Five main themes have been identified as underpinning the success of the Conservation Trust. These are: a passion for the project; skills and expertise; respect and trust; community engagement; and funding. In addition, there are some underpinning characteristics that are also contributing to the Conservation Trust's success. These are: the capacity and flexibility of the Department to support the Conservation Trust; the Department being embedded in the Trust; the strong connection and networks between the Conservation Trust and the Department; a lack of organisational constraints with supporting organisations; and a strong connection with the local environment.

The passion of the Conservation Trust members for the species-recovery programmes has driven it as well as steered its direction. It illustrates the members' strong connection to the local environment and their commitment to protecting it. It has attracted others to the Conservation Trust and also underpins the longevity of the Trust.

The Conservation Trust has a high level of the skill and technical expertise that is required to carry out the species-recovery programmes; a result of three Trust members having worked or continuing to work for the Department.

There is a high level of respect and trust both within the Conservation Trust and between the Conservation Trust and the Department. This is evident from the decision making process, knowledge sharing, close relationship, and sustained relationship.

It is evident from the interviews that there is a real willingness at all levels of the Conservation Trust and the Department to engage with other organisations in the community and to build up strong networks. Both the Conservation Trust and the Department have worked on building linkages and leveraging-off other organisations' conservation initiatives to make the Conservation Trust more effective. The willingness of some members of the community to get involved demonstrates a strong connection with the environment and an eagerness to protect it.

Funding in the form of fundraising and sponsorship has played a critical role in establishing the Conservation Trust and keeping it going. Funding has directly influenced the operations of the Conservation Trust by steering its direction and determining the type and level of work that can be carried out.

Support organisations have shown a lack of organisational constraint, which has enabled them to help the Conservation Trust. This help is in the form of sponsorship, providing volunteer opportunities as well as adapting operations like predator control programmes to work in with the Conservation Trust's work.

The Department is strongly embedded in the Conservation Trust through: having several of its employees and a past contractor as members of the Conservation Trust; providing scientific knowledge and technical advice; requiring concessions and permits to undertake

the work; facilitating workshops; gathering and analysing data; and providing best practice guidance.

The Department has had the flexibility and capacity to support the Conservation Trust by: supporting a biodiversity initiative that was not otherwise a priority for the Department, filling a number of roles within the Conservation Trust, and undertaking work that the Conservation Trust no longer had the capacity to do.

6. DISCUSSION

6.1. Introduction

So far this thesis has outlined the characteristics underpinning success in community-based conservation initiatives as presented in the literature and also the themes that have been identified as contributing to the success of the Conservation Trust studied. But how does this help answer the research question “How can successful conservation partnerships be achieved on public conservation land by the New Zealand Department of Conservation?”

The following discussion relates the literature review and research results to the research question by analysing the underpinning characteristics for success that are common to both the literature and the case study. The discussion also highlights the specific attributes of the Department that have encouraged and made a success of its partnership with the Conservation Trust. Any insights that may be of use to government departments partnering with communities in conservation are presented.

6.2. Defining success in departmental partnerships

The Conservation Trust selected for this study was viewed by the Department as a successful community-based conservation initiative. The wording in the key policies (Conservation General Policy (2007) and General Policy for National Parks (2005)) that guide the Department illustrate that the Department’s main focus for developing conservation partnerships is to enhance conservation. Internal departmental correspondence further illustrates this, with terminology emphasising a growth in conservation by partnering with communities. It is evident that the Department is expecting conservation partnerships to achieve conservation outcomes.

A number of authors argue that success in community-based conservation is the empowerment of community groups (e.g., Selin & Chavez (1995), the sharing of power (e.g., Kruse et al. (1998), the sharing of decision making (e.g., Castro & Nielsen (2001), and the sharing of knowledge (e.g., Berkes (2009)). It is probable that empowerment, shared decision making, power, and knowledge play roles in community groups achieving conservation outcomes. However, based on the interpretation of Departmental policy and internal documents, these definitions are not accurate for defining success in community-based conservation initiatives on public conservation land. A fitting definition of success that has a strong focus on delivering environmental outcomes is presented by Mountjoy et al. (2013). The most likely reason the definition of success for community-based conservation initiatives partnering with the Department is consistent with Mountjoy et al.’s (2013) research is, because in both circumstances, the land is not common property. Mountjoy et al.’s (2013) research is based on community-based natural resource management groups in Illinois, United States, whereas the majority of the literature tends to relate to common property. Inherently, with common property there is a common use of the land by the local community. This is not true in the research of Mountjoy et al. (2013) or in public

conservation land where there is no common use but rather a focus on conserving natural and historic values.

The Department states that it has 605 partnerships nationally for the year ended June 2014. The Department does not define the term 'partnership' when quoting the number of national partnerships, nor does it define what constitutes success in such partnerships. These definitions would provide valuable information on the quality of these partnerships. Goodwin (1998) believes that quantitative measures of success can lead to organisations implementing projects focused on the number of partnerships or people participating and not on achieving conservation outcomes. This does not accurately reflect the outcomes, quality, or success of partnerships.

6.3. Defining success in the Conservation Trust

The Conservation Trust was originally a small group set up by the Department of Conservation to check predator trap lines. The initial catalyst for establishing the group was community engagement and achieving conservation gains. A definition of success for this original group would be more in line with that of Brooks et al. (2012), which included positive changes in community group views on conservation as well as the achievement of conservation goals. Once the group was established as a Conservation Trust, the goals became clearly recorded in vision statements, aims/objectives, and work programmes. The focus was on achieving these goals. Success then became clearly defined as the realising of conservation outcomes, which is consistent with Mountjoy et al.'s (2013) definition for success. The change in the definition of success for the Conservation Trust is directly related to the Trust evolving and growing over time with different members. This is consistent with Mulrennan, Mark and Scott's (2012) research findings, which illustrate that in community-based natural resource management, outcomes can change with community group dynamics and can be quite different from that originally planned when the group was established.

The implementation of vision statements, aims/objectives and work programmes for the Conservation Trust has provided mechanisms for measuring success. The aims/objectives and work programmes also helped highlight early on when a species-recovery programme was not working effectively or was not proving to be as successful as planned. In this example, the monitoring by the Department illustrated that the amount of resources (time, effort and funding) was not producing adequate results and was not sustainable. This prompted significant changes to the species-recovery programme to make it more effective and sustainable and hence provide a higher likelihood of success in the long term. The Department had allocated resources towards monitoring the results of the Conservation Trust's work programmes and had the capacity to interpret the results. However, this is not consistent with the literature. Horwich and Lyon (2007) argue that often there is no capacity, data or funding to undertake the adequate monitoring of community-based

conservation initiatives. This case study is also not consistent with Gruber's (2010) research findings, which warn that success in community-based conservation initiatives is often not defined.

Clarifying what constitutes success in community-based conservation initiatives is necessary so success can be accurately monitored and measured. Regular monitoring can highlight when a community-based conservation initiative is not on target for success, so that appropriate changes can be made to improve the likelihood of success.

6.4. Community engagement

The success of the Conservation Trust was in large due to the input of the Department. The Department's initial idea was to form a community group to maintain a small-scale trapping programme. The Department arranged a community meeting in a community building local to the project area to gauge the level of interest. The Department staff member (DOC Trustee) who organised the meeting was very clear in the interview that listening to the community was critical, and input from the community was sought at the outset. Although the idea originated from the Department it was the Champion who took the group to the next level, established the Conservation Trust and drove the species-recovery programmes. At this stage there was strong buy-in from the members of the community involved and the Conservation Trust had to convince the Department to get involved.

The small number of community members involved had the opportunity to contribute to the project from the start and this may have helped boost acceptance for the project. This is contrary to Measham and Lumbasi's (2013) argument that projects initiated by the community are more likely to succeed through higher community ownership and local relevance. Although the literature indicates that community-initiated projects are more likely to be successful, this case study illustrates that early engagement with the local community may also result in successful community ownership.

This could be largely due to the existing strong relationship between the community members involved and the Department, with the DOC Trustee being a well-connected local community member with strong local knowledge. Having Department staff integrated into the community made engagement easier and clearly enhanced commitment and involvement from some members of the local community. Further to this, the Champion who was driving the Conservation Trust was a past Department staff member and already had a working relationship with the Department. Having a community member with an existing strong relationship with the Department may have made the development of a partnership easier. A challenge for the Department is to figure out how to engage in community-based conservation initiatives that do not heavily consist of Department and former Department staff, and to engage with communities that the Department is not strongly integrated in.

The Conservation Trust is moving towards incorporating more of the broader community into activities. This will involve public awareness and education through media, newsletters, and school visits, as well as increasing the number of volunteers assisting the Trust. This is a move towards becoming more community orientated and could provide greater community ownership. According to Measham (2006), communities have the ability to introduce conservation norms and embed new conservation values within a community, which Agrawal and Gibson (2001) argue could not be successfully introduced by an external actor such as the Department. However, due to the select small number of people involved in this case study the introduction of new conservation norms did not occur. The Conservation Trust members already held strong conservation values.

As discussed earlier, the original idea of developing a trapping programme came from the Department of Conservation and could be deemed a central government initiative. Several authors warn of viewing the community as a static homogeneous group (Agrawal & Gibson, 2001; Mulrennan et al., 2012; Tipa & Welch, 2006) and Agrawal and Gibson (2001) believe this is often the State's view of the community when they initiate programmes. From the interviews it is clear that the community is viewed, by the Department staff involved with the Conservation Trust, as having varied skills and a 'vast array of expertise'. Specific key members of the community have been targeted by the Conservation Trust for their expertise and people have come and gone from the Trust for various reasons. However, although the Department staff interviewed do not view the community as static and homogeneous, it is quite clear that the Department staff involved have not captured the true spirit of the community through their careful selection of a small number of community members.

6.5. The Department embedded in the Conservation Trust

The Conservation Trust could be viewed as a small and select group carrying out specific work in accordance with the methods of the Department. The Conservation Trust has a number of key people who are very familiar with the processes of the Department. The operational team consists of a Department ranger, one ex-Department ranger, and a ranger trained by these two. At the governance level there is a Department ranger as a Trustee who has been instrumental in selecting the other Trustees. The former Trustees were chosen because of their positions in the community and were not actively involved with the running of the Conservation Trust. The new Trustees were selected for their existing networks and for being local. These people are referred to as being the Conservation Trust. There are a number of volunteers and contractors but from the interviews they are not referred to as being part of the Conservation Trust. Like the sponsors, they are mentioned as assisting the Conservation Trust but not viewed as making up the body of the Trust.

The selection of specific people to the Conservation Trust may be why this case study was not consistent with the results of the nationwide survey that was commissioned by the Department in 2011. This 2011 survey, which looked at how the public viewed the

Department, showed there was some opposition on the West Coast. These survey results were not apparent in the interviews for this research. This could be due to the selection process of the Conservation Trust members and the heavy involvement of former and current Department staff in the Conservation Trust.

As discussed, those who make up the Conservation Trust are a small group of current and ex-Department staff and those chosen and trained by them. Although the Conservation Trust is a community-based conservation initiative, the Department is embedded in the Trust. The Department staff involved with the Conservation Trust acknowledge the skills the community can offer conservation; however, underneath it all the Conservation Trust is heavily reliant on key members who are either Department staff or former staff. This could be because the work the Conservation Trust undertakes requires technical knowledge.

The Conservation Trust has considerable assistance from the wider Department, for example, when the Conservation Trust changed its focus to a different species-recovery programme and the Department carried on the original programme. The Department has also been flexible and provided resources and additional hours as necessary for non-technical roles, for example, data collection, chairing the Conservation Trust, and gorse control. The Department has proved to have the flexibility, expertise, and capacity to step in and help in a diverse range of roles in the Conservation Trust. The DOC Trustee states that the Conservation Trust should be decreasing the workload of the Department as more technical knowledge and expertise is developed in the community. However, he also acknowledges that with highly specialist work the Department will always need to support the Conservation Trust. The degree to which the Department is embedded in the Conservation Trust challenges whether there is true community ownership. The DOC Trustee states that the Department needs to be clever about when it can give total ownership over to the community; however, it may be that when the Department plays a key role in a project ownership by default will remain with the Department. The Department needs to be clear about its role in community-based conservation initiatives and acknowledge that in highly technical projects it may need to provide a high level of support and, by default, have ownership of the project. Indeed, even in projects that do not require technical knowledge and skills, support may still be needed, but at a lower level.

6.6. Preconditions for success

The Conservation Trust was consistent in most of the preconditions - a crisis or perceived crisis, a willingness for locals to be involved, a leadership or energy centre, and a common vision – identified by Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004a) as underpinning success in community-based conservation. The objective of the Conservation Trust is the population recovery of species that are perceived to be in crisis. According to Plummer and FitzGibbon's (2004a) preconditions, this crisis can be real or imagined. Although there has been a change in species' type and protection method there is still the primary belief that the work the Conservation Trust undertakes is essential to the survival of the species. A small part of the

local community showed a real willingness to become involved, particularly a select few such as the Champion. It was the Champion who provided leadership and a central energy that drove the Conservation Trust during the establishment phase. This energy and passion mobilised others in the community to become involved and share the vision. The changes in species-recovery programmes for the Conservation Trust were recorded in the Trust's strategic plans so that there was always a clear vision for the Conservation Trust. This vision was revisited when the new Trustees came on board to ensure the Conservation Trust was heading in the right direction and a common vision existed between members of the Conservation Trust and the Department. The Conservation Trust was consistent with most of Plummer and FitzGibbon's (2004a) preconditions, being a crisis, a willingness for locals to be involved, a leadership or energy centre, and a common vision. Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004a) argue that these preconditions are consistently linked to co-management arrangements and act as an impetus to the co-management process. Having these preconditions in place could have contributed to the success of the Conservation Trust.

6.7. True partnership

Several of the interviewees described the Conservation Trust as being in a 'partnership' with the Department. The literature also illustrates that central to true partnerships is shared decision making, delegated power, participation, and empowerment. But are these characteristics present in the case study and therefore evidence that a true partnership is occurring?

The four typologies introduced in the literature provide a framework for analysing participation, shared-decision making, delegated power, and empowerment in a partnership. The typologies are graded from token participation to complete empowerment of a community group. Empowerment has been directly related to decision-making capacity in Arnstein's typology. Pretty (1995) and Arnstein (1969) both believe that the higher a project is on the participation typologies the more likely it is to be successful. So where does the partnership between the Department and the Conservation Trust sit in the typologies?

Arnstein's (1969) typology is largely based on decision-making power. From the interviews it is clear that the main decisions in the Conservation Trust are made by the five Trustees (four local residents who have a strong relationship with the Department and one Department ranger). The types of decisions made by the Trustees are the strategic direction, how funding and resources are utilised, when contractors are hired, what external organisations are to be engaged, and how projects are run. The day-to-day field decisions are made by the operational team. The new chairperson states that issues are discussed until a consensus is reached and decisions are made unanimously by the Trustees. The DOC operations ranger agrees and states that ultimately the decisions are made by the Trustees.

On the face of it, the Conservation Trust would fit within the top three rungs of Arnstein's typology (labelled degrees of citizen power). This would indicate true empowerment based

on the Trustees having the power to make all the decisions. However, Arnstein's (1969) typology is one dimensional and does not consider the impact that knowledge can have on the decision making process. When knowledge is considered it is clear that there is some shaping of the decision-making process by the Department, given that it is a large provider of the technical information required to carry out the conservation projects. In the case study the operations team (Department ranger, one former Department ranger, and a Conservation Trust ranger trained by the other two) provides the technical information that the Trustees use in decision making. This effectively heavily guides the decision-making process. The operations team has a strong understanding of the processes used by the Department and strong expertise in biodiversity work. The operations team designs and carries out the work programmes for the Conservation Trust and provides recommendations to the Trustees for decision making. As these recommendations are in line with the Department's best practice guidelines and what the Department would recommend, the work is essentially carried out the way the Department would undertake the work. The Department is also a conduit for information sharing between groups doing similar species-recovery work and analyses all predator trapping data. This role also shapes the decision-making process and therefore the way the Conservation Trust carries out conservation work. This shaping of decisions influences where the Conservation Trust sits on Arnstein's (1969) typology and could potentially rank it considerably lower down the typology to the level referred to as 'placation', which is a form of tokenism where ground rules allow community groups to advise but the State retains the overall decision making powers. The State in this instance retains decision-making power in constructing best practice guidelines, concession conditions, wildlife permits or work programmes that are designed by Department staff but followed by the Conservation Trust.

Pretty's (1995) typology could rank the Conservation Trust at the top in self-mobilisation. The characteristics consistent with the self-mobilisation category are the Conservation Trust having: taken the initiative independently of the Department to undertake a particular species-recovery programme; the power to make all the decisions; the ability to develop contacts with external organisations for resources and technical advice but keep control on how resources such as funding are used; an enabling framework in place provided by both the Department and a national organisation that provides guidance on the species-recovery work. However, again similar to Arnstein's (1969) typology, when the decision-making process is considered there are a number of different levels of participation involved. According to Pretty's (1995) typology when information that is being shared comes primarily from external professions there is an element of token participation. This is backed up by the Department defining the information-gathering process, analysing the data, and constructing the work plans. It also has an element of functional participation: while the group was initially formed to carry out a specific goal (small-scale trapping programme) and was allowed some decision making, many of the main decisions had already been made by the Department with the establishment of best practice guides, standard operating

procedures and the modelling of the project on other Department biodiversity work. Decisions are also shaped with the need for concessions and wildlife permits, all of which have special conditions to which the group must adhere.

In Lawrence's (2006) view, one-dimensional typologies fail to incorporate the multiple levels of participation that can co-exist. It would appear this case study supports this criticism as there are different types of participation that are not fully captured in one-dimensional typologies. To capture accurately the level of participation the Conservation Trust truly has a multi-dimensional typology would need to be constructed that considers knowledge and its influence on the decision-making process.

Goodwin (1998, p. 483), researching local participation in nature conservation in England, concluded that participation is the "renegotiation of power between expert outsiders and ordinary people". In carrying out species-recovery programmes expert knowledge is required. Although decision making in the case under study still ultimately sits with the Trustees there is not a significant transfer of power as the Department retains a high level of decision shaping by being seen as the experts and by providing recommendations to the Trustees (both directly from the Department and through having representatives on the operational team). This system appears to be accepted by both the Conservation Trust and the Department and has provided a common way to operate that has proved to work well. This common mode of operating could be due to how conservation is defined. Goodwin (1998) recognised that conservation in England is heavily defined by scientific knowledge. This case study is consistent with Goodwin's finding in that conservation is based on scientific knowledge and that this knowledge determines what should be conserved and how it is conserved. As discussed earlier, the Conservation Trust undertakes the conservation work in line with standard operating procedures and Department methods. This could be due to the Conservation Trust recognising and accepting the role of the Department as the experts with the scientific knowledge and acknowledging that the Department determines how conservation is undertaken.

If this is true across the board for community-based conservation initiatives then, potentially, participation could only ever reach a middle level on the typologies. It would be unrealistic to expect communities to have the technical expertise and scientific knowledge that the Department holds, and unless communities are given the power to define conservation and how it should be undertaken they will never reach the top of the participation typologies. Community-based conservation initiatives would only ever be contributing to and supporting state-determined conservation goals, rather than having the power to determine the goals and conservation priorities per se. In essence, participation could be seen as "a management tool to achieve a predetermined product" (Goodwin, 1998, p. 495). Goodwin (1998, p. 487) describes this as a "licence to operate" that essentially allows and limits a community-based conservation initiative to implementing national conservation objectives. Conservation objectives for the Department are

determined through an established framework consisting of conservation legislation, policy, conservation management strategies, and management plans, all of which are heavily influenced by scientific knowledge. This framework regulates the work of the Department, and although there are statutory public consultation processes within the framework, the framework limits community groups from having any actual decision-making powers over the way conservation is defined, prioritised or undertaken.

The Department's intention to build up conservation partnerships as described by Sue Cosford, the former Deputy Director of Operations for the Department of Conservation (2010-2013), is a fine sentiment but not supported by the existing framework administering conservation in New Zealand. According to the participation typologies, real partnerships means real decision-making powers and, as discussed earlier, this is not possible under the existing system. However, as this case study illustrates, community-based conservation initiatives can be successful and achieve substantial conservation outcomes even when true participation is limited. The interviewees did not indicate any feelings of powerlessness due to limited decision making. The case study did not indicate that the Conservation Trust members interviewed felt like 'hired hands' but rather there was a consensus that they were in 'partnership' with the Department. This could in part be due to some interviewees having worked or still working for the Department, which may result in a positive bias. However, true participation may not be necessary to achieve successful conservation outcomes, and community groups may be content to be guided by the Department on conservation delivery decisions.

6.8. Capacity building

In the literature, capacity was seen as an underpinning characteristic of success in community-based conservation initiatives. Capacity is determined by the level of capital a community group has. Mountjoy et al. (2013) argue that community-based natural resource management groups with high capital have greater success and that the level of capital can predict the level of success. The authors concluded that to be successful community-based natural resource management groups should focus on building capital in the areas of respect, outreach, and common values. To become highly successful there should be a focus on leadership, motivation, and vision (Mountjoy et al., 2013). So where does the Conservation Trust rank on capacity?

The results from this case study identified respect and trust as the main characteristics underpinning the Conservation Trust's success. Respect and trust were evident in the decision-making process, knowledge sharing, and the close and the sustained relationship. Respect and trust were recognised as being present even before the Conservation Trust was established, with members of the Conservation Trust having already worked together. Mountjoy et al. (2013) stated that the words 'respect' and 'trust' were used interchangeably by the people they interviewed and resulted in group cohesiveness. Although Mountjoy et al.'s (2013) research only focuses on the capital within the community group, in this case

within the Conservation Trust, it is worth noting that there was a considerable amount of respect between the Conservation Trust members, the Department and community before the establishment of the Conservation Trust. For example, the Champion is a well-respected former Department employee and the DOC Trustee is a well-respected community member who has worked as a Community Relations Programme Manager for the Department.

The Conservation Trust built outreach capital as described by Mountjoy et al. (2013) by developing external relationships both with organisations undertaking similar projects and with diverse organisations such as local mining companies and a pest control board. Again, most of these relationships were in place in a different form before the Conservation Trust was established. For example, one of the Trustees is a farmer, who already had an existing relationship with the local pest control board, and was able to build on that to gain assistance for the Conservation Trust. The Conservation Trust managed to build outreach capital and facilitate the support of a range of organisations that were flexible and had few institutional constraints. For example, the pest control board proved flexible by increasing their predator control area to join up with the Conservation Trust's predator control area. The case study results highlighted that the Conservation Trust did not have strong outreach capital or a strong relationship with the wider community, which was an area they had identified as needing further work. It is possible that building relationship with organisations weighted the Conservation Trust more towards success than having good relationships with the wider community. This could be why the Conservation Trust is deemed to still be successful despite not having strong wider community engagement.

Common values were not identified in the case study results as a characteristic underpinning success; however, the Conservation Trust had a clear written vision and objectives. The Department also held a workshop when new Trustees came on board to ensure that members shared a similar understanding of the strategic direction of the Conservation Trust. These would have assisted in developing, within the Conservation Trust, a shared sense of purpose and common values.

The Conservation Trust was fortunate to benefit from having existing respect and outreach capital already in place, as well as common values – all of which would have contributed to the Trust's success.

To become highly successful, Mountjoy et al. (2013) believe there should be a focus on leadership, motivation, and vision. The Champion provided the initial leadership to establish the Conservation Trust and was experienced in making informed decisions on species-recovery programmes. The Champion was strong and committed and had the motivation and passion to convince other people to come on board. This passion was identified in the case study as a main characteristic underpinning the success of the Conservation Trust. The Trust's vision is clearly recorded, and objectives and goals have been established to ensure the Trust works towards its vision.

This case study is consistent with Mountjoy et al.'s (2013) research in that outreach, respect, common values, leadership, motivation and vision were all present in the Conservation Trust and have contributed to its success. Some of the capacity indicators, such as respect, outreach, leadership, and motivation, were stronger than others; while vision and common values were present they were not identified as significant characteristics underpinning the Trust's success.

The Conservation Trust was initially formed to seek funding; however, that was an administrative process and a strong group of people with high capital and capacity already existed. The fact that the Conservation Trust sees funding as an underpinning characteristic of success could be because the high capacity and the pre-existing presence of the other preconditions as identified by Mountjoy et al. (2013) within the Conservation Trust has gone undetected by those interviewed. The existing high capacity allowed the Champion to focus solely on pursuing funding without jeopardising the success of the Conservation Trust. Funding is also significant as a large part of the work undertaken by the Conservation Trust is specialist species-recovery programmes that are very expensive to run. Mountjoy et al. (2013) argue that funding is an important factor in determining the success of community-based natural resource management groups, although not as important as the other capital. This case study showed that it was a main characteristic underpinning success with the Conservation Trust, which is consistent with the research of Arnstein (1969), Brewer (2013), and Goodwin (1998). Mountjoy et al. (2013) also believe that funding should not be a sole focus but instead should be pursued in addition to the other capacity indicators that are identified as preconditions for success.

Other forms of capital identified in the case study as significantly underpinning the Conservation Trust's success but not identified by Mountjoy et al. (2013) as being a precondition for success, are skills and expertise. The Conservation Trust was established with very high skills and expertise. Skills and knowledge are listed under human capital but were not included in Mountjoy et al.'s (2013) research as being important. This case study ranked skills and expertise as a main characteristic underpinning success, which could be due to the technical requirements of the species-recovery programmes. The case study may be unusual in undertaking specialist biodiversity work, which may not be common in community-based conservation initiatives, and which may not be thought of as an important general characteristic for success.

6.9. Adaptive Co-management

Capacity building shares some common themes with adaptive co-management, for example, the importance of trust, leadership, and conflict management. Although conflict management is not mentioned directly in capacity building, it is connected with developing common values and having a shared vision. Adaptive co-management also focuses on learning by doing, exchanging information, problem solving, and network building. As discussed earlier, the Department is strongly embedded in the Conservation Trust, providing

the scientific knowledge and technical advice on which decisions are based. Information is exchanged freely but the main flow of information is from the Department to the Conservation Trust in the form of advice and then from the Conservation Trust to the Department in the form of data that the Department then analyses. The Department is consulted and advises on problems and acts as an information hub linking similar organisations. As discussed earlier, this has been accepted as a common mode of operating possibly because several key Conservation Trust staff members are former/current employees of the Department or because the Department is seen as the expert on conservation.

Central to adaptive co-management is the empowerment of the community group. The DOC Trustees believes that to empower a community group “you’re listening to them”. It appears that the Department and the Conservation Trust have open communication and that they are communicating regularly. This is evident from the surprise expressed by the DOC Operations Ranger when he had not heard from the Conservation Trust New Chairperson for ten days.

Empowerment is also fundamental to participation and capacity building, and is the basis for community-initiated projects. The characteristics that have been identified as underpinning success in community-based conservation initiatives are also related to the empowerment of community groups. When the underpinning characteristics of success are present, so too are empowerment and an increased chance of success for the community-based conservation initiative.

6.10. Conclusion

The discussion has identified a number of characteristics within the Conservation Trust that have contributed to its success: the definition of success in vision statements, aims, and objectives and the ability to monitor success; the contribution of community members from the start of the project; the involvement of Department staff who are integrated into the community as well embedded in the Conservation Trust; the pre-conditions (a crisis, a willingness for locals to be involved, a leadership centre, and a common vision) identified by Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004a) as leading to success in co-management arrangements; a focus on capacity building, in particular in the areas of respect, outreach, common values, leadership, motivation, and vision; and the existence of adaptive co-management principles (trust, leadership, conflict management, and empowerment).

It must be acknowledged that the case study did not rank very high on the participation typologies when knowledge and its influence on decision making were considered. However, conservation in New Zealand is defined by scientific knowledge and the Conservation Trust appears to accept the Department as the expert in this area. The case study illustrated that community-based conservation initiatives can be successful and achieve considerable conservation outcomes even when true participation is not occurring.

7. CONCLUSION

The Department of Conservation has made a commitment to increasing conservation outcomes by increasing community partnerships. Identifying the characteristics that underpin success in community-based conservation initiatives can ensure that favourable conditions are established to increase the chance of success.

A definition of success fitting to the Department would have a strong focus on achieving conservation outcomes in community-based conservation initiatives. Conservation outcomes can change as community group dynamics change and original goals may need to be revised periodically. Revising goals and defining success is necessary so success can be monitored and measured. Frequent monitoring can improve the likelihood of success by identifying whether the community-based conservation initiative is on target for achieving its goals.

Although the literature indicates that community-initiated projects are more likely to be successful, early engagement with the local community in State-initiated projects could also result in success by developing strong community ownership. This is particularly likely if a strong existing relationship is further developed through having Department and former Department staff integrated into the community group. The challenge for the Department is how to gain strong community ownership when there are no Department or former Department staff embedded in the community-based conservation initiative or in communities where the Department is not well integrated. A further challenge would be for the Department to engage with the wider community rather than a small hand-picked selection of members.

The Department proved to have the flexibility, expertise, and capacity to intervene and assist in a diverse range of roles within the Conservation Trust. The Department needs to be clear about its role in supporting community-based conservation initiatives and acknowledge that, in highly technical projects, it may need to play an integral role and, by default, acquire a significant degree of project ownership. In projects that do not require high technical expertise support may still be required.

The case study results illustrate that the preconditions (a crisis, a willingness for locals to be involved, a leadership centre, and a common vision) that were identified by Plummer and FizGibbon (2004a) as underpinning success in community-based conservation initiatives were present in the Conservation Trust. It is possible that these pre-conditions acted as an impetus for the success of the Conservation Trust and that they would act similarly for other community-based conservation initiatives.

This case study confirms Mountjoy et al.'s (2013) conclusions that, to be successful, community-based natural resource management groups should focus on building capital in the areas of outreach, respect, and common values. To become highly successful, the focus should be on leadership, motivation, and vision. In projects that are expensive to run and

require expert specialist skills there would also be a need for securing funding and building skills and expertise.

Community-based conservation initiatives can be successful and achieve substantial conservation outcomes even when true participation and a transfer of power are limited. Conservation in New Zealand is based on scientific knowledge and this knowledge determines what should be conserved and the method of conserving it. Until communities hold this scientific knowledge, and the decision making power to determine conservation priorities, the community will only ever be contributing to and supporting state-determined conservation goals. Even so, this case study illustrates that substantial conservation outcomes can be achieved without true participation.

The Department should focus on establishing strong trusting relationships with the community and open lines of communication. A challenge for the Department will be to develop these relationships where there is resistance from the community. This may not be achievable in a short time frame. Building trusting relationships can take years and may need to be a long term goal.

Much remains to be learned about why some community-based conservation initiatives are successful and others are not. This research has contributed towards a greater understanding of the characteristics underpinning success in community-based conservation initiatives and can be applied to increase the probability of future success of community-based conservation projects.

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APPENDIX 1

Defining Terms

A range of terms are used to refer to forms of community-based governing and management of natural resources. The terms are partnerships, participation, community-based conservation, collaboration, and co-management. Some authors believe there is a lack of consistency (Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004b) and little agreement in the use of the terms (Lawrence, 2006; Reed, 2008).

This is consistent with Brinkerhoff's (2002) findings for the term 'partnerships' in non-profit organisations partnering with governments around the world. Her research included a review of the term 'partnerships' in academic literature as well as in a number of case studies. She found little agreement on the meaning of the term due to a lack of a conceptual framework and concludes "partnership remains an evolving concept and practice" (Brinkerhoff, 2002, p. 28). She acknowledges there is an overlap in terms and describes the 'perfect' partnership for success in non-profit organisations and the State as similar to participation being bottom up and at the grass-roots level. Jentoft, McCay and Wilson (1998, p. 877) came to a similar conclusion while studying fisheries co-management, where they found an "imprecise and often indiscriminate use of terminology".

Agrawal and Gibson (2001) argue there is no clear distinction in 'terms' in community natural resource conservation because supporters of the approach seldom had to define what it meant. The focus of discussions was mainly on markets and states. Carlsson and Berkes (2005) believed the confusion over the use of the term collaborative management stemmed from it being a relatively new discipline, and Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004b) define co-operative environmental management simply as a blanket term for all kinds of community consultation. Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004b) expanded on this and argued that the term 'partnership' encompasses a broad range of governance arrangements including participation, co-operative environmental management, collaboration, and co-management.

A number of authors recognise there is no single definition for co-management (Berkes, 2009; Berkes et al., 1991; Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2007; Campbell, 1996). Some believe one definition is not possible due to the varying conservation initiatives and stakeholders involved (Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2007; Lawrence, 2006) and because it shares many characteristics with other environmental governance arrangements (Berkes, 2009; Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004a).

Heckler (2009) found, when trying to define the term 'traditional environmental knowledge', that any one definition could be "overly restrictive" (Heckler, 2009, p. 5). She argues that defining traditional environmental knowledge risks transforming it into something it is not. This is due to the diversity of traditional environmental knowledge. The

same could be said for community-based conservation, which is a term that encapsulates a wide variety of governance terms and diverse arrangements.

However, there is value in analysing the different definitions for the various terms to draw out common themes and characteristics.

There are a number of generalised definitions, such as Pomeroy and Berkes' (1997) definition of co-management as "a middle course between pure state run property and pure communal property regimes" (Pomeroy & Berkes, 1997, p. 467). Similarly, the expression 'co-operative management' is defined as the "sharing of rights and responsibilities by the government and civil society" (Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004b, p. 63). It is viewed as sitting between total central government control and total community control. In environmental management it sits between state control of natural resources and total stakeholder-based conservation initiatives (Berkes, 1994).

Borrini-Feyerabend (2007, p. 65) believes generalised definitions of co-management can lead to a "corrupted language" that is trying to encapsulate a wide variety of practices and behaviours.

Although generalised definitions are limited, specific definitions of community-based conservation and associated terms can provide a deeper understanding of the common themes. Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004b) sum up co-management and participation as an efficient, equitable, empowering, and sustainable management process. They define collaboration as multiple parties with a shared interest and argue it is used synonymously with the term partnership, although has a stronger focus on the process and interaction of the parties involved.

Natcher, Davis and Hickey's (2005) definition of co-management is very similar to Plummer and FitzGibbon's definition of collaboration; however, it has a greater emphasis on relationships and their interactions and not on process. This relationship element is central to many definitions of co-management and is largely focused on local and state-level management (Mulrennan et al., 2012) and includes resource users (Sen & Raakjaer-Nielsen, 1996) as well as community groups (Berkes, 2009). However, Berkes (2009) defines co-management as only concerning resource users.

While Plummer and FitzGibbon (2004a) claim co-management is solely concerned with common pool resources, other authors have proposed definitions of co-management for protected areas. Lane (2001) describes co-management for protected areas as a partnership between conservation planners and local stakeholders that facilitates park management. However, this does not cater for the broad number of other conservation roles that also facilitate co-management, nor does it account for protected areas other than parks.

Borrini-Feyerabend (1996) also defines co-management specifically for protected areas: where stakeholders are involved in a substantial way in the management activities. Specifically, in a collaborative management process, according to Borrini-Feyerabend

(1996), the agency with jurisdiction over the protected area develops a partnership with other relevant stakeholders that specifies and guarantees the respective management functions, rights, and responsibilities. However, this definition does not take into account the many community arrangements that are ad hoc, informal, and not officially recognised. West and Brechin's (1991) definition of co-management of protected areas recognises the importance of shared management, responsibility, and authority but does not limit co-management to formal agreements.

In the literature, community-based natural resource management shares similar characteristics (Measham & Lumbasi, 2013) to community-based conservation, although it has been used to refer to full control of a conservation initiative, see, for example, Sen and Raakjaer-Nielsen (1996). Community-based natural resource management is associated by Adams and Hulme (2001) with rural development initiatives where conservation is a secondary benefit after sustainable resource use. Brunckhorst (2010) agrees with Adams and Hulme's (2001) definition, but only in a developing country context: community-based natural resource management in practice can mean multiple things in different places, particularly in developing rather than developed countries. Brunckhorst (2010, p. 17) expands on this, arguing that in developing countries community-based natural resource management is related to economic development and sustainable use of natural resources, whereas in developed countries it is "a local engagement mechanism for improving ecological and resource management [...] environmental repair and river restoration [...]".

APPENDIX 2

Additional analysis of catalysts for community-based conservation

A number of authors propose different reasons for the trend towards community-based conservation.

Some argue that many protected areas are too complex to be governed effectively by one actor alone (Bene & Neiland, 2006; Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2007; Brinkerhoff, 2002; Pimbert & Pretty, 1995; Zurba et al., 2012), even when that actor is a large governing body such as the state (Berkes, 2009). Although various authors refer to managing protected areas as 'complex', there is a lack of definition for this term. What specific characteristics make protected area management complex is not recorded in the literature. This lack of information makes it difficult to draw any conclusions on the 'complexity' of protected area management and whether it contributes to a move towards community-based conservation.

In a study of 23 integrated conservation-development projects it was found that weak government policy offered no other option than community-based conservation initiatives (Wells & Brandon, 1992). Wells and Brandon (1992) describe weak government policy as having a flawed design and being inefficiently implemented. They expand on this further and state some government agencies are politically weak and lack trained staff, equipment, and resources to carry out management tasks in protected areas (Wells & Brandon, 1992). This research primarily relates to developing countries and therefore similar findings may or may not emerge in a developed country context such as that in New Zealand.

Agrawal and Gibson (2001) argue that the strength of government policy is not relevant but the failure of top down policy approaches can lead a government to collaborative management. They also argue that states are limited in their ability to coerce participation into development and conservation projects, believing instead that decentralisation to the local community is more effective at encouraging citizens to become involved in conservation (Agrawal & Gibson, 2001). Bruyneel (2009) agrees and believes top-down approaches are often seen as bureaucracies imposing regulations on communities.

Government budget cuts are also believed to be a fundamental factor in decentralisation (Agrawal & Ostrom, 2001) and a move towards collaborative management (Mandell, 1999; Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004a). Pierre and Peters (2000, p. 88) agree and see this "passing the buck or displacing the problems to sub-national institutions" as a way of balancing the budget and curbing public expenditure.