

Transboundary Collaboration within the St. Elias Region for Area Conservation: Focusing on Kluane National Park and Reserve

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Main points of research:

- ❖ Location and characteristics of the St. Elias region.
- ❖ Ecosystem management and protected areas.
- ❖ Collaborative relationships between key actors.
- ❖ Role of First Nations and traditional knowledge.
- ❖ Opportunities: the way forward.

Location and characteristics of the St. Elias region



Location and characteristics of St. Elias region



Location and characteristics of St. Elias region



Threats to St. Elias region

❖ Climate Change Prediction:

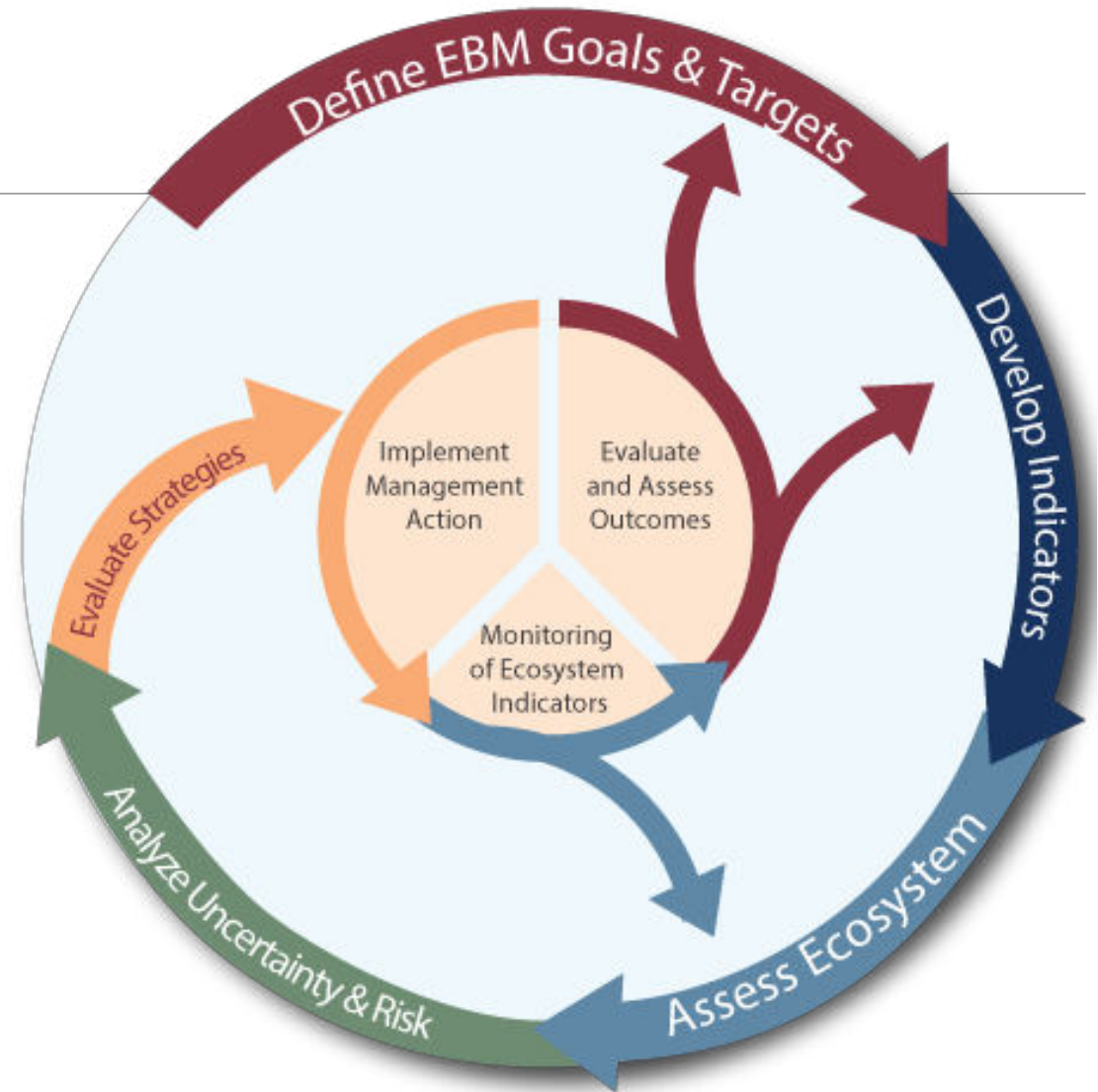
- ❖ Precipitation and snow cover changes,
- ❖ Changes in extend and depth of permafrost,
- ❖ Changes in fire and pest frequencies,
- ❖ Changes in water flows (Slocombe, 2003, p. 66).

❖ Threats to integrity of the park:

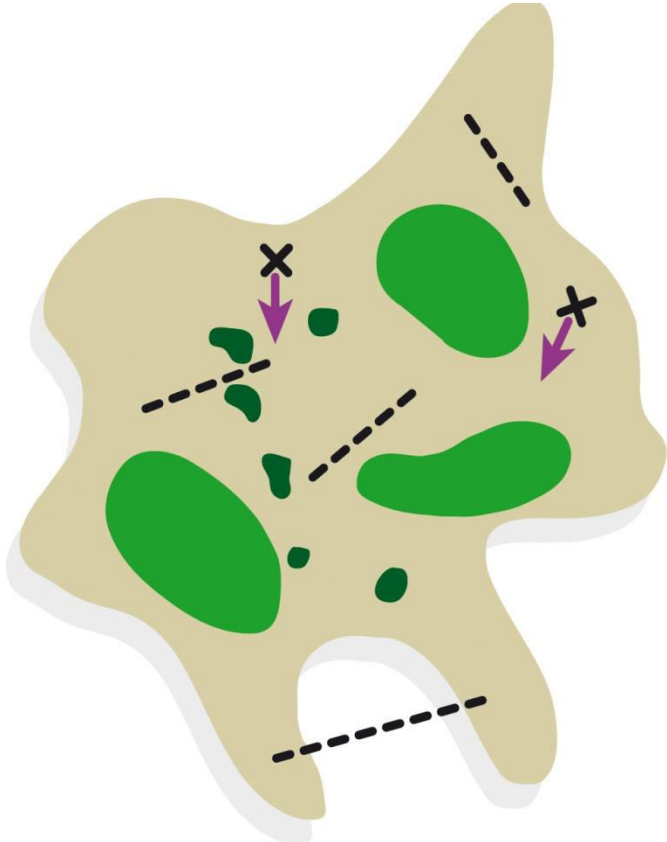
- ❖ Illegal commercial fishing in wilderness,
- ❖ Impact of tour boats on wildlife in Glacier Bay,
- ❖ Development of highways and creating habitat fragmentation,
- ❖ Mining and agriculture activities outside parks,
- ❖ Threatened species (e.g. Steller sea lion).

Ecosystem Management

- ❖ integrates scientific knowledge of ecological relationships
- ❖ within a **complex socio-political framework**
- ❖ towards the goal of **protecting a clear geographical space(s)** (Grumbine, 1994).



Ecosystem Management and protected areas



Key actors in transboundary collaboration

- ❖ Federal Government of the United States of America,
- ❖ Federal Government of Canada,
- ❖ State of Alaska,
- ❖ Province of British Columbia and the Yukon territory,
- ❖ First Nations, Tribes.

Kluane National Park and Reserve

- ❖ Federal Government of Canada,
- ❖ Provincial Government of the Yukon,
- ❖ Kluane First Nation,
- ❖ White River First Nation,
- ❖ Champagne and Ashihik First Nation.

Current collaborative methods between key actors

❖ Current collaborative methods:

- Communication, information sharing,
- Coordination of projects and shared interests,
- Cooperative management,
- International agreements.

Communication

- ❖ Active communication between agencies, for instance, plays a key role in generating knowledge of a certain region and gathering wildlife data.
- ❖ Common types of communication:
 - 1) Correspondence and telephone between government biologists and relevant experts,
 - 2) Conducting surveys,
 - 3) Exchange of information through meetings, trainings, and seminars,
 - 4) Communication between government and nongovernment organizations.

Coordination of projects and shared interests

- ❖ High Level: Formal and complex (government, legislation, formal agreements between governments).
- ❖ Low level: Informal and simple (informal agreements within government agencies, between nongovernment agencies).



High level:
Agreements,
legislation



Low level:
Communication,
monitoring

Cooperative Management

- ❖ Joint research programs between US/Canada,
- ❖ Shared infrastructure and resources within St. Elias region,
 - ❖ Example: Alsek River watershed management.

Interagency cooperation in St. Elias

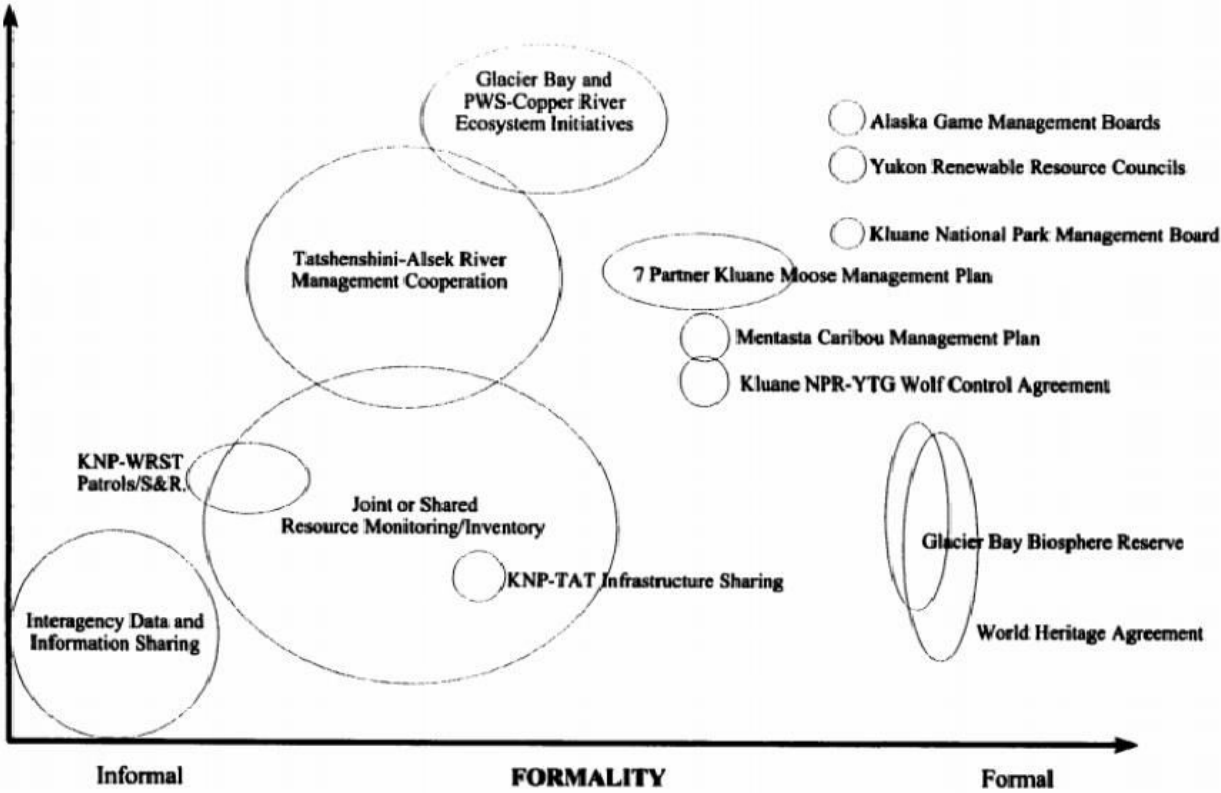


Figure 4.3: Primary Examples of Interagency Cooperation in the St. Elias Region

(Danby, 1999)

Obstacles to cooperative relationships


- ❖ Strained finances,
- ❖ Difference in interests,
- ❖ Lack of staff in resource management,
- ❖ Short-term vision,
- ❖ Collaboration between Canada and the US to become "not nearly as extensive as that between agencies of the same nation" (Danby & Slocombe, 2002, p. 264).


Role of First Nations and traditional knowledge

- ❖ "Transcending the binational nature of the St Elias are the First Nations, which call the entire region home" (Danby & Slocombe, 2002, p. 266).
- ❖ The First Nations in the St. Elias region have the ability to **bridge the national borders** and enhance cooperation between government agencies across borders.
- ❖ Traditional Knowledge: source of knowledge that **provides insights on the biophysical or natural and historic characteristics of an area** (Gadgil, Barkes & Folke, 1993, p. 151).

Collaboration with First Nation

❖ Kluane National Park and Reserve

❖ Kluane First Nation, 

❖ White River First Nation, 

❖ Champagne and Ashihik First Nation. 

❖ Healing Broken Connections project:

- ❖ Welcoming First Nations back to Kluane National Park,
- ❖ Integration of traditional knowledge within regional First Nations.

Opportunities: the way forward

- ❖ Develop new strategies to to consolidate and advance cross-border cooperation,
- ❖ Further cooperative work between agencies to address common conservation concerns,
- ❖ Systematic integration of traditional knowledge in area conservation,
- ❖ New common maps.