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## Learning Brief - 2019

Through joint research and strategic advocacy, the Alliance built the evidence and partnerships to ensure legal and regulatory frameworks that include local communities in managing marine protected areas for sustainable fisheries and biodiversity conservation.

# Creating a new kind of protected area

## In Mozambique, best practices for influencing policy to empower communities

The Primeiras e Segundas (P&S) archipelago in Mozambique is home to extensive mangrove forests and coral reefs and some of the world's poorest people. Can you please update the brief's second sentence to, That's why, in 2008, the CARE-WWF Alliance launched joint work in the region, building on several years of foundational investments by WWF Mozambique. While fish stocks are overfished and declining, citizens from the coast near the P&S archipelago historically lacked the legal authority to manage areas for fish stock regeneration. Through joint advocacy, the Alliance contributed to the Government of Mozambique's decision to designate a new protected area in 2012. The P&S Environmental Protection Area (PSEPA) is the first nature reserve in Mozambique to permit local use and to formalize co-management with communities.

Through joint research, the Alliance and the Ministry of Sea, Inland Waters and Fisheries co-produced evidence that community-managed no-take zones, where fishing is banned, serve as effective fish nurseries. The declaration of this innovative protected area that includes local communities in management is a

vital step toward the realization of long-term conservation and development objectives in the region. The enabling policy framework, paired with empowering community-based organizations to participate in management, has led to early participatory natural resource governance wins in PSEPA.

### Advocating with one voice for the declaration of a protected area

With the declaration of PSEPA in 2012, the government of Mozambique created a new protected area—the first example of a unique legal designation that goes beyond strict protectionism. This environmental protected area includes development objectives through areas zoned for community management and subsistence use. By influencing the declaration, the Alliance played a strategic role in creating the enabling conditions for sustainable livelihoods and community biodiversity conservation in Mozambique.

The Alliance took a multi-pronged, multi-level approach to cultivating government champions. Through bilateral meetings with the National Conservation Areas Administration (ANAC), Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture

and Ministry of Fisheries, the Alliance refined the case for protected area declaration for each audience. CARE's engagement in this advocacy was critical to establishing buy-in on this novel approach to protected area management within the Ministry of the Environment. In a least developed country desperate to reduce poverty, CARE's legitimization of the message that poverty alleviation could be achieved through environmental protection was critical. Together, these actions enabled the Alliance to deliver the message with one voice that garnered support for the declaration.

### Collaborative research and enabling regulations for community conservation

Collaborative research was instrumental in demonstrating to the government and communities that community-based conservation works. In 2013 and 2014, the Alliance engaged part of the Ministry of Fisheries, the Institute of Fish Research (IIP), to conduct a follow-up study on the effectiveness of no take-zones established in 2010. A

Memorandum of Understanding guided co-implementation of research on the biophysical effects of these small locally managed areas that prohibit fishing. After three years, the number of fish species at least tripled and abundance also increased. Engaging not only the national IIP but also District government officials, local fishers and US scientists in this research helped to raise the profile of the no-take zone approach as well as legitimize the results in the eyes of diverse stakeholders. IIP leadership throughout the Alliance research process—from methodological design to field implementation to co-authoring the report—engendered Ministry of Fisheries ownership over the results. The Ministry’s trust in this evidence was instrumental in ensuring provisions for no-take zones as one of several community-managed areas permitted within the protected area.

The Alliance also collaborated with ANAC to support the preparation of the management plan, a regulatory roadmap for administering the protected area.



A woman carrying seafood purchased from artisanal fishermen in Primeiras and Segundas.

By co-financing the plan’s drafting, the Alliance was able to shape the terms of reference and ensure selection of consultants with appropriate expertise. The Alliance provided feedback on the detailed plan to ensure its quality and inclusion of appropriate provisions for community management based on evidence and experience. In 2016, the Government of Mozambique approved PSEPA’s co-management plan: it puts communities front and center, from managing no-take zones to advising on administration of the entire environmental protected area.

### Empowering communities for co-management

Community-based conservation functions only as well as the community-based organizations that manage the resources. That’s why the Alliance has worked to strengthen Natural Resource Management Committees and Community Fishing Councils. While some groups existed previously, the Alliance has been instrumental in building their capacity and elevating their voices to higher levels of dialogue and decision-making. In 2015, the Alliance supported the creation of the Union of Artisanal Fishers. The government-recognized Union brings together representatives of fishers’ associations from Moma, Angoche, Pebane and Larde Districts. Speaking with a unified voice, artisanal fishers were able to directly communicate with representatives of the Ministry of Sea, Internal Waters and Fish in the Nampula and Zambézia Provinces. Because of the enabling regulatory framework of the PSEPA management plan, the Union successfully advocated for the establishment of a new community-managed no-take zone in Pebane District. While less powerful community groups had previously attempted to do the same, the Union was critical to removing

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bureaucratic obstacles to establishment of the new community-managed area.

### Conclusion

The P&S Environmental Protected Area (PSEPA) is the first in Mozambique recognizes the rights of communities to manage and use natural resources. Alliance research demonstrated the efficacy of community-management of natural resources in biological terms. Collaborating on that research with the IIP and other stakeholders was important for cultivating buy-in within the Government of Mozambique.

Paired with joint advocacy to diverse Ministries, CARE and WWF effectively delivered the common message that attending to the needs of local marine users—and empowering them to manage those resources—was key to the preservation of P&S. Subsequent financing of the PSEPA management plan secured community management, and no-take zones specifically, in the operational regulatory framework.

Finally, empowering community resource users through formation of civil society organizations that represent them at district and provincial levels is critical to the future of this budding co-management model. In PSEPA, ongoing capacity building of civil society from community to provincial levels will be critical to realizing the promise of this integrated approach to conservation and development approach.

This learning series was co-authored by EcoAgriculture Partners and the Alliance.

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