

The Common Property Resource Digest

NO. 70 QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF COMMON PROPERTY Sept. 2004

This issue of the CPR Digest focusses on *The Commons in an Age of Global Transition: Challenges, Risks and Opportunities* The Tenth Biennial Conference of the International Association for the Study of Common Property which took place from 9 – 13 August 2004 and was hosted by the Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México in Oaxaca, México. The conference was, by all accounts, a raving success. I don't want to steal the thunder of our excellent conference organizers *Leticia Merino* and *Jim Robson* who have a great deal of their own to say about the conference, starting on page 7....but there were *a lot* of people there and they had *a lot* to say.

Our main attraction in this issue is the biennial Presidential Address given this year by *Erling Berge*. In his wide ranging discussion Erling speaks to a number of current, serious question facing the IASCP about of our mission and identity. He encourages us to be patient with fuzzy concepts and marginal change as we continue to work out who we are and what we want to do.

Enjoy!

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Presidential Address

The Way We Think

Erling Berge,
 Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim
 Immediate Past President IASCP

Part I: The Way We Think About IASCP Introduction

IASCP has completed its first conference in Latin America. It is the tenth general conference of our association. Incidentally it is also 15 years since the association was founded. As associations go we are fairly young. But among the young anniversaries are important. One way of using them is to think a bit about where we came from, where we are, and where we want to go. We may even wonder if there is a discrepancy between where we want to go and where we are heading. You may want to think about that. Here I want to think about who we are or maybe rather who we think we are.

The collective expression of what we think we should be doing is found in our mission statement. Our homepage displays the following:

“The International Association for the Study of Common Property (IASCP), founded in 1989, is a non-profit Association devoted to understanding and improving institutions for the management of environmental resources that are (or could be) held or used collectively by communities in developing or developed countries.”

The Common Property Resource Digest

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CPR Digest no 67 and 68 have raised questions directly addressing our mission statement. Charlotte Hess, our Information Officer, in no 67, says that our mission statement is too restrictive seen in relation to what our members actually do. It may be leading outsiders into thinking we do other things than we actually do and thus possibly deter some people from getting involved in our discussions. This observation leads me to ask why we feel the statement restricts our identity today but apparently not in 1989. Was the statement of 1989 too 'static' in its approach to delimiting our field of interest?

Amy R Poteet, in *CPR Digest no 68*, raises questions about conceptual consistency in our discussions. The focus is not on our mission statement, but on what we do as scientists. Yet, the question is as applicable to our collective identity: how can we describe what our mission is? What are the concepts we can use most effectively to communicate our field of interest? Should the concepts be well defined, internally consistent and able to communicate unambiguously across professional and cultural borders?

I do not think anybody would oppose such concepts. But we all realise that such concepts do not exist. So, what is the next best solution?

Fuzzy concepts and marginal change

Some of the more commonly used concepts of science do not have clear boundaries. Consider for example 'cause' and 'causation'. In fact, most concepts in natural languages do not have clear boundary rules. Meaning is established by usage rather than by definitions. Over time their meaning will change, mostly without being noticed by the users of the language. Even if the language of science is different in some respects it is surprisingly similar in most of its dynamic. Core concepts are not well defined, meanings are established by usage, evolve, and change across generations of users.

Could such properties of languages have any implications for a mission statement? Consider for example core concepts from our discussions such as: 'common property', 'common pool resource', and 'commons'. In the program for the Oaxaca conference we find frequencies of use:

'common property' is mentioned	46 times
'common pool' is mentioned	18 times
'resources'	131 times
'common pool resource/s'	15 times
'commons'	128 times
'community/ies' are mentioned	226 times

Now, which concept should we choose in our mission statement? 'Common property' appears in our current mission statement, 'commons' does not. If usage were a

vote commons and community would speak most broadly to what we actually do.

However, to some extent the choice of words will have to be tailored to how specialised and focused we want our association to be or become. Therefore we also should consider the dynamics of languages. Should we choose fuzzy or well defined concepts?

In my view “commons” refers to a basic concept with a strong core speaking to and being understandable for most people, but without clear conceptual boundaries. While most people will be able to point to a commons they readily recognise, any two persons from different institutional contexts may have to discuss at some length to agree on similarities and differences in the classification of their favourite commons. It would seem reasonable to call it a fuzzy concept.

On the other hand, ‘common pool resource’ is not used in our mission statement, but it is a central concept in our discussion. This concept is well defined by a technical language in terms of subtractability and exclusion. Once definitions of subtractability and exclusion are accepted, the abstract idea of a common pool resource is clear with sharp boundaries. However, this may not always translate into easy identification of an object in the real world. Agreeing on whether any specific resource is or is not a common pool resource may sometimes be as hard as to agree on whether it is a commons. It will depend on how you understand subtractability and excludability.

The institutional structure giving meaning to subtractability and exclusion is not included in the definition. Nevertheless, it is implicitly there. Are, for example, real world examples of subtractability and exclusion defined independent of technology and transaction costs? Detailed investigations of the institutional structure governing each resource may be needed to determine whether the resource can be said to have common pool characteristics or not. In empirical work the clarity of the technical terms evaporates.

The concept ‘common property’ is used even in our name. Thus it should be the most basic concept in our identity. But what kind of image does this concept evoke for the uninitiated? My impression is that the most common understanding of the concept will associate to property rights and law, and if people do not know much about it, the first thing that comes to mind might be the common property of married couples or maybe the common property of condominium owners rather than a commons as we tend to think of it.

To me it seems that while all common property according to our theoretical approach can be called a commons, not all commons will be common property in the legal sense. Now, contrary to what most people think, property rights

are also in law a rather fuzzy concept. Most people will assume, as mainstream economics does, that only the Roman law *dominium plenum* can be considered real property rights. Those who do have not only missed the legal approach to property as a variable bundle of rights, they also have missed out on a basic feature of our institutional approach to resource management: that property rights in real life are negotiable and malleable

So what exactly does the concept ‘common property’ tell a stranger about us? Consider the different ideas evoked if our name contained the words ‘the Study of Commons and Property’ rather than ‘the Study of Common Property’!



*The volunteers were a joyful (and very helpful) presence -
Photo Doug Wilson*

Changing IASCP requires fuzzy concepts

Living systems have to adapt to their environment. Most adaptation occurs as an accumulation of small changes at various margins. The International Association for the Study of Common Property is a living system that will change, and we are better off changing at the margins rather than in sweeping reorganisations.

Words comprise much of what we are. Thus, changing The International Association for the Study of Common Property means changing words. And as noted, meanings of words in natural languages change at the margin. To be able to adapt, our core concepts need fuzzy boundaries that enable us to change our activities at the margin, to discover new types of commons and to apply the theory to new aspects of resource governance. But there is another important aspect to the words we use that Charlotte Hess pointed to.

The way we think and institutional design

Charlotte Hess’ concern, I think, is not so much the clarity of concepts as whether some scholars and practitioners feel at home in the Association. Will the mission statement tell them that what they do falls, as it were, within the

jurisdiction of the Association? Are they entitled to bring their questions and concerns along, and can they expect others to want to discuss them?

If I read her concerns right, the clarity of concepts may not matter so much per se. What matters to such a problem is the framing of the concepts. What kinds of feelings, attitudes and values will the mission statement evoke? Is our mission inclusive of all types of commons? Seen like this we really have an interesting problem in institutional design.

By some versions of our theory of commons, it would be reasonable to say that our association defines a commons. We are a group of people working together to manage and harvest essential goods from a resource held collectively. This resource is, of course, the fund of knowledge embodied in you and the texts that you have written or that you in other ways make relevant for the study of commons.

“Knowledge commons” has been on our agenda for a long time.

But are the characteristics of our common fund of knowledge such that we can call our association a commons? Does our theory apply to resources other than environmental resources? If we believe it does, or if we want to test if it does, we should not be deterred by the words used in our mission statement. Both the words we use and the way we frame them should encourage explorations at the margins of our fields of study.

There is also an important lesson for institutional design here. This lesson has always been common knowledge among good democratic politicians. The trick is to create an adaptable framework for guided evolution. We want a mission statement that helps us focus on what is important while it also allows us to explore new aspects and adapt to new perceptions of the world. We should not let ourselves become locked into some particular way of perceiving the world. We as well as the world will always be changing.

Using fuzzy concepts will allow change. But how do we introduce guidance to the evolving system? Bureaucratic instructions or democratic discussions work sometimes, but either may be too slow, or, at worst, self-defeating. For an association like ours, I think guidance must come from a framework that affects **the way we think**, rather than **what** we think.

The way we think is important

Why would I think that the way we think is more important than what we think? There is an obvious link from what we want to what we get. But is **the way we think** about our activities important apart from what we want to achieve? And exactly what do I mean by “the way we think”? I am not sure I will be able to answer to your satisfaction. Probably not even to my own satisfaction. But I want to try. So let me start with an example:

A forester thinking differently

During a conference on forestry in Oslo we had an excursion to the large privately owned woods around Oslo. One of the foresters working there came along

and explained how they managed the forest.

Recently new regulations to promote biodiversity and sustainable forestry had been promulgated and I asked the forester what difference did the new regulations make. What were they doing differently now compared to before the regulations.

The man thought about it for some time before he answered me: “No”, he said, “we don’t do things differently, but we think differently about what we

do.” At the time, I was puzzled.

From a way of thinking to doing

What kind of difference is that? What practical implication would follow from thinking differently? Isn’t it what we actually do that makes a difference for biodiversity? Of course it is. But thinking is also doing something. So let me rephrase the question. When and how will the way we think about what we do have an impact on what we do? Phrased like this we see that how we think about what we do will be extremely important. It will be important at precisely those points in time when we have to choose among several options for action. If we think that sustainable forestry is as important as profits, we will choose differently than if we think only profits counts. If we think about ourselves that we are just and honest human beings we will react differently to new opportunities than if we think that we are allowed to cut corners as long as we are not caught at it.

Two suggestions emerge. The way we think about what we do involves feelings, attitudes, and values.



Outside (and inside) the meeting venue civil society was alive
- Photo Doug Wilson

And the way we think about what we do involves the future more than the present.

The way to think about IASCP

Can we apply a distinction between what we think about and the way we think about it to the International Association for the Study of Common Property? As I show in the table, I think we can.

There would seem to be two kinds of mechanisms linking the goals of the Association and the activities we engage in. One mechanism defines what we do; the other defines the standards of performance when we do it. This is one way of approaching the difference between what we think about and the way we think about it.

In fact, I think it may be a reasonable conjecture to say that institutions for self-governance need to shape **the way people think** about their problems rather than **what people think** about their problems. This is a hypothesis you may want to test more rigorously. But I believe we should apply this as a design principle to our mission statement. The International Association for the Study of Common Property needs to be an Association where a diversity of views feels at home.

Part II: The Way We Think About Protected Lands

Shaping the way people think: an example from Norway

More generally, I think that as a field of study ‘the way we think’ can be identified as the cultural foundation of the social and economic institutions structuring the incentives we react to. Think about that: What does “Structuring of incentives” actually mean? Does the way we think actually contribute a structure to the incentives we face?

To me it seems to be an interesting way of approaching the creation of protected areas of various types. Let us take a brief excursion to some mountains in the West Fjords of Norway that are in the middle of being defined as a protected area. Interesting things are happening here. People are starting to think differently about these mountains. The mountains that people think about are unchanging, but the way they think about them is changing.

By the terminology of our Association these mountains are a commons and have always been a commons. But in the Norwegian language they are not called by the word

usually translated as commons. Rather it will translate approximately as private common property. The mountains are the common property of the farms in the valley. They are not the common property of the farmers, but of the farms. The resources found in the mountains are an integral part of what made farming possible here in the far north at the margin of where people are supposed to survive on agriculture. This has now started to change. Farming has been changing rapidly for more than one generation. The mountain resources are now of much less significance for farming, but are still used extensively.

More important than the slow changes in agricultural activities is the fact that central authorities have begun to

The rest of the world	Actions of IASCP members	Thoughts of IASCP members	The way we think about what we do.
	Expressing A Mission Statement	What We Want to Do: Science or policy advice?	Do we want to guide the development of IASCP or determine what it is? (design principle)
What the Best of the World Think We Do	What We Do	What We Think We do: improving our understanding of the world or gaining the attention of policy makers	Do we find what we do reasonable and appropriate? (basic value)
What the Best of the World Think We Want to Do		Is there a perceived discrepancy between actions and intentions?	Are we concerned that what we do measures up to the highest standards of science or are we worried about its application in political struggles? (standard of performance)
			To what degree should we let the thoughts of the rest of the world affect our view of what we do? (design principle)

think differently of these mountains. For almost a generation they have been of the opinion that the mountains need protection. The proposal to protect them was first published in 1986, alarming the local population. Now the authorities are about to get their ambition fulfilled. The mountains are included in the Geiranger-Herdalen Protected Landscape Area which currently is in the process of

being established. And furthermore, these mountains are also part of Norway’s “West Norwegian Fjords” nomination to the UNESCO World Heritage List (details can be found at <http://www.dirnat.no/archive/attachments/01/58/UNESC033.pdf>). A decision is expected in 2005. So something is definitely going on around these mountains.

This “going on”, however, among both the central authorities and the local population does not concern anything that is actually happening or about to happen in the area. It is all about the future. Except for less use by the local farmers absolutely no real world activities are noticeable in these mountains. Neither the local farmers, nor the local municipal authorities have any plans that might alter the mountains in any significant way. Still there is a widespread perception at the national level that the mountains need protection. What does it mean to protect the land in such a situation?

The original desire to protect is clearly induced by certain possibilities that large scale modern capitalism affords us. In Norway the central environmental authorities see these forces at work in the increasing use of motorised access to the wilderness, and also in the widespread local desire to develop hydro-electric power and large scale tourism. These three indicators of the destructive possibilities of

modern society can alternatively be seen as examples of the local desire to create activities that may generate income for the local population and the local community. The desire of a local population and community to adapt their activities to new opportunities and their goal of long term survival are easily recognized across the globe.

But how do you protect against possibilities afforded by technology and wishes entertained by local people?

By the concept introduced above we can say that as a society Norway has to create institutions structuring the incentives people perceive and act on. One may for example make unwanted activities unprofitable. But is that what the central authorities actually do in this case?

The local population is convinced and also many others will say that we have all the protection we might need against unwanted activities in the general legislation on planning and building and the procedures leading up to the necessary permissions for development of natural resources. So what do we achieve by creating protected areas? The way we do it in Norway achieves two objectives, with one unintended and unwanted consequence.

The intended and much publicised objective is to alert the people of Norway, and even the world, to the values and qualities of the landscape. The intended but not

communicated objective is to transfer some power from local to central authorities. The unintended outcome is to make farming less adaptable to changing circumstances and the farmers less trusting of central authorities.

There is no doubt that compared to the status quo situation of no protected area any kind of protected area will give central authorities powers they did not have before. The interesting thing is that the current round of establishing protected areas occurs in a flurry of decentralisation policy experiments. The Norwegian parliament has expressly demanded decentralised management of protected areas and in all recently established areas forms of co-management are being tested out. At the same time one may observe that in the oldest area with a form of local management, central authorities are now moving some powers from local to more central authorities and the recently established (1996) nature police is expanded and starting to replace locally established supervisory systems.

The unintended outcome follows from the detailed regulation of the activities of the local population. The guiding principle for such rules, judging from similar areas in other parts of the country, seems to be that nothing new will be allowed to happen within the protected area. In theory the local population can go on doing the things they always have been doing. On-going activities are not supposed to be affected. But if the farmers want to do something in a different way, if they want to introduce new technology or need new buildings, roads or other tools to exploit the resources in the protected area, they need permission from the authorities that promulgated the protection.

Compared to areas without protection the new rules will increase the transaction costs of those that have land within the protected area. This may reduce the human made

component of the landscape and will thus also alter the values being emphasised as a reason for the protected area.

So what has been achieved in relation to the threat from the large scale forces of modernization? I think the main achievement is to force Norwegians to think differently about these areas. By designating them as Protected Landscape Areas they have been imbued with values that were not there before. They have been given a common value for all

Norwegians. This will make it

harder for everyone who wants to make changes to the landscape, not only the local stakeholders but also actors with more resources and more power to intervene will have to think twice. Thus, indeed, the area is better protected against the forces of development. But this increased protection probably comes at a cost not considered.

One possible consequence may be that other areas, areas not protected in this way, more easily become subject to development. In theory this should not be a consequence. But by defining what areas are needed to protect Norwegian nature in its pristine form and provide area for recreation, the implication is that the rest of the land can be used in a more unconstrained way. Outside the protected areas it will feel like there are fewer restrictions on possible future activities. The way people think about the unprotected areas will change subtly.

Another possible consequence is that for many areas a significant change may be that not only Norwegians in general, but local farmers in particular have started to think differently. The significance here will be that the way they



A plenary gathering in the main tent - Photo Doug Wilson

have started to think differently may be detrimental to our current system of constraining the future usages of an area. To many local farmers it would seem that the “state” in the process of creating protection of the landscape has become a bit more of an adversary, maybe not much more than before, but closer and more tangible. To them the state has become a little less “our state”. The dissatisfaction of the local population may not matter much for the landscape in this case. The locals do not have the power to do much to alter either the landscape or the policy even if they wanted. But the way they have started to think differently about the state easily carries over to other issues. Less trust in one area means less trust in other areas. Less trust in this case mean more costly regulations in the future.

Concluding

To sum up: the creation of a protected area will as a minimum achieve one real world consequence: transfer of power from local to central stakeholders and several institutional constraints on the future through alterations in the way people think about what they do, some of these no doubt unintended.

The link between social and economic institutions and the way people think about what they do is probably a dimension in need of attention in institutional design. The lesson for Norwegian authorities would be that one must pay attention not only to what the institution makes people think they have to do, but also to the way people think about what they have to do. I think Norwegian environmental authorities have failed to consider the latter.

Now, returning to the question we started with. Should we as an Association care about how our members think about their activities within the association? If you sense that my answer to this is yes, you are right. And the way to shape our way of thinking is, I believe, best approached by shaping our mission statement. What we as an association shall actually do is expressed in our bylaws. But the way we think about what we do, the feelings and attitudes and values we want to emphasize by our activities should be expressed in the mission statement.

Incentives are entities mostly found in the future. Many, maybe most of them have an existence in time that also may include here and now. But the incentive part is in the future. What does it mean to say that institutions are structuring incentives? What is the link between what exists today and the future? What is the role of “the way we think” in this link?

I suspect that most of the time we change the way we think without really noticing that that is what is happening. Thus, studies of and efforts to create institutional structures that guide the evolution of activities rather than prescribe them should be given more attention in the theory of institutions.

Report on the Tenth Biennial Conference of the IASCP, Oaxaca, Mexico

James Robson and Leticia Merino
Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

The Conference was a tremendous success with 662 registered participants from 63 different countries congregating in Oaxaca, Mexico for a 5-day meeting of 128 panels, 9 side events, 35 poster presentations, 8 pre-conference workshops, and 11 field trips.

Although not confirmed, we believe this to have been the best attended IASCP conference to date. This is a great achievement and testament to the global appeal of the conference’s themes and of a very successful Call for Papers.

Latin American Perspective

This was the first time that a Latin American country had hosted an IASCP Biennial Conference, thereby providing a wonderful opportunity to encourage greater participation from Latin American scholars, researchers, indigenous groups and other local communities, and advance the study and understanding of common property and common pool resources across the region.

Well, not only was this the best attended IASCP conference to date but one that also saw 35% of participants from Latin America – a massive increase on participation from this region over the previous two Biennial Conferences. That equates to approximately 155 registered participants and it is important to note that at least half of these were from outside Mexico.

The availability of simultaneous translation certainly encouraged Spanish speakers to attend the meeting. Being able to present in their native language was a definite plus point for many participants and went a long way to breakdown language barriers that have limited Latin American participation at past IASCP meetings.

Conference Conduct

Using information accurate at the end of the conference, August 13, 2004, 507 paper presentations, 35 poster presentations, 8 workshops, and 9 Side Events took place during the week.

Panel Sessions

Panel sessions proceeded relatively smoothly given the extremely full program with early starts and late finishes. In total there were 14 panel sessions programmed throughout the three days proper of the conference, totaling 128 panels in all.

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The number of panels by conference sub-theme were:

Indigenous Rights, Traditional Knowledge & Identity	13
Governance, Conflict and Institutional Reform	45
Conservation and Management of Common Resources	20
Contemporary Analytical Tools, Theoretical Questions and Knowledge Development Processes	12
Environmental Services and Commons Management	16
The Impact of Geographic Information Technologies and Environmental Information on the Commons	5
New Global Commons	6
Markets and Commons Management	11

Poster Sessions

Two poster sessions had a total of 35 posters. Posters were of a very high quality with a lot of interest shown by other conference participants. A three-person team evaluated all the posters being presented and certificates were awarded to the following three participants: Carlos Tejada Cruz. Universidad Autónoma de Chiapa; Jenny Springer. World Wide Fund for Nature; Carl Rova. Lulea University of Technology. Our congratulations to each one of them. Thanks also to our evaluation team: Su Yufang,; Mariana Bellot and Martha Rosas.

Side Events

For the first time at an IASCP Biennial Conference, time slots were given up specifically for Side Events. These Side Events were intended to be longer, more flexible spaces for discussion than traditional panel sessions.

All these events were well attended and received and the discussions were in general very fruitful. Nearly all commented that the format allowed for much more in-depth discussion than the panel sessions – a pointer for future conferences?

Workshops

As in past IASCP conferences, the meeting was preceded by a day of workshops. A total of 8 workshops were made available to registered participants. These workshops were well attended and received favorable comments. The presence of bi-lingual volunteers and simultaneous translation in each workshop was important. This allowed for increased interaction between participants, increased learning and maximized use of conference materials.

Keynote Addresses

Two keynote addresses were given; the first by David Kaimowitz, Director of the Center for International Forestry

Research and then a second keynote address by Francisco VanderHoff of the *Unión de Comunidades Indígenas de la Región del Istmo*. These addresses were well attended and received, and Dr. Kaimowitz's address has been posted on the conference website.

Field Trips

A day of one-day field trips was organized for mid-meeting, whilst two multi-day trips were organized for the following weekend. All trips were fully subscribed and feedback was generally very positive. Oaxaca certainly helped by providing a wealth of interesting and varied places to visit but participants were also impressed by overall organization and the ability of the volunteer translators who seemed to do a great job.

Field trips were organized in close conjunction with partners in Oaxaca – in particular *Centro para la Biodiversidad* and

Grupo Autónoma de Investigación Ambiental – who helped with logistics in Oaxaca and contact with the host communities. The sites were selected to highlight the variety of CBNRM strategies that have been developed by indigenous and other local communities in Oaxaca to use, manage and conserve their common property resources. Many of these communities have since expressed to us their happiness and pride in playing host to so many interested participants from around the world.



David Kaimowitz delivers a keynote address -
Photo Jim Robson

Conference Publications

The decision was taken during early planning stages to produce both a fully detailed conference program (190p.) and a comprehensive book of abstracts (520p.) that featured all selected abstracts - the majority in both English and Spanish. Again, having texts available in both languages was very much part of this overall goal to maximize the impact of conference proceedings, both during and after the event, throughout both the English and Spanish-speaking worlds.

Full papers were included in the CD-ROM that was made available in the registration welcome pack, whilst also being posted on the conference website (www.iascp2004.org.mx) and the Digital Library of the Commons (<http://dic.dlib.indiana.edu>). At the time of going to press, a total of 311 papers had been received and posted on the conference website.

Social Events

The welcome cocktail took place on the evening of Monday, August 9, after the pre-conference workshops and before the conference officially began on the Tuesday. The night began with a *Calenda*, a very traditional Oaxacan street procession,

which was a lot of fun and seemed to get everybody in a relaxed mood. This procession began in front of Santo Domingo church and then proceeded through neighboring streets before ending up at the entrance to the main conference venue. Participants then moved onto the *Patio Herba Santa* for a cocktail of Mezcal and local “*botanas*” (snacks) made from local traditional varieties of maize. A very enjoyable evening.

The conference banquet on the other hand was less of a success. Although many participants enjoyed the food and entertainment, for logistical reasons the evening was somewhat disjointed. Lessons learnt from the dinner have been included in the main conference report that will be made available to future conference organizers. Nevertheless it is worth mentioning the remarkable dance that participants enjoyed. This was the “*Danza de la Pluma*”, a piece written in the 16th century by the Dominican priests who Christianized Oaxaca, and in which the story of the conquest of Mexico by Spain is represented. This was performed by the dancers and the band of the village of *Teotitlán del Valle*. These dancers normally only perform in the religious parties of their village (to fulfill a “promise” made to the saintly protectors of the village) but they danced for IASCP participants because of their appreciation of the Association’s work. They were not paid, but more than 60 people of *Teotitlan* were our guests at the party.

Summary

Overall, a highly successful event that paid testament to IASCP’s relevance both internationally and, most pleasingly, in Latin America where the Association membership rate had been traditionally low compared with other regions.

Clearly, work over the past couple of years promoting the conference in Latin America has paid dividends. It is now extremely important that the Association capitalizes on this and continues to strengthen its links there ensuring a good turn-out of Latin Americans at the next Biennial Conference in 2006.

Please note that a more comprehensive report of the event’s panel, poster and side event discussions will be presented in the December edition of the *Digest*. In addition, the conference website (www.iascp2004.org.mx) has been updated and now features the full list of participants, a number of panel presentations, the keynote addresses, more full paper submissions and lots of photos of the event.

Acknowledgements

The Conference Chair and the Conference Coordinator would like to take this opportunity to thank the whole of the Organizing Team, all conference sponsors, and our fantastic group of volunteers who, through their hard work, enthusiasm and support, helped to make this event a success.

Special thanks also go out to IASCP’s Executive Director, Michelle Curtain, who provided great support and invaluable advice over the two years of conference preparation.

Décimo Congreso Bienal de la IASCP Oaxaca, Mexico

James Robson and Leticia Merino

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Informe del Congreso

El Congreso fue un gran éxito con 662 participantes registrados de 63 diferentes países reunidos en Oaxaca, México durante 5 días, con 128 paneles, 9 eventos paralelos, 35 presentaciones de póster, 8 talleres previos al Congreso y 11 viajes de campo.

Creemos que éste Congreso ha tenido la mayor asistencia. Este es un gran logro y una prueba de la importancia global de los temas del Congreso y de una convocatoria exitosa.

Perspectiva Latinoamericana

Esta fue la primera vez que un país de América Latina es sede de un Congreso Bienal de IASCP, lo que representó una excelente oportunidad para promover la participación de estudiantes, investigadores, grupos indígenas y otras comunidades locales, así como en el avance del estudio y la comprensión de la propiedad colectiva y los recursos de uso común a través de la región.

Si bien, no sólo fue éste el Congreso con mayor asistencia, hasta el momento, sino también podemos decir que el 35% de los participantes eran originarios de Latinoamérica, fue una gran sorpresa el incremento de la participación de esta región en comparación con los dos Congresos Bienales anteriores. Considerando que aproximadamente 155 participantes registrados fueron de países diferentes de México.

La disponibilidad de traducción simultánea, ciertamente estimuló la asistencia de los hispanos parlantes al Congreso. Tener la posibilidad de exponer en su lengua materna fue definitivamente un punto importante para eliminar las barreras de lenguaje que habían limitado la participación de los latinoamericanos en los Congresos anteriores.

Desarrollo del Congreso

Usando información confiable hasta el final del congreso, 13 de agosto de 2004, 507 ponencias, 35 presentaciones de poster, 8 talleres y 9 eventos paralelos se llevaron a cabo durante el congreso.

Sesiones de Panel

Las sesiones de panel, transcurrieron relativamente sin complicaciones, teniendo un programa sumamente lleno, iniciando muy temprano y terminando hasta muy tarde. Hubo en total 14 sesiones de panel programadas a lo largo de los tres días propios del congreso, lo que hizo un total de 128 paneles durante el congreso.

A continuación enunciamos el número de paneles por subtema de este congreso:

Derechos indígenas, conocimiento tradicional e identidad	13
Gobernanza, conflicto y reforma institucional	45

Conservación y manejo de recursos de uso común	20
Herramientas analíticas contemporáneas, preguntas teóricas y procesos de desarrollo de conocimientos	12
Servicios ambientales y recursos comunes	16
Los impactos del desarrollo de las tecnologías de información geográfica	5
Nuevos recursos comunes globales	6
Mercados y recursos de uso común	11
<i>Sesiones de Póster</i>	

Se llevaron a cabo dos sesiones de póster, con un total de 35 carteles en exposición. Estas sesiones fueron muy concurridas por otros participantes del congreso quienes mostraron mucho interés por la muestra de carteles. Un equipo de tres personas evaluó todos los posters expuestos y se premiaron los tres mejores trabajos. A continuación se presentan los nombres de las tres personas seleccionadas: Carlos Tejeda Cruz; Jenny Springer; and , Carl Rova. Nuestro reconocimiento para cada uno de ellos. Nuestro agradecimiento para el equipo de evaluación: Su Yufang, Mariana Bellot y Martha Rosas.

Eventos Paralelos

Por primera vez en el Congreso Bienal de IASCP, se asignó un tiempo específico para eventos paralelos. Estos eventos (seminarios, mesas redondas, etc.) fueron pensados como espacios más flexibles y con mayor tiempo para la discusión que las tradicionales sesiones de panel.

Con base a pláticas con algunos de los organizadores y de los participantes, pudimos constatar que estos eventos tuvieron muy buena aceptación y participación y que las discusiones fueron muy fructíferas. En general los comentarios sugieren que este nuevo formato permite llegar a discusiones más profundas que las sesiones de panel, además de que permite la interacción con actores no necesariamente académicos - ¿un punto a considerar para los próximos Congresos?

Talleres

Como en los Congresos anteriores, se organizaron durante el primer día reuniones a manera de talleres. Se ofrecieron un total de 8 talleres a los que los participantes podían asistir. Estos talleres contaron con el interés y la participación de numerosos asistentes de quienes recibimos comentarios muy favorables. La presencia de voluntarios bilingües y la traducción simultánea en cada uno de los talleres fue muy importante. Esto facilitó la interacción entre los participantes, favoreciendo el aprendizaje y maximizando el uso de los materiales del Congreso.

Conferencias Magistrales

Tuvimos dos conferencias magistrales, la primera a cargo de David Kaimowitz, Director del Centro Internacional para la Investigación Forestal (CIFOR), poco después de la ceremonia de inauguración, y la segunda conferencia fue dictada por Francisco VanderHoff de la *Unión de Comunidades Indígenas de la Región del Istmo* (UCIRI). Ambos eventos contaron con excelente participación. La conferencia del Doctor Kaimowitz está disponible en la página electrónica del Congreso.

Viajes de Campo

Los viajes de campo fueron organizados por el *Centro para la Biodiversidad* (CENBIO) y *Grupo Autónoma de Investigación Ambiental* (GAIA) con el apoyo del equipo organizador del congreso. Fue gracias a la hospitalidad de las comunidades visitadas y a los años de trabajo de los organizadores de Oaxaca que estos viajes fueron posibles. Las comunidades visitadas fueron seleccionadas de entre una gran variedad de entidades que desarrollan manejo comunitario de recursos naturales, estrategias que han sido desarrolladas por comunidades indígenas en Oaxaca para el uso, manejo y conservación de los recursos biológicos de propiedad colectiva.

Muchas de esas comunidades nos han expresado su satisfacción y orgullo por compartir su experiencia con participantes de diferentes países que estuvieron interesados en conocer su trabajo.

Publicaciones del Congreso

Durante la primera etapa de organización del Congreso tomamos la decisión de producir un programa detallado del Congreso (190 p.) en inglés y en español y un libro de actas con resúmenes de las conferencias seleccionadas (520p.), la mayoría también presentados en ambos idiomas contar con los textos en los dos idiomas contribuyó a lograr nuestro objetivo de maximizar el impacto del Congreso antes y después del evento, constituyendo un puente de conocimiento entre los mundos de habla hispana e inglesa.

Todas las ponencias fueron incluidas en el CD-ROM del paquete de bienvenida para los participantes, el material también esta disponible en la página electrónica del Congreso (www.iascp2004.org.mx) y en la Biblioteca Digital de los Comunes (<http://dic.dlib.Indiana.edu>). Hasta el momento se han impreso y puesto en línea en la página web del Congreso un total de 317 ponencias recibidas.

Eventos Sociales

El cóctel de bienvenida tuvo lugar la tarde del lunes 9 de agosto, después de los talleres previos a la inauguración oficial del Congreso que se llevó a cabo el día martes 10 de agosto. La celebración inició con una *Calenda*, una procesión tradicional oaxaqueña, que fue muy divertida. Esta procesión comenzó enfrente de la iglesia de Santo

Domingo y continuó por las calles cercanas, concluyendo en la entrada principal de la sede del Congreso. Después se invitó a los participantes a disfrutar de un cóctel en el *Patio de la Hierba Santa* con Mezcal y a degustar bocadillos de la localidad hechos con distintos tipos de maíces de la región.

La cena del Congreso, por otro lado no tuvo el éxito que hubiéramos deseado. De cualquier manera vale la pena hacer mención a la “Danza de la Pluma” que presenciaron los participantes. La Danza de la Pluma es una pieza de danza-teatro escrita en el siglo 16 por los frailes dominicos, que realizaron la cristianización de Oaxaca, y que narra la historia de la conquista española de México. La danza es desarrollada por los danzantes y la banda de música del pueblo de Teotitlán del Valle. Los danzantes normalmente solo presentan la danza en las fiestas religiosas de su comunidad (para cumplir con las promesas hechas a los santos patronos del pueblo) pero en esta ocasión aceptaron bailar para la celebración de IASCP al considerar el valor del trabajo de la Asociación. Ellos no fueron pagados, pero a cambio de su actuación cerca de 60 gentes de Teotitlán fueron nuestros invitados en la fiesta.

Resumen

En general, el evento fue un éxito, que confirmó la relevancia de IASCP, en términos regionales y en Latinoamérica, cuya participación en IASCP había sido tradicionalmente reducida.

Evidentemente, trabajar un par de años en la promoción del Congreso en Latinoamérica ha producido resultados. Nos parece muy importante que la Asociación trabaje en el fortalecimiento de éstos vínculos en el próximo Congreso Bienal en el 2006.

Un informe detallado sobre las discusiones de las sesiones de panel, póster y eventos paralelos, será presentado en la edición de diciembre del *Digest*. Además, en la página web del Congreso (www.iascp2004.org.mx) que ha sido actualizada, mostrando ahora una lista completa de todos los participantes, el número de presentaciones de panel, las conferencias magistrales, algunas ponencias completas y fotos del evento.

Agradecimientos

La Presidenta y el Coordinador del Congreso aprovechan esta oportunidad para agradecer a todo el Comité Organizador, a todos los financiadores y a nuestro increíble equipo de voluntarios quienes, a través de su trabajo, entusiasmo y apoyo, ayudaron a hacer posible que este evento fuera un éxito.

Agradecemos también de manera muy especial a la Directora Ejecutiva de IASCP, Michelle Curtain, por su apoyo y asesoría a lo largo de los dos años de preparación del Congreso.

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Charlotte Hess

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Schedule of Events:

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