

# Conservation Enterprises Learning Group: What We Have Learned



## Learning Question 1: Are Enabling Conditions in Place?



**We've learned that several enabling conditions are important to establishing an enduring enterprise<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>**

- Resource rights and strong community structures are two of the most critical enabling conditions.
- The enterprise has established business practices, such as access to capital and markets.
- The enterprise meets participants' livelihood needs.
- The enterprise has infrastructure in place for production.
- Government policies enable the enterprise to exist and profit.
- Enterprise participants have necessary skills or the capacity to learn new skills.

**Useful tools:** Conservation Enterprises Planning Checklist; ProLand Community Forestry Sourcebook

**Related learning activities:** Alianza Forestal webinar; enabling conditions webinars; the Role of Intermediate Firms webinar; Wildlife Friendly Enterprise Network webinar; case study posters from the 2019 Environment Officers Conference and 2021 Impact Lab

**More related evidence**

### References

1. The Nature of Conservation Enterprises: A 20-year retrospective evaluation of the theory of change behind this widely used approach to biodiversity conservation
2. Lessons from Conservation Enterprises in the Maya Biosphere Reserve of Peten, Guatemala
3. Building a Conservation Enterprise: Keys for Success
4. Conservation Enterprises: Using a Theory of Change Approach to Examine Evidence for Biodiversity Conservation



## Learning Questions 2 and 3: Does the Enterprise Benefit Stakeholders? Do Benefits Lead to Positive Changes in Behavior?



**We've learned that successful enterprises provide stakeholders with cash or non-cash benefits, which may include cultural value, food security, and improved education.<sup>1,4</sup>**

**We saw how non-cash benefits, like education and healthcare, can spill over to the broader community.** Broadened benefits increase the possibility of motivating behavior change.<sup>1</sup>

**We learned that tying benefits to conservation status can improve the likelihood of behavior change.** But it is important to understand that different stakeholders are motivated by different incentives.<sup>1</sup>

**About half of enterprises motivate behavior change** (based on a 2015 synthesis of evaluations of conservation enterprises).<sup>4</sup>

**Useful tools:** MEL Framework for Conservation Enterprises

**Related learning activities:** Gorongosa Project webinar; case study posters from the 2019 Environment Officers Conference and 2021 Impact Lab

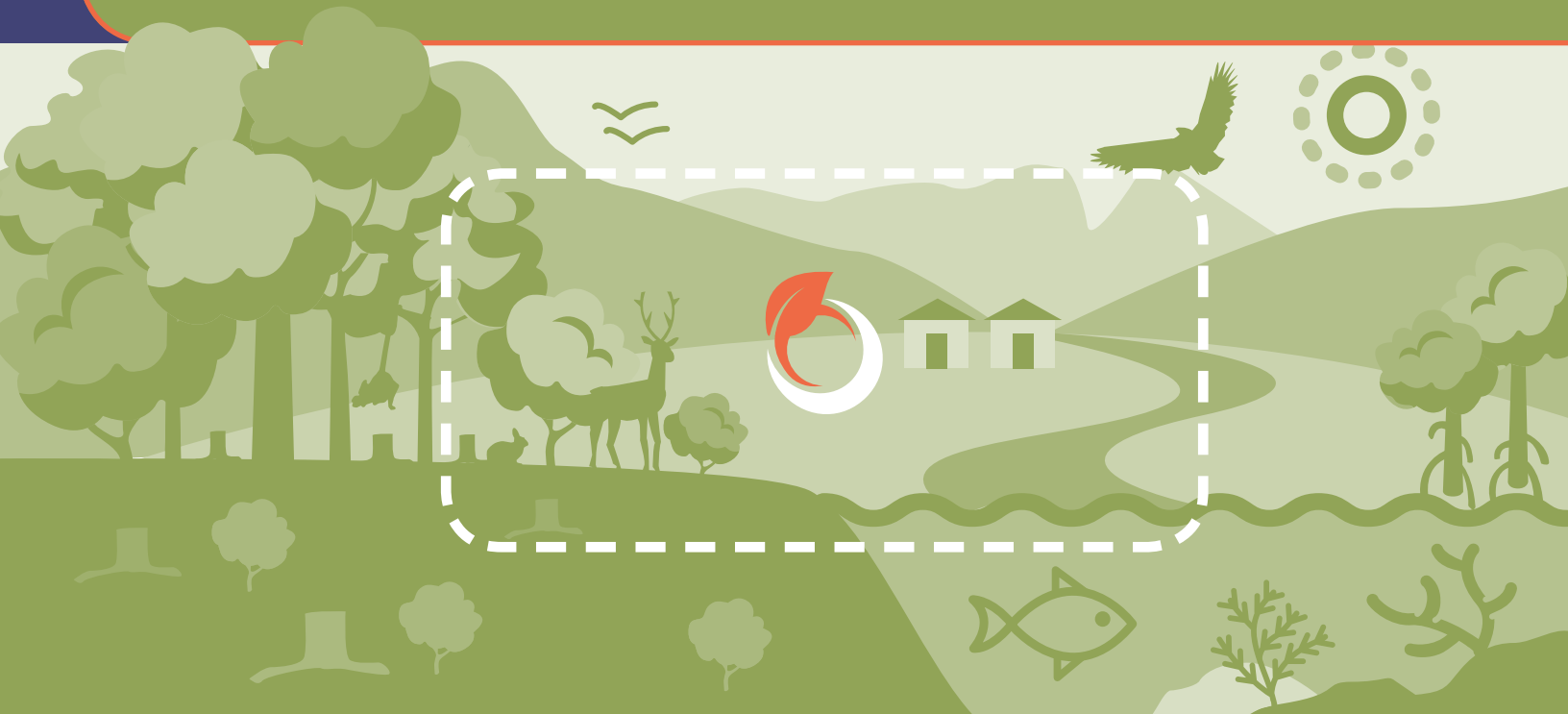
**More related evidence:** Learning Question 2; Learning Question 3

### References

1. The Nature of Conservation Enterprises: A 20-year retrospective evaluation of the theory of change behind this widely used approach to biodiversity conservation
4. Conservation Enterprises: Using a Theory of Change Approach to Examine Evidence for Biodiversity Conservation



## Learning Questions 4 and 5: Do Changes in Behavior Lead to Reduced Threats to Biodiversity? Does a Reduction in Threats Lead to Conservation?



**We continue to find that few studies have evaluated the direct impacts of conservation enterprises on conservation outcomes,** suggesting a gap in monitoring and evaluation—not necessarily an issue with the conservation enterprise approach.<sup>4</sup>

**We learned that conservation enterprises are most effective when combined with other strategic approaches.** In particular, securing land tenure, improving enforcement capacity, and mitigating human-wildlife conflict can complement enterprise approaches and ensure sustainable results.<sup>4</sup>

**Useful tools:** MEL Framework for Conservation Enterprises; Biodiversity How-to Guide on the Conservation Standards

**Related learning activities:** Case study posters from the 2019 Environment Officers Conference and 2021 Impact Lab; conservation enterprise MEL framework webinar; Nepal Impact Evaluation webinar

**More related evidence:** Learning Question 4; Learning Question 5

### References

4. Conservation Enterprises: Using a Theory of Change Approach to Examine Evidence for Biodiversity Conservation