Group Case Study

This is a group research paper detailing either a “success” or “failure” or “the jury is still out” story related to local involvement in natural resource conservation (or degradation in the case of a failure story). Another alternative is to compare two contrasting examples. The objective is to illuminate the actors, decisions, policies, beliefs, and institutions that influence the success or failure (in terms of both conservation and social justice) of such projects. Your group can either choose a specific case study (e.g. the Annapurna Conservation Area Project in Nepal; CAMPFIRE in Zaire) or a specific conservation approach involving local people (e.g. extractive reserves, community forestry).

I am not looking for mere description/summary but for statements and explanations of causation. In addition to presenting the details of your case study or management approach (location, history, how it works, goals, etc), your group must situate the case within the material of this course. In other words, a large part of this assignment is a review of course readings.

To answer the question of whether your example is one of success or failure in conservation and in social justice, you need to first explain what is meant by success or failure in the two realms. Therefore, you need to discuss what you mean by conservation, how you theorize/perceive the relationship between society and nature, how you describe/determine social justice, the relationship between conservation and justice including possible tensions and points of mutual benefit, and ways in which social justice might be incorporated into conservation. Most of this already should be swimming around in your head from the course readings and discussions. Your group just needs to put it all together and make connections to the particular case study or management approach you have decided to write about. Please see me as a group if you need help.

Suggestions and Formatting Requirements

I strongly recommend that you meet frequently in your groups, share your work, provide each other substantial feedback, and otherwise work collaboratively on this assignment. You will need to divide and assign tasks among group members and may want to develop a schedule of meetings.

Case study papers should be about 20 double-spaced pages in length, with 11-12 point font and 1-inch margins. I prefer that groups print their papers double-sided to save paper.

Deadlines

Topic Ideas = 18 April; Bibliography = 2 May; Title and Outline = 16 May; Paper = 29 May, noon

Grading

I will base individual grades primarily on the quality of interpretation, data collection, and analysis of the papers, and secondarily on quality of writing, clarity and organization of the exposition, and contributions to the group (roughly a 40:30:30 percent distribution). Group members will anonymously evaluate their peers’ contributions and quality of work, thus peer grading will account for 30% of this grade.