

SECTION

two

**Income-generation**

A black and white photograph showing a man in traditional attire leading a pack of oxen in a field. The man is in the foreground, looking towards the right. The oxen are harnessed together and are walking towards the right. In the background, there are other people and a flat landscape under a clear sky. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent white box containing the text 'SECTION two' and 'Income-generation'.

**It is now well understood that, for biodiversity conservation efforts to be successful, local people must be involved as stakeholders.**

The communities that live in arid and semi-arid zones usually depend on natural resources for their livelihoods, and the idea that local people be prevented from entering project areas where environments and wildlife are being protected is often counterproductive to the success of those projects. People who are excluded from initiatives that affect them have no interest in assisting those initiatives and are forced to increase their use of natural resources in other areas, often to the point of exhausting them and thereby exacerbating problems of land degradation and desertification. In addition, growing poverty and a declining resource base mean that rural people are so concerned about their own immediate survival that they are unable to take actions or adopt practices that may mean having less today in order to have more—or indeed any—tomorrow.

Conserving biodiversity and using natural resources sustainably require taking a long-term view, but short-term development can be useful in providing alternatives or complements to survival and livelihood strategies that depend on exploiting nearly exhausted natural resources. In this section, two of the case studies—from Brazil and Jamaica—describe new farming systems that allow farmers to boost their incomes while using far fewer of the resources on which they currently depend. The introduced systems had the added benefit of helping to restore degraded agricultural and pasture land. The case studies from Kenya and Burkina Faso, on the other hand, describe projects that introduced new ways of generating income by using and developing traditional resources and practices in sustainable ways.

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