**Case Study Name:** Local Residents Perception of Benefits and Losses From Protected Areas in India and Nepal  
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**Region:** South Asia  
**Country:** India and Nepal  
**Ecosystem Type:** Protected areas  
**Social Characteristics:** Community inside/bordering protected areas  
**Scale of Study:** Protected area  
**Resource Type:** Protected area  
**Type of Initiative:** Research-driven project  
**Community Based Work:** Resource management, conservation  
**Keywords:** Local attitudes, Conservation, India, Nepal, Park-people relationship, Perceptions, Protected areas, Tourism
### Summary:

High densities of people living around protected areas (PAs) in South Asia require management strategies to balance conservation goals and livelihood needs. Based on a survey of 777 households around five PAs in India and Nepal, this paper provides a comparative perspective of Indian and Nepali households’ views of protected area benefits and costs, their attitude toward conservation in general, and attitude toward protected area staff. Results indicate mixed responses towards tourism, varying from very favorable in Nepal to less favorable in India. The majority (81%) held positive attitudes towards the existence and importance of PAs but had negative perceptions of PA staff (69%). Most residents perceived benefits from access to fuel wood, fodder and other PA resources including benefits from tourism, while crop and livestock losses from wildlife were the main costs. Households overall positive attitudes towards the PAs and conservation despite high losses from living around PAs suggests that local residents may support conservation if their livelihood needs are met. Comparisons of household attitudes and perceptions suggest that locally based strategies rather than top-down approaches are likely to be more effective. Extending PA benefits to smaller landholders, households that are highly resource-dependent or experiencing higher income losses from human-wildlife conflicts, and less educated residents are particularly important to balance costs and losses from living around protected areas.