



IUCN  
World  
Conservation  
Congress  
Hawai'i 2016



# Business @ Congress

Highlights from the IUCN World Conservation Congress  
1-10 September 2016, Honolulu, Hawai'i



Photo by IISD/Kiara Worth and Diego Noguera

From debates on valuing nature, mitigating biodiversity impacts and deploying nature-based solutions, the constructive input and engagement from many participants on the Business Journey on the Pavilions and throughout the IUCN World Conservation Congress were greatly appreciated, as evidenced by the positive responses from IUCN Members and other stakeholders.

This IUCN Congress represented an opportunity to move the dialogue on engaging business. It focused on how we, as a conservation community, can work better with business to address the joint challenges facing our planet and deliver on the global goals for conservation and sustainable development.

This summary provides a snapshot of some of the key business-related decisions at the 2016 Congress, as well as some of the outcomes from events highlighted in the IUCN Business Journey.

## The IUCN Conservation Congress 2016

Held once every four years, the IUCN World Conservation Congress brings together thousands of leaders and decision-makers from government, civil society, indigenous communities, business and academia, with the goal of conserving the environment and harnessing the solutions nature offers to meet our pressing global challenges.

During the 2016 Congress held in Honolulu, Hawaii, from 1-10 September 2016, over 10,000 people from 190 countries participated. Of these, approximately 250 participants were from the private sector, including 100 representatives of 40 multi-national companies, representing a diverse range of sectors, including: agri-business, banking, insurance and finance, consumer goods, extractives, energy, infrastructure, information technology, professional services, tourism and transportation.

The two main components of the Congress are:

- **The Forum** (2-5 September) hosted more than 1,300 events – from high-level dialogues and training workshops, to knowledge cafes and pavilion panel discussions – [117 of which addressed the theme of business](#). The Business and Biodiversity Pavilion, co-funded by World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), served as a hub for business and participants interested in business-related issues. The B Team sponsored special breakfast briefings with interviews and insights from business experts, and reflected on key learnings from the previous day as well as looking ahead to key events coming up.
- The **Members' Assembly** (6-10 September), IUCN's highest decision-making body, met to take joint decisions on proposed motions concerning biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. For the first time, WBCSD (IUCN's only global Member representing business) participated in the deliberations. Overall, the Members' Assembly addressed [105 motions](#) and 85 of these were voted on prior to Congress [via electronic vote](#) – another first -- while the remaining motions were tabled and debated during the Assembly.

## Planet at the Crossroads

The theme of the IUCN Congress, *Planet at the Crossroads*, drew attention to the perilous state of the world's biodiversity, and the critical role nature's ecosystems play in underpinning our economies, well-being and survival. The success of the ambitious global goals for sustainable development and climate neutrality depend on how quickly we adopt more sustainable, nature-based solutions.

Therefore, business as usual is not an option.

Nature conservation and human progress are not mutually exclusive – they are inextricably linked. Moving forward, we need to create credible and viable alternatives for business. This includes supporting new partnerships between governments, NGOs,

**“We need to bring the initiatives of all stakeholders together in one coherent flow... No task is too big if we act together.”**

Erik Solheim, Executive Director,  
United Nations Environment  
Programme (UNEP)

conservationists, scientists, consumers, producers, urban planners, entrepreneurs, grassroots organisations, indigenous peoples and the financial community. Each partner holds a vital piece of the puzzle – the knowledge, the tools and resources – needed to build a more inclusive and sustainable future.

*“The main users of biodiversity are businesses.”  
Braulio Dias, Executive Secretary, CBD.*

## The role of business in implementing conservation goals

The [IUCN Global Programme 2017-2020](#), adopted at Congress, offers a pathway for action to addressing the world’s sustainable development goals. The [Business Journey](#) was framed around the structure of the IUCN Global Programme and highlighted events that demonstrate **the role of business in:**

1. **Valuing nature**
2. **Managing biodiversity impacts**
3. Contributing to **effective and equitable governance** of nature’s use.
4. **Investing in nature-based solutions.**

These thematic areas also shaped the Business and Biodiversity Pavilion schedule.

### Valuing nature

Natural capital approaches were a major topic of debate throughout Congress, where differing views of IUCN Members were expressed.

The complexity of valuing ecosystem goods and services in the context of business impacts and dependencies was highlighted as well as the need to consider other types of value (i.e. spiritual, social, cultural) that cannot be monetized.

During the IUCN Members’ Assembly, it was decided that IUCN will work on developing a natural capital policy that reconciles these diverging views.

- Bringing Business on Board: New Protocol Unveiled at IUCN Congress ([Blog by IUCN’s Gerard Bos in the Huffington Post](#))
- From companies to communities: IUCN Congress explores natural capital approaches and impacts ([web story](#))

*“The conservation community and business speak different languages. The Natural Capital Protocol is the language bridge between business and conservation.”  
Peter Bakker, CEO, WBCSD*

*“We can no longer afford to privatize the gains of impacting ecosystems, while socializing the losses.”  
Thomas Friedman, author and columnist for the New York Times.*



- [Turn down the volume: New IUCN guide helps navigate seismic survey impacts on marine species](#)

Also, the IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP) launched the latest edition of *Policy Matters*, which finds that comprehensive assessments are required for voluntary certification standards to have a real impact on nature and livelihoods.

- New IUCN publication examines pros and cons of voluntary certification standards on nature and livelihoods ([Congress web story](#))

## Contributing to effective and equitable governance of nature's use

The theme of natural resource use governance was addressed from a business perspective through the role of business in two complementary areas: integration of stakeholder values in decision-making and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

A number of events addressed directly or indirectly multi-stakeholder collaboration, including the need to build on bilateral partnerships to scale up and cause change at scale across sectors by building trust and developing a common language.

- An urgent call for collaborative action at the IUCN Congress: A blog by ICMC CEO Tom Butler ([Congress blog](#))

*"Climate change is a challenge for both society and industry." Tom Butler, CEO, International Council on Mining and Metals, at the high level dialogue on climate change.*

Several sessions also explored how to manage conflict with business including the need for a rights-based framework, compliance and dialogue, bringing together stakeholders together in norm-setting.

## Investing in nature-based solutions

Nature-based solutions are actions to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems, which address societal challenges (e.g. climate change, food and water security or natural disasters) effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits.

Nature-based solutions include approaches centered on restoration, protection and natural and green infrastructure. Integrated landscape management is an important aspect that featured across many sessions and on different pavilions. Indeed, the World Bank and the IFC recognized the need to be working more closely with other stakeholders through landscape-based approaches.

*"Language is important: we need to talk about mutual gain instead of compromise." Susan Fernandes, US BCSD*

- SUSTAIN-Africa: Driving green growth at a landscape level ([Congress web story](#))

One of the key themes, conservation finance was the subject of a high level dialogue, which also announced the launch of a coalition for scaling private investment into conservation support by 26 different organizations and networks.

- New coalition launches to scale private conservation investment at IUCN World Conservation Congress ([global press release](#))

*“The only way to do conservation at scale is through collaboration.”*

*Morgan Landy, VP at the IFC*

## IUCN resolution discussions relevant for business

Of the [105 resolutions and recommendations](#) adopted by the IUCN Members at the Congress, 30 are directly relevant to business. Some call upon business in general, while others target specific sectors.

A number of resolutions will help business across a range of sectors to **select areas for development** and avoid loss of biodiversity, including resolutions on “Protected areas and other areas important for biodiversity in relation to environmentally damaging industrial activities and infrastructure development”, “Identifying Key Biodiversity Areas for safeguarding biodiversity”, “Avoiding extinction in limestone karst areas” and “Protection of primary forests, including intact forest landscapes”.

Another set of resolutions focus on **best practices and tools recommended for business**. Among these: “IUCN Policy on Biodiversity Offsets”, “Natural Capital”, “Improving standards in ecotourism”, “Strengthening business engagement in biodiversity preservation”, “Strengthening corporate biodiversity measurement, valuation and reporting”, “Best practice for industrial-scale development projects”, and “Prevention, management and resolution of social conflict as a key requirement for conservation and management of ecosystems”.

Responding to one of today’s environmental crisis, “Promoting regional approaches to tackle the global problem of **marine debris** (litter)” calls upon key stakeholders to take strong measures to tackle this problem, including the private sector.

More specifically, the resolution on “Preventing electrocution and collision impacts of power infrastructure on birds” calls upon the **power sector** specifically. Other resolutions on “Management and regulation of selective intensive breeding of large wild mammals for commercial purposes”, “Terminating the hunting of captive-bred lions (*Panthera leo*) and other predators and captive breeding for commercial, non-conservation purposes”, and “A path forward to address concerns over the use of lead ammunition in hunting” focus specifically on the **trophy hunting sector**.

Finally, among the approved changes to IUCN’s Statutes, IUCN Members voted in favour of creating a new membership category for Indigenous Peoples organizations.

## Business engagement identified as key solution in Hawai'i Commitments

One of the main outcomes from the Congress are [The Hawai'i Commitments](#), which identify business engagement as one of the five key solutions for “Addressing the Challenges of a Planet at the Crossroads,” and ultimately, delivering on the global Sustainable Development Goals. In particular, the section on engaging the private sector states:

*"There is a palpable and urgent need to significantly increase investment in conservation action from both public and private sector sources. A precondition for attracting private investment is that conservation opportunities exist at scale. Additionally, regulatory and policy regimes that create a level playing field for business operations and that incentivize private investment to promote conservation are necessary. Ultimately, a collaborative approach, including government, civil society and the private sector, is essential for success."*

Other solutions, also requiring business engagement, are focused on addressing the challenges of climate change, sustaining the global food supply, preserving the health of the world ocean and ending wildlife trafficking.

## Full reporting on the 2016 Congress

See IISD coverage on the Congress here <http://www.iisd.ca/iucn/congress/2016/>

See IISD Congress summary video here <https://vimeo.com/182465224>

## Action between now and the next IUCN Congress

The next IUCN World Conservation Congress will be held in 2020. The application process for IUCN Member states to host the Congress will be opened in 2017. After a robust evaluation process, the successful host country will be announced in 2018.

IUCN and The B Team are developing a roadmap for business action on nature conservation, which includes advancing the Aichi targets and SDGs, to implementing the IUCN Global Programme and Paris Agreement.

The roadmap will be presented at the Convention on Biological Diversity Business and Biodiversity Forum, being held 2-3 December 2016, in Cancun, Mexico. This will be the first major event to bring together representatives from business and conservation following Congress.

Other initiatives include:

- Natural capital policy development – the first step will be the creation of a diverse working group by end 2016.
- The Coalition of Private Investment in Nature Conservation (CPIC) will develop a framework to help scale up new sources of funds for conservation.

We look forward to building on the inspiration and collaboration between government, civil society, indigenous peoples, and academia and business for nature conservation.

## Stay in touch

- [Sign up](#) for the bi-monthly IUCN Business newsletter “Building Bridges”
- Visit our website: [www.iucn.org/business](http://www.iucn.org/business)
- Follow us on Twitter: @IUCN\_business
- Email us: [biobiz@iucn.org](mailto:biobiz@iucn.org)



### Photos

First page: Speakers at session on the role of business in developing resilient, green and inclusive agricultural growth corridors in Africa on the Business and Biodiversity Pavilion. [Photo by IISD/Kiara Worth and Diego Noguera](#)

Last page: Natural Capital Protocol and Sector Guides Launch on the Business and Biodiversity Pavilion. [Photo by IISD/Kiara Worth and Diego Noguera](#)