Background

Parks and protected areas are essential nature based solutions for improving health and wellbeing. While Indigenous Peoples have known the fundamental importance of nature for tens of thousands of years, there is also a large and growing body of scientific evidence on the dependency and benefits of human health on healthy ecosystems.

The inaugural International Healthy Parks Healthy People Congress held in 2010 in Melbourne, Australia was a catalyst for progressing this agenda, bringing together 1,200 participants from 37 countries from planning, community development, health, tourism, climate change, education and conservation sectors. The Congress explored the many ways nature and parks contribute to our health and wellbeing and launched the Healthy Parks Healthy People approach on the radar for government, education and business sectors.

The adoption of Motion 39, Healthy Parks Healthy People at the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2012 in Jeju, followed by the Promise of Sydney at the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014 further elevated this agenda, creating a substantial platform for action based on the important role played by nature (and more specifically parks and protected areas) in promoting, protecting and restoring human health and wellbeing.

Key actions covered in the Promise of Sydney include:

- continuing to build evidence and quantify the benefits of nature for human health and wellbeing.
- forming strong new alliances and cross sector partnerships to influence policies and plans at global, regional, national and local scales.
- engaging with, and learning from, Indigenous peoples about wellbeing benefits from nature and providing opportunities for Indigenous peoples to connect to land for health and wellbeing.
- engaging and connecting with more diverse constituents to provide opportunities for people to gain the benefits of being in nature.

Since 2014, a number of initiatives continue to advance the health and nature agenda and create new partnerships across the conservation and health sectors. These include:

- The CBD/WHO State of Knowledge report which highlighted the current strong evidence for how humans are dependent on nature, but that also highlighted knowledge gaps for further work.
- Healthy Parks Healthy People: the state of the evidence 2015 - A review of post-2008 literature in relation to the health benefits of parks and natural spaces, prepared by Deakin University, Australia in collaboration with Parks Victoria.
- A new partnership between the Pan American Health Organisation and the U.S National Park Service to develop a Healthy Parks Assessment Tool.
- An increasing number of regional inter-government policy agreements between health and nature conservation agencies to ensure that nature’s benefits for health and wellbeing are recognised in health and urban planning policies.

In addition, several Healthy Parks Healthy People or similar models have established across the world, across Australia and to countries as diverse as the U.S, New Zealand, Scotland, Canada, Finland, South Korea and Colombia.
An important milestone was reached in 2015 through a collaboration between IUCN and the Salzburg Global Seminar to form a partnership, the Parks for the Planet Forum - a ten-year leadership and action platform - to accelerate transformational change by placing nature at the heart of human health, wellbeing, security and prosperity in a rapidly urbanising world. Participants at the Forum’s first meeting issued the Salzburg Challenge for Nature, Health and a New Urban Generation, setting out concrete recommendations for cross-sector action, noting that cities and local governments provide an exceptional opportunity for leadership on green infrastructure and urban parks.

The Health and Nature Forum events held during the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2016, featured as an official ‘Health and Nature’ Journey, focused strongly on the benefits of conserving nature for health and wellbeing. These sessions paved the way for the adoption of Resolution 064 ‘Strengthening cross-sector partnerships to recognise the contributions of nature to health, well-being and quality of life’ https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/46481 as part of the Members’ Assembly. This Resolution recognizes the key achievements to date, and calls for greater cross-sector collaboration and improved methods for quantifying the benefits from nature in order to help lead change and reduce the prevalence of worldwide non-communicable diseases.

The Members’ Assembly also amended the draft IUCN Global Programme 2017-2020 to more explicitly link the Programme to SDG 3 (on health and wellbeing). This provides a clear policy platform for IUCN to seek new global and regional initiatives and partnerships linking the health sector with the conservation sector over the next four years. A key to unlocking the values of parks and protected areas for health and wellbeing while conserving biodiversity, is the formation of long-term partnerships between the health and conservation sectors.

The work of the IUCN/WCPA HPHP Taskforce that was formed after the 2010 HPHP Congress is acknowledged. It was a large group comprising of health and nature practitioners across the world, which aimed to develop best practice guidelines and direction on the relationship between nature and human health. The group has delivered a comprehensive document detailing the HPHP Journey to date. This new Specialist Group is the successor of the HPHP Taskforce.

**Purpose of Specialist Group**

To promote the health and wellbeing benefits of nature across the conservation, health and other sectors, facilitate partnerships to influence policies and plans across these sectors, build the evidence on benefits of nature for human health and wellbeing, and encourage the development of metrics to measure the co-benefits.

**Relevance to and integration in GPAP/WCPA’s Quadrennial Programme 2017-2020**

The policy basis for the Specialist Group is WCC2016 Resolution #064 (https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/46481).

**Objective 1**

Mainstream health and wellbeing benefits of nature across the conservation, health and other sectors though development of interdisciplinary materials, case studies, tools and programs.

**Goals and activities**

- Develop a communications prospectus for the health and nature/HPHP approach with key future directions and distribute amongst key stakeholders and IUCN members.

- Build the capacity and expertise of protected area managers to realised the immense value of parks and protected areas for human health and wellbeing.
  - Use Panorama and other online tools to run an information webinar to build awareness.

- Build a global communications platform of experts and practitioners and encourage WCPA membership for most active members
- Develop and distribute a report/newsletter update on achievements, progress and success stories.
- Identify opportunities at key events and meetings (both conservation and health related) to promote the synergies and co-benefits between nature and human health and wellbeing.
- Assemble a suite of health and nature best practice approaches and case studies (such as HPHP and Healthy Nature Healthy People), building on the work of the previous HPHP Taskforce. Make these available online and distribute through networks.
- Report on activities of the Specialist Group as required.

Objective 2
Facilitate environment/conservation and health partnerships at a global, regional, national and sub-national scale, to influence policies and plans across sectors that support programs in parks and protected areas.

Goals and activities
- Support the IUCN Secretariat and Council with the implementation of Resolution #064
  - Build partnerships across the parks and protected areas, conservation and health sectors, including formalising a partnership agreement with the World Health Organization at both international, national and sub national levels.
- Develop a framework for implementing and integrating nature and human health and wellbeing outcomes into cross-sectoral policy and programs within government.
- Collaborate with other WCPA specialist groups including #NatureForAll and Urban Conservation Strategies, to identify and build on synergies with these activities and groups.
- Collaborate with other commissions including the Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy and the Commission on Environmental Law to seek opportunities within their work areas and plans that raise the profile of the health and nature agenda.
- Develop a framework for the IUCN and WHO and other health organisations to work across a region using the Oceania Regional Office (ORO) initially as a pilot project. This framework could be then applied to other regions.

Objective 3
Further build the evidence and knowledge base on the extent of benefits of nature for human health and wellbeing.

Goals and activities
- Work with relevant partners to provide input into the implementation of IUCN WCC Resolution #058 on Natural Capital, in particular the connection between human health and wellbeing and natural capital frameworks tools and standard.
- Work with the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services (WAVES), the System of Environmental Ecosystem Accounts (SEEA) and contribute to the development of consistent metrics for quantifying the contribution of parks and protected areas to human health and wellbeing as required.

Partnerships, funding and fund-raising

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Existing partners</th>
<th>Supporters for Resolution 064 (in addition to existing partners)</th>
<th>Target partners</th>
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<tr>
<td>#NatureForAll</td>
<td>• Vida Silvestre Uruguay</td>
<td>• World Health Organisation (and regional offices)</td>
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<td>Urban Conservation Strategies Specialist Group</td>
<td>• Sociedad Española para la Defensa del Patrimonio Geologica y Minero, Spain</td>
<td>• Health Insurance Industry (i.e. Bupa</td>
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<td>Parks Canada</td>
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<td>National Park Service (US)</td>
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<td>• Use existing IUCN/WCPA (and other) communications tools including contributing to Parks Journal, Oceania Regional News and other regions.</td>
<td>Adhere to the reporting requirements of the WCPA including regular and annual reports to the steering committee.</td>
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<td>• Develop a communication platform with SG members and other contributors to the international development of the Health and Nature agenda.</td>
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<td>• Contribution to key health related communications avenues – TBC</td>
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**Governance**

These terms of reference are effective from March 2017 until WCPA Steering Committee Meeting in 2020.

**Membership**

The IUCN/WCPA Health and Wellbeing Specialist Group will be open to all WCPA interested members and will also comprise of a core group of between six to ten representatives forming an Advisory Committee. These representatives can be identified through their interest and expertise in promoting and advancing the health and nature agenda and where possible will also reflect diversity with representative spread of gender, age, geographic location, sector and culture. Membership of the Specialist Group will be managed in consultation with the Chair of WPCA.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

In establishment, IUCN Member Parks Victoria will take on a central role in establishing and coordinating the activities of the Specialist Group. It is anticipated that the leadership of the Specialist Group may rotate over time.

**CHAIR**

The Chair shall convene the Health and Wellbeing Specialist Group meetings. If the designated Chair is not available, then (referred to as the Acting Chair) will be responsible for convening and conducting that meeting. The Acting Chair is responsible for informing the Chair as to the significant points/decisions raised or agreed to at that meeting.

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

The Executive Officer is responsible for developing the agenda (in collaboration with the Chair), developing the minutes and distributing them in a timely manner, before and after each meeting.

**MEMBERS**

Members will:

- Be passionate and knowledgeable about the role that parks and protected areas play in contributing to health and wellbeing;
- Contribute to the Specialist Group’s programme of work;
- Champion the health and nature/HPHP agenda with their constituents, colleagues and in their own area of work;
- Respectfully consider opinions, ideas and issues raised by other Members;
- Notify members of the Specialist Group, as soon as practical, if any matter arises which may be deemed to affect the development of the core objectives.

Members of the Advisory Committee will be expected to:

- Have capacity to undertake the role in addition to the normal workload or activities;
- Attend all scheduled meetings and if necessary nominate a proxy and actively participate in discussions;
- Provide complete, accurate and meaningful information in a timely manner;
- Be given reasonable time to make key decisions;
- Make timely decisions and act to not hold up the Group;
- Be open and honest discussions, without resort to any misleading assertions;
- Provide ongoing assessments to verify the overall progression of the Specialist Group.

**Regularity of Meetings for Advisory Committee**

The Advisory Committee shall meet approximately every three months or four times per year via electronic means (e.g.: Skype or similar). Where an opportunity arises, meetings may be held face to face such as at a major IUCN/WCPA conference or meeting.