



## IUCN's key messages for UNFCCC COP24 2-14 December 2018, Katowice, Poland

The *Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C* published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in October 2018 underscores the seriousness of the threat that climate change poses to natural and human systems. Yet, as the *UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2018* reveals, a very significant gap still remains between the current commitments expressed by Parties in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement, and what is needed to keep global warming to well below 2°C and 1.5°C. The need for urgent and ambitious global action to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is clearer than ever before.

As Parties convene in Katowice to finalise the rules, procedures and guidelines necessary for the operationalisation of the Paris Agreement, i.e. the Paris Agreement Work Programme (PAWP), IUCN would like to highlight the critical role of the world's ecosystems in providing effective and practical nature-based solutions for both climate change mitigation and adaptation.<sup>i</sup>

These solutions are also directly relevant for the political phase of the Talanoa Dialogue at COP24, which will take stock of the collective efforts of Parties in relation to progress towards the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement, and aim to inform the preparation of future NDCs.<sup>ii</sup>

IUCN's specific recommendations in relation to the PAWP are the following:

### I. Mitigation/ Nationally Determined Contributions

- Additional guidance provided to Parties in relation to the future preparation and communication of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) should encourage and enable greater recognition and inclusion of nature-based solutions to climate change, in addition to ambitious mitigation action in other sectors.
- This is bearing in mind the major climate change mitigation benefits that conserving, restoring and sustainably managing terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems provide as practical and cost-effective sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases, as also clearly recognised in the Paris Agreement.
  - An analysis published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)* in 2017 has estimated that natural climate solutions can provide over one-third of the cost-effective climate mitigation needed between now and 2030 to stabilize warming to below 2°C.<sup>iii</sup>
  - *UNEP's Emissions Gap Report 2017* estimates that land-based carbon removal options, including forests, wetlands and soils, offer a total annual emissions reduction potential of 4 to 12 GtCO<sub>2e</sub>.<sup>iv</sup> These also help to meet other global sustainability goals, such as improved water quality, biodiversity conservation, and improved food security.

### II. Adaptation Communications

- Additional guidance provided to Parties in relation to their Adaptation Communications – whether transmitted through their National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), National Communications (NCs), or Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) – should likewise encourage and enable greater recognition and inclusion

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of the critical role that healthy ecosystems – forests, mangroves, oceans – play through ecosystem-based adaptation in helping vulnerable countries and communities better adapt to the adverse effects of climate change.

- A recent study estimates that wetlands avoided US\$ 625 million in direct flood damages during Hurricane Sandy in 2012.<sup>v</sup> More generally, coastal wetlands in the US have been estimated to provide storm protection services worth US\$ 23 billion annually.<sup>vi</sup>
- Such guidance should also encourage Parties to systematically assess the risks posed by climate change to vulnerable communities and ecosystems, as highlighted in the *IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C*, and to prioritise these in national adaptation planning and actions, so as to build the resilience of both people and ecosystems.

### III. Global Stocktake

- The modalities for the Global Stocktake (GST), due to take place in 2023, and every five years thereafter, should explicitly consider the contribution of nature-based solutions in addressing climate change, and systematically assess and report on the extent to which countries have incorporated ecosystem-based mitigation and adaptation measures within their NDCs.
- It should also encourage Parties to incorporate more ambitious ecosystem-based mitigation and adaptation measures in their subsequent NDCs.

Additionally:

#### **Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples (LCIP) Platform**

- IUCN welcomes the progress made in operationalising the local communities and indigenous peoples (LCIP) platform to date. At COP24, it looks forward to the successful establishment of a Facilitative Working Group, with meaningful and balanced representation of local communities and indigenous peoples, and to the development of a workplan to facilitate the effective implementation of the functions of the platform.

#### **Gender and Climate Change**

- COP24 marks the half-way point of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) adopted at COP23 under the Lima work programme on gender. Recalling the Paris Agreement, which acknowledges that Parties should respect and promote gender equality and empowerment of women when taking action to address climate change, IUCN welcomes the progress made to date, and looks forward to continue supporting the implementation of the five priority areas of the GAP.

<sup>i</sup> Nature-based solutions are defined by IUCN as 'actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems, that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits', [Resolution 69](#), 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress, Hawaii, USA.

<sup>ii</sup> For IUCN's joint submissions under the Talanoa Dialogue, see: [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/78\\_TNC-CI-IUCN-NWF-FT-BV-CCR-WCS\\_Talanoa%20Dialogue%20Input%202018.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/78_TNC-CI-IUCN-NWF-FT-BV-CCR-WCS_Talanoa%20Dialogue%20Input%202018.pdf) and [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/441\\_GMA%20Submission%20to%20Talanoa%20Dialogue.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/441_GMA%20Submission%20to%20Talanoa%20Dialogue.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> Griscom et al. 2017. 'Natural Climate Solutions', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)*, 114(44):11645–11650; available at: <http://www.pnas.org/content/114/44/11645.full.pdf>

<sup>iv</sup> UNEP. 2017. *The Emissions Gap Report 2017*. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Nairobi.

<sup>v</sup> Narayan et al. 2017. 'The Value of Coastal Wetlands for Flood Damage Reduction in the Northeastern USA', *Scientific Reports*, 7(9463); available at: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-017-09269-z>

<sup>vi</sup> Costanza et al. 2008. 'The value of coastal wetlands for hurricane protection', *Ambio*, 37(4):241-8.