

Name: Wolfgang E. Burhenne

Nationality: German and Austrian

Wolfgang Burhenne grew up in the Alps. Drafted in 1941 as a soldier at 17, he was twice wounded, and incarcerated in 1942 until the end of the war for supporting the resistance against the dictatorship. After 1945 he worked in the forestry service, studied, was employed by the Bavarian Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry, editor in a publishing house and then became a parliamentary advisor.

He has served since 1953 as elected Secretary General of the “Interparlamentarische Arbeitsgemeinschaft”, an association of members from the now 16 German state parliaments, the Federal German Parliament and the European Parliament.

He has been engaged in voluntary activities for IUCN since 1950 (variously as financial adviser, founder and chair of the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law, Legal Adviser), and is currently acting as liaison between the Commission and the United Nations.

Wolfgang Burhenne is the co-founder of a number of national and international environmental organisations and international foundations for environmental law and policy, in particular the International Council on Environmental Law (New Delhi, 1969).

He participated in the development of several international agreements and contributed to the work of many UN and other conferences, is an honorary member of IUCN and the International Alpine Commission, and with his wife, joint recipient of the UN International Environmental Prize (UNEP Sasakawa Prize), and various awards including the Knight Commander’s Cross (badge and star) of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany.