



Creating Solutions for People and
Nature in Eastern & Southern Africa
An Open Dialogue on the Future of Conservation in Africa
30 September 2015
IUCN Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Conservation Forum
(30th September to 2nd October, Nairobi, Kenya)

IUCN ESARO REGIONAL CONSERVATION FORUM NARRATIVE REPORT

January 2016

1. Introduction

IUCN will be holding its World Conservation Congress (WCC) in Hawaii from 1st – 10th September 2016 and in accordance with the provisions of the IUCN Statutes, the IUCN Regions hold preparatory Regional Conservation Forums (RCF).

IUCN ESARO received a grant from the Union Development Group to support members to attend the RCF. In addition, IUCN ESARO managed to source additional support from USAID Kenya and East Africa, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Kenya and the African Wildlife Foundation. From the 29th September – 2nd October 2015 representatives from over 70 member organizations converged in Nairobi, Kenya to prepare for the region's effective participation at the WCC. Representatives from IUCN's Commissions, IUCN ESARO and IUCN Headquarters Secretariat also participated. These participants from IUCN Constituents were joined on the first day of the RCF by representatives of governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, the academia, the local community and indigenous groups during an Open Dialogue that was attended by over 150 participants.

2. Overall goal and objectives of the RCF

The overall goal of the Regional Conservation Forum was:

To establish a collective voice, strengthen the conservation movement and prepare IUCN's Constituencies within Eastern and Southern Africa to effectively participate in the 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress.

The specific objectives of the Regional Conservation Forum were:

1. To provide a platform for IUCN Constituencies within the region to deliberate on critical trends and emerging issues affecting biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in the region with a view to collectively identifying recommendations to inform the development of motions as well as regional and continental processes;
2. To engage the IUCN Constituencies on and increase their participation in the IUCN Programme development, adoption and implementation process;
3. To provide members with an understanding of IUCN Governance processes and prepare them to fully participate on any proposals from Council and members including proposed amendments to the Statutes and to deliberate on proposed Council motions such the one on creation of a new member category for Indigenous People's Organizations;
4. To build the capacity of members on the motions process and ensure their participation in motion drafting, submission and implementation of resolutions; and
5. To raise the awareness of the IUCN members on the overall Congress preparations, encouraging them to be aware of Congress events including contributing to Forum events as well as provision of general Congress logistics especially the sponsored delegates programme

3. Progress towards the achievement of expected results

The agenda for the RCF was divided into two parts with the first day dedicated to an Open Dialogue which comprised of a high-level panel debate followed by round table discussions. Days two and three were dedicated to discussions on IUCN Members Business to prepare members for effective participation at WCC.

3.1 Open Dialogue

The Open Dialogue was attended by over 150 representatives from IUCN Members and Partners, IUCN Commissions, IUCN Secretariat staff, Governments, Non-Governmental Organisations, the Private Sector, the Local communities and Indigenous groups representatives and the Academia. It comprised of a high-level panel debate followed by round table discussions, aimed at the identification of critical emerging trends and policy recommendations to contribute to forming the African Voice on environmental sustainability and conservation in preparation for the road to IUCN World Conservation Congress.

The IUCN President Xinsheng Zhang and the UNEP Director and Regional Representative for Africa Juliette Biao gave some remarks and the Forum was officially opened by Prof. Judi Wakhungu, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Kenya the co-host and Strategic Partner to the Regional Conservation Forum.

His Excellency Robert Godec, United States Ambassador to the Republic of Kenya delivered the key note address entitled, "The State of conservation in the region – A challenge to policy and Practitioners".

3.2 High-level Panel Discussion

Participants at the Forum were also challenged and provided with different perspectives and insights in a discourse different to what they are accustomed to by a panel of experts who spoke to their own personal views and experiences. The panel was chaired by Daudi Sumba, Vice President at the Program Design and Government Relations of the African Wildlife Foundation, and the panelists were the IUCN Councilor for Africa Honorable Jesca Eriyo, Deputy Secretary General for the East African Community, His Excellency Johan Borgstam, Swedish Ambassador to the Republic of Kenya and Permanent Representative to UNEP and UN-HABITAT, Shaka J. Dzebu the Advocacy Officer at the Catholic Justice and Peace commission of the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference and Dr. Dino Martins the Executive Director of the Mpala Research Centre.

3.3 Roundtable Discussions

The afternoon was dedicated to parallel Round Table discussions around four themes: Governance and Natural Resources, Financing Conservation, Illegal Wildlife Trade and Natural Capital. During this session the participants had the opportunity to share up to date knowledge and information on topical issues influencing conservation and sustainable development and engage in debates leading to the identification of the critical issues for consideration as policy recommendations and formulation of possible motions.

3.3.1 The Governance and Natural Resources roundtable discussion started off with a series of presentations on two pressing issues in the region namely the contributions World Heritage Sites make to conservation, well-being and rights as well as how development sectors are effecting conservation of important biodiversity and livelihood and cultural spaces. Participants identified the need to safeguard institutional collapse with an emphasis on conflicting roles and lack of accountability to ensure effective governance. The need to develop tools that support communities' effective participation was noted with a possible role for IUCN suggested as that of guiding funders whilst at the same time ensuring that communities are part of the process.

3.3.2 The Conservation Finance roundtable discussion shared innovative financing strategies based upon unique experiences emerging amongst IUCN Members that have achieved more inclusive public participation, enabling partnerships and local development solutions that can assist conservation today. Building partnerships was

identified as a positive development for effective implementation. Through partnerships it was noted that IUCN needs to find a way of harnessing private sector resources and consider setting up a commission that advises members and partners on how to engage with the private sector.

3.3.3 The round table on Illegal Wildlife explored how communities could be more effectively engaged as partners to curb poaching and illegal trafficking. A presentation was made by IUCN giving background to the issue. It was noted that community engagement was given insufficient attention in current efforts to curb poaching and illegal wildlife trade which have until now focused almost exclusively on top-down law enforcement and demand reduction. The presenters also introduced a dynamic Theory of Change (ToC) for “beyond enforcement” measures developed by the IUCN CEESP/SSC Sustainable Livelihoods Specialist Group together with partners.

The rest of the session was taken up by group work. This was conducted using a “carousel” approach where participants were asked to critically explore the four main “streams” in the ToC: (1) Strengthening disincentives for illegal behavior (2) Increasing incentives for stewardship (3) Decreasing the costs of living with wildlife (4) Supporting alternative non-wildlife based livelihoods/economic development. The Open Dialogue resulted in recommendations targeting regional and continental policy processes as well as IUCN’s Programme of work in the region for 2016-2020 and the development of motions being put forward to the World Conservation Congress in 2016.

3.4 Preparing members for participation in the World Conservation Congress: Capacity Building on the Members’ Business Session

Day one activities laid the foundation for the Members’ Business sessions. Representatives from over 70 member organizations participated in the proceedings.

3.4.1 The IUCN Programme

The IUCN Global 2017-2020 Draft Programme as well as IUCN ESARO’s Implementation Plan were presented to the members highlighting the programme logic and the key drivers for the programme. Members had an opportunity to ask questions for clarification and to air their views. One of the notable comments made was the need to link the Programme to the Sustainable Development Goals and to reach ensure it reaches out to the youth and other groups such as the Indigenous Communities.

In groups members were asked to deliberate on the following questions:

- 1) What would you change and why? Give clear changes (not just “no”);
- 2) Are the guiding principles appropriate and adequate – if not, add and edit; and
- 3) What should and can constituency do to strengthen the one programme approach.

The three groups that IUCN members were divided into were the Islands, Southern Africa and Eastern Africa which included the Horn of Africa. Members from the islands discussed how to participate more effectively in the IUCN Programme and explored the possibility of forming a committee for IUCN members in the Islands. The Eastern African Group reviewed the IUCN ESARO programme to date and identified areas that need enhancement. They also reviewed the three thematic areas identifying possible interventions that will contribute to the realization of the desired results whilst also analyzing the extent to which the set objectives can be achieved.

The members from Southern Africa identified over-arching principles for effective delivery as adoption and implementation of the One Programme Approach and also put some thought into the work they want to undertake. The group discussed the need for coordination of activities noting the importance of carrying out membership mapping and strengthening National Committees in order to achieve the desired programmatic

goals. Inclusion of governments in the National Committees was encouraged as it was seen as a way to strengthen them.

3.4.2 One Programme Approach

The members participated in a session around practical ways in which to build on and scale out successes to date and address challenges and obstacles in order to strengthen the operationalization of IUCN's One Programme approach in the region. Members shared how in their National Committees they are making efforts to implement the One Programme Approach with examples from South Africa where the Committee uses the IUCN platform to reach out to the Government, in Zimbabwe they are currently working on a joint proposal, with the initiative coming from the members, Botswana has identified Transboundary initiatives as very strategic and important to addressing and implementing the IUCN programme. Members where National Committees are not yet established identified the need to set up such committees to ensure the effectiveness of the One Programme Approach with the Island members as well as members in Swaziland indicating an interest in setting up National Committees. Malawi highlighted the intention to co-opt more members and to identifying new donors and strategic programmatic areas.

3.4.3 The World Conservation Congress

Day two of the members' business focused on increasing knowledge and understanding on Members' Assembly procedures including the proposed statutory changes and other reforms as well as prepare Members for effective participation in WCC activities. Ms. Sarah Over from the Union Development Group took the members through the amendments to the Statutes that were voted on electronically in 2015 and what the implications are. Members were appraised about the issues that were put forward for consultation as follows:

1. Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Organisations - Proposal for a separate Category/sub-category;
2. Local and regional governmental authorities - Including local and regional authorities (LRGA) in the structure of the Union;
3. Members' Assembly - sole authority; and
4. Election of the President.

After the presentation, participants had an opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification.

The members were taken through the format for the Forum and the different activities that take place. They were encouraged to get involved in the preparatory activities noting deadlines for the call for forum contributions, nominations of candidates for the election of the President, Councilors and Chairs of the Commissions, nominations for the various awards and the Motions process including deadlines for submission of motions, consultations on motions and the actual electronic voting.

Members were also appraised on the role of Nature Based Solutions and the role of the Sustainable Development Goals through a presentation by Deputy Head, IUCN Global Policy, Constanza Martinez & Director, IUCN Global Ecosystem Management Programme, Edmund Barrow.

During a lunchtime session, members were introduced to the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services.

3.4.4 Reconstitution of the Regional Committee

Time was not permitting for members to have discussions on and reconstitute the Regional Committee as well as identify ways in which to strengthen the National Committees. It was agreed that this process would be carried out after the RCF with support from the Secretariat.

4. RCF Evaluation

As the RCF came to a close, the members were requested to participate in an on-line evaluation of the meeting. The areas of evaluation included ratings for the overall organization of the event, logistical arrangements, each event in terms of relevance and content. 58% of the respondents rated the event as being overall excellent whilst 42% rated it as very good. The table below summarizes the ratings from the respondents:

Table 1: Members' ranking of the quality and relevance of each session – IUCN Programme

	IUCN Intersessional Programme (2017-2020)	IUCN ESARO Regional Programme (Overview)	IUCN ESARO Regional Implementation Plan (2017 - 2020)	Strengthening the One Programme approach in the region
Excellent	20.00%	35.00%	15.00%	30.00%
Very good	36.00%	28.00%	28.00%	8.00%
Fairly good	11.76%	41.18%	41.18%	5.88%
Mildly good	35.71%	0.00%	14.29%	50.00%
Not good at all	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%

The members noted the need to strengthen the Regional Programme. Some members also expressed the importance of the One Programme Approach and the need for further discussion on it to ensure its delivery by all IUCN Constituents in the region.

Some members said that they found the issues discussed on WCC preparations very relevant. Though discussions on possible motions already started at the RCF some members felt that further discussion and support post-RCF is necessary. Limited time was noted with some members wishing there had been more time devoted to discussion and the start of motion formulation during the RCF. The table below summarizes how the members rated the related sessions:

Table 2: Members ranking of the WCC related sessions

	Governance Procedures & Reforms	2016 World Conservation Congress	The role of Nature-based Solutions in today's challenges & aspiration	Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services	Biodiversity Offset Policy Options	Motions to be submitted from
Excellent	33.33%	42.86%	9.52%	4.76%	4.76%	4.76%
Very good	34.78%	26.09%	21.74%	4.35%	8.70%	4.35%
Fairly good	11.76%	17.65%	29.41%	5.88%	17.65%	17.65%
Mildly good	25.00%	8.33%	8.33%	41.67%	16.67%	0.00%
Not good at all	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	0.00%	33.33%	44.44%

5. Lessons learned

The RCF was well attended but there are some members who failed to attend due to some other important conservation events occurring at the same time as the Forum and the lesson learnt is that for future meetings there is need to review the timing for such meetings. Though funds are usually the limiting factor the level of networking that went on during the RCF and the enthusiasm exuded showed that there is need to bring members to the same fora outside of the RCF set up to discuss issues pertinent to the region more often in order to have a

common vision and coordinate activities. This observation is confirmed by the members' responses to an evaluation question on how the RCF strengthened the region as summarized in the table below:

Table 3: Members' ranking of the effect of the RCF on strengthening the region

Answer Choices	Responses
Excellent	26.92%
Very good	61.54%
Fairly good	11.54%
Mildly good	0.00%
Not good at all	0.00%

As much as the intention is to target such initiatives at those members who will actually attend the WCC, it is not a guarantee that those who attended the RCF will represent their organizations at the Congress so capacity building will have to be on-going post RCF.

6. Conclusion

Whilst no motions were developed during the RCF, discussions on some possible motions started and it is hoped that these will culminate into tangible motions after the RCF. The RCF was a good start for the region's participation at WCC and the Secretariat will support the members to ensure that the Regional Committee is reconstituted so that the members are ready for WCC. In the RCF evaluation, a member said, "I understood the relevance of the new SDGs to conservation. I learnt how to table a motion through IUCN and how our work fits into the bigger conservation picture and IUCN programs. I made many good contacts and reconnected with colleagues in conservation".

Reference Documents

[RCF brochure](#)

[RCF Agenda](#)

[RCF Video](#)

[RCF List of participants](#)