Statement from IUCN on the report of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post -2015 Development Agenda:

“A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development”

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) welcomes the report of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post -2015 Development Agenda. The document is very eloquent in explaining the approach of the Panel and effective in starting this important discussion on the direction the world will take to achieve sustainable development after 2015, when the period of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) ends. While we recognise the invaluable contribution of the MDGs process, we agree with the Panel’s statement that “the MDGs fell short by not integrating the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development …, and by not addressing the need to promote sustainable patterns of consumption and production.”

IUCN also appreciates the fact that the document takes into account some of the recommendations made in the report of the Global Sustainability Panel: “Resilient People-Resilient Planet” and hopes that this document will continue to be taken into account throughout the process.

The report is a good starting point to launch discussions on how the post 2015 framework will look like. As it lays down several important points, the present statement aims at addressing only the main issues IUCN would like to underline. We look forward to participating further in discussions to explain these points in depth and present other elements we find important to include.

IUCN supports and offers its expertise to promote what the report calls a “new data revolution” and agrees with the establishment of a Global Partnership on Development Data. In this context, we would like to draw the attention of the Panel to the recently established Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). The Platform is an independent intergovernmental body designed to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity, ecosystem services and sustainable development. This Platform could contribute effectively to the “new data revolution” proposed by the Panel and enough attention and resources should be dedicated to this mechanism, which has the potential of changing the way we perceive the consequences of biodiversity loss, comparable to what the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change did for climatic shifts.

In relation to the above, IUCN strongly concurs with the Panel that relevant, scientifically robust and timely data helps design and implement a strong accountability mechanism. Each goal, as stated in the document, should be accompanied by an independent and rigorous monitoring system that would take into account tools to collect and analyse relevant data. In this context, IUCN, whose membership is both governments and NGOs, underlines the importance of civil society organizations (CSOs) in such processes. IUCN is a science based organization focused, among other issues, on collecting data and best practices that are then useful for monitoring progress and for policy making. CSOs should
have a clear role in these monitoring mechanisms and the views reflected in the report under the section “Stakeholders partnering by theme” is a good start to clearly define that role.

We also welcome the views on the role of the business sector in bringing about sustainable development as it is an important agent of change and innovation. Acknowledging that some companies have already embarked in implementing corporate policies and strategies that aim at integrating sustainability in their operations and that in order to support an effective implementation they need enabling public policies that create a level playing field, reward early movers and promote leadership. IUCN supports the establishment of a reporting framework that leverages and combines existing reporting regimes of social and environmental performance measurement. As already proposed by the reports of the Global Sustainability Panel and of this Panel, the regime should be mandatory and operational by 2030, at latest. We note that this is not part of the goals and targets in Annex I and we recommend that this be made part of the package of targets.

We acknowledge that Annexes I and II of the report are illustrations of how the goals and targets could be formulated. IUCN is ready to work with governments and other stakeholders to reflect more explicitly the role of biodiversity and ecosystem services as the natural infrastructure that underpins the supply side for humans’ basic needs, thus requiring a better articulation in particular in Goals 5 (on food security), Goal 6 (on Water), Goal 7 (on energy), Goal 9 (on natural resources management) and the respective targets and indicators. IUCN will provide specific examples of what we call nature-based solutions to development needs throughout the discussions.

In order to ensure policy coherence, obligations related to development already negotiated and adopted by governments should be part of the post 2015 package. Of particular importance are the 20 Aichi Targets adopted under the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2010 in Nagoya, Japan. The Aichi Targets are not only about biodiversity conservation but also sustainable development. These targets can be incorporated in relevant goals. IUCN can contribute with specific options and schemes on how to introduce the Aichi Targets in the post 2015 package.

IUCN considers that Goals 10 (on good governance) and 11 (on stable and peaceful societies) are essential for achieving sustainable development. We particularly appreciate targets related to public participation in decision making processes, the public’s right to information, fighting corruption, accountability, access to and independence of justice. It is essential, in our view, that these targets are properly defined so as to enable meaningful monitoring of progress and IUCN looks forward to working with other actors to achieve this.

Finally, IUCN notes the different processes related to the post-2015 development framework, the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and others such as the UN Working Group on Financing for Sustainable Development. Our view is that they should converge as soon as possible. While we welcome the proposal put forward in the report regarding the holding of a summit of member States in 2015 where all processes would come together, we are concerned that the suggested timing may be too late. Better policy coherence is more likely if all these discussions on sustainable development occur “at the same table” as soon as possible.