



Report on U.S. Regional Conservation Forum

14 September 2015

The Terrace, California Academy of Sciences, 55 Music Concourse Dr, San Francisco, CA 94118

The event started with an opening session between 8:30 – 9:00, featuring a Welcome from Meg Lowman of the California Academy of Sciences, and a short introduction from the US State Member Representative, Christine Dawson, of the US State Department. Then Frank Hawkins, the director of the IUCN US Office, gave an overview of the agenda and methodology. Each participant then introduced themselves briefly

Enrique Lahmann presented the World Conservation Congress

This covered, amongst other subjects, why Hawaii was selected for Congress 2016, the classification of Members, deadlines leading up to Congress.

Enrique introduced the Congress location and Hawai'i more generally, and then presented the Members forum, emphasizing

- Proposals for the forum should include contributions from secretariat, members and commissions (one program rule)
- Help promote event if you want to be more engaged (communications)
- Use this Congress to get firm commitment from decision-makers
- Highlight any schools that may be important to include in the congress forum

Frank Hawkins then presented the IUCN Program 2017-2020.

A revised draft was produced in June 2015, consultation from June 2015 - Feb 2016, approval by WCC in September 2016

- Main lessons from 2013-2016 programme:
 - 3 elements need completion
 - 3 high level global results still valid - underpinning narrative needs strengthening/updating
 - Business model needs more integration - linear, recognizable sense of impacts
 - More ambitious - more impact, focused, and coordinated

2017 - 2020 approach:

- use policy to influence scaling up approaches
- link up delivery, construct webs of knowledge being generated by initiatives
- link up Union: Union = mechanism by which process is proceeding

Themes

1. Valuing and conserving nature - powerful set of targets, but more work needs to be done and integrated more profoundly into SDGs.
 - a. Results: knowledge platforms to value and conserve diversity; policies themselves need to be improved, show impact through improvement of status of biodiversity
2. Effective and Equitable Governance of Nature's Use
 - a. Result: improve natural resource governance; support design and legal implementation of frameworks at landscape scale, national international transboundary and global scales
 - b. Approach: build capacity and develop standards to create nature-based solutions.
3. Deploying Nature Based Solutions to address Societal Challenges
 - a. Result: healthy and restored ecosystems meet security needs
 - b. Build capacity amongst participants, provide mechanism of knowledge sharing.
 - c. Generating floods of funding, FLR successful on this, need to replicate in other activities.

Going Forward: what we need

- Metrics: for measuring delivery and actual impact
- Focus: make sure where we put effort are towards things that will make a change
 - What does IUCN need? Are we putting resources in the right place?
 - Geographically - there are justifications for increased investments in meso/south America and SE Asia
 - Terrestrial vertebrates and ecosystems have good attention but we need to provide more attention to marine and freshwater ecosystems as well
- Need an operation and financial plan
- Structure of program that ramps up scale, far-ranging impacts
- We have to start acting on the indirect drivers for habitat loss- for instance agricultural subsidies

Questions of clarification included the issue of how IUCN goes about influencing policy? Is this policy of governments or organizations? Frank gave an example of our work in supporting the World Bank review of safeguards policy – as an international organization, IUCN convenes the people the bank wants to consult with as members

Another concerned the issue of reporting the work of the IUCN members as contributions to the results of the IUCN program. Synthesis of the results of IUCN members' work would be a valuable way of showing how the Union worked together.

John Robinson, Regional Councillor for North America, moderated a discussion on the World Conservation Congress and the IUCN Program 2017-2020.

The aim was to solicit member input in the following areas:

- Linkages to broader environmental and sustainable development
- Global and national/regional priorities for resolutions
- One Program Commitment statement/Charter
- Member contributions to Program

The discussion continued the theme from the previous session about the joint efforts of the Secretariat, Members and Commissions and how collectively we deliver the results of the Work Programme. A proposal was made to identify those parts of the Union that are working on various components of the Work Programme in order to improve communication between members can be improved and a clearer idea of the overall implementation of the Work Programme available for members and the wider world. A further suggestion was made that this could be an important role for National Committee.

A further discussion focused on improving IUCN's evidence base and strengthening the narrative of our impact. It is clear that IUCN needs to have clearer message, and that for instance it should be focused more clearly on protected areas, given the results of the World Parks Congress. The message needs to be simple, not implicit but explicit

Further points raised included the definition of "restoration" and the relation between restoration and nature-based adaptation, which could be made clearer. In the governance theme, the absence of discussion of armed conflict seems like an admission that IUCN finds it difficult to do anything with this issue – we can't play a peacemaker role. In an animated discussion around resilience, the area of primary focus may be in eye of beholder. Instead of rebuilding wherever we want, we should focus on natural systems that can protect.

A number of questions and comments focused on the themes of the World Conservation Congress, for instance whether the WCC will address climate refugees and people affected by climate change. The Secretariat team noted that while these are still under discussion, the Members' Portal is being utilized to debate some of these things, and everyone should contribute to the the member's forum discussion in the Portal.

A number of members noted that we have made an effort to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals, the Aichi targets, and other international targets, into the Work Programme, but has any thought been given to what comes out of Paris UNFCCC COP

agreement and integrating that into the program? The response was that a team will look at second draft of the Work Programme and give room for these discussions later in the year and early in 2016.

On the issue of human rights issues related to environmental work on the ground, a member wanted clarity on the role of IUCN in tracking or influencing policy. The response was the responsibility for these issues lie with governments – it's hard for IUCN to be in advocacy position. However there are ways to call on governments to recognize potential challenges and to respond to challenge appropriately – ultimately it is a question of framing the issue. IUCN's role is education and capacity building.

A clear focus from the World Parks Congress was Inspiring a New Generation How do we integrate younger generations into this program of work? Members are actively involved in developing a component for ING that needs to find a place in the Work Programme, but it is not clear how this place will be created.

The final phase of the discussion session focused on ways to increase impact by developing or strengthening relations with organizations that can't be or aren't yet a part of IUCN, for instance faith-based organisations or those involved with young people. Social network analysis can help us understand the landscape and complement text and narratives that can become out of date quickly. Formulating long-term goals and statements such as to show how we can benefit from engaging in others expertise would be a valuable way of engaging this constituency. Some work on this subject (for instance social network analysis), has come from commissions such as CEESP, but it has not been widely circulated in the organization, and there is a perception that we might become disjointed if we do not keep our focus on the existing workplan.

A consensus emerged on the value of storytelling as a means of bringing diverse constituencies together. It can help with outreach to organizations and individuals that come at issues from different perspectives, particularly those of traditional societies. In addition, if we are trying to reach beyond the traditional conservation community we need to use apps and twitter—for example, Instagram. That kind of innovation is how you're going to engage younger generation. We should also look for positive opportunities rather than focusing on negatives.

It was acknowledged that one of our challenges is the format of the call for contributions. Perhaps each of the proposals should demonstrate how they help us achieve our One Program? This suggestion has been generally adopted in the call for contributions process.

After lunch Enrique Lahmann presented on the Governance reforms and the Resolutions Platform, focusing on:

- Elections procedure, accreditation and statutory deadlines
- Proposals for governance improvements and reforms, including new Member categories (Indigenous Peoples Organizations, local and subnational Governments)
- Members Assembly's authority
- Reforms proposed through the consultations on the Framework of Action for Strengthening the Union

Clarification was given for the discussion on indigenous peoples membership categories specifying that we are talking about indigenous governments/tribal governments as potential voting bodies. For the US government delegation, specifically the State Department would prefer an option where indigenous peoples agencies and local government would be part of delegation but have independent vote. An event at WCC is being planned to focus a discussion about the role of subnational level members.

The comment was made that state and local governments are often laboratories for innovation that cannot take place at national levels – and thus it would be desirable to give them votes.

For the motions process, it seems unclear who determines what is reasonable and achievable in revised motions process. In particular, “Reasonable” seems a subjective parameter for judgement.

In the interests of transparency, a request was made for an indication of all motions that are submitted, so that members can see how many don't make it through the process.

Ricardo Tejada moderated a series of short topical presentations

- **Proposal for US National Committee**- Richard Cellarius, Commission on Economics, Environmental and Social Policy

This session included a discussion about how national committees were managed elsewhere in the network and how many countries have regional offices. In order to better justify the creation of a US National Committee, a gap analysis would be helpful showing what IUCN provides and how the national committee would fill the gaps.

- **IUCN Awards at WCC**- John Robinson, US Regional Councillor
- **The Promise of Sydney/ Inspiring a New Generation** – Elaine Hsiao, WCPA Young Professionals

The discussion highlighted the Inspiring a New Generation Summit which will be held in November in West Virginia. The Summit will identify action points for mobilizing support for the initiative including how it might be integrated into the IUCN quadrennial work plan.

- **Celebrating the importance of nature in culture through the World Heritage Convention** – Cyril Kormos, Wilderness Foundation

Cyril described the initiative to include a nature-culture thread in the World Conservation Congress that will take examples from World Heritage sites that qualify under joint nature/culture criteria.

- **Perspectives on the WCC** Christopher Dunn, Cornell University

Christopher gave a very interesting account of how it came to be that the next World Conservation Congress will be, for the first time, in the United States. The latest news is that it seems at least possible that the President will attend the World Conservation Congress, and discussions to that effect are underway with various White House constituencies.

At the end of the day, Frank Hawkins moderated a discussion to identify some next steps. The following key points were identified:

1. In the US and Canada, we should build partnerships with agencies outside IUCN that have capacities we do not- for instance the private sector, faith-based communities, communications networks. In addition, we need to have within Membership more discussions and opportunities to talk - a US National Committee would give us that opportunity, and this would also enable us to connect high level policy IUCN to on the ground work, and generate a better understanding of the collective impact of IUCN.
2. We need a clear and actionable plan for Inspiring a New Generation. A better social analysis of the conservation landscape would help, and we need to find ways to tell stories better—we need to put ourselves in the position of listener, and develop better skills in evidence based storytelling
3. In the Work Programme, Protected Areas should be made more explicit
4. Members indicated that the World Conservation Congress presents a very powerful opportunity to extend the reach and influence of IUCN. The commitment and energy of Hawaii committee was noted as a key asset to deliver this goal. The challenge is to find a framing for the Congress that enables their work to resonate with constituencies including the White House. Hawai'i is far from the continental US—it is important to make sure the WCC energy and momentum is transmitted to continental US

The event closed with a reception on the Terrace.

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Participants

Name		Title	Affiliation
First	Last		
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Ricardo	Tejada	Director	IUCN Global Communications
Maggie	Roth	Communications Officer	IUCN Washington DC
Christine	Dawson	IUCN Member	Department of State
John	Robinson	IUCN Member	Wildlife Conservation Society
Cyril	Kormos	IUCN Member	WILD Science for Nature and People Initiative (SNAP)
Craig R.	Groves	Executive Director	National Wildlife Federation
Les	Welsh	Pacific Region Associate Director	Global Footprint Network
Rona	Kelly	IUCN Member	Global Footprint Network
Amanda	Diep	IUCN Member	Arizona State University
Candice C.	Kelman	School of Sustainability	InterEnvironment Institute
Ted	Trzyna	President	InterEnvironment Institute
Mike	Paparian	Board Member	Consultative Group on Biological Diversity
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Doris	Cellarius	CEESP	Sierra Club
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David	Raney	Marine Team and Hawaiian resident	Sierra Club
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