

### IUCN WORLD PARKS CONGRESS 2014 HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2014

In the morning, participants attended stream sessions while a high-level roundtable convened. Government representatives provided inputs to the vision of the Promise of Sydney and pledged national commitments for the next decade. An evening World Leaders' Dialogue focused on finding the balance between the global appetite for mineral resources and how this defines PAs.

#### HIGH-LEVEL ROUNDTABLE

IUCN President Zhan Xinsheng, opened the high-level roundtable event, saying the environmental leaders present need to "raise the bar" on countries' performance regarding PAs worldwide. He said the Promise of Sydney will aim to provide best practices through sharing experiences and wisdom from around the world.

Session Co-Chairs Peter Cochrane, Australia's World Parks Congress Ambassador, and Julia Marton-Lefèvre, IUCN Director General, opened the discussions, inviting delegates to provide their inputs and considerations to inform the vision and required actions, which will be captured in the Promise of Sydney outcome document.

Simon Birmingham, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for the Environment, Australia, noted that despite enormous growth in terrestrial and marine PAs, significant challenges

persist, which need to be addressed over the next decade through building effective partnerships among governments, local communities, businesses and the private sector

Robert Stokes, New South Wales Minister for Environment, Australia, suggested the Promise of Sydney will provide an opportunity to reframe the debate on conservation from "one of conflict to one of conversation."

During the ensuing discussion on countries' perspectives to be included in the Promise of Sydney vision, several delegates stressed the need to raise awareness and convince both leaders and people of the benefits of biodiversity. Many participants suggested forming a group of high-level leaders who could spread the message among their peers globally.

Participants also emphasized, *inter alia*: the centrality of conservation to human wellbeing and the economy; the need to "move out of silos," including those of the three Rio Conventions; partnerships at different levels; recognizing the benefits provided by PAs, and ensuring these flow to the local communities and custodians; creating sources of income for communities living in PAs, including ecotourism; education and communication; ecological corridors and avoiding fragmentation of PAs; ending illegal trade in wildlife; measuring wellbeing beyond the gross domestic product (GDP); and facilitating financial mechanisms that will enable both public and private sectors to contribute to conservation.

One delegate stressed the need to "bring to the table people not in the conservation business," and change perceptions from "conservation as anti-development" to "conservation being about development."

One participant stressed the need to commit to establishing and expanding, securing funding for, and good management of PAs.



(L-R): Zhang Xinsheng, President, IUCN; Hery Rajaonarimampianina, President, Madagascar; and Simon Birmingham, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for the Environment, Australia

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Peter Cochrane, Australia's World Parks Congress Ambassador

A delegate suggested including in the vision: a reference to the SDGs; sustainable utilization of natural resources for present and future generations; the principle of “conservation as a core;” quality of PAs alongside quantity; and regional partnerships to support the WPC.

A participant noted the need to stop “illegal activities on our biodiversity,” stressing education and changing perceptions relating to natural resources as key to addressing their over-exploitation. One delegate reminded all of the important role of the men and women who dedicate their lives to the protection of natural resources and ecosystems, and urged selecting a UN ambassador for wildlife crime as well as passing a UN resolution. A minister urged greater interaction and integration among the different multilateral environmental conventions.

On country commitments over the next decade, one participant shared his government's commitments to set up new marine parks for the protection of mangroves, and empower local committees to serve as “eyes on the ground.” Several government representatives announced commitments to increase PA coverage, including a minister of one of the largest countries who pledged to increase his country's PAs by 27, and expand 12 PAs to increase the overall PA territory by 28% over the next decade. A delegate reiterated his country's promise made at WPC 2014 to increase the share of PAs to 20% of his country's territory by 2020.

One delegate outlined initiatives from her country to transform the environmental sector, including establishing a viable wildlife economy that benefits all stakeholders, and growing the blue economy through unlocking the potential of oceans without “stripping them bare.”

Another minister promised his country would, *inter alia*, continue to invest in biodiversity conservation, build awareness among youth and local communities, and stop poaching.



Alcinda Abreu, Minister for Coordination of Environmental Affairs, Mozambique

A deputy minister announced that, over the next decade, her country would, among other things: create 60,000 sustainable jobs and two million hectares of conserved land; ensure US\$1 billion in equity in the hands of indigenous people; and support more than one million beneficiaries currently living in poverty.

Closing the session, Birmingham thanked participants for their passion and commitments, and assured them of Australia's commitment to ensuring positive outcomes for PAs globally, regionally and nationally.

## STREAM SESSIONS

### STREAM FOUR: Freshwater Ecosystems in Protected Areas: Effective Protection through Conservation Law:

Ben Boer, World Commission on Environmental Law, noted that even though the legal protection for wetlands is often controversial, conventions such as the World Heritage, CBD, Convention on Migratory Species, Ramsar and UN Watercourses Convention have enabled regulation of national laws for freshwater ecosystems. He provided the example of the Australian Minister for the Environment and Heritage versus Greentree in 2004 Federal Court case regarding the Windella Ramsar Site, in which a AUS\$450,000 fine for clearing protected wetlands for agriculture was imposed on a farmer and his company.

Lydia Slobodian, IUCN, Environmental Law Centre, discussed the UN Watercourses Convention and obligations to parties in relation to PAs. She noted that even though the definition of a watercourse according the convention strictly refers to the water itself, catchment issues are addressed under the “protection of ecosystems,” requiring states to individually and jointly protect and preserve ecosystems of international watercourses.



Ben Boer, World Commission on Environmental Law



Purificació Canals, MedPAN

Volker Mauerhofer, University of Austria, presented on “Convention Check,” an activity undertaken in Austria to encourage better implementation of conservation-related MEAs. He reported the evaluation of the implementation showed that the “Convention Check” is a reliable method of assessment and that the Austrian PA management had implemented 20% of the tool’s recommendations.

In ensuing discussions, participants noted the need for more: awareness creation on the obligations and provisions of the UN Watercourses Convention; and interaction between freshwater ecologists and courts to provide science based evidence for cases against the environment.

**STREAM SIX: Inspiring Solutions: Better-Governed Seascapes as Models for Sustainable Living:** Hugh Govan, Locally-Managed Marine Area Network (LMMA) moderated the session, asking the presenters to reflect on: solutions for developing and connecting effective governance across multiple spatial scales, including encouraging policy makers to take into account local resource governance solutions; what can be learnt from traditional and local governance models; and the most inspiring solutions for multiple sectors in sustainable coastal and marine planning. He provided examples from applying a LMMA approach in Fiji, noting that initial results indicated that this bottom-up methodology to conservation planning for marine area networks puts Fiji on track to meet Aichi Target 11.

Jesse Hastings, National University of Singapore, shared an example from Cambodia of establishing a marine fisheries management area through a participatory approach that brings together communities, fishers, different levels of government and the private sector, thus promoting shared governance. He noted that this represents a shift from standard top-down planning.

Brian Jones, Blue Ventures, described how communities in Madagascar instituted voluntary closures in an octopus fishery, and partnered with the private sector to grow and market sea cucumbers. He noted that this system increased stocks, provided incentives for good management, and emerged as a more popular approach than MPAs, which are often considered “restrictive.”

Sutej Hugu, Tao Foundation, illustrated fisheries management through traditional norms and taboos that govern which, where and when species are harvested. He explained that an “eco-calendar” dictates the end of the harvest for flying fish to coincide with the start of the breeding season.



Devin Bartley, FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, and Nigel Dudley, IUCN WCPA



Pedro Rosabal, IUCN Global Protected Areas

Purificació Canals, MedPAN, presented on the participatory multi-stakeholder process that led to the Mediterranean Roadmap for MPAs for 2020. She highlighted how a collective process, such as the establishment of a regional trust fund for marine protection in the region, can achieve concrete results.

Participants discussed their experiences, including how Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs) are using customary governance models to achieve Aichi Targets, and lobbying for conservation to be mainstreamed into marine spatial planning initiatives.

## PARALLEL PLENARY I

On Conservation Goals, Stream 1, stream leaders highlighted the recently-launched Protected Planet Report 2014 and the IUCN Green List of Protected Areas. They outlined the main stream recommendations, including: going beyond numeric targets; focusing action “where biodiversity is and where it is threatened”; addressing the challenge that only 24% of PAs are considered well-managed; focusing on adequate resourcing; tackling legal downgrading and de-gazettement; and endorsing new governance types such as ICCAs and private PAs. They underscored going beyond Aichi Target 11 (Protected Areas), noting that some stream participants recommended setting ambitious targets of sustainably managing up to 50% land and seascapes.

On the World Heritage cross-cutting theme, stream leaders highlighted: restoration of threatened sites; preventing industrial extractive activity in World Heritage Sites; development of World Heritage Site criteria for wilderness; greater emphasis on connectivity between sites; and ensuring respect for indigenous peoples’ rights, and their full and effective involvement in equitable management of World Heritage sites; and benefit sharing. They noted the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2014 as a tool to engage partners in stewardship of sites along with the COMPACT model of community planning and small grants.

On Enhancing Diversity and Quality of Governance, Stream 6, stream leaders recommended: putting transnational wildlife crime “out of business,” including through devolved wildlife governance, traceability mechanisms and transboundary cooperation; shifting the paradigm from top-down to shared governance with a strong legal basis; deepening understanding of governance issues through country-specific assessments; and developing governance standards and guidance. They also noted the importance of implementing governance-related policies, such as national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and observing human rights enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.



Rebecca Koss, IUCN and WCPA Young Professionals and Intergenerational Partnership for Sustainability Task Force

On Inspiring a New Generation, Stream 8, stream leaders underscored that new ways of tackling longstanding challenges for PAs should include facilitating inter-generational mentorships, and using online and social media platforms to connect urban populations to nature. They underscored how facilitating special interactions with nature at early ages leads to transformative experiences, and engenders a culture of stewardship. They noted a recommendation to hold a young people's gathering every two years to empower current and future leaders, and presented the stream's contribution to the Promise of Sydney: the Young People's Pact, which outlines commitments, principles and actions.

## PARALLEL PLENARY II

Ignace Schops, EUROPARC Federation, and Charlotte Karibuhoye, IUCN WCPA, moderated this session.

Reporting on Responding to Climate Change, Stream 2, stream leaders outlined key messages, including on the need for: communities to drive adaptation to ensure ownership and sustainability of initiatives; building capacity for PA management; planning conservation goals with climate change in mind; and effective communication.

On recommendations, they mentioned, *inter alia*: a call for the outcome of the 2015 UN Climate Change Conference, Paris, to give full recognition to biodiversity, ecosystems and PAs as key enablers in climate change adaptation; positioning PAs as solutions to climate change; engaging new thinking in

planning and management of PAs; and new and strengthened partnerships for climate change adaptation to protect landscapes and seascapes.

Stream 3 leaders emphasized: unlocking the value of parks and PAs while conserving biodiversity as key recommendations for Improving Health and Wellbeing. They also mentioned: building knowledge and research; providing indigenous communities with access to places of importance; integrating preventive health into planning processes; building skills for the health and wellbeing sector to realize the value of PAs; strengthening policies to promote the role of nature in health and wellbeing; and ensuring that every child has the opportunity to engage with nature.

On Supporting Human Life, Stream 4, stream leaders outlined conclusions and recommendations around three issues. Recommendations on food security included: local solutions that place people at the center of management; a human rights-based approach to conservation; and recognizing the contributions of PAs to food security. On water, the stream recognized PAs as a key element in delivering water-related services. Outcomes relating to disaster risk reduction focused on priority actions to advance natural solutions, including through science, management and communication.

On the Marine cross-cutting theme, theme leaders highlighted preparatory work through a framework structured around "protecting more, involving more, and investing more," and summarized key recommendations on: MPA targets and management effectiveness; integration with the climate change framework to advance PAs as part of the solution; creating and managing MPAs that sustain human needs, and stressing the importance of ecosystem services; integrating oceans in the SDGs; working with indigenous and local communities; and using new technology to "engage, inspire and manage."

In the discussion, panelists addressed: management and enforcement of areas outside territorial waters; examples of promoting cultural heritage; and ways to improve communication on parks and PAs, including through social media, adopting language for target audiences, and funding young professionals to take part in events such as the WPC.

## PARALLEL PLENARY III

Lee White, National Parks Agency, Gabon and Mike Wong, Parks Canada moderated the discussion.



Youth ambassadors join on stage to sing a song version of the The Young People's Pact, a call to action and one of the outputs of Stream 8.



Panel from Parallel Plenary II

On Reconciling Development Challenges, Stream 5, stream leaders stressed that investment in PAs has received less recognition than infrastructure development, and noted a need for policy-relevant information and data, particularly on PES, and innovating mechanisms for PA financing. They recommended, *inter alia*: integrating PA values into approaches to economic development; providing approaches to manage and connect landscape and seascapes; integrating PAs into key sectorial plans, national sustainable development goals and the post-2015 SDG framework; and ensuring social and environmental safeguards for better understanding of costs and benefits, and the tradeoffs and risks of PAs.

Stream 7 on Respecting Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge and Culture reported that even though much has been achieved since the WPC in Durban, indigenous and local communities (ILCs) are yet to be full partners in PA management, they recommended, that *inter alia*: collective land and resource rights of ILCs to land and seas be recognized; full participation of indigenous women and youth in development and maintaining PAs be achieved; PAs observe rights of ILCs, in accordance with UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and that IUCN develop a new category of indigenous PAs. They also recommended that: the distinction between natural and cultural World Heritage Sites be eliminated; formal education opportunities be created to include indigenous cultural skills and accreditation pathways for rangers and trackers; and innovative financing mechanisms be created to support promotion of indigenous economies.



(L-R): Leigh Welling, US National Parks Service; Mariana Bellot Rojas, National Commission of Natural Protected Areas, Mexico; Nigel Dudley, IUCN WCPA

On the cross-cutting theme of Capacity Development, theme leaders recommended: mainstreaming capacity development into all levels of PA management and national governance systems; and supporting the vision of a world where institutions and individuals receive knowledge skills, and implement best practices to effectively manage and equitably govern all types of PAs, including territories governed by ILCs. The stream proposed a Capacity Development Road Map to provide directions for achieving the levels of capacity development required for effective management.

On the cross-cutting theme on a New Social Compact, representatives from Canada's First Nations and New Zealand Maori communities called for an honest reassessment of historical injustices in the name of conservation, and moving from fragmentation to integration, both "within and without."

In the discussions, participants said that: the WPC has enabled dialogues and networking; issues of economic growth were the "elephant in the room," and require more consideration; and investments in PAs need to reconcile needs of the environment and the people.

## WORLD LEADERS' DIALOGUES

**A Balancing Act: How the Global Appetite for Mineral Resources Defines the Fate of Protected Areas:** Introducing the session, moderator Thomas Friedman, New York Times, emphasized the need for a better understanding of the nature of economic and environmental trade-offs, noting that PAs are "not just big zoos," but represent engines of economic development.

Emmanuel de Merode, Chief Warden, Virunga National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo, contrasted the death toll from recent conflict with the possibility of providing many new jobs in natural resource-based sectors. He noted that park management had been "an island of stability" in the region.

Melissa George, Chair, Indigenous Advisory Committee, Australia, noted that while Australian Aboriginals have "a seat at the table" to negotiate benefit sharing from extraction activities, both the irreversibility of such activities and their cumulative impacts must be considered.

Anthony Hodge, President, International Council on Mining and Metals, asked how mining projects can be designed to ensure both human and ecosystem wellbeing, adding that, in many jurisdictions around the world, the responsibilities for managing the costs of risk are currently ill-defined.



Julia Marton-Lefèvre, IUCN Director-General



Melissa George, Chair, Indigenous Advisory Committee, Australia

Julia Marton-Lefevre, IUCN Director-General, highlighted that the costs of adequately managing a global network of PAs equal to only 2.5% of global military expenditure. Noting the role of parks and PAs in carbon storage, she said the issues of the Congress are closely linked to issues of climate change.

Hery Rajaonarimampianina, President of Madagascar, called for economic development to be framed by a long-term, sustainable approach, which includes consideration of human wellbeing. He highlighted the need for legal and regulatory frameworks, and for leaders and heads of government to ensure the compatibility of economic investment with safeguarding of the natural environment.

Robert Hill, former Minister for the Environment, Australia, said that adequately supporting PAs requires a balancing act, noting that it is easier for his country to place natural values ahead of economic gain, compared with developing countries.

Wang Wenbiao, CEO, Elion Resources Group, described his 30-year career in fighting desertification and land degradation in China. He said that, in his native region, re-afforestation and



Hery Rajaonarimampianina, President, Madagascar

restoration of ecosystems have raised incomes from US\$100 per capita annually in the 1980s to US\$5,000 today, and created 100,000 jobs, through replanting species suitable for cold and arid conditions, and plants used in traditional Chinese medicine.

In the discussion, participants noted: the difficulty of reconciling immediate benefits from minerals extraction with a commitment to future generations; the need to live more simply and reduce environmental impacts; and the value of conducting Strategic Environmental Assessments before commencing extractive projects.

Panelists' "take-away messages" included: the need for free, prior and informed consent with regard to minerals extraction projects; introduction of a strong "no-go" statement on conservation in the Promise of Sydney; focus on the SDGs in 2015; and the need for equitable, just and fair governance.



(L-R) Anthony Hodge, President, International Council for Mining and Metals; Melissa George, Chair, Indigenous Advisory Committee, Australia; Julia Marton-Lefèvre, IUCN Director-General; Hery Rajaonarimampianina, President, Madagascar; Robert Hill, former Minister for the Environment, Australia; Wang Wenbiao, CEO, Elion Resources Group; and Thomas Friedman, The New York Times

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