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External Review of IUCN 2011

Final Report

January 2012



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Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| AFD | Agence Française de Développement – French Agency for Development |
| Alianzas | IUCN-NORAD Framework Program Alliances Phase 1 and 2 |
| ARO | IUCN Asia Regional Office |
| CBD | Convention on Biodiversity |
| CEC | IUCN Commission on Education and Communication |
| CEESP | IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy |
| CEL | IUCN Commission on Environmental Law |
| CEM | IUCN Commission on Environmental Management |
| CHF | Swiss Francs |
| CITES | Convention on International Trade and Endangered Species |
| COP | Conference of Parties |
| CPA | Core Programme Area |
| CSG | Constituency Support Group |
| DANIDA | Danish International Development Agency |
| DG | Director General |
| DGIS | Directorate-General for International Cooperation, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| EC | European Commission |
| ELC | IUCN Environmental Law Centre |
| ERP | Enterprise Resources Planning |
| ESARO | IUCN Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office |
| FAC | Finance and Audit Committee |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GEF | Global Environment Fund |
| HQ | Headquarters |
| HR | Human Resources |
| HRM | Human Resources Management |
| IIED | International Institute for Environment and Development |
| IGAD | Intergovernmental Authority on Development |
| INGO | International Non-Governmental Organisation |
| IPCC | Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change |
| IUCN | International Union for Conservation of Nature |
| LFA | Logical Framework Analysis |
| LLS | Livelihood and Landscapes Strategy |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MFF | Mangroves for the Future Phases 1 and 2 |
| MIS | Management Information System |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NORAD | Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation |

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| NRC | National and Regional Committees |
| NRM | Natural Resource Management |
| ODA | from Overseas Development Assistance |
| OECD-DAC | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee |
| ORMA | IUCN Mesoamerica Regional Office |
| PACO | IUCN West and Central Africa Regional Office |
| PPC | Programme and Policy Committee |
| PRCM | Regional Conservation Programme for the Coastal and Marine Area of West Africa Phase 1 and 2 |
| RAMSAR | Convention on Wetlands |
| RBM | Results-Based Management |
| REDD | Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (Programme) |
| RofE | IUCN Regional Office for Europe |
| RT | Review Team |
| SC | Review Steering Committee |
| SDC | Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation |
| SIDA | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency |
| SSC | IUCN Species Survival Commission |
| SUR | IUCN Regional Office for South America |
| ToC | Theory of Change |
| TOR | Terms of Reference |
| TPA | Thematic Programme Area |
| TRAFFIC | The Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNFCCC | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |
| USP | Unique Selling Point |
| VP | Value Proposition |
| WANI | Water and Nature Initiative Phase 1 and 2 |
| WCC | World Conservation Congress |
| WCMC | World Conservation Monitoring Centre |
| WPCA | World Commission on Protected Areas |
| WWF | World Wildlife Fund |

Executive Summary

Introduction, Purpose and Method

This report presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the External Review of IUCN 2011. The evaluation was undertaken by a team from ITAD (www.itad.com), in partnership with Biodiversity International (www.biodiversity-int.co.uk), and was carried out between February and August 2011.

The **purpose** of the 2011 Review is defined in the TORs (p. 6) as:

- Re-affirm the value of IUCN, its organizational change pathway and innovations in the IUCN niche, value proposition and Programme;
- Provide IUCN's framework partners with a means to verify the relevance and effectiveness of IUCN as a means of delivering aid for conservation and improved livelihoods, enabling them to justify continued investment in IUCN; and,
- Identify priority areas for change within IUCN and in the relationship between IUCN and its framework-partners.

Based on our preliminary discussion with IUCN Secretariat staff, particularly the 2011 Review Steering Committee, and in the belief that 'form should follow function', we have reordered the sequence in which we address the **three Review objectives** in the report as follows:

- Objective 1 - IUCN Programme – niche, relevance and effectiveness
- Objective 2 - IUCN Progress since 2007 Review - organisational model
- Objective 3 - IUCN Implementation through Members and partners.

Each of the objectives is addressed in turn (Sections 2-4) detailing the critical issues and challenges, as well as findings and conclusions. Owing to the overlap and interconnected nature of the three main objectives, the report contains a separate **Conclusions, Recommendations and Future Directions section (Section 5)** which synthesises the conclusions into a set of priority recommendations.

The Review Team employed a **mixed-method approach** across all three objectives, utilising a broad range of qualitative data collection methods in order to ensure a robust, triangulated evidence-base. Specific tools and methods include:

- **Field visits** to IUCN operations in eleven countries (Switzerland, UK, USA, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, India, Thailand, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Mexico) to engage IUCN Secretariat staff and former staff, Members, Commission members, project partners, donors, and 'competitor' organisations through semi-structured topic-listed interviews, focus groups, and site visits;
- **Portfolio analysis:** desk review exercise of five prominent IUCN initiatives –Water and Nature Initiative Phase 1 and 2 (WANI), Livelihood and Landscapes Strategy (LLS), Mangroves for the Future Phases 1 and 2(MFF), Regional Conservation Programme for the Coastal and Marine Area of West Africa Phase 1 and 2 (PRCM), and Alliances Phase 1 and 2 (Alizanzas Solidarias para la Gestión Territorial Sostenible en Centroamerica);
- **IUCN Members web survey** sent out to 1,143 IUCN Members with a response rate of 29%;
- **IUCN Commissions web survey** sent out 10,143 Commission members across all six Commissions with a response rate of 27%; and,
- **Multiple visits to IUCN Secretariat HQ in Gland** to interview programme and operational staff, observe an IUCN Council meeting, IUCN Framework Donors meeting, and Senior Management Team meeting.

Interpreting and Using the Review

The Review Team set out to provide IUCN stakeholders, particularly senior IUCN management and IUCN's Framework Donors, with a **fair, rigorous, robust and transparent assessment of IUCN in 2011**. The findings, conclusions and recommendations are designed to be interpreted 'appreciatively'. In this respect, the report is written to address IUCN's long term strategic interest – to engage with and address first order issues related to IUCN's niche, purpose and role, rather than focus exclusively on second order issues of IUCN's progress since 2007. The aim of the report is not to undermine confidence in the Union but rather to challenge IUCN to bring about the sweeping change required to meet its niche as the global conservation Union. This is a valuable niche which IUCN is uniquely placed to fill.

Objective 1 - IUCN Programme – niche, relevance and effectiveness

Objective 1 looks at IUCN's niche, relevance and effectiveness. The Review Team assessed how the IUCN Programme is described and defined, the development of IUCN's theories of change as an aspect of programme planning that has the potential to help IUCN clarify its scope and method of working, IUCN's global framework of results and Value Proposition, and how IUCN has introduced reforms into its project activities.

This is the first time in the history of IUCN (over 60 years) that its niche, relevance and effectiveness have been subject to external scrutiny. A major finding is that the organisation does not have appropriate formal definitions, frameworks and indicators that performance can be evaluated against. Therefore, whilst it is clear that IUCN is producing results at a global level, the limited ability credibly and systematically to identify and claim these results is problematic both for IUCN and its wider stakeholder audience. This represents a missed opportunity for IUCN.

The life blood of IUCN for the past two decades has been projects funded by donors. Without this the large organisation would not be solvent. The bulk of information obtained by the Review Team comes from these. Unfortunately this distorts what the organisation is and could be. IUCN is more than its programme and its programme is more than just projects. By comparison, the global influencing work of IUCN is largely undocumented. Much of the time of the review has been taken up on how the three strands (Commissions, Members, and Secretariat) work on projects and how these projects support the work of IUCN. The most powerful inferences come not from what is within the project management sub-systems but what is absent in the overall facilitation of improved impact of the organisation as a whole.

The value of IUCN and its niche - The value of any organisation depends on "the value to whom". Members continue to pay subscription fees, and Commission members continue to provide voluntary services. Donors continue to fund work proposed and implemented by IUCN. However, there is very limited formal agreement or clarity about what IUCN's niche or unique attributes are. IUCN does have unique and valuable attributes. But these have yet to be characterised by the organisation in a manner that would convince donors and other funders in relation to core funding of the organisation as opposed to funding its projects. The Value Proposition, although useful in aligning the three strands does not show why IUCN should be funded relative to other organisations which can provide similar services – in other words, it fails to reflect its niche.

There is no analysis of IUCN's unique selling point in relation to competitors or any analysis of the global market. IUCN does have unique and valuable attributes but these have yet to be characterised by the organisation in a manner that would convince donors and other funders in relation to funding the organisation as opposed to supporting a project. The two unique attributes are:

- A long history of "achieving union" in relation to conservation (involving introduction of new partners, facilitating harmony through processes including assumption sharing and conflict resolution, and giving birth to funded agreements or new organisations). This is much more than convening.

- Special legal status in relation to the UN as observer and to perform certain tasks.

Verification of the relevance and effectiveness of the IUCN Programme – IUCN is producing results but in terms of identifying and claiming results is missing an opportunity. The Programme is generally relevant to global biodiversity and conservation priorities but there is less evidence of relevance with respect to IUCN’s niche and even less detail on relevance relative to defined beneficiary groups or stakeholders. Specifically:

- IUCN has yet to define a purpose for its programme with clear simple and verifiable indicators. Without this it is very difficult to assess if the programme has achieved its purpose, which results contributed most at what cost/benefit in relation to the purpose, or what results should be dropped or done by others. There are a number of documents which may help define IUCN’s purpose – these include the IUCN Constituency Act, Value Proposition, and Mission Statement;
- The Programme is generally relevant to global biodiversity and conservation priorities. However the Review found that there is less evidence of relevance relative to IUCN niche / USPs and less detail on relevance relative to specifically defined beneficiary groups or stakeholders;
- The breadth of IUCN’s influencing and capacity building activities across a range of partners is impressive, and there is evidence of innovation in many arenas of the programme such as how to measure wellbeing, and working at the landscape scale etc;
- IUCN has yet to define result indicators that would enable them to split those of high effectiveness with potential impact and sustainability, from others of less importance. That said, IUCN’s promising monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system is picking up results from the regions and connecting them to global results. Over 870 have been identified; IUCN does not have a system for distinguishing physical outputs from behavioural results which would help develop a theory of change for global policy actions or effects on the ground;
- Many significant IUCN results are not being recorded by the M&E system owing to resourcing and management priority issues. These relate to activities such as information dissemination, high level diplomatic actions (especially outside environment ministries), achieving union, funds generated through leverage, nurturing new organisations, education and training, joint ventures and accords, etc., unless they take place as part of a projectised activity. Many of these are occurring outside projects and or the Secretariat (e.g. at National and Regional Committee or Commission level);
- IUCN does not have an explicit Theory of Change with which to illustrate how IUCN activities produce outputs and outcomes which contribute to impact at the global level. Developing a Programme-level theory of change would help address issues of niche, relevance and effectiveness by placing IUCN within the change process the organisation aims to support and inform.

Organisational change with emphasis on the programme – **Despite the lack of a clear overarching objective,** IUCN has managed positive changes in:

- Aligning the three strands of the Union using a global results approach;
- Establishing an excellent project screening system;
- Attempting to collect project and programme results from all parts of IUCN, link them to the global results, and producing a synthesis report for donors and others;
- Attempting to integrate result monitoring with planning; and,
- Attempting to incorporate organisational results into framework agreements.

Objective 2 - IUCN Progress since 2007 Review – organisational review

Objective 2 requires the Review Team to examine progress since the 2007 Review on organisational issues, with a particular focus on three important themes:

- Whether the organisation's **structure and governance arrangements** support the achievement of the mandate and purpose effectively;
- Whether the key **corporate and support functions** are able to guide, support and oversee IUCN's activities to ensure that strategic objectives are met; and,
- Whether IUCN's current '**business model**' is appropriately defined, and confers long-term sustainability.

IUCN's structure and governance arrangements – It would appear from the Statutes that IUCN has drifted away from the original intentions of the founders of the Union. The Secretariat recognises this and has begun to redress the balance between the three strands of the Union through the One Programme approach.

However, progress in this regard has been slow and constrained as IUCN bears a heavy cost for the democratic processes enshrined in its Statutes, both financially, and in terms of loss of agility and sub-optimal roles played by Council, Council Committees, and individual Council Members. Council and its Committees fulfil a combined role of representation and advice, with some decision-making and oversight responsibilities. The size of the Council, and the nature of the membership, combined with the style of process adopted, makes it difficult for Council or its Committees to act as effective decision-making bodies. There is scope to build on the efforts already being made to improve the utility of committee processes to improve oversight, and focus deliberations at the appropriate strategic level. While changing the governance arrangements would be a very lengthy process, IUCN needs to give consideration to ways and means, within the current Statutes, of harnessing the power of Council and Congress more effectively in pursuit of the organisation's future strategy.

IUCN's structure and staffing are typical of knowledge and intellectual capital organisations, with large numbers of 'professional' staff expected to act autonomously within the disciplines of their professional expertise. However, with staff as the most important resource, and the major cost driver of IUCN, the organisation must consider the development of more strategic human resources management functions, particularly focusing on capacity development and performance management of Secretariat staff, and on controlling the organisation structure, staff numbers, and employment costs.

In terms of IUCN's position, the regionalisation strategy focuses entirely on expanding the number of locations which have a permanent Secretariat presence. It is not apparent that the actual distribution of IUCN offices achieves the objectives of the regionalisation strategy, as the number and relative size of offices would tend to support the hypothesis that new offices are opened opportunistically.

IUCN's corporate and support functions – There are very striking imbalances in the allocation of resources between some functions. Corporate functions which are critical to implementing selected 2007 Review recommendations are seriously under resourced, especially Fundraising and Strategic Partnerships, Programme Cycle Management, Knowledge Management and Learning, and Oversight. These functions should be prioritised as critical to the operational, financial and developmental performance of the organisation. IUCN is already working to strengthen other corporate functions and the anticipated impact of the Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP) on aspects of communications, knowledge management, financial and human resources management is very welcome. The ERP should be viewed as a tool to support these functions and not as a replacement for adequately funding the functions themselves. IUCN should consider repositioning the Human Resources Management Group to deliver strategic human resource services in addition to excellent

personnel administration, as at present. Credit is also due to the Finance Group for their efforts to reform financial management to comply with modern international expectations.

With minimal resources IUCN has been able to make good progress with several aspects of the results based management system. In particular, conceptual frameworks, guidance materials, project cycle management arrangements, and strategic evaluation have all been advanced since the last External Review recommended strengthening this area. However, as detailed under Objective 1, IUCN's organisational planning and M&E suffers from inherent constraints in the Strategic Planning Model, which lacks specific intermediate indicators to translate Global Results Areas into a meaningful framework to direct operations, and which does not reflect Value Proposition and One Programme activities, including Member engagement, convening and influencing activities. The challenge for IUCN to enhance the strategic planning process will involve at least three steps:

- First, to develop more SMART indicators which will help to translate the Global Results Areas into an intermediate strategic planning framework which can be used directly by programme planners;
- This will allow IUCN to refine the monitoring framework to enable reporting on strategic achievements (both programme areas and non-programme) objectively and quantitatively, while continuing to report at the operational level, as at present; and,
- Finally, following up on its commitment to Results Based Management which began in 2001, IUCN should commit to a simple time-bound plan for making the necessary changes, and allocate sufficient resources to complete the task so that strategic planning and monitoring arrangements are in place for the 2013-16 Programme.

IUCN's 'business model' - Review of IUCN's current financial position confirms IUCN's own analysis; that traditional funding sources (predominantly international donor agencies) are no longer reliable, and that new sources must be found. IUCN has initiated a number of measures to address financial sustainability in terms of developing new funding channels and seeking economy savings, and should renew and expand these efforts. However, IUCN appears to conceive the business model as another way of describing the thinking behind the Programme. A genuine 'business model' has a different purpose and focus. It should define the relationship between IUCN's Programme activities, the costs of delivery, and the sources of funds to pay for these. The Business Model is the tool that IUCN should use to examine and secure its organisational and operational sustainability. As such, it should define the necessary funding and income-earning bases to support the programme, and should ensure that IUCN undertakes only the optimal mix of activities which make a contribution to the Value Proposition.

The long term solution involves more fundamental and systematic examination and reform of the organisation's business mix, and the individual business models which comprise it. Actions fall into three categories:

- Systematic analysis of existing and new funding and income-earning opportunities in order to identify and pursue those which best match IUCN's niche and needs;
- A sustained and systematic focus on achieving efficiency savings, including business process reviews, and the introduction of internal time recording and service agreements and charges; and,
- A high level process of prior options reviews to identify and make strategic changes in the business mix, and individual component business models to secure IUCN's long term future.

Objective 3 - IUCN Implementation through Members, Commissions and partners

Objective 3 covers three core areas and, in discussion with the Steering Committee, was expanded during the Review inception to include Commissions as well as Members and partners:

- Progress in Member, Commission and partner engagement
- IUCN response to Member, Commission and partner demands
- Governance structures for Members, Commissions and partners

In terms of **progress in Member, Commission and partner engagement**, IUCN has focused its response in two areas since 2007:

- Restructuring and strengthening the Constituency Support Group (CSG), where considerable progress has been made shifting the focus from Membership administration to communications; and,
- Conducting the Membership Mapping exercise, which is only partially complete and progress has been slow.

A number of structures have been created to support the One Programme approach, notably the Network Approach.

IUCN has not updated its Membership Strategy since 2004. This means there is no up to date and explicit strategy/‘road map’ detailing IUCN’s membership needs (type, size, location, technical/sectoral expertise), nor plan of how IUCN intends to recruit new members to meet its needs.

Similarly, the Review Team is not aware of any strategy or policy for involving partners in programme formulation or implementation outside that of fundraising. In fact, the term ‘partner’ is interpreted broadly by IUCN, often to include any institution outside a Member.

In relation to Members’ National and Regional Committees (NRCs), relatively few actions have been taken by the Secretariat to better understand, define or strengthen NRC’s role in programme formulation and implementation. Given that NRCs are important instruments for involving Members, particularly in programme formulation and preparation for Congress, IUCN should commission a review of NRC best practice in order to learn lessons about the value of the role they play and how this can be better harnessed.

IUCN response to Member, Commission and partner demands – the findings of two surveys – Members and Commission members – generally convey positive perceptions about an organisation that has changed to meet new challenges. However, beyond improved communication from the Secretariat to Members and Commission members, perceptions of progress are not high for the following:

- Engaging Members and Commission members in the formulation of the Programme;
- Engaging with policy/law makers;
- Effective capacity development for Members; and,
- Staff and resources for strategic influencing.

Overall, there is a sense that IUCN is an organisation that does not realise its potential, and both Members and Commission members want to see a more effective use made of the unique feature of IUCN, its Union and Membership.

Evidence from interviews combined with the web survey results indicates that membership of an IUCN Commission is about networking and shared knowledge. It is not seen as a source of funding for experts, nor does it bring influence over policy or IUCN’s strategy. Experts join Commissions in their own right, not to engage with IUCN as a Union. How best to engage Commission members into the wider work of the Union requires further examination. The extent to which Commissions are ‘shallow’ in terms of the number and nature of active participants also requires further research.

Governance structures for Members, Commissions and partners – Overall, the Review Team found few, new and additional, or substantially revised governance structures directed specifically at

Members, Commission and partners. Some progress has been achieved by IUCN in defining and communicating the One Programme approach which, in essence, could be considered a new governance structure. Notably, IUCN should review the success of the Network Approach in order to learn lessons and, if findings are positive, should ensure the critical network functions – Network Coordinators and Membership Focal Points – are adequately resourced and scaled-up to engage Members and Commissions in implementation beyond communications.

IUCN has done the thinking. Now is the time to start doing – so that Members and Commissions see what delivering One Programme means in practice.

Overall Conclusions

Three broad conclusions emerge from the Review:

1) **IUCN is producing results at a global level.** IUCN's Programme is producing results. These results manifest themselves in different ways - IUCN is involved in a very wide range of activities leading to physical outputs of tools, conventions, standards, guidelines, as well as some higher order outcomes and impact in terms of improved physical and biological structure of habitats, landscapes and watersheds. However, credibly and systematically identifying these results can be problematic both for IUCN and its wider stakeholder audience. This represents a missed opportunity. Ultimately this stems from very limited agreement or clarity about what IUCN's niche, purpose and unique attributes are. This pivotal absence has held back the development of clear indicators of performance and has enabled a drift in the work of the Union in response to external factors. IUCN struggles to demonstrate effectiveness in a clear and convincing way above the level of individual projects despite the fact that much of the work of the Union is of high standard and is valued among scientists and policymakers.

2) **Some progress has been made towards all the 2007 Review objectives, but overall that progress has been slow and lacking in urgency.** The 2007 Review put forward a large number of detailed, technical recommendations designed to address how the three strands of the Union interact and to strengthen work planning, management and evaluation. The strongly technical nature of many of the recommendations has deflected attention from more strategic concerns, and the Secretariat has been slow to engage with either the Members or Commissions in the process of change.

3) **Although communications from the Secretariat have improved, little progress has been made in restoring and rebalancing the combined Union of Secretariat, Members and Commissions, in IUCN's strategy, planning and implementation.** As a vehicle for leveraging the capacities of IUCN's constituent parts, progress with the One Programme has tended to focus on formulation, commitment and communication rather than tangible and visible implementation.

In summary, IUCN as a Union is unique and valuable. It is producing results relevant to global biodiversity and conservation priorities. In order to maintain and enhance its contribution and safeguard its future, IUCN should dedicate appropriate resources and commitment to addressing the recommendations set out in the following section.

Recommendations and Future Directions

Detailed recommendations together with indicative timeframes and responsibilities are set out in Chapter 5. The recommendations should be interpreted positively by IUCN stakeholders, particularly senior Secretariat management and IUCN's Framework Donors. Taken together, the set of recommendations are designed to challenge IUCN to bring about the sweeping change required to fill its niche as the global conservation Union. This is an invaluable role which the IUCN is uniquely placed to undertake.

Overarching Recommendation

1 Critically assess and (re-) define IUCN's purpose –take progressive and decisive steps to re-discover its purpose, re-define its niche as the global conservation union, and re-configure the organisation to meet global challenges.

Subsidiary Recommendations

2 Instigate a critical external questioning of purpose and niche - commission an independent external analysis of global biodiversity and conservation trends in order to make transparent and independent proposals about where the Union best fits and has most to contribute within the field.

3 Interrogate the Value Proposition and develop a Union-wide Theory of Change - manage a Union-wide consultation process to revisit the Value Proposition in order to define a statement which is unique and of practical value to managers and stakeholders.

4 Develop an intermediate framework of SMART indicators - which will help to translate Global Results areas into a strategic plan which can be used directly to guide operations.

5 Define a sustainable IUCN business model – define a business model based on a systematic analysis of existing and new funding and income earning opportunities, high-level process of prior options reviews to identify any strategic changes in the business mix, and a sustained and systematic focus on achieving efficiency savings.

6 Simplify and strengthen management reporting – develop a logical reporting structure that meets Framework Donor reporting requirements and links Strategy (Quadrennial Programme) – Implementation (activities and corresponding budget lines) – Results (Annual Reports).

7 Combining recommendations 5 & 6 on the business model and management reporting - IUCN should consider the benefits of preparing specific budgets for Value Proposition and One Programme-unique activities, and also whether specific fundraising initiatives to cover the costs of some of these activities would be worthwhile.

8 Establish a smaller, more authoritative Committee of Council - explore establishing a Committee of Council, which is formally tasked to support and hold the Director General accountable.

9 Invest in the under-resourced core functions of fundraising, M&E, and knowledge management - continue to develop critical mechanisms for information sharing, coordination and alignment.

10 Re-position the human resources management function to address some of the strategic human resources issues - provide guidance on structure and job design; provide performance management support, and especially capacity building; provide control of establishments, and optimise staff costs through strategic initiatives such as localisation of posts.

11 Learn from the Network Approach - review the success of the Network Approach in order to learn lessons and, where findings are positive, ensure the critical network functions are adequately resourced and scaled-up.

12 Strategically address gaps in the Membership - identify gaps in the Membership according to the requirements of the 2013-2016 Programme and findings from the external analysis of purpose and niche, and start to address these gaps through a new Membership Strategy.

13 Contract an independent review of the six Commissions - to assess their relevance and fit to the IUCN Programme, their operation and management, and scale/ size.

14 Review the work of the National and Regional Committees – conduct an independent review best practice of National and Regional Committees in order to better understand their role and contribution to IUCN and how this can be unified into the IUCN Programme.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Executive Summary | i |
| Table of Contents | 1 |
| Table of Tables..... | 3 |
| 1 Introduction and Context..... | 4 |
| 1.1 Introduction | 4 |
| 1.2 Review Purpose and Objectives..... | 4 |
| 1.3 Structure of the Review Report | 6 |
| 1.4 Interpreting and Using the Review | 6 |
| 1.5 Methodology..... | 6 |
| 1.6 External Review Assumptions and Data Analysis | 10 |
| 1.7 IUCN Background | 10 |
| 2. Objective 1 - IUCN Programme – niche, relevance and effectiveness..... | 12 |
| 2.1 Introduction and Definitions..... | 12 |
| 2.2 IUCN and its Programme..... | 15 |
| 2.3 IUCN’s Niche..... | 19 |
| 2.4 Relevance Section | 25 |
| 2.5 Effectiveness | 40 |
| 2.6 Conclusions on Niche, Relevance and Effectiveness | 69 |
| 3. Objective 2 - IUCN Progress since 2007 Review – organisational review..... | 72 |
| 3.1 Overview of progress since last review | 73 |
| 3.2 Organizational structure and governance assessment..... | 77 |
| 3.3 IUCN Governance Arrangements..... | 79 |
| 3.4 Secretariat Staffing, Structure and Functions..... | 82 |
| 3.5 IUCN’s Strategic Planning Process | 92 |
| 3.6 Assessment of the financial position and the ‘business model’ | 95 |
| 3.7 Summary and conclusions | 104 |
| 4. Objective 3 - IUCN Implementation through Members, Commission members, and partners. | 106 |
| 4.1 Progress in Member, Commission and partner engagement..... | 106 |
| 4.2 IUCN response to Member, Commission and partner demands..... | 115 |
| 4.3 Governance structures for Members and Commissions | 122 |
| 4.4 Summary and Conclusions..... | 123 |
| 5. Overall Conclusions, Recommendations & Future Directions..... | 124 |
| 5.1 Overall Conclusions..... | 124 |

| | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 5.2 | Discussion..... | 125 |
| 5.3 | Recommendations and Future Directions | 127 |

Table of Tables

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 1 <i>Structure of objectives in the Terms of Reference</i> | 4 |
| Table 2 <i>IUCN External Review Evidence Base Checklist</i> | 8 |
| Table 3 <i>Assessment of Relevance (sensu DAC) in IUCN Programme documents</i> | 27 |
| Table 4 <i>Hypothetical Theories of Change</i> | 63 |
| Table 5 <i>Summary Overview of progress since the last review</i> | 73 |
| Table 6 <i>Geographic Distribution of Staff by Region and Type</i> | 82 |
| Table 7 <i>Geographic Gender Distribution</i> | 84 |
| Table 8 <i>Preliminary Budget for 2012</i> | 97 |
| Table 9 <i>Options for Increasing Revenue</i> | 101 |

1 Introduction and Context

1.1 Introduction

This report presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the External Review of IUCN 2011. The evaluation was undertaken by a team from ITAD (www.itad.com), in partnership with Biodiversity International (www.biodiversity-int.co.uk), and was carried out between February and August 2011.

1.2 Review Purpose and Objectives

The **purpose** of the 2011 Review is defined in the TORs (p. 6) as:

- Re-affirm the value of IUCN, its organizational change pathway and innovations in the IUCN niche, value proposition and Programme;
- Provide IUCN’s framework partners with a means to verify the relevance and effectiveness of IUCN as a means of delivering aid for conservation and improved livelihoods, enabling them to justify continued investment in IUCN; and,
- Identify priority areas for change within IUCN and in the relationship between IUCN and its framework-partners.

The objectives of the review as defined in the Terms of Reference (see Annex 1) and further elaborated on in the Review Inception Report are summarised in the Table 1. below:

Table 1 Structure of objectives in the Terms of Reference

| Review Structure as set out in the TORs | |
|---|---|
| COMPONENT | CONTENTS |
| 3 Specific Objectives | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Those concerned with issues of the progress of the IUCN organisational model. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specific points from the last review ○ Changes in strategies and programmes ○ General management ○ Internal and external communication ○ Planning, budgeting, implementation linked to MER ○ Programme M&E system ○ The effect of the current business model (restricted / unrestricted, cost recovery variance, diversity of income sources) on IUCN’s ability to optimise its organisational model with emphasis on (i) communications and interaction, (ii) value for money, (iii) performance in relation to aid effectiveness (Paris declaration) and value for money (VfM) 2. Those concerned with the niche, relevance and effectiveness of the IUCN programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Value of IUCN relative to other actors since the last review ○ Influence on decision makers ○ External strategic partnerships ○ Outreach to target groups ○ Delivery through regional offices (local and donor needs) ○ Responsiveness to needs of different donors 3. Those concerned with IUCN’s approach to implementation through membership and partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Membership and marketing strategy ○ Responsiveness to member demands ○ Conduciveness of current and proposed governance structures |

| Review Structure as set out in the TORs | |
|---|--|
| 3 Focus Areas as set out in the External Review Matrix | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progress since the last review 2. Niche, relevance and effectiveness of delivery 3. Membership engagement |
| External Review Matrix | Questions and Sub-Questions with suggested indicators and sources of data |

Based on our preliminary discussion with IUCN Secretariat staff, particularly the 2011 Review Steering Committee, and in the belief that 'form should follow function', we have reordered (renumbered) the sequence in which we address the three review objectives in the report as follows:

- Objective 1 - IUCN Programme – niche, relevance and effectiveness
- Objective 2 - IUCN Progress since 2007 Review - organisational model
- Objective 3 - IUCN Implementation through Members and partners

We believe that this order makes more sense to the reader as the definition of IUCN's niche, relevance and effectiveness ('its form') should inform its organisational model ('its function'), and the extent to which this has addressed this in light of the 2007 Review recommendations. The final section of the report deals with IUCN implementation through Members and partners, and based on discussions with IUCN during the inception phase, has been widened to include IUCN's Commission members.

Following discussion between the Review Team (RT) and the Review Steering Committee (SC) during inception a number of the review objectives were refined and reformulated as follows:

- Objective 1 - IUCN Programme – **niche, relevance and effectiveness**
- Objective 2 - IUCN Progress since 2007 Review – the tasks relating to IUCN's organisational model were reformulated as follows:
 - Assessment of the extent to which the **recommendations of the 2007 External Review** have been effectively implemented
 - Assessment of the **suitability of the organizational structure and governance** (including Council, Membership and Commissions) arrangements for the achievement of IUCN's mandate and purpose (important contribution to conclusions on objective 3 - Members engagement)
 - Assessment of the **strategic planning process** and suitability of strategic plan outputs to direct operations – is there a clear strategic direction which is reflected in operational plans?
 - Assessment of the **financial and human resources** current position, value for money and cost effectiveness and implications for organizational sustainability
 - Assessment of current **organizational management arrangements**, (including progress with implementing recommendations of the 2007 Review), especially information management, communications, knowledge management, and M&E
 - Identification of options for future / long-term **sustainability of the business model**
- Objective 3 - IUCN Implementation through Members and partners - cross-cuts Objectives 1 and 2 above has been used pull the various aspects of the review together by assessing IUCN's underlying purpose and mandate – **to engage IUCN's Members and partners in the planning and delivery of the IUCN Programme**. An agreement to also include the Commissions was added at inception, where evidence is available. It is beyond the scope of

the Review to assess and evaluate in detail the work of the Commissions. Hence a separate independent review of the Commissions is recommended to adequately assess their operation and contribution to IUCN.

1.3 Structure of the Review Report

Each of the objectives is addressed in turn by section (Sections 2-4) detailing the critical issues and challenges, as well as findings and conclusions. Due to the overlap and interconnected nature of the three main objectives the report contains a separate Conclusions, Recommendations and Future Directions section (Section 4) which pulls together each of conclusions and synthesises them into a set of priority recommendations.

1.4 Interpreting and Using the Review

The Review Team set out to provide IUCN stakeholders, particularly senior IUCN management and IUCN's Framework Donors, with a fair, rigorous, robust and transparent assessment of IUCN in 2011. The findings, conclusions and recommendations are designed to be interpreted 'appreciatively'. In this respect, the report is written to address IUCN's long term strategic interest – to engage with and address 1st order issues related to IUCN's niche, purpose and role rather than focus exclusively on 2nd order issues of IUCN's progress since 2007. The aim of the report is not to undermine confidence in the Union but rather to equip IUCN to bring about the sweeping change required to meet its niche as the global conservation Union. This is a valuable niche which the IUCN is uniquely placed to fill.

1.5 Methodology

The Review Team employed a mixed-method approach across all three objectives, utilising a broad range of primarily qualitative data collection methods in order to ensure a robust, triangulated evidence-base.

The evidence base upon which the Review Team have based the findings and recommendations is summarised in the Box below:

2011 Review Team Evidence Base

The data collection tools and methods employed by the review team include:

- Document review and analysis
- Secretariat HQ visit and observation
- Secretariat HQ staff interviews
- Senior Management Team meeting observation
- Finance and audit reports and accounts analysis
- HR system and reports analysis
- Regional and Country Office visit – Staff interviews
- Regional and Country Office visit – Members interviews
- Regional and Country Office visit – Commission members interviews
- Regional and Country Office visit – Partners interviews
- Donor meeting attendance
- Donor interviews
- Council meeting attendance
- Councillor interviews
- Councillor email survey
- Members web survey
- Commission members web survey
- Prominent project portfolio analysis
- National Committee of the Netherlands interview

Specific tools and methods which merit further detail include:

- Field visits to IUCN operations in eleven countries to engage IUCN Secretariat staff and former staff, Members, Commission members, project partners, donors, and ‘competitor’ organisations through semi-structured check-listed interviews, focus groups, and site visits to the following locations:
 - Switzerland – IUCN Secretariat HQ
 - UK - multiple
 - United States – IUCN HQ Outposted Office
 - Ghana – IUCN Project Office
 - Kenya – IUCN East and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO)
 - South Africa – IUCN Country Office
 - India – IUCN Country Office
 - Thailand – IUCN Asia Regional Office (ARO)
 - Costa Rica – Meso America Regional Office (ORMA)
 - Burkina Faso – West and Central Africa Regional Office (PACO)
 - Guatemala - IUCN Country Office
 - Mexico - IUCN Country Office
- Portfolio analysis / desk review exercise of five IUCN ‘flagship’ initiatives – See Annexes 9 and 10 for further details.
 - Water and Nature Initiative Phase 1 and 2 (WANI)
 - Livelihood and Landscapes Strategy (LLS)
 - Mangroves for the Future Phases 1 and 2 (MFF)
 - Regional Conservation Programme for the Coastal and Marine Area of West Africa Phase 1 and 2 (PRCM)
 - Alliances Phase 1 and 2 (Alianzas)
- IUCN Members web survey sent out to 1,143 IUCN Members with a response rate of 29% - See Annex 16 and 17 for further details.
- IUCN Commissions web survey sent out to 10,143 Commission members across all six Commissions with a response rate of 27% - See Annex 18 and 19 for further details.
- Multiple visits to IUCN Secretariat HQ in Gland to interview programme and operational staff, observe an IUCN Council meeting, IUCN Framework Donors meeting, and Senior Management Team meeting.

An overview of the evidence base produced by the Review Team is detailed below in Table 2.

Table 2 IUCN External Review Evidence Base Checklist

The table below provides an overview of the main data collection activities / deliverables that contribute to the external review evidence base. This includes: the proforma checklists used to standardise the data collection and write up from IUCN offices, members, partners and commission members engaged during the country visits; the desk-based project document reviews; web surveys for both Members and Commission members; as well as additional data collection activities such as an email survey of key Council members, face to face and telephone interviews; and, specific desk-based research products.

| | Desk-based | Central & West Africa | East & Southern Africa | | Central America | | | Asia | |
|--|--|--|---|--|-------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|
| ACTIVITIES / DELIVERABLES | UK | Ghana | Kenya | South Africa | Costa Rica | Guatemala | Mexico | India | Thailand |
| IUCN office proforma checklist | N.A. | DP & RG | UB & RG | RG | DP & AI | | | SN | |
| Members & Partners proforma checklist | Members web survey | DP & RG | RG & SN | RG | DP & AI | | | SN | |
| Commission members proforma checklist | Commission members web survey | RG & DP | SN | RG | DP & AI | | | SN | |
| Project reviews | Prominent Projects Desk Review: LLS WANI MFF PRCM Alianzas | Allanblackia – DP Cadburys Cocoa Partnership (CCP) – RG Pro-poor REDD - RG | Pangani River Basin Management Project (PRBMP) - SN | Greening Soweto – RG | | Tacana Project - AI | Cahoacan Project - AI | Ecosystems for life - SN | Livelihoods and Landscape Strategy (LLS) in Doi Mae Salong, Northern Thailand |
| Additional activities / deliverables | Simon Stuart – telephone interview – SN Achim Steiner – former DG - interview | | | Yolan Friedman – Council Member – interview - RG | ORMA clustering approach - AI | | | | |

| | Desk-based | Central & West Africa | East & Southern Africa | | Central America | | | Asia | |
|--|--|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|------|--|
| | - RG Sir Martin Holdgate – interview – SN | | | | | | | | |
| | Model Country Visit Plan – DP & RG | | | ESARO Member development strategy | ORMA progress on 2007 Recommendations – AI & DP | | | | |
| | Council Meeting Approach and email survey responses– RG & UB | | | | ORMA Portfolio analysis - AI | | | | |
| | Country Visit checklist template - DP | | | | | | | | |
| | 2007 Review Recommendations – Progress Update - RG | | | | | | | | |
| | The Geography of IUCN - SN | | | | | | | | |
| | Netherlands National Committee interview notes – DP | | | | | | | | |
| | IUCN Framework Donor Interview notes – Sida & Danida – DP | | | | | | | | |

DP – Derek Poate

RG – Robbie Gregorowski

SN – Steve Newman

UB – Ursula Blackshaw

AI – Alejandro Imbach

1.6 External Review Assumptions and Data Analysis

Analysis of a complex institutional evaluation such as IUCN is challenging, not least because the information gathered is very diverse, often intangible in nature, and of varying quality and robustness. To ensure a systematic approach that presents a logical sequence of findings, conclusions and recommendations, the RT handled this as follows:

- Process - The use of review checklists ensured systematic coverage of the questions, focus areas, and specific objectives. The strength of findings against each of these was interpreted according to the nature of the evidence and the triangulation of the finding.
- Weighting of evidence - As a general guide, evidence has been taken into consideration in the following way. Data such as staff numbers and financial expenditure are assumed to be factual. Secondary data from independent reviews and evaluations carried out in a professional way by organisations that subscribe to internationally-accepted quality standards, have been assumed to be of high probity. Next, in terms of weight ascribed, is information from routine administrative processes, surveys of IUCN Members and Commission members and formal IUCN documentation (manuals, policy documents, guidelines etc), with more credibility given where methodology is explained and is robust. Following this is evidence from the findings from the country visits and interviews with stakeholders, especially where supported by good documentary evidence.
- Strength of conclusions - Where there is stronger evidence, the conclusion drawn can be stronger. A simple example of this is that the RT is able to draw strong conclusions about IUCN finance and human resource (HR), systems and structures because there are clear objectives and benchmarks set for these elements, and the evidence is tangible and apparent. In contrast, conclusions about higher level outcomes such as the impact and influence of the IUCN Programme at a global level are much less firm because the evidence is less tangible, causation is complex, meaning that only estimates of contribution rather than direct attribution are possible.

The Review Team have made a small number of assumptions upon which to base the external review. These are:

- That the findings and recommendations of previous review – 2007 External Review – were accurate and provide a robust and reliable starting point against which to assess and measure IUCN's progress.
- That assumptions can be made about IUCN based on the contents of the set of key strategy, planning and policy documents produced by IUCN and held on the IUCN Knowledge Base.

1.7 IUCN Background

The following background to IUCN and the External Review is taken from the TOR (p. 4)

IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature was founded in 1948 as the world's first global environmental organization. It has more than 1,000 member organizations in 140 countries including 200+ government and 800+ non-government organizations. Today IUCN consists of the largest professional global conservation network, and is the leading authority on the environment and sustainable development with almost 11,000 voluntary scientists and experts, grouped in six Commissions. IUCN is a neutral forum for governments, NGOs, scientists, business and local communities to find pragmatic solutions to conservation and development challenges with thousands of field projects and activities around the world. IUCN is governed by a Council elected by member organizations every four years at the IUCN World Conservation Congress. The funding comes from governments, bilateral and multilateral agencies, foundations, member organizations and corporations. IUCN has an official Observer Status at the United Nations General Assembly.

External Reviews of IUCN have been undertaken since 1991 as a joint exercise of IUCN and its framework partners. A joint donor review takes place every four years prior to the Congress, and the final report is presented to the Congress for approval.

The External Review of 2007 identified the following main challenges for IUCN:

- IUCN's governance structure – everyone agrees that IUCN is a unique member organization. Although it is needed now more than ever, it is very unlikely that its bicameral governance structure could be created today. However, the relationships between its constituent parts - the membership, Commissions and Secretariat – are suboptimal. IUCN continues to operate without effectively engaging its membership and the Council is seen as a less effective a governing body than is needed. The Union must become once again more than the sum of its parts;*
- Growth and decentralization of the Secretariat – The rapid growth and decentralization of the Secretariat has led to problems in a collaboration and communication across functional units and regional offices. A smaller organization can rely on informal networking and still function quite well but an organization that operates from more than 60 locations and has more than 1000 staff needs strong organization-wide systems and processes. These include clear accountability for who does what and who informs whom. IUCN lacks sufficiently clear and consistent systems and processes to manage the Secretariat;*
- Financial resources – IUCN has achieved impressive results with available resources but its current financial model is weak and unsustainable. IUCN derives at least 85% of its income from Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) funding through a limited number of OECD countries and about 73% of its income is restricted to specific ODA funded projects. Only about 11% of income is unrestricted, including fees from its members;*
- External competition – IUCN lacks some of the fundamental tools such as an effective Management Information System (MIS) and networking models to remain competitive in a rapidly changing external environment. To some extent it needs to reinvent itself if it is to retain its leadership as the voice for Nature and sustainable use of natural resources.*

2. Objective 1 - IUCN Programme – niche, relevance and effectiveness

2.1 Introduction and Definitions

The report begins by assessing the niche, relevance and effectiveness of the IUCN Programme. The original formulation in the TOR is:

'To assess the continued niche, relevance and effectiveness of delivery of the IUCN Programme.'

The TORs define the programme as the scope by which to examine niche, relevance and effectiveness. Niche however covers both the organisation and the programme.

Following the introduction and a section on definitions, the chapter is structured as follows:

2.2 IUCN and its programme

- What is IUCN and what are its component parts?
- What form does its programme take?
- What are the implications of the programme for the Review?

2.3 Niche

- The evolution of IUCN's niche
- An analysis of the Constituency Act and Value Proposition relative to IUCN's niche

2.4 Relevance

- The definition of Programme relevance – Global Results, Framework Partners, Regional, Country and Project offices
- How is Programme relevance maintained?
- How is result relevance maintained?

2.5 Effectiveness

- An appreciative assessment of IUCN's contribution to achieving the Global Results
- An assessment of the Programme purpose based on a document analysis of key IUCN legal and programmatic documents including the Value Proposition.
- A discussion of how best to verify and improve the effectiveness of the Programme.

2.6 Conclusions on Niche, Relevance and Effectiveness

The analysis draws on the following key data sources:

2011 Review Team Evidence Base

The data collection tools and methods employed by the Review Team include:

- Document review and analysis
- IUCN Prominent Project desk analysis
- Secretariat HQ visit and observation
- Secretariat HQ staff interviews
- Senior Management Team meeting observation
- Regional and Country Office visit – Staff interviews
- Regional and Country Office visit – Members interviews

- Regional and Country Office visit – Commission members interviews
- Regional and Country Office visit – Partners interviews
- Donor meeting attendance
- Donor interviews
- IUCN Council meeting attendance

2.1.1 Review Definitions

The TOR do not provide definitions for niche, relevance, and effectiveness so it is critical that these are defined in advance. Official evaluation definitions are taken from the world’s largest donor, the European Commission (EC, 2004)¹ and the OECD/DAC (OECD, 2002)². Niche and Theory of Change (ToC) are not defined by DAC or other donor guides so an attempt has been made by the Review Team. The table below gives the definitions and also provides an illustration of how the terms could be used in the context of IUCN.

| Intervention Logic | |
|--------------------|---|
| Term | Definition, and illustration in the context of IUCN |
| Overall Objective | <p>The Overall Objective explains why the endeavour is important to society for instance in relation to long term aspiration to reduce poverty and or maintain global public goods.</p> <p>Sometimes known as a “goal” (DAC), this helps to show how the project/programme fits into the regional/sector policies of other government/organisations concerned. The Overall Objective will not be achieved by the programme alone (it will only provide a contribution), but will require the contributions of other programmes and projects as well.</p> |
| Programme Purpose | <p>A programme is a collective name for a collection of endeavours and projects with a clear end date and a clear source of funding. The programme purpose is a <u>clear</u> statement (often an agreement) of where the programme managers wish to be at the end date.</p> <p>Clarity is vital as it should be something that could be objectively verified by a third party.</p> |
| Result | <p>Results are the tangible products/services delivered as a consequence of implementing a set of Activities.</p> <p>IUCN has a range of results that it produces every day. These include “physical outputs” such as part of Global Result 1.2 which refers to IUCN standards, tools and knowledge for sustainable natural resource management are available, enhanced conventions and “behavioural results” such as company X adopts turtle protection measures. Global Result 2.2: Natural resource management policies and strategies to adapt to the impacts of climate change are adopted and implemented is an example of a “behavioural result”.</p> |
| Activity | <p>Activities are the actions that take place in order to achieve a result</p> <p>In IUCN there is a vast range of activities such as report writing, convening, training, analysing, monitoring, screening, transferring technology, standard setting, innovating, and negotiating etc</p> |
| Input | <p>Inputs are the physical and non-physical resources that are necessary to carry out the planned activities and manage the project.</p> <p>A distinction can be drawn between human resources (IUCN staff) and material resources (IUCN budget)</p> |

¹ EC 2004 Project Cycle Management Guidelines

² OECD 2002 Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management. Evaluation and Aid effectiveness report No6 produced by the DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation

| Evaluation Terms | |
|---|--|
| Term | Definition and illustration in the context of IUCN |
| Intervention logic | <p>The strategy underlying the project. It is the narrative description of the endeavour at each of the four levels of the (1) activity, (2) result, (3) programme purpose and (4) overall objective.</p> <p>This could help IUCN look at assumptions in more detail. What is IUCN assuming (often many assumptions) that makes them sure that (1) will lead to (2), (2) will lead to (3) and (3) will lead to (4)?</p> |
| Impact | <p>The contribution of the programme to a wider endeavour, in other words its contribution to the Overall Objective.</p> <p>IUCN and its programme have a “footprint” limited by time (the duration of the programme) and space: the global cover of the organisation (emphasis on special sites and not strong and influential everywhere due to history). It is also limited by constraints brought about through its governance structure as all organisations are.</p> |
| Relevance | <p>The appropriateness of project objectives to the real problems, needs and priorities of the intended target groups and beneficiaries that the project is supposed to address, and to the physical and policy environment within which it operates</p> <p>The Overall Objective could be important here if it showed policy windows and or new opportunities relevant to biodiversity conservation. Framework partners have a responsibility here to inform IUCN about relevant policies or global situation analyses emanating from their governments. IUCN could consider relevance of Programme Purpose and relevance of Results</p> |
| Effectiveness | <p>The contribution made by the project’s results to the achievement of the project purpose.</p> <p>In IUCN’s case have the global results been achieved? Which one has made the greatest contribution to the conservation of nature and its links with humanity? For financial effectiveness analysis; what was the most cost effective result? Was an “unexpected result” the most effective? e.g. achieving synergy between environment line ministries and defence/security agencies.</p> |
| Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVI) | <p>Measurable indicators that will show whether or not objectives have been achieved at the three highest levels of the logframe. OVIs provide the basis for designing an appropriate systems for monitoring and evaluation</p> <p>IUCN is familiar with the term indicators</p> |

| Organisational development and management terms | |
|---|---|
| Term | Definition and illustration in the context of IUCN |
| Niche | <p>The niche of IUCN explains its position with the global biodiversity community and how IUCN’s work (the programme) fits into and also sets it apart from the work of other agencies involved with biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>Some donors and experts thought that IUCN’s niche was as an actor setting standards and achieving union in relation to judicious biodiversity conventions and actions. Many thought that this was its unique selling point (USP). Some argued implementation of donor funded projects should not be its niche. A very focused Programme Purpose could help to resolve this in future.</p> |
| Theory of Change | <p>A statement on how limited actions on the ground can achieve higher level ambitions in policy or social change etc</p> <p>In IUCN it is clear that it collects evidence and produces convention drafts and standards etc with a view to limiting injudicious behaviour in relation to the management of nature. A theory of change would show</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | from where the process starts, what the steps are and when the process stops. For instance does IUCN (1) stop when it influences and trusts others or (2) does not rest until changes occur on the ground before the end of a given programme period. |
|--|---|

2.2 IUCN and its Programme

2.2.1 IUCN Overview

IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges.

IUCN works on biodiversity, climate change, energy, human livelihoods and greening the world economy by supporting scientific research, managing field projects all over the world, and bringing governments, NGOs, the UN and the private sector together to develop policy, laws and best practice.

IUCN is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organization, with more than 1,200 government and NGO members and almost 11,000 volunteer experts in some 160 countries. IUCN's work is supported by over 1,000 staff in 45 offices and hundreds of partners in public, NGO and private sectors around the world. It has the following features:

- Founded in 1948 as the world's first global environmental organization;
- Today the largest professional global conservation network;
- Considered to be a leading authority on the environment and sustainable development;
- More than 1,000 Member organizations in 140 countries including 200+ government and 800+ non-government organizations;
- Almost 11,000 voluntary scientists and experts, grouped in six Commissions;
- A neutral forum for governments, NGOs, scientists, business and local communities to find pragmatic solutions to conservation and development challenges;
- Thousands of field projects and activities around the world;
- Governance by a Council elected by Member organizations every four years at the IUCN World Conservation Congress;
- Funded by governments, bilateral and multilateral agencies, foundations, Member organizations and corporations; and,
- Official Observer Status at the United Nations General Assembly.

2.2.2 What does IUCN do?

According to the IUCN website:³

Knowledge: IUCN develops and supports cutting-edge conservation science, particularly on biodiversity and ecosystems and how they link to human wellbeing.

Action: IUCN runs thousands of field projects around the world to better manage natural environments.

Influence: IUCN supports governments, NGOs, international conventions, UN organizations, companies and communities to develop laws, policy and best-practice.

³ <http://www.iucn.org/about/>

Empowerment: IUCN helps implement laws, policy and best-practice by mobilizing organizations, providing resources and training, and monitoring results.

2.2.3 Why does the world need IUCN?

The IUCN website suggests the following:

- To help balance the needs of people with the needs of the planet that supports us.
- Nature, directly or indirectly, provides our clean air, food, water, shelter, energy, soil, medicines and protection from natural disasters, as well as recreation, inspiration, diversity and beauty.
- To help reduce poverty and improve people's lives, and this has a great bearing on nature.
- To help with judicious decisions, based on sound science rather than political dogma, and involve all the sectors of society who are affected by those decisions.

For 60 years, IUCN has led the development of conservation science and knowledge, and brought together governments, NGOs, scientists, companies and community organizations to help the world make better decisions about conservation and development.

2.2.4 The six Commissions

The six Commissions unite 10,000 volunteer experts from a range of disciplines. They assess the state of the world's natural resources and provide the Union with sound know-how and policy advice on conservation issues.

Commission on Education and Communication (CEC)

CEC drives change for the co-creation of sustainable solutions through leading communication, learning and knowledge management in IUCN and the wider conservation community. Members: 850.

Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP)

CEESP provides expertise and policy advice on economic and social factors for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. Members: 1000.

Commission on Environmental Law (CEL)

CEL advances environmental law by developing new legal concepts and instruments, and by building the capacity of societies to employ environmental law for conservation and sustainable development. Members: 800.

Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM)

CEM provides expert guidance on integrated ecosystem approaches to the management of natural and modified ecosystems. Members: 400.

Species Survival Commission (SSC)

SSC advises the Union on the technical aspects of species conservation and mobilizes action for those species that are threatened with extinction. Members: 7500.

World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)

WCPA promotes the establishment and effective management of a worldwide representative network of terrestrial and marine protected areas. Members: 1300.

2.2.5 IUCN Programmes

The IUCN Programme 2009-12, provides the framework for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the conservation work undertaken by the Union with and on behalf of IUCN Members. It

is discussed and approved by Member organizations every four years at IUCN’s World Conservation Congress.

IUCN's Global Programme, with its five priority areas of work, is implemented by individual ecosystem or theme-based programmes:

- Business and biodiversity
- Economics
- Ecosystem Management
- Environmental Law
- Forest
- Gender
- Global Policy
- Marine and Polar
- Protected areas
- Science and Learning
- Species
- TRAFFIC
- Water
- World heritage

The Global Thematic Programme is also underpinned by regional programmes and commission programmes and aims to produce 10 ‘results’. The table below sets out the Programme and Results Areas.

| Programme Area | Result |
|---|---|
| Core Programme Area - Conserving biodiversity | Global Result 1.1: Biodiversity-related policies and governance systems enable action towards the achievement of biodiversity conservation. |
| | Global Result 1.2: IUCN standards, tools and knowledge for sustainable natural resource management are available and actions are taken for biodiversity conservation including effective management of global and regional common natural resources. |
| Thematic Area 2 – Changing the Climate Forecast | Global Result 2.1: Climate change mitigation and adaptation policies and practice include biodiversity concerns from local to global level. |
| | Global Result 2.2: Natural resource management policies and strategies to adapt to the impacts of climate change are adopted and implemented. |
| Thematic Area 3 – Naturally Energising The Future | Global Result 3.1: Energy policies and strategies mitigate the impact of the growing energy demand on biodiversity. |
| | Global Result 3.2: Ecosystem services that underpin sustainable and equitable energy are incorporated in energy policies and strategies. |
| Thematic Area 4 – Managing Ecosystem for Human Wellbeing | Global Result 4.1: Development policies and strategies support vulnerable and poor stakeholders, especially women, to sustainably manage ecosystems for improved livelihoods. |
| | Global Result 4.2: Sustainable environmental management reduces |

| Programme Area | Result |
|---|---|
| | vulnerability to natural hazards and conflicts. |
| Thematic Area 5 – Greening The World Economy | Global Result 5.1: Economic, trade and investment policies better integrate biodiversity values. |
| | Global Result 5.2: Companies, industry associations and consumer groups incorporate ecosystem values into planning and action. |

2.2.6 IUCN Activities and Physical Outputs

In order to provide a flavour of IUCN’s activities and outputs, we have summarised a PowerPoint presentation provided to IUCN’s Framework Partners in June 2011 which summarises IUCN’s key activities and outputs under each Global Result area for the current programme.⁴ The table below provides a summary of these activities and outputs.

| Global Results Area | Outputs |
|--|---|
| Global Result 1.1: Biodiversity-related policies and governance systems enable action towards the achievement of biodiversity conservation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBD and CITES support • World heritage screening |
| Global Result 1.2: IUCN standards, tools and knowledge for sustainable natural resource management are available and actions are taken for biodiversity conservation including effective management of global and regional common natural resources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publications in Nature and Science • Red list • Database and best practice for protected areas • Governance tool |
| Global Result 2.1: Climate change mitigation and adaptation policies and practice include biodiversity concerns from local to global level. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REDD+ innovations • Pilot testing of REDD+ ideas • Gender sensitisation of the REDD+ process |
| Global Result 2.2: Natural resource management policies and strategies to adapt to the impacts of climate change are adopted and implemented. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools and models |
| Global Result 3.1: Energy policies and strategies mitigate the impact of the growing energy demand on biodiversity. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving biofuels policy and practice • Warnings on oil production aspects on environment and governance |
| Global Result 3.2: Ecosystem services that underpin sustainable and equitable energy are incorporated in energy policies and strategies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensible considerations of energy at the landscape scale |
| Global Result 4.1: Development policies and strategies support vulnerable and poor stakeholders, especially | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved watersheds and coastlines • Empowerment of women |

⁴ Moiseev, A., Smart, J. Maginnis, S. 2011a. Report on the Implementation of the IUCN Programme 2009-2010. PowerPoint presentation to IUCN’s Framework Partners. June 2011

| Global Results Area | Outputs |
|--|--|
| women, to sustainably manage ecosystems for improved livelihoods. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicators for measuring wellbeing |
| Global Result 4.2: Sustainable environmental management reduces vulnerability to natural hazards and conflicts. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved establishment and protection of mangroves Strategies for disaster reduction |
| Global Result 5.1: Economic, trade and investment policies better integrate biodiversity values. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributions to the TEEB Study |
| Global Result 5.2: Companies, industry associations and consumer groups incorporate ecosystem values into planning and action. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less environmental damage from cement manufacture Less environmental damage from the oil sector |

Drawing on the presentation and supported by the Review Team’s activities, it is possible to identify the following key issues relating to the programme which shaped the nature of the review and are further discussed in the sections on niche, relevance and effectiveness:

- IUCN is producing results a global level;
- These results manifest themselves in different ways - IUCN is involved in a very wide range of activities leading to physical outputs of tools, conventions, standards, guidelines as well as higher order outcomes and impact in terms of improved physical and biological structure of habitats and landscapes and water sheds;
- In terms of outputs, over 400 publications have been produced, which include some in those known as ‘high impact’ journals such as Nature and Science. Assessing and quantifying the impact of these outputs is challenging;
- The breadth of IUCN’s influencing and capacity building activities across a range of partners is impressive;
- There is evidence of innovation in many arenas of the programme such as how to measure wellbeing, and working at the landscape scale etc.
- The IUCN monitoring and evaluation system is picking up results from the regions and connecting them to global results. Over 870 have been identified;
- Results indicators at the outcome and purpose level are yet to be fully defined;
- IUCN does not have an explicit Theory of Change with which to illustrate how IUCN activities produce outputs, outcomes and ultimately impact at the global level;
- Similarly, IUCN does not have a clearly defined and shared purpose statement together with a concise set of objectives which define the purpose. There are a number of documents which may help define IUCN’s purpose – these include the IUCN Constituency Act, Value Proposition, and Mission Statement.

2.3 Niche

2.3.1 Introduction and the Evolution of IUCN’s Niche

This section sets out to determine IUCN’s niche based on an analysis of key IUCN policy documents and concludes with a discussion of the potential missed opportunities of IUCN not defining its niche

more precisely.

As set out in the definitions, niche is not an evaluative term. The term 'Niche' is defined in the areas of commerce by the Oxford Shorter English Dictionary (2002) as:

"A position from which an opening in the market can be exploited."

This infers that niche is related to the concept of a marketplace where demands for goods and services are met by providers. In organisational terms it is dynamic and not fixed.

IUCN as an organisation operates within the world of "biodiversity conservation and nature based solutions to human development". Its programme should support and protect its niche within this. Its niche relies to some extent on reputation and carrying out a role effectively.

In the context of IUCN as an organisation, it is important to ask what conservation function is needed by global society and question how IUCN is positioned to deliver that role. In order to understand uniqueness it is important to identify IUCN's services alongside services offered by others.

The definition of Niche provided by IUCN in the 2009-2010 Strategy Document, (Moving Toward a 2020 vision for IUCN), is given as follows:

"IUCN provides the knowledge-based platform to connect practice to policy at global and local levels and to influence decisions and actions about the sustainability of the Earth and its people."

There are a number of problems with this definition. Firstly it is not unique. The worldwide web also provided this platform. Secondly it is animate and not merely a passive platform. In the view of the Review Team IUCN's uniqueness comes from its 'Union'. IUCN can bring together disparate elements to achieve a joint endeavour. This is a genuine 'craft' requiring facilitation and negotiation skills. The craft is based on experience developed since 1947 and is the antithesis of adopting an immutable position. No other conservation organisation can boast that it has this period of experience. IUCN through its unique Membership and Constitution can also boast access to an incredible and unique social capital (contacts and reach) at all levels in society. These contacts enhance the gravitas and persona of the organisation.

There were many examples of this that came out of the Review field assessment.

In Kenya (ESARO):

- Ministers and support staff had invited IUCN to get involved in relation to key land use issues as part of the development of the new constitution.

In India:

- The office has been asked by the Ministry of Environment and Forest to host the next CBD COP.

In Mesoamerica:

- IUCN was chosen as a founding partner for the Central American Commission on Environment and Development, and initiatives such as the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor

2.3.2 Can the Constituency Act inform IUCN's niche?

The Constituency Act (IUCN 1948) defines a 'purpose' for the Union based on three objects stating that the Union shall:

1. Encourage and facilitate cooperation between governments, national and international organisations concerned with, and persons interested in the protection of nature.
2. Promote and recommend national and international action in respect to:

- The preservation in all parts of the world of wild life and the natural environment, soils, water, forests, including the protection and preservation of areas, objects and fauna having scientific, historic, or aesthetic significance by appropriate legislation such as the establishment of national parks, nature reserves and monuments and wild life refuges, with special regard to the preservation of species threatened with extinction;
 - The spread of public knowledge about protection of nature;
 - The promotion of an extensive programme of education in the field of the protection of nature;
 - The preparation of an extensive programme of education in the field of protection of nature;
 - The preparation of international draft agreements and a world-wide convention for the protection of nature; and
 - Scientific research relating to the protection of nature.
3. Collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information about the protection of nature. It shall distribute to government and national and international organisations, documents, legislative texts, scientific studies and information concerning the protection of nature.

These can be expressed in terms of a set of results related to:

1. Effective and sustainable relationships (friendships/union) achieved through diplomatic action;
2. Effective action identified and adopted by officers and officials at local, national, or global level through use of knowledge products such as laws, policy/procedural drafts, and research linked materials such as tools, methods, approaches and data; and
3. Effective behaviour adopted by citizens achieved through educational actions based on interpretive/educational materials, including syllabi.

Analysis elsewhere in this report raises the question whether the organisation has recently overlooked its role and strengths in areas 1 and 3 in the rush to obtain donor funded development projects.

The term 'effective' only has meaning in the light of a purpose, which is hinted at by the phrase:

“The preservation in all parts of the world of wild life and the natural environment, soils, water, forests, including the protection and preservation of areas, objects and fauna having scientific, historic, or aesthetic significance by appropriate legislation such as the establishment of national parks, nature reserves and monuments and wild life refuges, with special regard to the preservation of species threatened with extinction”

In terms of global presence, the 1948 Constituency Act was endorsed by eighteen donor governments.⁵ At this time, IUCN was not a global organisation with an equal level of reach and influence in all countries. Even today it still does not have this. For instance, IUCN does not have powerful programmes and offices in Indonesia and the Congo Basin, two areas at the centre of “saving the rain forest for the sake of global climate”. Similarly, Thailand still does not have a legally constituted office and the India office was only established recently. The field visits identified that

⁵ Europe: France, Norway, Netherlands, Switzerland, Belgium, Austria, Poland, Italy, Luxemburg; Americas: Argentina, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Panama, Venezuela; Asia, Thailand, India; Middle East: Egypt, Syria.

the geographical development of IUCN has been incremental and opportunistic rather than strategic (e.g. based on working in the most influential countries in a region or in those countries with the most functionally important species and ecosystems for global benefit).

At this time in IUCN's history it was acknowledged that research was vital along with education of the public. Areas within Countries and regions were the focus. The level of the planet was not considered. The idea of Union was both vital and central. New or strengthened laws, methods and tools would be key outputs.

Therefore, in terms of niche based on the Constituency it can be inferred that IUCN was seen as

“A trusted (scientific case) independent (non-aligned) actor facilitating actions on the ground by assisting others through capacity building and advisory services.”

The major implication of this analysis is that IUCN was not conceived as (project) implementer. This raises a key question for IUCN today: Does IUCN niche relate to implementation of conversation activities? And, does IUCN need to be an implementer to obtain evidence in order to make recommendations?

2.3.3 IUCN's Value Proposition

The Value Proposition can be seen as an attempt to update and further define and enhance IUCN's niche or role within the biodiversity conservation community.

| IUCN Value Proposition | |
|--|---|
| Taken from the 'IUCN Programme 2009-2012, Shaping a sustainable future' document, IUCN's Value Proposition is: | |
| 1 | Providing credible and trusted knowledge; |
| 2 | Convening and building partnerships for action; |
| 3 | IUCN has local to global and global to local reach; |
| 4 | IUCN influences standards and practices. |

The Value Proposition was developed in the 2009-12 Programme document and tries to draw together the elements of IUCN's work in a concise way that conveys IUCN's key characteristics. The statements go to the heart of what IUCN stakeholders feel the organisation should be doing – generating new knowledge, engaging in partnerships, and bringing about positive influence related to biodiversity conversation. Despite containing elements of IUCN's potential niche, the Review Team believes that the statement is inadequate as a statement of IUCN's niche because:

- The statements are not unique to IUCN – many other organisations have similar aspirations relating to knowledge, partnership and influence;
- The statement is not comprehensive in terms of defining the scope, reach, and key operations/ actions of the organisation as discussed under the Constituency Act – should IUCN operate as an implementer?; and
- The Value Proposition statements do not seem to be widely shared by all constituents of the Union, particularly some Membership and Commissions.

The web surveys of Members and Commission members questioned their familiarity with IUCN's current plans and objectives. In relation to the Value Proposition, the findings showed that:

- Significant minorities of the INGO and NGO Members are not familiar with the Programme;

disagree over the Value Proposition; and do not share the view that IUCN has a clear purpose with indicators;

- A quarter of all Members and a staggering 44% of Commission members (with the highest proportions among the CEESP, CEL and SSC) don't know about the Value Proposition.

In spite of the Value Proposition inadequately defining IUCN's niche, it is potentially useful as a convening or alignment tool across the Union with further communication and discussion. Its statements also relate to key elements of programme M&E that IUCN will need to be able to validate in order demonstrate effectiveness as an organisation. For example, the Value Proposition may be a logical starting point in order to develop indicators which help IUCN to credibly answer:

- How does IUCN monitor the quality and extent of influence?
- How does IUCN evaluate the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of any influence?
- How does IUCN monitor the quality and extent of partnerships?
- How does IUCN evaluate the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of partnership

2.3.4 Updating IUCN's niche with reference to emerging opportunities

IUCN and others are now working at the landscape scale. This can include multiple national and international ecosystems and / or community-level such as villages. The Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) is working on the concept of 'sentinel landscapes' in order to act as reference monitoring sites for solutions of global importance. It would appear that IUCN could use a fixed number of reference monitor sites including "sentinel landscapes" to demonstrate on the efficacy of policies tools and approaches. This concept would further define IUCN's niche as:

'A trusted (scientific case) independent (non-aligned) actor facilitating actions on the ground by assisting others through capacity building and advisory services.'

A role for IUCN as a global monitor of reference (special) sites may be attractive to governments, large wildlife NGOs, and philanthropic donors. Potential proposals that may enable IUCN to claim this niche include:

- Supporting 'neighbouring nations' to request 1% of defence funds for "peace and nature trans-boundary landscapes" to be brokered, monitored and managed by IUCN;
- Approaching large NGOs (e.g. WWF) ask for 1% of their operating budgets to cover the monitoring of sentinel biodiversity sites; and
- Working with philanthropic donors to develop "endowed earth and nature landscape laboratories that can carry their name".

Beyond a niche role in the monitoring of sentinel landscapes, there is currently an empty niche in terms of monitoring the UN's environmental performance. IUCN do not appear to have used the status of being an observer to the full in this regard. This line of thinking, if continued, leads to the idea of a wider standards / conservation monitoring or guardianship role for IUCN:

- Relevance, impact and effectiveness of conservation and natural resources linked endeavours defined and improved by the provision of *monitoring and evaluation services*. (Note IUCN performs this functional already by such services as the screening of world heritage applications for UNESCO.)
- Relevance, impact and effectiveness of conservation and natural resources linked endeavours defined and improved by facilitating the *creation* of new self-sustaining bodies, instruments, and organisations. An underexploited example here is to ask what strategic

and franchise/licensing lessons has IUCN learned from its role as instigator in the creation of WWF, IIED, UNEP-WCMC etc.

2.3.5 Key findings on IUCN's niche

Based on the above analysis, The Constituency Act appears to be a more useful starting point for updating and enhancing of IUCN's niche than the Value Proposition, which relates more to IUCN's outcome and impact aspirations. The Constituency Act illustrates the original rationale behind IUCN, much of which still holds today. The Value Proposition presents the outcomes and impact IUCN hopes to achieve within the field of biodiversity conservation. Bringing these together with current opportunities derives a possible IUCN niche as follows:

'A trusted (scientific case) independent (non-aligned) actor facilitating actions on the ground by assisting others (including policy makers) through capacity building and advisory services.'

This is empowering for IUCN in that:

- It recognises that others may be better placed to generate the data, evidence and new knowledge, that underpin the global biodiversity conservation agenda, and that IUCN's niche is to facilitate the advance of the agenda through capacity building, partnership, and influencing.
- The extent to which IUCN can separate implementation ('practice') from capacity building, partnership and influencing ('policy') requires further consideration from IUCN.
- Ultimately, only IUCN can define its niche, based on clear buy-in from its Union of stakeholders. A global situation analysis (beyond that conducted in programme preparation the level of individual global results areas), assessing what other major stakeholders (essentially IUCN's 'competitors') are doing may help clarify IUCN's strengths / unique selling points as well as where the field is crowded with better placed institutions.
- Thinking about what others are doing will help refine and define a programme purpose supported by relevant indicators and an institution-level theory of change (discussed later in this report).
- A programme purpose for IUCN derived from the above could be:
'At least X partners/clients are satisfied that IUCN has credibly contributed to achieve desired specified attribute targets for the management of special areas as national or international level by date Y.'

2.4 Relevance

2.4.1 Introduction

The previous section on niche helped to outline the role of IUCN in addressing global priorities in biodiversity conservation linked to human well being. In a business sense this relates to an organisation's assets or unique selling points (USPs) or what an organisation can bring to the 'market'. Relevance is directly related to marketing i.e. finding out what the market wants. This is a sophisticated form of situation analysis, requiring special resources, as can be inferred from the DAC (OECD, 2002) definition below, repeated here owing to its pivotal importance in the analysis:

"The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies."

The development intervention in question is the IUCN programme. The objectives in question are the global results. The key questions in the analysis therefore are:

- (1) Is there a clear description of the beneficiaries?
- (2) Are the needs (voices) of the specified beneficiaries clearly articulated and differentiated?
- (3) Are the biodiversity conservation and wellbeing needs clearly stated in a way that can be functionally grouped at a global level e.g. a matrix of countries have signed up to a key global policy such as the CBD and Human Development Index category etc?
- (4) Are the global environmental needs clearly stated through environmental analysis?
- (5) Are the global human wellbeing/resilience needs clearly stated through a reliance/vulnerability/gender differentiated situation analysis?
- (6) Are the framework partners (and other key potential donors) needs adequately characterised in a way that reflects policy and the aspirations of the tax payer?

The first tier of relevance analysis relates to design through a document review of the current programme document, "Shaping a sustainable future 2009-12". The draft IUCN Programme 2013-2016 "Nature+" (Draft for consultation, May 2011) is then appraised in order to assess the nature of any improvements or remaining deficiencies. The second tier of analysis is based upon the field visits to regional, country and project offices. The third tier of analysis relates to a review of a small sample of projects assessed during the field visits.

2.4.2 IUCN Programme documents - 2009-12 and 2013-16

The programme does not have a clearly stated purpose, so the relevance analysis is done in two stages. Firstly to see if the whole programme is relevant based on any kind of general situation analysis in the general introduction. Secondly, to assess relevance at the level of each global result through a brief textual analysis of the associated text. The analysis follows DAC rigor in order to bring out key issues for deeper discussion by IUCN and the framework partners. A balancing section 2.4.3 will identify special relevance constraints for IUCN which will also need to be discussed.

In some cases it may be important to identify issues of clarity and realism. As the review is a joint endeavour between IUCN and the Framework Partners, the following question is important: "Are the Framework Partners' (and other key potential donors') needs adequately characterised in a way that reflects their policy and in some cases the aspirations of the tax payer? In today's economic climate donors have to demonstrate value for money to the tax payer.

Table 3 overleaf sets out the findings on the quality of the situation analysis at the whole programme level in the two programme documents. In many respects the 2009-12 Programme document has a broader coverage of relevance issues. However, although less detail is given in the 2013-16 draft it is overall judged to be an improved document because reference to the Aichi

biodiversity targets provide a framework against which relevance can be assessed and if indicators are developed, measured.

Table 3 Assessment of Relevance (sensu DAC) in IUCN Programme documents

| Question reflecting best practice | Shaping a sustainable future 2009-12” | Draft IUCN Programme 2013-2016 Nature+ |
|---|---|--|
| 1a Is there a clear description of the beneficiaries? | Yes to some extent. It can be implied that beneficiaries are “global citizens who buy into the concept of wellbeing outlined in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA)” | Less detail than previous programme |
| 1b Are the needs (voices) of the specified beneficiaries clearly articulated and differentiated? | Yes to a limited extent It is hinted that the aspirations and effects of citizens may be different depending on where their country sits in a scale of economic performance | Less detail than previous programme |
| 2. Are the country needs (conservation biodiversity and wellbeing) clearly stated in a way that can be functionally grouped at a global level e.g. a matrix of Countries have signed up to a key global policy e.g. CBD and Human development Index category etc? | Yes to a limited extent. Heterogeneity is acknowledged in terms of gender differences and the special needs of traditional societies. The special problems of sub-Saharan Africa are recognised along with the importance of cultural values in different countries. The special characteristics of emerging economies China Brazil India and South Africa are mentioned. There is no mention of the difference in national environmental policy quality across the globe or national environmental action in relation to national/international policy. This maybe an organisational constraint as analysed by MacDonald in: http://perso.cpd.rug.ac.be/maesschalck/MacDonaldInstitutional_Reflexivity_and_IUCN-17.02.03.pdf | Less detail than previous programme but does put the Aichi Biodiversity targets on centre stage as a justification for supporting Core Programme Area 1. These were developed as part of the CBD plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 adopted at CBD COP10 Nagoya Japan. This improves the focus of the programme. There are comments on trying to develop measurable indicators for the targets. This is excellent and will improve relevance The role of agriculture and alien species as a key drivers of biodiversity loss is now given prominence |
| 3a Are the global environmental needs clearly stated through an environmental situation analysis | The rationale underlying the programme is illustrated clearly and concisely under the section ‘Today’s world through an environmental lens’ but this does not equate to a full environmental situation analysis. | Yes. The document refers to a world class situation analysis (web-link below) and provides an excellent summary of this in the text. http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/2013_2016_global_situation_analysis.pdf |
| 3a Are the global human wellbeing/resilience needs clearly stated through a | Yes to some extent and it refers to the MEA which takes this further. IUCN could improve on the MEA to show marked difference in resilience in different countries to different | No, not beyond the situation analysis above. |

Table 3 Assessment of Relevance (sensu DAC) in IUCN Programme documents

| Question reflecting best practice | Shaping a sustainable future 2009-12” | Draft IUCN Programme 2013-2016 Nature+ |
|---|--|---|
| reliance/vulnerability/gender differentiated situation analysis | environmental issues for instance Bangladesh and the Maldives in relation to climate induced changes in sea levels. | |
| 4. Are the framework partners (and other key potential donors) needs adequately characterised in a way that reflects policy and the aspirations of the tax payer? | No the partners are not mentioned and neither are the aspirations/priorities of their citizens and how these differ between countries. The variation of national policy opportunity and constraint across the globe does not appear to be covered adequately. | No |
| 5. Summary | On the whole good but general | An improvement owing to the inclusion of more targets that will help to guide relevance |

The 2009-12 Programme – Shaping a sustainable future

The textual analysis of the Global Results based on the statements put together under each result does not naturally lend itself to relevance concerns for a number of reasons:

- There tends not to be a clear definition of beneficiaries. The voices of the specified beneficiaries are not clearly articulated and differentiated.
- Country needs are not differentiated within each Result or put into functional groups (e.g. those needing policy, those needing law enforcement systems etc.)
- Global environmental needs have been analysed in the global situation analysis but there is no prioritisation attempted in relation to this result or IUCN's global or local niche.
- Global wellbeing/resilience needs have been analysed in the global situation analysis but there is no prioritisation attempted in relation to this result.
- The needs and aspirations of the partners are not expressed with priority and neither are those of the tax payer, so IUCN's response relevant to demand is not clearly elucidated.

Overall, the 2009-12 Programme document is relevant to global biodiversity and conservation needs and priorities. There is a clear narrative process, starting with the Executive Summary clearly states:

“The IUCN Programme 2009–2012– Shaping a sustainable future – will:

- 1. Contribute directly to targets agreed internationally by governments to reduce the rate of loss of biodiversity, and*
- 2. Contribute an environmental perspective to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and other relevant international commitments.”*

The rationale underlying the programme is illustrated clearly and concisely under the section 'Today's world through an environmental lens' (p.9). And an attempt to set out IUCN's niche and unique selling points is set out in the following section 'The Union's Unique Role', citing 'credible trusted knowledge, convening and building partnerships for action, and global-to-local and local-to-global reach.' The detail on how the rationale and IUCN's niche have informed each other is less evident. Also less evident is how relevant the programme relative to 'market demand'. - The programme does not illustrate how IUCN has responded to the Framework Partners and other national and international sources of funding and how these will support the breadth of activity within the Programme. At the level of individual Global Results relevance becomes less clear. The process established in the introductory sections of the programme document linking targets, rationale, and IUCN's niche is generally not followed through to specific results.

In conclusion the 2009-12 Programme document appears to take a scatter gun approach to relevance – broadly relevant at broad global biodiversity conservation level but focus and prioritisation below this are less clear and precise.

The draft 2013-16 Programme

There is evidence that IUCN has recognised the limitations of the text in the 2009-12 and addressed them in the design and content of the 2013-16 Programme. In particular, the programme draft is supported by a stand-alone Global Situation Analysis which is summarised in the draft programme text. Beyond this and despite the draft suffering some of the relevance issues noted in the 2009-12 Programme, there is evidence of IUCN considering relevance in relation to niche and demand. For example, based on the findings of the situation analysis, energy as a theme has now been replaced by Food Security. This indicates a response to maintain relevance as well as perhaps an attempt to allocate IUCN's strategic resources where they can be shown to effective.

The result formulations in the draft IUCN Programme 2012-16 Nature + are set out in the table below.

| Result Formulations in the Draft IUCN Programme 2013-2016 Nature+ | | |
|--|---|--|
| Programme Area | Global Results: Summary | Global Results: Detailed |
| 1. Core Programme Area: Valuing And conserving Biodiversity | 1.1: Tools and knowledge for biodiversity conservation 1.2: Policies in support of biodiversity conservation | 1.1: IUCN standards, tools and knowledge for valuing, conserving and sustainably using biodiversity are accessible, widely adopted and result in action for effective and efficient management of biodiversity. 1.2: Policies and governance systems reflect the full values of biodiversity to enable action at all levels towards the achievement of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. |
| 2. Core Programme Area: Sharing nature's benefits fairly and equitably | 2.1: Tools and knowledge for better decision making for biodiversity conservation 2.2: Policies and governance for biodiversity conservation that recognize and respect rights | 2.1: IUCN standards, tools and knowledge for valuing, conserving and sustainably using nature and natural resources foster fair, equitable, just and efficient decision making and are accessible and widely adopted. 2.2: Policies and governance systems recognize and respect the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples, and effectively empower vulnerable and poor stakeholders, especially women, to value, conserve, sustainably manage and benefit from biodiversity. |
| 3. Thematic Programme Area: Nature based solutions to climate change | 3.1, 3.2: Policy and practice for mitigation and adaptation 3.3: Assessing the impact of climate change on biodiversity and promoting action | 3.1: National and international climate change policies and funding optimize ecosystem-based adaptation and mitigation solutions with appropriate social and environmental safeguards that improve natural resource governance and increase the resilience of vulnerable livelihoods. 3.2: Institutional arrangements, standards and tools that enable the equitable and efficient implementation of ecosystem-based adaptation and mitigation solutions are available and widely adopted at local and national level, with particular emphasis on the participation of and benefits for natural resource dependent communities. 3.3: Knowledge, standards and tools to assess the impacts of climate change on biodiversity continue to be improved and are widely available to support conservation, adaptation and mitigation at local, national and global levels. |
| 4. Thematic Programme Area: Managing ecosystems to improve food security | 4.1, 4.2: Policy and practice linking ecosystem management and food security 4.3: Broader conservation movement working for food security | 4.1: Global, regional and national food security policies and strategies benefit from biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management in strengthening the resilience and sustainability of small-scale, community based production and wild-harvest food systems (terrestrial and fisheries/marine). 4.2: Multifunctional landscape and seascape management, incorporating the differentiated roles of men and women, is recognized and widely adopted as tools, standards and institutional arrangements that contribute to the stability and sustainability of food systems. 4.3: International, national and local conservation policies, practices and standards contribute to improved food production systems, food security and wider livelihood needs of both men and women at the local level. |
| 5. Thematic Programme Area: greening the | 5.1: Integrating nature into economic risk management 5.2: Building biodiversity | 5.1: Green economy policies and actions are enhanced through stronger integration of biodiversity and ecosystem services in risk management at local, national and global scales. |

| Result Formulations in the Draft IUCN Programme 2013-2016 Nature+ | | |
|---|------------------------------|---|
| Programme Area | Global Results: Summary | Global Results: Detailed |
| economy | based economic opportunities | 5.2: Opportunities to benefit from biodiversity conservation and sustainable use are supported by relevant public policies and private decision making and contribute to greening the economy at local, national and global scales. |

At the level of the specific Global Results, the 2013-16 draft suffers from many of the issues highlighted above on the 2009-12 Programme. Specifically, the link between relevance to IUCN at global level and how this is carried through to each specific Global Result is not clearly elucidated in terms of definition of beneficiaries, global and national demand specific to that result, and IUCN's specific niche relative to the result.

Role of the Framework Partners

Based on the issue identified above of relevance relative to 'demand' and due to the unique relationship in this respect that IUCN has with its group of Framework Partners, IUCN's Framework Partners have a responsibility to help IUCN formulate a relevant goal in the Framework Partner contract documents. This would show the global endeavour that IUCN's Programme hopes to contribute to and link the programme directly to market demand as defined by a broad group of agencies acting on behalf of taxpayers. Ideally this would be a global policy statement with targets, indicators and a timeline. It could be an updated or improved version of the Millennium Development Goal on Environment for instance or something based on the format used in the Convention on Biological Diversity Aichi Targets (2011). For example:

"By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of global importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are protected."

More broadly, Framework Partners as the core funders of IUCN's Programme have a responsibility to ensure that IUCN develops and implements a credibly and realistically resourced results-based programme with a clear purpose as well as a set of output and outcome indicators across the Global Results. Ensuring buy-in to the programme from the Framework Partners in this way would also help 'define the parameters' by which IUCN delivers to the Framework Partners in return for the funding it receives and provides a mechanism by which both parties can continuously monitor and provide guidance on how to increase and verify relevance.

Generic Problems of Improving Relevance in Biodiversity Conservation

Biodiversity conservation and human wellbeing are multidimensional measures and there is no single measure that can be used to optimise either. This suggests that science (*we carry on collecting new data in the hope of arriving at an incredibly important breakthrough*) needs to be separated from practice (*a checklist of best practice in full awareness that knowledge is not complete*). IUCN and its partners need to know if they are funding science/new information or trying to optimise and inform best practice.

Both programme documents appear to have to satisfy the needs of all - from global citizens to the very specific interests of the scientific Commissions of IUCN, IUCN Members and the Framework Partners. These are very different audiences and have very different planning and reporting requirements.

Bearing this in mind, the perceived relevance of IUCN's Programme would be significantly enhanced if it were possible to:

- Articulate a clear set of customers or beneficiaries for different results;
- Set out an overall and results-specific Theory of Change which explicitly sets out IUCN’s role addressing global biodiversity and conservation priorities, the pathway by which IUCN plans to address these priorities, as well as the extent of IUCN’s responsibility / sphere of influence.
- Acknowledge difficulties of balance between local, national and global benefit.
- Analyse country needs in a global context and produce different functional blocks with different requirements; North America and Europe, Sub Saharan Africa, China and Brazil and India, “Mega rain forest countries”, etc could be one classification.
- Acknowledge the aspirations (priorities) of the Framework Partners linked to that of the citizens they represent. (This is also the responsibility of the partners to articulate).

Addressing these issues is beyond the scope of the Review but should be considered in relevant fora.

2.4.3 Managing relevance: Evidence from the field visits Regional, Country and Project Offices

This section assesses relevance based upon the field visits to IUCN regional, country and project offices.

Regional processes

The key text reviewed here is the IUCN Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Programme (ESARO) – From Good to Great strategy document of 2010. This links the global programme and support functions to the region. Inferences are made in the light of findings from the visit to the regional office for Eastern and Southern Africa and for Asia. Key questions here augment the previous relevance criteria analysis above and are listed below as sub headings with findings.

| Relevance Management at the Regional Level | |
|---|--|
| Relevance Criteria / Question | Assessment |
| Is there a clear description of the beneficiaries in the region? | No beneficiaries are not mentioned |
| Are the needs (voices) of the specified beneficiaries clearly articulated and differentiated? | No |
| Are the country needs (conservation biodiversity and wellbeing) clearly stated in a way that can be functionally grouped at a regional level? | To some extent. The region is broken down into habitat types but special problems of special Countries are not dealt with. |
| Are the regional environmental needs clearly stated through an environmental situation analysis? | To a limited extent in relation to habitat types |
| Are the regional human wellbeing/resilience needs clearly stated through a reliance/vulnerability/gender differentiated situation analysis? | No. |
| Are the regional members, regionally based Commission members and partners (and other key potential donors) needs and roles adequately characterised in a way that would improve relevance? | Yes. Good work has been done on mapping this |

| Relevance Management at the Regional Level | |
|---|--|
| Relevance Criteria / Question | Assessment |
| Are potentially competing interests of Members, Commissions and Secretariat in relation to relevance managed effectively? | Yes there is good work to bring them together in relation to the value proposition and the global results |
| Are programme support processes improving specificity and customer satisfaction? | Yes there is good work on trying to improve sub result relevance in relation to the global results and even some targets, but quality and customer satisfaction aspects could be improved. |
| Is there the basis of good linkage to regional conservation forums and world conservation forums? | Yes the way that the sub result are formulated and the tension that this creates with the global results will provide lesson learned that can be fed into the regional and world forums |

The findings here are supported by the analysis of the programme documents – regional programmes seem to be relevant to regional conservation and biodiversity priorities but IUCN is not explicitly positioned against these priorities according to its niche and an explicit theory of change. Second, there is evidence of an improved approach and conceptualisation of relevance through innovations rolled out by the regions in conjunction with and generally how defining and maintain relevance across IUCN has been improved under the One Programme approach and associated innovations such as Regional Conservation Forums and the Network Approach – see Chapter 4. However, this could relatively easily go further. For example, interviews with senior managers in both the ESARO and the Asia Regional Offices revealed that there was no formal logging and analysing of requests to these offices for support from Members, non-members, Commission or potential partners or any system of customer satisfaction evaluation following interaction and engagement with IUCN. This would be simple to implement and could dramatically improve learning and relevance.

Relevance at the level of a Country: The India Office

IUCN's India Country Office is a new one (established in 2007) and one that has established some excellent systems and approaches. It has an outstanding relationship with the Ministry of Environment and Forests at the highest levels.

One of the most important mechanisms for improving relevance has been the commissioning of an authoritative "Country Analysis" involving the participation of the Members and Commission members. Funds for this were obtained from SIDA – an obvious area where Framework Partner support can directly enhance IUCN relevance and identify where donor and IUCN priorities meet. The contents list from this analysis is reproduced in below with findings in relation to relevance.

In summary the management of relevance was excellent and could only be improved by clearer identification of beneficiaries and the identification of key policy windows. The template of this report is an ideal vehicle for addressing relevance at the Country level throughout IUCN.

| Analysis of India Office Country Analysis Document | |
|--|--|
| Report Section | Relevance Finding |
| 1. Introduction | Introduces good involvement of staff members and commission members |
| 2. India: ecosystems and livelihoods | Excellent analysis of key processes affecting biodiversity and human well-being but no beneficiaries statement or capture of voices |
| <i>2.1 Expansion of agriculture</i> | |
| <i>2.2 Unsustainable farming practices</i> | |
| <i>2.3 Rapid urbanisation</i> | |
| <i>2.4 Industrial growth</i> | |
| <i>2.5 Public sector projects</i> | |
| <i>2.6 Shrinking commons</i> | |
| <i>2.7 Limitations of state conservation</i> | |
| <i>2.8 Natural disasters</i> | |
| <i>2.9 Anthropogenic climate change</i> | |
| 3. Priorities in conservation | Excellent situation analyses of country needs and strategic linkages to other countries in the region. Inputs from all three strands obvious and synergy identified |
| <i>3.1 Enhancing international cooperation</i> | |
| <i>3.2 Mainstreaming conservation in sectoral policy</i> | |
| <i>3.3 Influencing resource use practices</i> | |
| <i>3.4 Sustaining fragile ecosystems</i> | |
| <i>3.5 Promoting community conservation</i> | |
| <i>3.6 Participatory management of protected areas</i> | |
| 4. The World Conservation Union (IUCN) | Good synergy analysis |
| <i>4.1 Sources of strength</i> | |
| <i>4.2 IUCN in Asia</i> | |
| <i>4.3 IUCN in India</i> | |
| 5. Strategy for IUCN in India | Very clear and realistic containing the voice and needs of members that could be the basis of generating customer satisfaction systems. Also attempt to understand and use the niche of IUCN |
| <i>5.1 Role</i> | |
| <i>5.2 Nature of support</i> | |
| <i>5.3 Short term goal</i> | |
| <i>5.4 Country Programme objectives</i> | |
| <i>5.41 Enhancing India's role in international environmental agreements</i> | |
| <i>5.42 Mainstreaming conservation in sectoral policy</i> | |

| Analysis of India Office Country Analysis Document | |
|--|-------------------|
| Report Section | Relevance Finding |
| 5.43 Sustaining fragile transboundary ecosystems | |
| 5.44 Integrating empirical research into policy and practice | |
| 5.45 Strengthening IUCN membership | |

Relevance at the level of a Project Office: The case of Ghana

Key findings are given below from interviews with Staff, Members and Commission Members and are presented as a series of representative but stylised facts:

- Ghana has a focus on forestry and considers itself a ‘forestry-project office’ rather than a country office. Its mandate both in Ghanaian law and through its relationship with the IUCN West and Central Africa office currently prevents it from being mandated as a full IUCN country office. In some ways the focus on forestry (specifically REDD) is sensible as it aligns IUCN activities well with most of the donor focus in the country and more broadly in terms market demand in terms of available funding. Relevance and realism are balanced in Ghana but a broader environmental situation analysis would have been helpful.
- The key beneficiaries are therefore forest linked communities. Again good focus.
- The key policy learning and action area is on REDD+ which is of central relevance to Ghana and Tropical forestry as a whole
- The office’s mandate as project office presents a number of challenges with respect to relevance, however. In particular, the broad range of stakeholders interviewed in Ghana during the field visit identified a number of pressing national environmental priorities including destruction of the coastal wetlands and land tenure issues associated with the northern drylands. IUCN presently does not have the mandate or the resources to engage with these issues despite them potentially being as significant as REDD.
- Members and Commission members did not feel part of defining relevance. This was due to the small budget and staff levels at the project office who are restricted in engaging in a broader set of IUCN convening and influencing activities if they are beyond specifically defined project activities. Consequently Member meetings are not happening despite an obvious demand.
- There is a level of frustration in Commission members of the form: “We give IUCN its reputation but rarely get funds from IUCN. In fact we often need to get funds for non essential work so that we can afford to do key work such as species assessment or taxonomy without payment”. (This sentiment was also relayed in project offices in India and Kenya)

In summary, at the Regional, Country and project office level there is considerable evidence to support IUCN’s relevance to Regional and national biodiversity and conservation priorities, particularly relevance to market demand in the form of donor funds. In line with the findings of the analysis of the programme documents – IUCN’s Regional, Country and project office strategies and activities are relevant to regional conservation and biodiversity priorities but IUCN is not explicitly positioned against these priorities according to its niche and an explicit theory of change. However, there is evidence at the country-level that this may be starting to change. The IUCN India Office

Country Analysis document is one example. Directly engaging and involving Members and Commission members in Regional Conservation Forums and the formulation of Regional Programme Strategies is another.

2.4.4 Improving relevance and effectiveness at the project level: analysis based upon project discussions at the regional and country level

This section takes the relevance analysis to the lowest level – that of a sample of projects. During the field visits, a sample of eight country-specific projects were selected and analysed in relation to 17 variables in order to identify any common strengths or weaknesses. The reports are attached and analysed in Annex 11.

The projects were:

1. Cadbury’s Cocoa Partnership Environmental Strategy (Ghana)
2. Tacana Project Integrated Water Management (Guatemala)
3. Cahoacan Project River basin management (Mexico)
4. Alanblackia oil seed (Ghana)
5. Pro Poor REDD+ (Ghana)
6. The Pangani River Basin Management Project (Tanzania)
7. Ecosystems for Life India
8. Livelihoods and landscape strategy on Doi Mai Salong (Thailand)

When reviewing the sets of project documents associated with each project against a broad range of criteria, relevance was defined as ‘Relevance: It should contain an accurate description of the problem in hand and explain why the entities/inputs are a good fit.’ The findings for each project are set out below:

| Relevance with a Sample of IUCN Projects | |
|---|---|
| Project | Relevance Findings |
| Alanblackia oil seed (Ghana) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good overview of opportunity in context of MDGs; Bonn Guidelines on CBD; coherence with SECO CAP. (p5-6) • Logical follow on from the first project but no explicit reference back to indicators of performance from Phase I |
| Tacana Project Integrated Water Management (Guatemala) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project document has a good explanation of the situation that led to the Project (land degradation and the devastating impacts of the Stan tropical storm in 2005) (see pp 4-8) • Seems to have a good assessment of this complexity, considering the achievement of relevant results at the local level (actual work of micro-basin/watershed committees), Municipality level (adoption of Municipality regionalization by micro-basins), Departmental level (the Inter-institutional coordination mechanism –CORNASAM- and its activities) and national level (participation on the National Micro-basin Commission) and the adoption by this Commission of the Micro-basin approach to planning and implementation developed by the Project through its field experiences. |
| Cahoacan Project River basin management (Mexico) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Project arose from the need to redirect the efforts of a previous one originated through the WANI 1 process whose field actions were simply erased by the impact of Tropical Storm Stan in 2005 that was a major disaster in Guatemala and Mexico. As a consequence the new project was less focused on water resources management and more focused on prevention of rainfall-related disasters. • The analysed Cahoacan Project is a logical follow on from the first project but the project document does not include explicit sections on situation analysis or diagnosis because the memories of the effects of Stan were too fresh. • The fitness of the Project and IUCN as its implementing agency are simply that they were the only ones active in this river basin on watershed management issues, and the experience previous to the Stan storm showed that they were doing a good job but with just a small component on disaster-prevention. |
| Cadbury’s Cocoa | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation for CCP – develop an environmental strategy that engages and involves both policy makers and cocoa growing communities – as part of a strategy to improve livelihoods and ensure |

| Relevance with a Sample of IUCN Projects | |
|--|---|
| Project | Relevance Findings |
| Partnership Environmental Strategy (Ghana) | <p>cocoa production in Ghana is environmentally sustainable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged IUCN because of their reputation for multi-stakeholder dialogues – CCP had seen IUCN work on AB which has been in the news. |
| Pro Poor REDD+ (Ghana) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong presentation and analysis of global REDD+ issues and the need to involve poor communities themselves in the national discussions on REDD. “The proposed action in this concept note aims to support such learning in five tropical forest countries with established on-going forest sector reform processes and with relatively high levels of rural poverty.” Project Proposal p. 8 Some indications of IUCN influencing in relation to UNFCCC REDD+ agenda – “The Forestry Commission of Ghana and IUCN jointly organized an awareness raising workshop on REDD in Accra on the 14th and 15th of August, 2008. This workshop was timed to coincide with UNFCCC expert working group meetings held from 21st to the 28th of August in Accra.” – Project Proposal p. 14 |
| The Pangani River Basin Management Project (Tanzania) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant to local development needs and based on key water policy and acts Very relevant to knowledge building on the links between climate change river basin management livelihood and biodiversity The intervention logic was relevance, clear and coherent. Water governance is a key issue in Tanzania and climate change is already having an effect. Good involvement of secretariat and members but Commission member involvement less obvious Relevant to influence. IUCN helped to develop Act and Strategy New model of water financing and Basin now more stable due to “union” of stakeholder |
| Ecosystems for Life(India) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable management of water regimes in river basins that cross natural boundaries is a major issue that has focus of importance, in view of the recurrent droughts and floods in the South Asia region. While intergovernmental cooperation is increasing, dialogue among civil society of countries sharing international rivers will help in developing knowledge base and strengthen understanding of issues and contribute to better management of natural resources. India and Bangladesh share three major rivers and cooperation on trans-boundary waters is essential for the well being of millions of citizens of the two countries. In this context, this four and a half year project funded by the Netherlands government is very relevant |
| Livelihoods and landscape strategy on Doi Mai Salong (Thailand) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevance is strong and contains new developments in forest restoration pioneered in Thailand. Role of IUCN across the Union particularly the Secretariat (HQ, Regional Offices, and Country Offices) is clearly set out. There is clear evidence that this project will contribute to major work on the role of forest restoration in REDD+ Formal mechanisms for member involvement are poor There is no monitoring template for the project which includes indicators related to partner contribution and involvement in project implementation. Some indications of IUCN influencing in relation to UNFCCC REDD+ agenda |

Overall, a number of common features on relevance emerge across the projects sampled:

- Relevance to regional and country biodiversity and conservation priorities is high across the sample.
- A number of the projects illustrate a strong understanding of IUCN’s niche or USPs in implementing the project and the value this adds – ‘LLS in Thailand assessment found that the role of IUCN across the Union particularly the Secretariat (HQ, Regional Offices, and Country Offices) is clearly set out.’
- IUCN is recognised by partners as occupying a particular niche or relevance in relation to specific issues / services provided by the Union. ‘Cadbury’s Cocoa Partnership engaged IUCN in Ghana because of their reputation for multi-stakeholder dialogues.’

- Links between project-level relevance and wider, global or external relevance were evident in a number of projects - Alanblackia in Ghana – ‘Good overview of opportunity in context of MDGs; Bonn Guidelines on CBD; coherence with SECO CAP (p5-6)’. Similarly in Ghana = ‘Some indications of IUCN influencing in relation to UNFCCC REDD+ agenda – “The Forestry Commission of Ghana and IUCN jointly organized an awareness raising workshop on REDD in Accra on the 14th and 15th of August, 2008. This workshop was timed to coincide with UNFCCC expert working group meetings held from 21st to the 28th of August in Accra.’
- There is less evidence of relevance being assessed and updated throughout the project life-cycle. This may be because the projects sampled may not have sufficiently long durations for this to be necessary.
- Finally, there is little evidence of relevance directly linked to Global Results in a strategic forward-planning manner as part of a coherent project portfolio contributing to a Regional Strategic portfolio and on to a Global Result. This tension between strategic priorities and responding to funding pressure and the ‘projectised’ approach it forces on IUCN is addressed in more detail in the next section on effectiveness.

2.4.5 IUCN Programme relevance - Key findings and conclusions

In summary, the analysis has shown that the IUCN Programme is generally relevant to global biodiversity and conservation priorities. There is evidence of improvement in the new draft programme in terms of the management and updating of relevance (Energy dropped and Food Security added) in response to market demand and global priorities. At the programme level there is less detail of relevance relative to IUCN niche / USPs and less detail on relevance relative to specifically defined beneficiary groups or stakeholders. Developing a Programme-level theory of change would help address these issues by placing IUCN within the change process the organisation aims to support and inform.

Relevance appears to be easier to manage at lower levels in the organisation where it can respond to national and regional conservation priorities. For example, the India office have developed a useful template for Country Situation Analysis. Beyond this there is evidence of an improved approach to defining and maintaining relevance through innovations such as Regional Conservation Forums and the Network Approach rolled out by the Regions with support from Secretariat HQ.

The relevance analysis has identified a number of potential ‘missed opportunities’ which, if addressed, could further enhance IUCN Programme relevance. Further improvements to enhance relevance relate to the central questions listed below:

- (1) Is there a clear description of the beneficiaries?
- (2) Are the needs (voices) of the specified beneficiaries clearly articulated and differentiated?
- (3) Are the biodiversity conservation and wellbeing needs clearly stated in a way that can be functionally grouped at a global level e.g. a matrix of countries have signed up to a key global policy such as the CBD and Human Development Index category etc?
- (4) Are the global environmental needs clearly stated through an environmental situation analysis and prioritised?
- (5) Are the global human wellbeing/resilience needs clearly stated through a reliance/vulnerability/gender differentiated situation analysis and prioritised?
- (6) Are the framework partners (and other key potential donors) needs adequately characterised in a way that reflects policy and the aspirations of the tax payer?

IUCN is currently addressing item 4 well. IUCN's Framework Partners have a responsibility to help IUCN formulate a relevant goal in the Framework Partner contract documents. Ensuring buy-in to the programme from the Framework Partners in this way would also help 'define the parameters' by which IUCN delivers to the Framework Partners in return for the core funding it receives and provides a mechanism by which both parties can continuously monitor and provide guidance on how to increase and verify relevance. Maintaining relevance depends on clear niche definition for IUCN as well as systems to allocate resources according to results where the organisation has been successful. This is picked up in effectiveness analysis in next section.

2.5 Effectiveness

2.5.1 Introduction

The section builds on the assessments of the niche and relevance to assess the effectiveness of the IUCN Programme with emphasis on progress since the previous review in 2007. Effectiveness is defined as *'The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.'* The effectiveness section is structured as follows:

- A brief outline of the approach, key definitions and standard requirements for the evaluation of effectiveness - **Section 2.5.2.**
- An appreciative assessment of IUCN's contribution to achieving Global Results based on assessment of each Global Result in turn as well as a desk-review of a sample of prominent IUCN global projects– **Section 2.5.3.**
- An assessment of programme purpose based on a document analysis of key IUCN legal and Programmatic documents including the Value Proposition. This builds on the analysis of niche in section 2.3 and relevance in 2.4. This section also contains an analysis on the efficacy of the global result formulations – **Section 2.5.4.**
- A discussion of how best to verify and improve the effectiveness of the Programme. This section introduces an analysis of theory of change within IUCN.– **Section 2.5.5.**
- A brief discussion of potential organisational constraints and missed opportunities in the reporting of IUCN's effectiveness and impact – **Section 2.5.6.**
- A concluding section pulling together the analysis on the niche, relevance and effectiveness of the IUCN Programme – **Section 2.6.**

2.5.2 Approach, definitions and the critical requirements for assessing effectiveness

It is important to establish that this is not a review of the effectiveness of IUCN as an organisation. The work of the Commissions and Members are viewed through the lens of the programme as confined to our data and sampling approaches. It is also important to make it clear that the Review Team will use the DAC (OECD 2002) definition of effectiveness which is stated again here due to its pivotal role in the approach.

'The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.'

The development interventions objectives are taken as the 10 Global Results of the IUCN Programme 2009-2012 as listed in section 2.4 on Relevance.

Before looking at the key questions used in the analysis it is important to look at (1) the standard requirements for the analysis of effectiveness and (2) what has been learned from the analysis of niche and relevance that may guide the analysis.

A key part of the effectiveness definition was "relative importance of the objectives'. This can only be properly assessed if the programme has a clear purpose that can be publically stated and ideally evaluated at the end of the programme period in order to assess if the programme has been successfully delivered in relation to representative set of quantitative and qualitative results indicators.

A key finding of the Review is that the current IUCN Programme does not have a clear statement of purpose with associated indicators or targets. Beyond this, best practice in effectiveness analysis requires:

- (1) Clear definitions of time bound results with indicators or targets that can be verified by a lay observer.
- (2) An elucidation of the activities that are intended to produce a set of results.
- (3) Knowledge of the cost of producing the results.

IUCN needs to carry out effectiveness analysis with empowered staff members at many levels in the organisation. The two extremes are:

- At the project level where donors have agreed to fund the project on the basis of an agreed project purpose with clear, verifiable, and time-bound results and activities.
- At the organisation level where donors have agreed to fund the organisation's programme on the basis of an agreed purpose with clear, verifiable, and time-bound results and activities. The contract clarity could be improved by the use of logical framework elements. The responsible manager in this case could be the Director General or Deputy Director General.

Key points to make here are: (1) IUCN presently lacks adequate organisation-wide systems and resources to deliver the evidence upon which to assess programme effectiveness and subsequently allocate resources according verifiable results. (2) It takes many years for an organisation to develop the skills and discipline necessary to adopt a results-based approach to management and reporting; (3) Improvements in effectiveness need clear guidance and encouragements from donors as well as IUCN's senior management team; and, (4) Many donors are going through a process themselves to improve effectiveness and to develop a result-based approach.

2.5.3 IUCN's Global Results – An Appreciative Assessment

In the absence of any statement of programme purpose and clear results indicators, it is useful to try to assess the extent that any Global Result may be achieved using an appreciative approach that tries to discover 'islands of excellence'.

For each Global Result the following evaluation questions have been addressed:

1. What appears a useful clarified abbreviated Global Result that may guide learning from the point of view of the review team?
2. What evidence is available to indicate promising physical outputs/behavioural effects based on the sample?
3. Is the chance of the result being achieved high or low based on the sample outputs and behavioural effects?
4. What could be done to improve effectiveness based on the limited sample?

The sample draws on the Review Team field visits as well as supplementary data collected through document analysis and follow up interviews especially Kenya base at ESARO, Thailand base at ARO, Costa Rica base at ORMA, India Country Office and Ghana project office. The sample is meant to cover a wide range of sub programmes such as species, forest, environmental law as well as relationships with partners as diverse as CIFOR and the Armed forces. Many of IUCN's interventions produce outputs and behaviour change of relevance to more than one Global Result (e.g. Mangroves for the Future (MFF)). Therefore some examples will be listed more than once.

This data is then augmented by information from a presentation (Anon. 2011a) given to the Framework Partners and a progress report on programme implementation (Anon. 2011b) as and when required.

The team were asked to state why they thought any example was exemplary. The term exemplary is used in the clarified result statement to mean that it should be deemed of high value by the senior management of IUCN through a transparent and agreed set of standards. In addition the exemplary example could act as a useful case study for illustrating success for others including the Framework Partners. This will be dealt with later in sections dealing with the management and verification of effectiveness. In the analysis, no figure is provided in terms of the number of exemplary examples per result that would be required to credibly claim success as this is deemed the responsibility of IUCN and is dependent on multiple factors including the context in which the result is expected, the timeframe, and the level of funding allocated.

The Review Team understood the One Programme concept and how it had been used to bring the three strands of IUCN together. In the analysis, there is no attempt to separate the work of Commissions, Members or Secretariat unless a specific point is being made.

Global Result 1.1: Biodiversity-related policies and governance systems enable action towards the achievement of biodiversity conservation.

Policies and procedures can help to protect nature and improve people's lives so the inferred result is *at least X exemplary policies, instruments (procedures) and or laws enhanced by the end of the programme period (EOP) in relation to biodiversity conservation.*

At the ARO, the team learned of exciting developments in China. IUCN China has collaborated with WWF to develop guidelines for the State Forestry Administration (SFA) and the Ministry of Finance aimed to enhance the guidance and regularization of the management and utilization of overseas forest resources for Chinese enterprises. In relation to this, field visits to West African countries have been facilitated for government officials and currently in the process of piloting these guidelines in West African countries such as Gabon. Also in China, a comprehensive policy review report on the current laws, regulations and institutional framework governing the sustainable management of medicinal plants had been drafted and distributed to relevant stakeholders

Sri Lanka has published a new National Strategy and Action Plan for Mangroves as a guiding document for coastal zone management policy review.

In Kenya, interviews with officers working on the Tanzania Pangani project told the team about the process of supporting Water User Associations (WUAs) to implement the Water Resource Management Act. IUCN has also been instrumental in raising awareness and understanding of climate change adaptation at different governance levels to decrease vulnerability. The environmental flows assessment process, which included climate change scenarios, has resulted in providing information to the government to make more informed water allocation procedures

In Gland a summary of global level policy interventions showed very high levels of achievements in relation to agreements in Nagoya on the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, Resource Mobilization Strategy and Access and Benefit Sharing Protocol. The Strategic Plan will be a framework for action for the biodiversity related conventions:

- Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species; Convention on Migratory Species; World Heritage, RAMSAR, IPGR
- Also Agencies of the United Nations
- Chairs of the Scientific Advisory of Biodiversity-Related Conventions: requested IUCN to map the Conventions to the Aichi targets

Desk research showed that IUCN working with TRAFFIC had produced the following outputs in relation to major conventions and fora:

- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES): Decisions taken by CITES Parties during CITES Animals (24th), Plants (18th) and Standing

Committee (58th and 59th) meetings, and during the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (March 2010) were informed by TRAFFIC research, analyses, interactions with delegates and recommendations. Policy outcomes supported included: Decisions on listing of species in the CITES Appendices; Amendment of resolutions and/or agreement of Decisions on the trade in Asian Big Cats, Elephants, Rhinos and Sharks;

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD): Decisions taken by CBD Parties during CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) 14 and the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD were informed by TRAFFIC reports, side events, interactions with delegates, and interventions. Policy outcomes supported included: Adoption of Decision X/32 on Sustainable Use of Biodiversity, with specific reference to action on use of wild species for meat (“bushmeat”); Adoption of Decision X/17 Consolidated Update of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation 2011-2020; Increased attention of CBD community to wider livelihoods issues associated with failure to achieve 2010 target.
- International Tiger Conservation Forum: Deliberations among and decisions taken by participants in the Forum and in the related meetings leading up to it informed by TRAFFIC information and recommendations. Policy outcomes supported: Agreement by Government delegations from 13 countries with wild Tiger populations to collaborate in a Global Tiger Recovery Programme (GTRP), with the goal of doubling wild Tigers by the next Year of the Tiger in 2022. The GTRP was also given high-level political endorsement and support in ‘The St. Petersburg Declaration on Tiger Conservation’ that was endorsed by all 13 Tiger range country government representatives at the Forum, including five Heads of Government.

In conclusion: Each of the cases listed above are world class and serve as global exemplars. The chance of a strong contribution towards the Global Result being achieved is high.

The following could be done to improve procedures based on the sample:

- Frameworks for evaluating and learning in relation to biodiversity policy effectiveness
- Customer satisfaction measures linked to politically acceptable attribution approaches
- Publication influence measurement and tracking e.g. citation scores

Global Result 1.2: IUCN standards, tools and knowledge for sustainable natural resource management are available and actions are taken for biodiversity conservation including effective management of global and regional common natural resources.

Professional practitioners and others need tools and knowledge to help make best use and limit damage to nature and natural resources, so the inferred result is *at least X exemplary tools, standards and or approaches created and or enhanced by EOP.*

In Kenya during a visit to CITES within the UNEP building the team learned of the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS): TRAFFIC managed CITES monitoring system for tracking illegal trade in ivory by assessing elephant product seizure records (nearly 16,000 records compiled to date). ETIS Analyses for CITES CoP15 supported extensive deliberations on ivory trade issues, and triggered a series of specific decisions. ETIS analyses have also contributed to, stimulated and/or underpinned a variety of policy and enforcement related decision-making processes and enforcement efforts at national levels. This was considered exemplary as it cross links with the red list and other regional planning tools and should make a verifiable difference to population of elephant. The Illegal timber trade is now a central issue in Europe as is a major contributor to rainforest destruction. The ETIS approach may have application here.

In Thailand the team was very impressed by the Thailand, Doi Mae Salong project: LLS has changed the way the 'Doi Mae Salong Reforestation Project' is implemented by the Royal Thai Armed Forces. As a result, 2,400 ha of forest and agriculture land (27% of the total landscape of 9,000 ha) is under locally-negotiated multifunctional land-uses. The synergy between the armed forces and forestry line agencies could be replicated in many countries and could be of central relevance to REDD+ as could the landscape approach and framework species tool being tested by the project. The landscape approach received increasing recognition by decision makers during 2010. Among other things it is now embodied in the CBD Strategic Plan for 2011-2020. It was featured prominently and integrated into the programmes and discussions for the Commonwealth Forestry Conference, Nagoya CBD COP Forest Day, Cancun UNFCCC Forest Day 5, among other events, reflecting a dramatic increase in the understanding of and up-take of the landscape approach into country and institutional programmes of work.

In Ghana the team were excited by the Guidelines drafted for sustainable *Allanblackia* harvesting and production in Ghana, and used in Tanzania and Nigeria. These standards form the basis of the UEBT application guide for *Allanblackia* which is an industry standard to which the main buyer, Unilever, is committed to and which will ensure ecological sustainability of the resource. This is incredible because it shows IUCN working with the private sector as part of sustainable procurement which could be a major force in biodiversity conservation and globally represents a market of many billions of dollars

In all Countries visited, the team learned of the importance of the **Red List** as a tool for considering the management of species across many countries in a region set by the range of an animal. This is a rare example of Countries cooperating together in a way that is not just a fight for national interests. This model of cooperation is of global importance and the mechanism should be studied in more detail so that regional plans for REDD+ can be developed. Very few officers interviewed appeared to be aware of criticisms of the Red List. Mrosovsky (2003)⁶ is an example of one dissenter in relation to marine systems.

In Asia the team learned of approaches and standards for rights based approaches that link customary law to national law and give indicators to the concept of just governance. A book on rights based approaches produced jointly between IUCN and CIFOR is world class and truly brings in IUCN strengths across many continents in terms of environmental law and breakthroughs in relation to governance indicators. There is a great deal of synergy to be gained from IUCN linking with the CGIAR. This book is an exemplar of this.

In conclusion: Each of the cases listed above are world class and serve as global exemplars. The chance of a strong contribution towards the Global Result being achieved is high.

The following could be done to improve procedures based on the sample:

- Better use of baselines and control area approaches
- Cost benefit analysis of case studies and implications if a region adopted it
- Customer satisfaction measures
- Publication influence measurement and tracking e.g. citation scores

Global Result 2.1: Climate change mitigation and adaptation policies and practice include biodiversity concerns from local to global level.

The result infers that "Nature must be considered when we think about and act on and to climate change". It is about practice and policy so the *at least X exemplary climate change related policies,*

⁶ Mrosovsky, N 2003 called '*Predicting Extinction: Fundamental flaws in the IUCN's Red List System, exemplified by the case of sea turtles*' ISBN 0-9734777-0-9

and or practices enhanced by the end of the programme period (EOP) in relation to biodiversity concerns.

In Kenya at ESARO the team learned of the work done by the LLS project in relation to Mount Elgon which has important areas of forest. This led to IUCN being officially recognized as a key partner in the REDD process for Uganda. REDD+ is probably one of the most important global policy initiatives in relation to biodiversity at the current time. The pro-poor practices developed in this intervention high very wide applicability.

In Gland and on many field locations the team realised that IUCN is playing a major role in gender considerations in relation to forests and in turn to REDD+. Many excellent publications on REDD have been produced that outline best practice. These will influence many actors involved in negotiations.

In India, the IUCN was working on a project in the Himalayas that outlined the importance of Black Carbon. This relates to particulates produced by diesel and firewood. This is a key issue in relation to climate change and has not been studied to the same extent as greenhouse gases. The approach and partnerships were highly innovative

In Thailand at ARO, the team learned of the very high number of practices being developed to improve resilience in coastal protection as part of the MFF regional project. The reef to ridge approach is at a scale of central relevance to most of the stakeholders with livelihood depending on coastal resources. It is also important for climate change planning to adapt to sea level rises (climate change linked) and to mitigate using biomass for sequestration purposes. The use of a small grant facility is an excellent approach to learning many lessons at low cost. Local lessons are used to develop National and International Policy

The concept of climate justice that was being developed in 2008 and was in 2009 to “governance-based adaptation”. This concept was integrated into the now initiated EC climate change resilience initiative for coastal Lower Mekong countries. The ARO appears to be playing a leading role in this. This should produce new insights into adaptation approaches.

In conclusion: Each of the cases listed above are world class and serve as global exemplars. The chance of a strong contribution towards the Global Result being achieved is high.

The following could be done to improve procedures based on the sample:

- More focus and priority for climate change issues
- Cost benefit analysis of case studies and implications if a region adopted it
- More work with the private sector
- Publication influence measurement and tracking e.g. citation scores.

Global Result 2.2: Natural resource management policies and strategies to adapt to the impacts of climate change are adopted and implemented.

Natural resources management must adapt to new thinking on the climate change Key issues for biodiversity are sea level rises, more extremes of weather and ocean acidification. The result is about practice and policy so the *at least X exemplary natural resources management linked policies, and or practices enhanced by the end of the programme period (EOP) in relation to climate change adaptation.*

In Thailand at ARO, the team learned of the very high number of practices being developed to improve resilience in coastal protection as part of the MFF regional project. The reef to ridge approach is at a scale of central relevance to most of the stakeholders with livelihood depending on coastal resources. It is also important for climate change planning to adapt to sea level rises (climate change linked) and to extreme weather events. Natural resources management covered fisheries, renewable energy and forestry. New laws and approaches to valuation are also being assessed

A telephone interview was held in Kenya with key players in Tanzania involved in the Pangani basin project. A climate change modelling study and vulnerability assessment was undertaken for the Pangani basin and is being disseminated through different channels (global, national and basin level meetings). Information is being used to inform national level processes, including by the Pangania Basin Water Officer attending UNFCCC. Vulnerability assessments are also being used to inform district development plans. Additionally, information from the environmental flows assessment has been disseminated widely to increase understanding of the implications of various flow regimes. The development of models can be a very powerful output

Also at ESARO the team heard of a very interesting case of capacity building In August 2010 when a three - day workshop on “Climate Change Journalism: Understanding the present, predicting the future” was held together with Climate change Facilitation Unit (CCFU). Forty-five (45) journalists and editors took part to the training that aimed at improving the climate change information that media has and to give tips on how to handle climate change issues in the media. Unfortunately there was no detailed recording of how the course may influence their behaviour in the future.

In India the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law and MoEF initiated the first conference on Climate Change Law and Governance. This is a key issue and builds on Delhi’s global reputation in controlling and reducing air pollution.

Also in India, IUCN is helping with inputs to the Chennai Action Plan on climate change.

In conclusion: Each of the cases listed above are world class and serve as global exemplars. The chance of a strong contribution towards the Global Result being achieved is high.

The following could be done to improve procedures based on the sample:

- More focus and explicit priority for adaptation issues based on biodiversity
- Better follow-up tracking, monitoring and learning on subsequent behavioural change of conference and training event attendees

Global Result 3.1: Energy policies and strategies mitigate the impact of the growing energy demand on biodiversity.

Energy demand is affecting nature so its impact must be carefully managed. The result is about strategy and policy so the *at least X exemplary energy linked policies, and or strategies enhanced by the end of the programme period (EOP) in relation to biodiversity.*

In India, the IUCN president Dr Ashok Koshla had chaired an important International Biofuels conference in India in 2010. Sustainability issues were t the core of this. Biofuels have the potential to be substitute for fossil fuels and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

At the ESARO, the team learned of important data being collected about charcoal prices. These have an impact on biodiversity as trees can be removed for making charcoal. Strategies for improving charcoal production and use have a positive effect on biodiversity and can improve health and rural livelihoods. Focusing on charcoal as an issue improves realism.

In Thailand at ARO, the team learned of the very high number of strategies being developed to reduce un-sustainable firewood harvesting as part of the MFF regional project. The reef to ridge approach is at a scale of central relevance to both mangrove timber and other coastal forest resources

In conclusion: Each of the cases listed above are good and serve as regional exemplars. The chance of a strong contribution towards the Global Result being achieved is medium.

The following could be done to improve procedures based on the sample:

- More focus and explicit priority for adaptation issues based on demand modelling linked to a range of scenarios
- Given limited staff resources on this topic it might be better for IUCN to select only one issue such as charcoal.

Global Result 3.2: Ecosystem services that underpin sustainable and equitable energy are incorporated in energy policies and strategies.

Ecosystems support life and livelihood so they must be protected against injudicious use as part of energy use. The result is about strategy and policy so the *at least X exemplary ecosystem services linked policies, and or strategies enhanced by the end of the programme period (EOP) in relation to biodiversity.*

The main large scale capital intensive energy technology with a direct and obvious link to ecosystem services is hydro-electricity. IUCN does not appear to be working on this topic in any detail in the Countries visited.

For many people firewood and charcoal are the main source of energy an injudicious use can affect forests and mangroves in a way that reduces the ability of these systems to provide ecosystem services. Charcoal has been dealt with above.

The Water Programme have compiled a progress report in relation to this global result and key outputs are given below:

- An agreement developed with International Rivers: WCD+10: Promoting Sustainability through a New Global Dams Dialogue. The aim is to take stock of what has and has not been achieved, and to initiate a new multi-stakeholder process to find agreement on the social and environmental standards to be used in dam projects. At Stockholm Water Week in 2010 a seminar on WCD+10 discussed the potential for reconvening a global dialogue on dams
- Implementation of regional level reviews and dialogues which will inform national and regional strategies and plans for infrastructure development. For example support to the West Dialogue on Dams developed with ECOWAS. IUCN/WANI commissioned 2 case studies and a final report on this dialogue. There will also be communication outputs in the form of a website and video. River basin dialogues with hydropower actors as part of developing IWRM strategies for example Huasco (Chile) and Santa (Peru) river basins.

In conclusion: Each of the cases listed above are good and serve as regional exemplars. The chance of a strong contribution towards the Global Result being achieved is medium.

The following could be done to improve procedures based on the sample:

- Given limited staff resources on this topic it might be better for IUCN to select only one issue such as hydro-electricity.

Global Result 4.1: Development policies and strategies support vulnerable and poor stakeholders, especially women, to sustainably manage ecosystems for improved livelihoods.

Vulnerable people need to be protected from injudicious use of ecosystems. Poor women are highlighted as key beneficiaries.

The result is about strategy and policy so the *at least X exemplary ecosystem linked policies, and or strategies enhanced by the end of the programme period (EOP) in relation to the sustainable management of ecosystems and improved livelihood.*

Many projects have been funded by donors under this result.

In Thailand the team learned of Ridge to reef networks established in two watersheds in Southern Thailand in Ranong and Phang Nga provinces ranging from the sea to the upper watershed. The communities have started taking joint actions on ecosystem management issues including river dredging and others. The watershed scale is of central relevance to strategy.

Also in Thailand, supported building capacity of Community Based Organisations (CBOs) in Ranong and Phang Nga to influence policy changes including on issues such as obtaining protection for the threatened endemic water lily species; enhanced bargaining power on land tenure issues, etc.

In India, a committee of Secretaries has been setup at the national level in 2010 for looking at synchronising Panchayats (Village level Councils) Extension to Scheduled Areas Act (PESA) and forest regulations and Forest Rights Act. This looks at provisions for communities benefiting from use of minor forest produce/non-timber forest products (NTFP) the thrust of LLS India initiatives. This is a very important policy instrument.

In Kenya the team learned about a major approach of promoting strategic partnership and alliances linked to the ESARO. IUCN had joined forces with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). This organisation in Eastern Africa was created in 1996 to supersede the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) which was founded in 1986. The recurring and severe droughts and other natural disasters between 1974 and 1984 underlined its importance.

IGAD and IUCN established a biennial meeting of directors of conservation related ministries and finance related ministries from the member states. In April 2010, the second Entebbe conference was convened with the overall theme - 'environment and natural resources as a core asset for wealth creation, poverty reduction and sustainable development'. The conference involved feedback on the work of IGAD, IUCN and IDRC on agenda set in the previous conferences in particular the understanding on drylands economic value and opportunities to diversify livelihoods beyond livestock in Arid and semi arid areas of IGAD. More important was to strengthen the rural economy and understand the extent to which environmental assets (goods and services) are important and the extent to which such values are integrated into macro-economic planning. The meeting was attended by directors from all IGAD member states, representatives of civil society and knowledgeable resource persons from the region and outside the region. After the two days deliberation the conference made further recommendations for the follow-up action by all partners and proposed indicators to monitor the follow-up of these recommendations. Among the most urgent recommendation was for IGAD to launch a strategy for management, market chains and value addition for products in Arid and Semi Arid Lands. This regional approach based upon the dry-land ecosystems is of central importance to current issues on food security policy at National and International levels.

In conclusion: Each of the cases listed above are world class and serve as global exemplars. The chance of a strong contribution towards the Global Result being achieved is high.

The following could be done to improve procedures based on the sample:

- More focus and explicit priority for work with regional political bodies linked to a habitat type
- Better tracking, monitoring and learning on behavioural change of conference and training event attendees
- Clearer explanations of the key indicators for improved livelihood
- Measurement of the physical outcomes of IUCN's work in terms of restoration of X areas of ecosystem function Y (e.g. dry-land food production)
- Gender differentiated data collection and reporting could be improved

Global Result 4.2: Sustainable environmental management reduces vulnerability to natural hazards and conflicts.

Vulnerable people need to be protected from natural hazards and conflicts. The result is about effective environmental management so *at least X exemplary environmental management systems enhanced by the end of the programme period (EOP) in relation to the reduction of vulnerability to natural hazards and conflicts.*

At the ARO, the team studied the MFF project and had discussions with key staff. Mangroves are a key line of coastal defence against natural hazards, and indeed the MFF funding was linked to post tsunami events. The project has taken baselines on coastal processes so should be able to produce a range of exemplary management systems across the region as supported by physical data on ecosystem function.

Also at the ARO, A three volume manual has been developed. This includes a toolkit and a training module for integrating environmental safeguards into various stages of the disaster management cycle. Three training programmes for administering the module conducted regionally involving disaster management practitioners are also underway.

At the ESARO, the regional work on drylands (outlined above in result 4.1) is of central relevance to the natural hazard of drought, as is many of the IUCN projects in East Africa. In a few years there should be many examples of agro-ecosystems of high biodiversity value that are now more resilient to drought.

In conclusion: Each of the cases listed above are world class and serve as global exemplars. The chance of a strong contribution towards the Global Result being achieved is high.

The following could be done to improve procedures based on the sample:

- Better reporting on the physical status of sample ecosystems under better environmental management through IUCN actions
- Measures of effectiveness for disaster preparedness manuals, guidelines and approaches
- Evaluation of customer satisfaction and intent after training and other capacity building events.

Global Result 5.1: Economic, trade and investment policies better integrate biodiversity values.

Trade and investment can be less damaging to the environment if regulated based on biodiversity values. The result is about effective policy so *at least X exemplary policies enhanced by the end of the programme period (EOP) in relation to the effective inclusion of biodiversity valuation methods.*

In Ghana the team studied the Allanblackia project where 4,500 farmers in Ghana have links to an improved supply chain through a local based company that is selling locally produced Allanblackia oil to the international market. The work with Unilever means that the market is now being supplied from local to global by nearly 10,000 farmers in Ghana, Nigeria and Tanzania.

In Kenya, the team visited UNEP and met IUCN supported officers working on issues under the auspices of TRAFFIC with global links. The example below from Southern Africa is typical:

In Mozambique, TRAFFIC produced a comprehensive assessment report, 'Illegal Hunting and the Wild Meat Trade in Central Mozambique: A case-study from Coutada 9, Manica Province' that offers a way forward to safeguard the environment and promote sustainable development in the context of wildlife based land use. A major study on wild meat trade issues in Zimbabwe's southeast lowveld undertaken collaboratively as part of the EU PARESEL Programme underpinned development of a strategy to reduce poaching on the Save Valley Conservancy, address human wildlife conflict, and

improve the livelihoods of people living adjacent to the park. This includes providing community members living adjacent to the Conservancy with wild meat, the first event of this kind in Zimbabwe.

Discussions with the officer in the ESARO working on invasive species led to the team investigating aquaculture as a potentially risky business. This is very important in Thailand for instance. IUCN's Global Invasive Species Coordinator and the SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group deal with this issue – both the coordinator and the Specialist Group strongly inputted to discussions on invasive species at CBD COP10 which may lead to important policy reforms. Invasive species are a major threat to global biodiversity.

In conclusion: Each of the cases listed above are world class and serve as global exemplars. The chance of a strong contribution towards the Global Result being achieved is high.

The following could be done to improve procedures based on the sample:

- Better framework and follow up of policy effectiveness with ability to ground truth policy
- Better mechanisms for customer satisfaction and attribution with respect to policy
- Joint evaluations with TRAFFIC and CITES for mutual learning on instrument reform and enforcement approaches

Global Result 5.2: Companies, industry associations and consumer groups incorporate ecosystem values into planning and action.

Companies and consumer group can be less damaging to the environment if ecosystem values are included in plans and action. The result is about effective plans and actions so *at least X exemplary plans and actions enhanced by the end of the programme period (EOP) in relation to the effective inclusion of ecosystem values*

At the ARO the team was told that work is being carried out with twelve private sector companies in Vietnam, India, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Lao PDR, Bangladesh and China. These in the process of integrating biodiversity policies, into their corporate governing principles. Holcim Vietnam is applying corporate directives to implement biodiversity action plan.

The Allanblackia work in Ghana with Unilever should help in improving its policies and procedures on sustainable procurement of the oil. This work is also relevant to the sustainable procurement of palm oil. Oil palm plantations if, wrongly managed or grown in the wrong place can damage ecosystem services.

In India, the work with the company involved with the major (Dhamra) port has helped them to develop mitigating measures that would prevent coastal damage through biodiversity loss.

In Gland the team learned of other outputs in relation to work with private companies. These included:

- Shell's Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP) in 4 countries have been reviewed and recommendations produced, which are now resulting in the BAP process being reformulated in Shell and applied in practice in Nigeria and potentially in the Caspian Sea.
- Engagement with Rio Tinto has been signed to focus on Rio Tinto core commitment to biodiversity conservation - Net Positive Impact, where IUCN role will focus on providing Rio Tinto with tools for the verification of this commitment.
- Additional and more focused Biodiversity indicators have been included in the Oil & Gas Sector Supplement of the Global Reporting Initiative Guidelines.

In conclusion: Each of the cases listed above are world class and serve as global exemplars. The chance of a strong contribution towards the global result being achieved is high.

The following could be done to improve procedures based on the sample:

- Better framework and follow up of company action
- Better mechanisms for customer satisfaction and attribution with respect to sustainable procurement and EIA procedures
- Joint evaluations with the Rain Forest Foundation

In summary, it is important to note that the major weakness in the islands of excellence approach to assessing effectiveness is that, although numerous examples can be found of high standard work that contributes towards Global Results, the absence of a more comprehensive and robust planning, monitoring and reporting framework means there is no assessment of how much IUCN has achieved relative to what it set out to achieve. That said, it is clear that there are many islands of excellence which contribute to IUCN effectiveness across the Programme of Global Results.

Positive findings include:

- (1) Most of the results appear to be making good progress apart from results 3.1 and 3.2 which appear to be suffering due to the lack of resources. This is unfortunate as energy demand and supply is a key driver of resource use (land, water, mining etc.) and pollution. These drivers can have a significant impact on species and ecosystem services.
- (2) Some results appear to give physical and well-being benefit within a short time and also give policy/procedural reform outputs.

There are a number of potential missed opportunities for IUCN. These include:

- The use of frameworks for evaluation, demonstrating and learning on informing policy and IUCN's contribution to this.
- Metrics of publication and communication influence.
- Quantitative cost benefit, social return on investment, and Value for Money case studies to demonstrate IUCN's efficiency and effectiveness.
- Tracking of what trainees/conference attendees actually did with what they learned – behavioural change metrics etc.
- Measurement of the aggregated physical outcomes of IUCN's work in terms of restoration of X areas of ecosystem function Y (e.g. dry-land food production, improved watersheds) across the whole Global Result portfolio.
- Reporting on gender differentiated data and effects (especially in relation to results 4.1 and 4.2).

Improving Effectiveness - experience with prominent global projects: a desk review

The analysis above of Global Results shows that they fall short of clear statements that can be used to guide the programme development or define effectiveness. However, IUCN has been working through global and regional projects to improve planning, monitoring and evaluation. In order to see how these changes were implemented in practice, five prominent projects were selected for detailed review:

- Water and Nature Initiative Phase 1 and 2 (WANI) (2001-08; 2008-13)
- Livelihood and Landscapes Strategy (LLS) (2006-2009) India Component
- Mangroves for the Future Phases 1 and 2(MFF) (2007-09; 2010-13)
- Regional Conservation Programme for the Coastal and Marine Area of West Africa Phase 1 and 2 (PRCM) (2004-07; 2008-11)

- Alliances Phase 1 and 2 (Alianzas)(2004-08; 2009-11)

In all cases except LLS, the project has been continued into a second phase. The Review Team concentrated on the most recent documentation to assess the extent to which the design has adopted improved characteristics for planning, monitoring and evaluation. The five projects are all prominent in the sense they are either global initiatives (WANI and LLS) or regional and multi-regional, so they have been implemented in a number of locations.

The Review was structured to examine how recommendations set out in the 2007 Review and followed up by internal plans have been put into practice. Six issues were examined:

- Application of Theories of Change to Project Planning and M&E Processes (Review recommendation No 3)
- Evidence of Strengthening and improvement of M&E functions and resources (Review recommendation No 6)
- Enhancing capacities for strategic influencing (Review recommendation No 4)
- Strengthening IUCN as a knowledge organisation (Review recommendation No 5)
- Transforming the Project Portfolio (Review recommendation No 8)
- Application of IUCN's Results Based Management Approach

A summary of the results is given in Annex 9. The questions under each issue were assessed from project documentation. Full transcripts of the project reviews are appended in the Annex. These quote relevant text in support of the rating and give a narrative explanation.

Taking the review issues in turn:

- **Application of Theories of Change to Project Planning and M&E Processes (Review recommendation No 3)**

All five projects were found to have incorporated theory of change into the situation analysis at the project planning stage, especially in describing the nature of change desired and outlining the planned pathway of change.

Integrating theory of change into M&E was less successful. WANI 2 and Alianzas both performed best; the other three having incorporated this only to a limited extent. No projects handled risks well in the monitoring system, and the provision of SMART outcome indicators was weak.

- **Evidence of Strengthening and improvement of M&E functions and resources (Review recommendation No 6)**

Three projects had good evidence for strengthening M&E functions: WANI 2; MFF and Alianzas. LLS and PRCM had only incorporated these arrangements to a limited extent. The review of PRCM suffered from a shortfall of some information for this topic. Statements of M&E plans were mostly weak. Monitoring was mostly done for each component and all projects included some arrangements for monitoring influence on policy. Four of the project incorporated good gender disaggregated data, but reference to gender impact was limited.

- **Enhancing capacities for strategic influencing (Review recommendation No 4)**

Four projects made some provision to enhance capacity for strategic influencing. Only PRCM had no provisions.

- **Strengthening IUCN as a knowledge organisation (Review recommendation No 5)**

All five projects had some evidence about using knowledge developed by the project in the future, though arrangements in LLS were limited.

- **Transforming the Project Portfolio (Review recommendation No 8)**

All five projects show evidence of aspects that help transform the portfolio: awareness of a policy influencing strategy and linking global and regional initiatives. Arrangements to bring Members into implementation were less frequently found.

- **Application of IUCN's Results Based Management (RBM) Approach**

Broader adoption of IUCN's RBM approach has been taken up in a less consistent way. WANI 2 and Alianzas were both found to have met objectives; but the other three were all less comprehensive. Lack of verified reporting, poor use of monitoring for learning and adaptive management and poor evidence of management response to evaluations all indicate that whilst the technical aspects of M&E are being adopted, the use of information lags behind.

In summary, analysis of major global and selected country specific projects shows increasing effectiveness and relevance based on the results chain and logical framework approach linked to assistance on results based management. The situation is better at this level in the organisation than at the Programme and Global Results level where there are still missed opportunities in the following areas.

1. Identification of clear resolvable problems, with clear owners.
2. Setting out a results chain that shows the assumptions made at each stage and addressing questions in relation to any planned action such as: Is it plausible. Is it achievable? Is it verifiable and is it worthwhile?

A number of results and especially possible headline news is not being captured and reported to the Framework Partners. These include

1. Outputs and behavioural results (especially high level diplomatic) produced by member organisations
2. High impact breakthrough documents (judged by peers) produced by IUCN or in collaboration with other organisations. An example of an extremely high quality and influential publication here is "Rights based Approaches" (Campese *et.al.* 2009)⁷ which is a CIFOR/IUCN product.
3. High quality outputs and behavioural results by Commission members. Examples here are include major reports on the oil industry and the effects of mining
4. Organisations produced or enhanced by IUCN e.g. IIED, UNEP-WCMC; etc
5. Outputs and behavioural results produced by service functions. Examples here include REDD advisory services or services provided for UNESCO

Some of the possible underpinnings to the lack of reporting on headline news and suggestions on how it could be improved are analysed in the next section.

2.5.4 Inferring IUCN purpose and effectiveness from key IUCN documents

Defining a purpose for IUCN Programme is beyond the terms of reference for this Review. Carrying out an ex-post effectiveness review of the programme to date using a specially constructed purpose is also beyond the scope of the Review. The aim of this section is to establish some sensible, evidence-based inferences on the nature of IUCN's purpose and the implications of these for programme effectiveness.

As a way of trying to strengthen the programme purpose there has been significant good work done

⁷ Campese J, Sunderland T, Greiber T, Oviedo G (eds) 2009. Rights based approaches: Exploring issues and opportunities for conservation. CIFOR and IUCN. Bogor Indonesia

by the Programme and Policy Group to facilitate the production of a set of Global Results to be achieved within a four-year period. IUCN is a Member organisation so consultation with and endorsement by Members is a constitutional requirement.

Survey work has shown that these Global Results have had a good effect on aligning the three strands of IUCN together so they are focussed on a common endeavour. They have also helped with the alignment of the different parts of the Secretariat in terms of HQ, Regional Offices, Country Offices and Project Offices.

Three sets of documents were analysed as part of a search for a programme purpose or at least the elements of a programme purpose.

- The first set - **Legal documents** - relate to the declared legal aims of IUCN itself, namely (1) the original constitutional act (Analyses in section 2.3) and (2) the current statutes analysed in the geographical setting or “footprint” of the organisation.
- The second set – **Programme documents** - relate to the programme documents; (3) IUCN (2008a) Shaping a sustainable future. The IUCN Programme 2009-12 and (4) IUCN (2011) The draft IUCN Programme Nature + 2013-2016.
- The third set – **Framework Partner documents** - relate to the question: What do the framework donors think is the purpose of IUCN and its programme and why do they fund the programme? The key document for analysis here is the template for the framework donor agreement.

These three sets are reviewed in turn, followed by a short analysis of the nature of the Global Results, and summarised with respect to the implications for IUCN’s Programme purpose.

Set 1: Legal documents

The Constituency Act

The analysis of Niche in section 2.3 based on the Constituency Act, indicated that a programme purpose can be inferred as:

‘At least X partners/clients are satisfied that IUCN has credibly contributed to achieve desired specified attribute targets for the management of special areas as national or international level by date Y.’

This would have indicators related to customer satisfaction; (1) the number of “credible letters of thanks” and or the attribute targets for special areas with national or internationally designated environmental importance such as

- (2) X area is adequately protected in order to retain agreed species or specified ecosystem services.
- (3) Rate of species loss is held to an agreed limit.

It should be noted here that there is nothing to stop IUCN receiving credible letters of thanks from a wide variety of clients including global citizens (worried about the resilience of the planet) or specified groups such as vulnerable women in forest dwelling communities who have agreed on specific aspects of one or both the indicators for reasons of wellbeing.

The Statutes (IUCN 2008b)⁸

⁸ IUCN 2008b Statutes and Regulations, ISBN 978-2-8317-0794-5

These do not replace the constituency act but update implementation. Key questions are: (1) has it improved clarity and realism? And (2) has it incorporated the latest scientific findings?

Taking the objects from the document and dividing them into numbered sections gives:

“(1) to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and (2) to ensure that any use of natural resources is (a) equitable and (b) ecologically sustainable”

In terms of clarity, realism and coherence (scientific rigor) the above formulation shows a marked deterioration from the Constituency Act. The integrity of nature cannot be measured. Measurement of the diversity of nature is also problematic owing to the arbitrary choice of taxa, geographical and temporal scale, and level of biological organisation. The idea that a membership organisation can ensure that the use of natural resources is equitable is unrealistic. Measurement of ecological sustainability is also problematic. A world with no mammals (including humans) could still be ecological sustainable.

The term equitable however is useful (provocative) in that it forces the organisation to consider access and benefits in relation to the beneficiaries and source entities that are the focus of attention.

Whilst the external Review is not charged with developing the best precise scientific indicators the approach here based on appreciative inquiry is to propose a set of provocative “generic indicators”.

Based on the above analysis the generic indicators are:

1. Resilient planet (Disasters and regional neighbour nuisance less frequent, planetary boundary approaches etc)
2. Resilient local nature (species and areas etc)
3. Resilient local people (living in or next to the landscapes of concern)
4. Resilient economy (contribution to GDP and may be in conflict with 3.)

The world could look to IUCN to define these in more detail through scientific and democratic means as a major contribution to global public goods. This line of thinking if continued leads to the idea of “unexpected or hidden results” of IUCN including:

- Relevance, impact and effectiveness of conservation and natural resources linked endeavours defined and improved by the provision of monitoring and evaluation services. (Note IUCN performs this functional already by such services as the screening of world heritage applications for UNESCO.)
- Relevance, impact and effectiveness of conservation and natural resources linked endeavours defined and improved by facilitating the creation of new self-sustaining bodies, instruments, and organisations. (An underexploited example here is to ask what strategic and franchise/licensing lessons has IUCN learned from its role as instigator/mother/midwife in the creation of WWF, IIED, UNEP-WCMC etc?)

Reflecting on the above:

- (1) For niche it could be inferred that IUCN was seen as dual purpose: *a trusted (scientific case) independent (non aligned) actor and (official?) monitor (for equitable and sustainable use of resources) facilitating actions on the ground by assisting societies through capacity building and advisory services and (2) a monitor.*

This raises a key question for IUCN today: Does IUCN have the remit to be an implementer?

- (2) A derived programme purpose for IUCN could be *At least X partners/clients are satisfied that IUCN has helped them to achieve desired specified attribute targets for the management of special areas at national or international level as confirmed by verification of equity and environmental sustainability targets set by an agreed source with reference to all spatial scales.*

This raises two very important questions: Who is setting the targets? And is IUCN only let off the hook if targets for all four generic indicators are met? In other words if it does the impossible

The statutes do not address oversight issues or indicate how the status of IUCN as a designated observer to the UN may be used to galvanise its work.

IUCN has incorporated the latest scientific concerns about effects at the level of the planet and citizen concerns about global and national governance issues. Clarity and realism, however, appear to have suffered.

There is no recognition of the footprint of IUCN as delineated by its history, programme duration, organisational constraints and geography (See Annex 14 on Geography)

Set 2: Programme documents

2009-2010 Strategy Document, (Moving Toward a 2020 vision for IUCN),

The document states that:

“IUCN provides the knowledge-based platform to connect practice to policy at global and local levels and to influence decisions and actions about the sustainability of the Earth and its people.”

The statement is good because it states IUCN’s ability to draw on knowledge, link the global to the local, and brings about change in policy and knowledge and supports the purpose formulation derived from the Constituency Act.

The IUCN Programme 2009-12

The 45-page document is of the correct length given the level of explanation required by a broad audience. It is well written with good detail on context (global environmental situation analysis) and the case for support. It shows better focus than previous programme documents.

The document also provides themes (Global Results nested within thematic programme areas) that help the constituent parts of the organisations align in their delivery.

Lost opportunities relate to the absence of:

1. Programme purpose or linked targets/indicators
2. Practical lessons learned from the previous programme in the quest for impact and sustainability and the strategy and tactics arising from it
3. Theory of change and statement of linked assumptions and any key scientific hypotheses
4. Statement of niche (Unique Selling Point) of IUCN and description to show how this relates to the work of other actors. Note the Value Proposition is presented as IUCN’s unique role. The Review survey has shown that the Value Proposition could apply to UNEP, WWF and many others
5. Global Results with (1) quantity or quality indicators or time bound targets or (2) examples of activities leading to their attainment or (3) indicative costs of attainment in financial and human resource terms

6. Brief (less than one page) details of monitoring evaluation and quality/risk control
7. Organisational change results requested by donors
8. A simple (less than one page) outline overall workplan showing milestones and elements of the M&E plan e.g. baseline data collection, mid-term review, effectiveness/impact analysis completion date.

The draft IUCN Programme Nature+ 2013-2016, May 2011

The document shows evidence of how a more result oriented approach is taking effect and is a big improvement on the previous programme in this respect. It features a chain of logic that starts with inputs and delivers impact. It lists some general assumptions.

It is good to see the planning schedule with a 17 month timeline for consultations, editing and final acceptance of the document from first draft (May 2011) to approval at the World Conservation Congress (September 2012)

The document has fewer themes (energy has been dropped) with fewer Global Results showing that decisions have been made to improve realism. Again the result formulations help the constituent parts of the organisations align in their delivery

The document has a clear policy guide to improve relevance (Nagoya CBD plan 2011-2020) at the level of global conventions. Annex 1 gives time-bound targets for biodiversity agreed in Nagoya. Consideration of "Aichi targets" is a major move forward and this will help IUCN to think about result indicators. By listing an IUCN result as a target the indicator becomes very simple. For example Protected areas type A of standard B increased by 20% using 2013 baseline as a result could use an indicator of "percentage"

The form of the Aichi targets with its reference to protected areas and species could be used to formulate a goal statement

Inclusion of food security as a result area shows that learning has occurred and the programme has been modified to improve relevance.

Given the significant improvements, there are also a number of potential lost opportunities within the document. IUCN could have gone further in its analysis of how to operationalise and facilitate the Aichi targets by comment on realism and lack of indicators and sources of verification. The table on IUCN's contribution is a positive improvement but is rather vague.

Although an improvement on the 2009-12 Programme, the document could still has the omissions listed below

1. Programme purpose or linked targets/indicators
2. Practical lessons learned from the previous programme in the quest for impact and sustainability and the strategy and tactics arising from it
3. Theory of change and statement of linked assumptions and any key scientific hypotheses. The IUCN results chain and assumptions section on page 8 is not adequate as terms are not defined and assumptions are too generic (actually they are general risks)
4. Statement of niche (USP) of IUCN and statement to show how this relates to the work of other actors. Note the Value Proposition is presented as IUCN's unique role. The Review survey has shown that the Value Proposition could as well apply to UNEP, WWF and many others.

5. Global Results with (1) quantity or quality indicators or time bound targets or (2) examples of activities leading to their attainment or (3) indicative costs of attainment in financial and human resource terms
6. Acknowledgement and use of the concept of its footprint. (See Annex 14)
7. Brief (less than one page) details of monitoring evaluation and quality/risk control
8. Organisational change results requested by donors
9. A simple (less than one page) outline overall workplan showing milestones and elements of the M&E plan e.g. baseline data collection, mid-term review, effectiveness/impact analysis completion date.

Set 3: Framework Partner documents

Template for the framework donor agreements - IUCN (2009)⁹

The Template for the framework partner agreements - IUCN (2009) is of pivotal importance in relation to the management of relevance and effectiveness and the balance of responsibilities between IUCN senior management and the representatives of the donor partners. The political pressures on National Governments in Europe for greater aid effectiveness mean that they are in a state of flux with rapidly changing management systems, approaches and priorities. This means there is a greater urgency for partners to give information and advice to IUCN so that relevance and reporting systems can be adjusted for maximum harmony and synergy.

Signed documents for a sample of framework donors during the 2009-12 quadrennial were analysed. The percentage in brackets refers to the percentage of core funds (Total CHF 22.2 million) that they contribute: AFD of France (4.8%), SDC Switzerland (9.6%), Sida Sweden (19.9%), Norad Norway (11.9%), DGIS Netherlands (20.2%), Danida Denmark (18.3%), and Ministry of Foreign Affairs Finland (7.5%).

The documents are largely the same apart from France which appended numerous supporting papers. The agreement consists of two parts: (1) A header document that outlines the Union's unique role, the programme, an explanation about framework agreements, and a set of principles for framework partners and (2) The contract.

The header document contains no programme purpose, or Global Results (only the thematic programme areas). On page 3 it claims that "the programme is fully results based" and "incorporates indicators and measures of success for each result at global and component programme level to monitor progress." The section on framework agreements (page 4) talks of "targeted impacts" and on page 5 "leverage of additional resources for programme implementation". The principles (page 5) refer to "joint reporting requirements....set by the group", "two day annual progress meetings" and "regular interactions".

The legal realities in the contract are as follows:

- Article 1. No statement of programme purpose only reference to the programme document "shaping a sustainable future" which also does not have a purpose.
- Article 3. Infers that the programmes contribution (*purpose to overall objective*) to (A) international targets for reducing the rate of biodiversity loss and (B) the millennium goals will be monitored and reported. It does not contain any targets or indicators for the attainment of the 10 Global Results but does contain a list of 7 organisational results. Tables 1-3 in Section 2.5.6 on theory of change show best practice in monitoring and reporting for the 19 elements and sets them in a theory of change (level of intervention logic) framework.

⁹ IUCN 2009 IUCN Framework Agreement 2009-2012

Contribution of the Global Results to defining a programme purpose

It has already been stated that the power of the Global Results is severely constrained by the lack of a clear programme purpose and the lack of indicators. Further comments are summarised below in relation to all ten results in the 2009-12 Programme.

| Result | Comment |
|--|---|
| Global Result 1.1: Biodiversity-related policies and governance systems enable action towards the achievement of biodiversity conservation. | Very difficult to monitor as action by who is not clear and the time delay for effects on the ground is so long that ex-post analysis is more relevant than current projects. Are the IUCN costs clearly accounted for across all Commissions and the work of national committees? Policy attribution can be politically sensitive. |
| Global Result 1.2: IUCN standards, tools and knowledge for sustainable natural resource management are available and actions are taken for biodiversity conservation including effective management of global and regional common natural resources. | As above |
| Global Result 2.1: Climate change mitigation and adaptation policies and practice include biodiversity concerns from local to global level. | Very difficult to verify the point when enough concerns are included. Who sets the standard on the quality and quantity of concerns? |
| Global Result 2.2: Natural resource management policies and strategies to adapt to the impacts of climate change are adopted and implemented. | Adopted/implemented by whom? What is the time frame? |
| Global Result 3.1: Energy policies and strategies mitigate the impact of the growing energy demand on biodiversity. | The word mitigate is inappropriate. Better not to have a bad policy than try to mitigate its effects. |
| Global Result 3.2: Ecosystem services that underpin sustainable and equitable energy are incorporated in energy policies and strategies. | Who decides on what is equitable? Better to identify which are the focal energy sources than try to cover everything. |
| Global Result 4.1: Development policies and strategies support vulnerable and poor stakeholders, especially women, to sustainably manage ecosystems for improved livelihoods. | This is extraordinarily broad and covers the global aid agenda. It is also conceptually flawed in that an ecosystem could be sustainably managed for improved livelihood with drastically reduced biodiversity in many areas. |
| Global Result 4.2: Sustainable environmental management reduces vulnerability to natural hazards and conflicts. | Very broad and contentious. Not all hazards and conflicts can be reduced through natural resources interventions. |
| Global Result 5.1: Economic, trade and investment policies better integrate biodiversity values. | Who decides when enough biodiversity values have been integrated? Not all economic trade and investment actions have a biodiversity link so why not focus or at least develop a functional classification. |

| Result | Comment |
|--|-----------|
| Global Result 5.2: Companies, industry associations and consumer groups incorporate ecosystem values into planning and action. | As above. |

A summary of the key findings of the analysis of the Global Results indicates that: include:

1. A major limitation of the results is that it is difficult to conceptualise a time-bound 'end point' from each result or how each result contributes to the achievement of a coherent purpose.
2. Statements of results are good for getting people to start to coalesce around common objectives.
3. The language is not readily understandable by citizens, and may be difficult or impossible to translate culturally and linguistically in many key settings.
4. The formulation of the results does not give clarity and focus and in some cases there are issues of coherence if not a very dense packing of assumptions.
5. Applying accurate cost figures to each result may be difficult.
6. The formulation of the results makes management very difficult (increases costs) for linking project effects, assessing progress (absence of end points) verifying results (independent monitoring) and demonstrating contribution.
7. They are all linked to rationalising the efficacy of donor funded projects and may under-represent the core competences in the organisation of research, scholarship, curriculum development/ education, diplomacy, evaluation, and practical products that can be used by citizens.
8. There is little rationale about why IUCN should be involved in some results when others can make more of a contribution, and who in the organisation should allocate resources according to results.

Overall, the fundamental weakness is that the Global Results do not empower IUCN Senior Management to develop the programme or allocate resources according to proven results. The danger of this is that it prevents IUCN from focussing scarce resources on strategic priorities / activities which are delivering results, and instead helps maintain the allocation of resources to an ever increasing number of areas, often according to historical precedent.

In summary, the aim of this section was to establish some sensible, evidence-based inferences on the nature of IUCN's purpose and the implications of these for programme effectiveness. The major suggestions for IUCN based on this analysis are that:

1. The programme should have a purpose that encapsulates elements concerned with reducing the rate of biodiversity loss and the most relevant MDGs. The programme has an end date and a geographic footprint so target setting is possible
2. The indicators of purpose should include objectively verifiable representations of progress towards resilient nature, resilient planet, resilient local people and resilient economy expressed in a way that can be verified by a lay person
3. IUCN is in a strong position to develop these indicators through research and improve the quality of the MDGs and other systems for assessing human development.
4. In the absence of a programme purpose, IUCN will continue to struggle to credibly assess the relative effectiveness and contribution of the Global Results.

5. In the absence of a programme purpose, IUCN cannot assess impact in any convincing way across the whole organisation.
6. The Global Results do not enable Senior Management to develop the Programme, maintain relevance, or allocate resources according to proven results.
7. An organisational development result needs to be developed with indicators in a manner that can be verified by Framework Donors.
8. At the very least a progress report to donors and others should be able to show the extent of (1) real conservation progress on the ground, (2) real progress in terms of human wellbeing on the ground, (3) Testimonials of the quality of policy influence and resulting action from pivotal decision makers, (4) Impact of publications (5) Details of any outstanding innovation and or lessons learned

2.5.5 Improving IUCN effectiveness – Theory of Change and Results Framework

Picking up on the analysis above which set out some of the limitations to assessing effectiveness given the constraints inherent with the current definition of the Programme’s purpose and results, the following section discusses how best to verify and improve the effectiveness of the programme through a theory of change approach and a coherent results framework.

One of the most important factors in relation to improving effectiveness is the notion of strategy and planning. The following section looks at IUCN’s theories of change and results framework as two essential components of planning for effectiveness.

IUCN’s Theory of Change and the management of effectiveness

The review team analysed a number of documents in order to identify theories of change operating in IUCN. The table below indicates these at different levels in the organisation

To put the idea of theory of change into the process of monitoring and evaluation, it may be best practice to insert some correct language or terms:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Where do you want to get to? | <i>Programme purpose</i> |
| 2. What changes in people’s behaviour will be required in order to get there? | <i>Behavioural results¹⁰</i> |
| 3. What physical things can you produce that could bring about this change in behaviour? | <i>Outputs</i> |
| 4. What assumptions are you making when you go from 3 to 2. | <i>Development assumptions</i> |
| 5. What assumptions are you making when you go from 2 to 1. | <i>Development assumptions</i> |
| 6. Have you made things clear and simple? i.e. Clear language understandable to a lay person. | <i>SMART Objectively verifiable indicators, means of verification and intervention logic that is clear coherent and realistic</i> |

Intervention assumptions and theory of change

¹⁰ Behavioural results are key changes in response to the outputs that IUCN helps to deliver. In development projects this stage of objectives is commonly referred to as Outcomes, but that term has not been defined and adopted by IUCN.

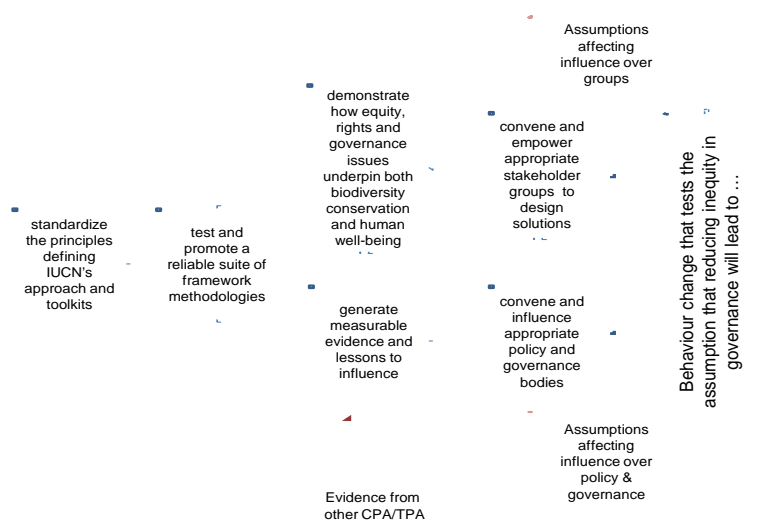
IUCN’s strategy for change during 2009-12 continued to be based on a Knowledge – Empowerment – Governance model established in the 2005-2008 Programme. IUCN generates knowledge in order to empower people and organisations to develop and implement governance systems at different levels to enhance biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources for human well-being. The 2007 Review recommended that IUCN should instigate a process to ‘*deepen understanding and more clearly articulate and test the assumptions (theories of change) that underpin how (IUCN) aims to strategically influence society on conservation issues*’.

This recommendation has not yet been acted upon to any significant extent. In neither the 2009-12 Programme nor the April 20th draft of the 2013-2016 Programme is the term ‘theory of change’ used explicitly.¹¹

The statement of approach is said to be a manifestation of a theory of change for the programme. The Review Team have assessed these statements in the draft programme document. Two of the five programme areas present approaches that convey the elements of a theory of change: CPA2: Sharing nature’s benefits fairly and equitably; and TPA4: Managing Ecosystems to Improve Food Security. For illustration, the Review Team has transformed the text for CPA2 into a diagram of the change process, shown here in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

Diagram of the generic theory of change for CPA2: Sharing nature's benefits fairly & equitably



Source: Review Team’s interpretation

The diagram adds the implicit link to learning from other IUCN component programmes and assumptions about the influence IUCN might have. All these steps in the process outlined in the figure including the overall assumption about testing the impact from governance-related behaviour change would need to be planned in component programmes.

Explicit theories of change with testable (learning) assumptions are essential at the organisational level as the credibility of IUCN depends on a high level of assumption testing in order to achieve impact and advance the body of knowledge.

¹¹ IUCN defines a theory of change as ‘describing a process of planned social change, from the assumption that guide its design to the long-term goals it seeks to achieve. It helps draw logical connections between activities and outcomes and articulate exactly what propositions and assumptions the work is testing’. (Reference / Source document)

Table 4 Hypothetical Theories of Change

| Question | Theory at the level of the <i>whole organisation</i> | Theory at the level of the <i>core programme</i> | Theory at the level of the <i>Global Result of 'Development policies and strategies support vulnerable and poor stakeholders, especially women, to sustainably manage ecosystems for improved livelihoods'</i> |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1. Where do you want to get to? | <i>A switch to sustainable development</i> | <i>Rate of biodiversity loss reduced by 2020</i> | <i>Designated Forest area in Cameroon conserved with the help of poor people supported by REDD+ payments</i> |
| 2. What changes in people's behaviour will be required in order to get there? | <i>Global citizens think carefully about what they do today so that they do not consume too much or do injudicious actions that will stop biodiversity replenishing itself as the bountiful provider</i> | <i>People drafting the plan and targets insert the appropriate text</i> | <i>People designing REDD+ pilots adopt readily monitorable approaches to forest restoration</i> |
| 3. What physical things can you produce that could bring about this change in behaviour? | <i>We could produce a book called the world conservation strategy</i> | <i>Briefing notes, large group of people available as resource persons in the right place at the right time, data and facts that can be drawn on as evidence as to why the text should be formulated in a certain way</i> | <i>A demonstration project, published participatory forest management reports and manuals, people available as consultants in the right place at the right time, and biodiversity studies.</i> |
| 4. What assumptions are you making when you go from 3 to 2. | <i>That people get access to the book. That people read and understand the book. That the book does not make them despair and do the opposite of what we had hoped. That the readers have the luxury of time to think and are not in a state of starvation where the future is dominated by concerns of where the next meal will come from.</i> | <i>That the people find the notes people and data credible. That we need to send a large group of people. That our credibility is not undermined if we "adopt a position" in relevant fora. Etc.</i> | <i>That demonstrations on the ground are more influential than high level economic cost benefit analyses. That designers have the time to look at complicated things. That the development of REDD+ pilots follows a rational and measured path Etc.</i> |
| 5. What assumptions are you making when you go from 2 to 1. | <i>That people know what we mean by Resilient Planet and we can monitor progress in achieving this together. That it is not too late in terms of irreversible climate change. That the book readers are in positions of power or leverage. Etc.</i> | <i>That the global agreement causes a change in national policies and procedures. That the government has the financial resources and political will to support these policies and procedures. That people attach urgency to these targets. That the targets will eventually affect biodiversity on the ground at critical locations by a certain date. That top down approaches are more effective than bottom up rights based approaches on the ground Etc.</i> | <i>That REDD + will be more successful than countless previous initiatives in the sustainable management of tropical forests. That poor people can get payments and be looked after in Countries with a record of poor governance and corruption. That the REDD+ process will not speed up deforestation so that the powerful can (1) get profit through conversion before any legislation or (2) establish a super high deforestation rate on which to base the reference payments on Etc.</i> |
| 6. Have you made things clear and simple? | <i>People may not be clear about what is meant by sustainable development or biodiversity. It may not be simple to measure these things either. Etc. But let us try and we can then learn from testing these assumptions.</i> | <i>People may not be clear about what is meant by harmony with nature, access to genetic resources, or biodiversity. It may not be simple to measure these things either. Etc. But let us try and we can then learn from testing these assumptions.</i> | <i>People may not be clear about what is meant by forest restoration or a judicious form of REDD. It may not be simple to measure these things either. Etc. But let us try and we can then learn from testing these assumptions.</i> |

Key questions to ask about IUCN's theory of change are given below with a 'provocative proposition', perception or question posed by some of those interviewed (in italics):

Is it plausible? Do the donors, commissions, members, secretariat staff and outsiders, feel that the model is correct and can get the change in the world that they all want to see? *Is policy work not linked to a "rights based approach" and "rigorous ground truthing" a waste of time?*

Is it achievable? Do the donors, commissions, members, and secretariat staff have the adequate human (intellectual), economic (safe funding), and political (lack of conflict of interest + support of enough citizens and national governments) to get the change in the world that they want to see? *In some situations (companies or countries) line departments responsible for forest protection may be corrupt and obtain payments linked to the amount of forest destroyed. How will IUCN deal with this given its stance on government members and protocol with the "private sector"?*

Is it verifiable? Do the commissions, members, and secretariat staff have systems in place to show learning in ways that are credible through presenting verifiable base lines and useful mistakes? *In reading any IUCN report, what space is given to mistakes made and lessons learned (through assumption testing) or methodological difficulties in baselines and randomised statistically significant approaches? Is this giving rise to internal concerns about lack of rigor? Do framework partners read papers in Science or Nature? Assumption testing could be maybe something that a University could do.*

Is it worthwhile? Do donors, commissions, members, secretariat staff and outsiders see important meaningful and large scale changes in the world as a result of IUCN actions? *Where are the biodiversity conservation successes? Why worry about the great crested newt when we know today that one third of the world's children under five are so undernourished that they will be permanently stunted physically and mentally? Most people outside the conservation fraternity have never heard of IUCN. The Convention on Biological Diversity has been a complete waste of time. In IUCN we simply do not have the time to spend on attribution and don't you see that it would be politically unacceptable?*

Based on evidence presented throughout this report, the external review team feel that those involved in the management and improvement of the programme are missing major opportunities in all of the areas above. In addition the work of the team (especially in relation to effectiveness analysis) is made infinitely more difficult through any shortcomings in the above.

Improvements in relation to theory of change

The 2013-16 Programme draft does take a more structured approach to developing the core and thematic programmes. Two innovations demonstrate the changes. Firstly, each of the programme areas sets out a situation analysis which includes a justification for IUCN's involvement, followed by a statement of IUCN's planned approach. Secondly, the Core Programme Area: Valuing and Conserving Biodiversity, for the first time is able to link the work of IUCN directly to targets in a global plan, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity.

The March 2011 Draft Strategy Paper: Bridging Gaps Building Foundations has an excellent analysis of the drivers of change, IUCN's comparative advantage, and focuses on key actors of change. This is a major improvement in approach to strategy apart from the missed opportunity to answer the questions:

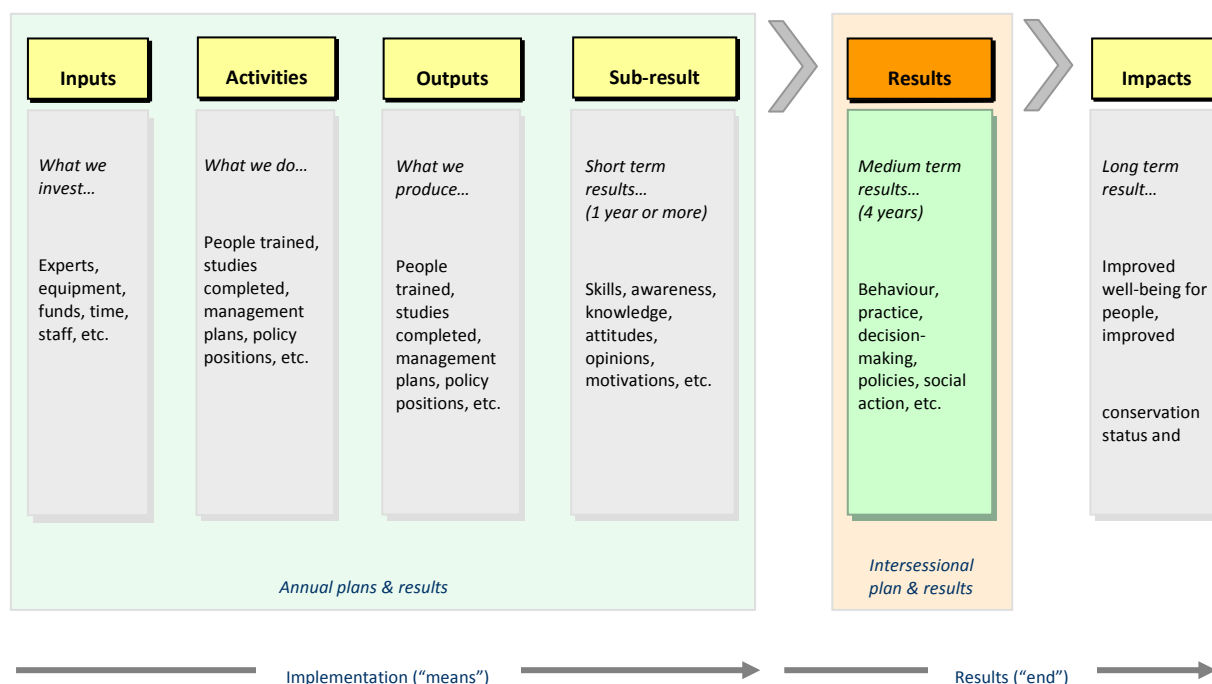
- Are the actions plausible?
- Are the actions achievable?
- Are they verifiable?
- And are the worthwhile?

IUCN's Framework of Results

The results chain work in the “user guidelines for developing IUCN Component Programme Plans 2009-2012 page 11” is a good start in relation to results oriented management and the reporting verification of effectiveness and impact. It could be improved however if physical outputs and behavioural results were clearly distinguished.

Figure 2

What are results?



Source: User Guidelines for developing IUCN Component Programme Plans 2009-2012 p11

The approach follows a conventional results chain using the term ‘results’ to cover stages between outputs and impact. Clear guidance is given in the accompanying text, to explain that this stage is associated with behavioural change: ¹²

A result can include:

- a change in behaviour in individuals or institutions;
- a change in governance, legal or institutional arrangements that will bring about a desired behavioural change;
- an immediate change in condition or trend of human or ecosystem well-being that is intended to contribute to the logic of the programme (i.e. by generating knowledge to change a behaviour, by providing the conditions under which the behaviour will change and/or trigger a governance, legal or institutional arrangement change).

A component programme result statement must have the following attributes:

- Clearly identifies the immediate or intermediate change in behaviour, governance arrangement or condition of human or ecosystem wellbeing;
- Achievable in a four-year time span;
- Clearly measurable;
- Clearly identifies what success will look like when it occurs.

¹² IUCN (2011) User Guidelines for developing IUCN Component Programme Plans 2009-2012 p11

The text acknowledges the importance of indicators, noting that ‘you will know that an outcome has been properly formed when the measure (or indicator(s)) is abundantly clear and you know what success will look like after four years’.

Although the guidance is comprehensive and clearly presented, it is perhaps unfortunate that the word ‘results’ was adopted for this stage. To develop competence in programme planning it is essential that everyone is familiar with the distinctions between activities (what IUCN does), outputs (delivery of knowledge products and services that IUCN can be held accountable for); and the behavioural change (short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes) that is increasingly beyond IUCN’s control / sphere of influence, but which is the purpose of the component’s work.

The word ‘results’ is too widely used in common parlance as a generic collective term for anything the programme achieves to be of help in strengthening the planning process. Indeed, there is a danger that it is seen as little more than a comfortable buzzword, for which the term ‘fuzzword’ has been coined. The fuzziness creates a ‘normative resonance’ that makes everyone feel good. It aims to please as many people as possible without revealing which precise meaning they personally favour.¹³ A more precise term would be preferable. Outcome is in wide use but is not universal and, in common with other gradations of objective in English, (output, result, impact) does not necessarily translate well into other languages

A key point to make here is that different behavioural results and outputs can occur at any time in a project from the first week to many years after project funding has stopped. Secondly unexpected results may turn out to be the most important in terms of people’s lives and species populations. For instance in some settings the grain sacks used in World Food Programme endeavours turned out to have more long term benefit to poor people (useful in their livelihoods) than the free food (which can put farmers out of business). This latter point is why ex post monitoring of other peoples projects is often more powerful for learning lessons while you are trying to manage your own project.

Missing results

A ‘provocative proposition’ would be that only a small proportion of IUCN outputs and behavioural results come from field projects. The others come from a very long list of entities that include:

1. Outputs and behavioural results (especially high level diplomatic) produced by member organisations
2. High impact breakthrough documents produced by IUCN or in collaboration with other organisations. An example of an extremely high quality and influential publication here is “Rights based Approaches” (Campese *et.al.* 2009) which is a CIFOR/IUCN product.
3. Outputs and behavioural results by Commission members. Examples here are include major reports on the oil industry and the effects of mining
4. Organisations produced or enhanced by IUCN e.g. IIED, UNEP-WCMC; etc
5. Outputs and behavioural results produced by service functions. Examples here include REDD advisory services or services provided to UNESCO

In conclusion the User Guidelines for developing IUCN Component Programme Plans 2009-2012 are an important and significant contribution to the improvement of the management of effectiveness in IUCN with reference to a results chain.

¹³ Oxfam GB (2010) Deconstructing Development Discourse. Buzzwords and Fuzzwords ed. Andrea Cornwall and Deborah Eade

2.5.6 Reporting on effectiveness headlines, impact and constraints to the framework partners and others

Relevance and effectiveness monitoring systems appear to be improving, but this review has shown that there is still a long way to go. Reporting and presentations still appear to lack substantiated and representative headline news - beyond individual success stories. Before concluding the analysis of niche, relevance and effectiveness, this section draws together some findings on what structural constraints exist to better reporting, what is a reasonable rate of change for achieving results based management, and provides a suggestion on a reporting template for discussion with the Framework Partners.

How does IUCN define and manage local and global impact?

Within IUCN, the measurement and management of impact is devolved to projects and officers involved in policy and knowledge product work using the results change approach outlined earlier. Many of the Secretariat staff interviewed felt that impact was something that happens in the future and should be assessed by specialists. To some extent this is correct but there could be a system in IUCN where staff are asked to notify an impact assessment and characterisation unit or cell.

The results chain work in the use guidelines for developing IUCN Component Programme Plans 2009-2012 page 11 is a good start in relation to assessing local Impact but is not sufficient to raise awareness the global impact. Global impact cannot be measured, monitored or verified without a formulation of a goal and programme purpose. In simple terms these are the events that happen beyond the direct sphere of influence or system boundary of the IUCN Programme. Examples here include:

1. Influential staff members who learned their skills in IUCN and then move on to other organisations around the world to bring about change based on what they learned.
2. Policy and instrument changes that are unpredictable, or off the radar screen. Hypothetical examples could be that someone uses the Red List approach for valuable cultural objects.
3. Technology transfer. A hypothetical example could be a remote ocean pH measuring system developed by IUCN is now used in geology.
4. Publications: IUCN does not effectively measure the impact of its knowledge products in terms of informing policy or influencing practice.

The European Commission have been focussing on global impact by using appreciative ex-post approaches as part of ROM and this has yielded many positive findings.

How can external reporting be improved?

One of IUCN's unique strengths is that its work encompasses 'sample' (test) landscape / ecosystems or areas (e.g. a forest or a sentinel landscape), that it learns from and can apply this learning to develop general principles and provide robust evidence for policy reform. IUCN enhancing its reporting to Framework Partners based on linking evidence-based learning from the field directly to policy and practice would allow the organisation to more credibly claim and communicate the following potential missed opportunities:

- Headline news of major breakthroughs and successes with clear attribution based on some form of evaluation of effectiveness and impact.
- Sharing of problems encountered, failures and the resulting lessons learned in a way that can be shared with the partners as the basis for constructive discussion and mutual learning.
- High level 'exemplar' case study results that demonstrate innovative new thinking or knowledge, show outstanding positive cost benefit , or demonstrate attractiveness for uptake by others.

- Reputation enhancing news that clearly show the effectiveness of key products such as the Red List and the rigor used in screening activities such as application for World Heritage status and in the assessment of the quality of management in protected areas. This, in turn, would enhance and strengthen IUCN as a 'brand' that has a distinct niche and value relevant to today's conservation and biodiversity challenges.

In order for this enhanced reporting to be enacted, further assistance may be required on:

- Reporting on a representative sample of programme results as opposed to the entire portfolio.
- Establishing politically acceptable attribution from IUCN activities right up to impact in terms of policy or change in practice. It is not unreasonable to ask an official to produce a note of thanks saying how IUCN's input has made a contribution and how they see things possibly progressing in the future. This and other forms of customer satisfaction appear to be missing from the quality evaluation process.
- Clarifying the meaning of global results, physical outputs and behavioural results by using indicators in a way that could be understood by citizens.
- Showing what activities were behind the result as part of a critical examination of efficiency, detailing a clear and connected results pathway (or theory of change) attributable to IUCN.
- Taking baselines and using targets on order to show verifiable progress.
- Producing cost data for each of the global results so that financial effectiveness can be assessed.
- Testing assumptions that the physical outputs and behavioural results lead to the global results and the learning that results from assumptions are being supported.

In summary, although significant progress has been made in establishing a results-based system, further development and clarity of reporting based on the system could benefit IUCN.

Are there any key words and concepts that may be challenging to measure in an operationally useful and objectively verifiable way?

There are many of these such as 'sustainable development', 'good governance', 'wellbeing', 'ecosystem services' etc. Perhaps the term of pivotal relevance to IUCN is "biodiversity conservation". Biodiversity is a kind of synonym for nature that recognises the number of species, ecosystems, and variation within a species in an area. Measuring three things leads to the problem of discriminating where the sum of diversity is the same. Is a system with 95 species, 5 ecosystems and 500 varieties any more bio-diverse than one with 99 species, 1 ecosystem and 500 varieties for instance? How do we proceed when we know that we cannot identify many of the species and do not have the tools for understanding sub species variation? The Western classification of sub species variation is based on phylogeny (connections through evolution). Who is to say that this should reign supreme over functional classifications that are often part of indigenous knowledge systems?

What does conservation mean? Some would say that it means the rational management of resources. But who defines rational for whom and how are different cultural definitions of resources to be dealt with and over what time scale?

It may be useful to use proxy indicators to give clarity by stating that the idea is to maintain populations of key species within certain limits in a delineated area or to ensure that at least X hectares of a specified habitat is protected within a country using an updatable and independently verifiable checklist for best practice.

The above should be seen as a major opportunity and a challenge for IUCN to test and operationalise indicators that improve clarity and communication, as well as provide all those with an interest in IUCN's work (but particularly the Framework Partners) with a headline metric by which IUCN's success can be measured over time.

What is a realistic rate of change?

Some large donor organisations are still going through a process of change from a preoccupation with trying to micro-manage activities and administering funds disbursement to one of asking for citizen-verifiable results delivering value for money and delegating management to others. The transformation is not brought about by the simple publication of a manual and the installation of an audit function. It has taken the European Commission over 15 years to embrace results oriented management as evidenced by funding decision support systems and organisational development inputs and installing incentive systems . IUCN and its Framework Partners with whom it works on defining rates of change within the Programme, should recognise the process as time-consuming and complex and build in resources and support to the key personnel charges with bring about the results-orientation transition – particularly those members of the Programme and Policy Group within Secretariat HQ.

A suggested reporting template

Global impact monitoring would greatly empower IUCN and its programme to learn lessons, manage resources more effectively, and credibly claim success. Reporting this is key to maintaining the buy-in and support of the Framework Partners. With this in mind, an example report template (outline) is presented below for discussion purposes. Suggested report length is 15-20 pages.

1. Executive summary.
2. The good news: headlines on major breakthroughs and lessons learned with clear attribution and objective/rigorous reference to baselines.
3. Urgent constraints requiring the attention of the Framework Partners
4. Any updating of the intervention logic (goal, programme purpose and results plus respective indicators or targets) to improve relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.
5. Progress in relation to programme purpose and results with reference to OVIs.
6. Planning and evaluation milestones and actions required.
7. Lessons learned including reference to assumptions.
8. Impact and impact pathways.
9. Possible new roles for IUCN in the light of aid effectiveness and global public good issues.
10. Any significant comments from the president, Members and Commission chairs
11. Update on business model
12. Funds leverage. How funding from the partners has led to access to more financial and other assistance
13. Publications and information products ranked in order of impact class. (Annex)

2.6 Conclusions on Niche, Relevance and Effectiveness

2.6.1 Niche

The value of any organisation depends on its “value to whom”. Members continue to pay subscription fees, and Commission members continue to provide services. Donors continue to fund work proposed and implemented by IUCN. And similarly, Framework Partners continue to fund IUCN through the Framework contracts. Together, these behaviours imply a strong implicit IUCN ‘value’. In terms of explicit value, the Review Team came to the following conclusions:

- The current definition of IUCN’s niche set out in the 2009-2010 strategy document (Vision 2020), as providing a “knowledge based platform” is not unique in demonstrating why IUCN should be funded relative to other organisations which can provide the same services.
- It is clear that IUCN does have unique and valuable institutional attributes. However, these have yet to be elucidated in a manner that would convince donors and other funders to provide core institutional funding over individual project support. The three unique attributes are:
 - A tripartite structure combining Members, Commissions and Secretariat.
 - A long history of “achieving union or friendships” at global, regional, national and local levels in relation to conservation. (Involving introduction of new partners, facilitating harmony through processes including assumption sharing and conflict resolution, and giving birth to funded agreements or new organisations). This is much more than convening.
 - Special legal status in relation to the UN as observer and to perform certain tasks. This gives legitimacy for it to provide services on evaluation at the portfolio level
- There is no single document that analyses gaps in the global market, IUCN’s core competence to address them, as well as IUCN’s unique selling point in relation to other.
- In summary the analysis suggests that IUCN’s niche is one as an informed, rigorous and non aligned actor rather than as an implementer. It appears that in many cases evidence can be gained from other implementer’s projects (in real time or ex post) or ex post evaluation of IUCN endeavours

2.6.2 Relevance

The field visits demonstrated that a wide-range of biodiversity and conservation professionals around the world hold IUCN in very high regard based on a high level of satisfaction engaging with the organisation. Essentially IUCN is treated as a friend and appeared to held in respect as a “wise and ageing helper”, as an enabler of a high number of friendships (sustainable relationships) established between individuals and organisations and as a creator of a high number of organisations, instruments, and approaches it had helped to create. The broader findings on the relevance of the IUCN Programme are:

- The absence of a distinct organisation-level purpose statement means the value and relevance of IUCN can only be interpreted loosely.
- The Value Proposition, although useful in aligning the three ‘strands’ of IUCN, is not useful for showing why IUCN should be funded relative to other organisations which can provide the same services. None of the four Value Proposition attributes have indicators that can demonstrate their value or IUCN’s progress in the improvement of their value.
- The relevance analysis has shown that the IUCN Programme is generally relevant to global biodiversity and conservation priorities.
- There is evidence of improvement in the new draft programme in terms of the management and updating of relevance (Energy dropped and Food Security added) in response to market demand and global priorities. In particular, the 2013-16 Programme draft is supported by an excellent stand-alone Global Situation Analysis which is summarised in the draft programme text.
- At the programme level there is less detail of relevance relative to IUCN niche / USPs and less detail on relevance relative to specifically defined beneficiary groups or stakeholders. Again however, there is evidence that the situation is improving. This includes innovations

such as Regional Conservation Forums and the Network Approach rolled out by the Regions with support from Secretariat HQ. Developing a Programme-level theory of change would help address these issues by placing IUCN within the change process the organisation aims to support and inform.

- Maintaining relevance depends on clear niche definition for IUCN as well as systems to allocate resources according to results where the organisation has been successful.

2.6.3 Effectiveness

Effectiveness is defined as *'The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.'* The Review Team has attempted to assess the effectiveness of the IUCN Programme in the absence of a number of key definitions and in the context of a nascent results-based M&E and reporting system. Based on appreciative evaluation of the Global Results set out in the 2009-12 Programme, it is clear that there are many 'islands of excellence' which contribute to IUCN effectiveness across the Programme. Progress towards achieving the Global Results in most cases seems to be good. .

In terms of efforts to improve and enhance effectiveness, the Review Team have noted improvements in results-based monitoring and reporting systems and project quality management as follows:

- Alignment of IUCN's three strands using Global Results approach.
- Attempt to integrate result monitoring with planning within a continuous project-cycle management framework.
- Attempt to incorporate organisational results into framework agreements.
- Recognition of the need to measure contribution, improve assumption testing, and streamline evaluation.

Pulling niche, relevance and effectiveness together and summarised as a simple but representative narrative, the current status of the IUCN Programme can be described as:

"IUCN is clearly delivering many impressive results at the level of global biodiversity conservation. But it is challenging for IUCN to credibly and transparently assess and claim credit for these results in the absence of a robust results and reporting framework maintained by definitions (programme purpose and niche), relevant results indicators, and supported by an underlying ToC. These absent components represent a missed opportunity for IUCN as the organisation is not claiming results it potentially could. It also represents a danger of complacency - that IUCN is happy with current status quo without questioning what unique value it offers and can offer in a future characterised by increasingly scarce donor resources. Similarly, the results and reporting framework, which currently focuses on Secretariat-managed projects and programmes, risks underestimating the value and results presented to the Union by the Commissions and the Members – IUCN's truly unique feature."

3. Objective 2 - IUCN Progress since 2007 Review – organisational review

This section assesses IUCN’s function as an organisation in light of progress since the 2007 Review – Objective 2. Specifically, this section covers:

- Assessment of the extent to which the **recommendations of the 2007 External Review** have been effectively implemented;
- Assessment of the **suitability of the organizational structure and governance** (including Council, Membership and Commissions) arrangements for the achievement of IUCN’s mandate and purpose (important contribution to conclusions on objective 3 - Members engagement);
- Assessment of the **strategic planning process** and suitability of strategic plan outputs to direct operations – is there a clear strategic direction which is reflected in operational plans?
- Assessment of the **financial and human resources** current position, value for money and cost effectiveness and implications for organizational sustainability;
- Assessment of current **organizational management arrangements**, (including progress with implementing recommendations of the 2007 Review), especially information management, communications, knowledge management, and M&E ; and,
- Identification of options for future / long-term **sustainability of the business model**.

This section draws on the following key data sources:

2011 Review Team Evidence Base

The data collection tools and methods employed by the Review Team include:

- Document review and analysis
- Secretariat HQ visit and observation
- Secretariat HQ staff interviews
- Senior Management Team meeting observation
- Finance and audit reports and accounts analysis
- HR system and reports analysis
- Regional and Country Office visit – Staff interviews
- Donor meeting attendance
- Donor interviews
- Council meeting attendance
- Councillor interviews
- Councillor email survey

3.1 Overview of progress since last review

Table 5 below set outs a summary overview of progress against the 2007 Review recommendations. When interpreting IUCN’s progress, it is important to recognise that the comprehensive list of 2007 recommendations (and sub-recommendations/activities) are not well sequenced or prioritised. Consequently, there is considerable overlap in the between the recommendations. In addition, in terms of progress, it is important to avoid focusing specifically on the recommended activity (generally at the sub-recommendation level), in itself. Rather, it is important to focus on the progress the recommendation was intended to bring about. A detailed overview of progress against each of the recommendations is located in Annex 4.

Table 5 Summary Overview of progress since the last review

| 2007 Review Recommendation | IUCN Response | 2011 Review Progress Update |
|--|--|---|
| <p>1. A New Compact with Members COUNCIL and the DIRECTOR GENERAL should consider the findings of this review on members, particularly with respect to the outcomes of the Membership Strategy 2005-2008, and provide strategic direction and a longer-term vision for a future policy (or a new “Compact” with members) for IUCN as a membership organization. Specifically:</p> | <p>Agree, however IUCN proposes to expand results and activities under this recommendations to include Secretariat, Commissions and the membership. Through this work, IUCN will increase the capacity of Members, Commission Members, partners and the Secretariat to network and connect their actions in the field with global policy work (see also Recommendation 4 on strategic influencing).</p> <p>This work will be led primarily by the Director General with the guidance of the One Programme Working Group of Council</p> | <p>Members report some improvements and evidence of some progress with Membership Mapping exercise and restructuring of the Constituency Support Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No New Compact with Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No new Membership Strategy 2009-12 as pending completion of Membership Mapping exercise which in turn is on hold pending completion of the ERP / CRM Restructuring of Constituency Support Group from administration and collection of dues to focus on Member engagement. This has involved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased clarity about services offered to members Ensuring Members are better informed and engaged – e.g. better opportunities to comment on IUCN policy – role still relates primarily to commenting on policy rather than forming policy Members now engaged in Regional Conservation Forums through Membership Unit and Membership Focal Points Two studies on IUCN National and Regional Committees (NRCs) and on IUCN national and international non-governmental organization Members - presented to Council in November 2010 |
| <p>2. A New Membership Strategy 2009-12 COUNCIL and the DIRECTOR GENERAL should develop a new membership strategy based on consultation with the Members and input from Commissions and the secretariat. The strategy should be consistent with the new IUCN Strategy 2009.</p> | <p>Partially agreed. The existing Membership Engagement Strategy will remain in effect and... (TEXT MISSING FROM ORIGINAL PDF DOCUMENT)</p> | <p>No new strategy but significant investment in constituency services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No new Membership Strategy for 2009-12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On hold pending Membership Mapping which itself on hold waiting for technical solutions for integration with ERP / CRM Overall slow progress with Membership Mapping approx. 1/3 complete. Better understanding of needs of Members decentralised to Regions through Membership Focal Points No explicit membership development strategy or rationale at HQ which involves targets or categories of new members Some Regions have strategy at region and country level |
| <p>3. Analysis of Intervention Assumptions IUCN instigate a process to deepen understanding and more clearly articulate and test the assumptions (theories of change) that underpin how it aims to strategically influence</p> | <p>Agree, but the recognition that theories of change are already present and explicit in much of IUCN's work although overall they will be better documented and tested</p> | <p>Theory of change and policy influencing built into project design but less evidence of these in project M&E arrangements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN has integrated aspects of the Theory of Change approach into project and programme design (e.g. the DRAFT IUCN Programme 2013-16 contains a situation analysis for each Core and Thematic Programme Area). However, there exists no overarching Theory of Change relating to IUCN's aim to strategically influence. |

| 2007 Review Recommendation | IUCN Response | 2011 Review Progress Update |
|--|---------------|--|
| <p>4. Enhancing Capacities for Strategic Influencing The DIRECTOR GENERAL, in collaboration with the membership and Commissions, develop a strategy to strengthen IUCN's strategic influencing role, particularly at the regional and national levels.</p> | <p>Agreed</p> | <p>Piecemeal rather than coherent and tends to be event (e.g. convention) and project-driven – no formal strategy, training or capacity building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, progress in enhancing capacities for strategic influencing has been piecemeal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little evidence that Regions are now more involved/engaged in strategic influencing outside of direct programme / project activities beyond establishing the link between the programme results framework and the leveraging of IUCN's value proposition in strategic influencing. There have been some attempts to revitalise the Global Policy Group, but more remains to be done (see separate discussion of structures and functions in main report). Strategic influencing indicators relate to roles, policy influencing strategies, policy baselines, and policy monitoring indicators - and there is evidence for some of this as part of the design of the programme monitoring and project appraisal systems. At global level IUCN strategically goes after a few conventions – CBD/CITES and mobilise Regions, Commissions, and Members in this effort. However, there is no evaluation, monitoring or lesson learning of policy influencing – insufficient resources. |
| <p>5. Strengthen IUCN as a Knowledge Organization The DIRECTOR GENERAL gives urgent attention and high priority to enhancing IUCN's knowledge management functions and capacities to support the work of the Union.</p> | <p>Agreed</p> | <p>Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System prioritised up to now. Still a need to bring ICT, scientific knowledge, internal and external communications, marketing, networking, branding, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and lesson learning together under the concept of 'knowledge management'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive definition would bring together Information and Communication Technology (ICT), scientific knowledge, internal and external communications, marketing, networking, monitoring and evaluation, and lesson learning and sharing. The main issue here is that IUCN has prioritised ICT, particularly the ERP, as an essential precursor to improved Knowledge Management. Unfortunately, there does not appear to be a comprehensive and shared understanding of what it means for IUCN to be a Knowledge Organisation, so the other essential elements are not being addressed in a coherent way. |
| <p>6. Strengthening the Monitoring and Evaluation Function The DIRECTOR GENERAL oversee a substantial upgrading of the Secretariat's capacities, structures, procedures and resources for monitoring and evaluation processes to support learning and accountability functions and to enable reporting on the Unions activities and achievements in a synthesised and coherent manner.</p> | <p>Agreed</p> | <p>PM&E influential but under-resourced for IUCN's complexity and knowledge orientation. Challenge remains in linking operational planning to the quadrennial programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a difficult recommendation to evaluate. Positively a significant amount of work has been done to strengthen programme planning and, in particular, monitoring. However, M&E development must be seen in the context of a wider effort to address the whole Results Based Management (RBM) approach as well as the project and programme planning, appraisal and monitoring cycle. In reality, the effectiveness of the M&E system is limited by shortcomings in the organisation's planning model. In essence, while high level results are defined as part of the quadrennial Programme, actual operational plans thereafter are built from the bottom up, resulting in retro-fitted portfolios of projects and programmes. Efforts are made to link each component to the achievement of strategic results, but in the absence of a process by which specific quantifiable, measurable and time bound (SMART) indicators are agreed and documented for each Core and Thematic / Regional programme or portfolio of projects, M&E can only assess each project and programme in isolation, and then infer their contribution to the achievement of global result. A major constraint is the lack of resources for monitoring support, and particularly for evaluation. |

| 2007 Review Recommendation | IUCN Response | 2011 Review Progress Update |
|---|--|--|
| <p>7. Enhancing Core Capacities The DIRECTOR GENERAL prepares for approval by Council an overall plan for enhancing core organizational capacities with clear targets, priorities and responsibilities, based on a detailed assessment of the additional resources required. The plan is explicitly linked to the annual business plans from 2009 onwards and the Director General reports on implementation progress regularly to Council.</p> | <p>Agreed, will happen as part of actions against other recommendations</p> | <p>There is little evidence of a coherent strategic approach to assessing and enhancing core organisational capacities. No evidence of an overall skills needs assessment or similar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is little evidence of a coherent strategic approach to enhancing core organisational capacities. However some progress has been made in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-learning is on offer covering a variety of knowledge and skills, but uptake in the first year of global operations was poor (187 staff completed courses in 2010, although there were 900 visits to the relevant areas of the network). There is a plan to develop some 'obligatory' e-learning courses, but this has not happened yet. Statistics for the first half of 2011 are more promising. • Various individual units offer technical training periodically. A number of global service units support on-the-job learning through coordination/ liaison/community of practice approaches (for example, for planning, M&E, finance and HR). • Budgets for technical training sit with individual cost centres (and are reported as the first budget lines to be cut). • HR report that the most important learning priority is management skills. There is no evidence of systematic needs analysis at this level. • Recruitment is on a post by post basis, there is little evidence (or, in fact scope for) a coherent approach to workforce planning which could incorporate specific targets for importing new skills. |
| <p>8. Transforming the Project Portfolio The DIRECTOR GENERAL oversee a significant realignment (and potentially a reduction) of the project portfolio such that it enables IUCN to have project resources that are more focused on its strategic influencing, learning, innovation and knowledge management functions.</p> | <p>Agreed, and we will build on already existing trends in the project portfolio toward increasing convergence between programmes, leverage initiatives and global projects implemented in the regions, with projects themselves, as well as between projects and strategic influencing priorities</p> | <p>Some evidence of change at Regional level. Prominent projects contribute positive lessons if mechanisms to share lessons are in place. On-going tension exists with project financing model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is some evidence of progress in transforming the project portfolio to contribute to a coherent Programme of Core and Thematic programme areas although it is difficult to assess overall progress in this regard. • IUCN can demonstrate a set of good practice examples of projects and programmes which demonstrate a strategic influencing nature. |
| <p>9. Enhancing Donor Support Framework Donors take a more proactive role in supporting IUCN to achieve a level and structure of funding that enables it to invest in core organizational capacities and respond to growing demands of the international community.</p> | | <p>Recommendation directed at donors but no response. Objectives in framework agreements lack indicators and not monitored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No response to this set of Recommendations received from Framework Donors. |
| <p>10. Diversifying the Partnership Base The DIRECTOR GENERAL and COUNCIL make diversifying the funding base and the establishment of new strategic alliances a central priority over the coming Quadrennial Period.</p> | <p>Agreed</p> | <p>Some progress in exploring new funding partnership ideas with limited success in a challenging external environment. Efforts tend to be HQ-led and not building on Regional opportunities. Scope to work more with Members. Opportunity to link funding to programme strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is evidence of a coherent strategic approach to diversifying the partnership base. However, given a number of adverse factors – global financial crisis and the decline framework funding as a preferred donor fund allocation method – limited progress has been made in diversifying the partnership base. The Strategic Partnerships team in HQ is small and under-resourced given the critical function performed. • Some progress has been made by the Strategic Partnerships team in engaging new framework partners such as the Abu Dhabi Environment Agency as well as small signs of progress developing philanthropists and IUCN Good Will Ambassadors. |

| 2007 Review Recommendation | IUCN Response | 2011 Review Progress Update |
|--|---------------|---|
| <p>11. Strategy and Planning Coherence and Follow-up The DIRECTOR GENERAL and COUNCIL agree on a clear hierarchy and coherence of strategy and planning documents that include a long term strategy, the Quadrennial Programme, and rolling business plans and organisational development plans.</p> | <p>Agreed</p> | <p>Poor quality of linkage between global results areas, implementation planning and cost centre-level work plans. Some progress in prioritisation and resource allocation according to results (RBM) although not yet transparent and fully established. Draft Business Strategy good but now follow up. Clear demand from framework donors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme planning takes place at three levels: long-term (2020 Vision), intersessional (programme planning), and biannual. There is no clear evidence of an extremely long term strategy (2050), but this is an unrealistic recommendation in any case. Programme plans are linked across the levels as described, and effectively document the activities which the organisation intends to carry out. However, there are major shortcomings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The poor quality of linkage between global result areas and cost centre level work plans. As described above, there is no clear chain of SMART indicators, aggregated at each level. The M&E system tries to remedy this lack, but this is not sufficient. (See main report for fuller discussion) The poor quality of prioritisation processes, particularly because governance processes tend to result in a long 'wish list' of activities which the Secretariat is directed to carry out, without any meaningful assessment of feasibility against financial and other constraints. At the recent Council, this was recognised in discussions, and then a proposal that future programme assessment should bring together programmatic and financial considerations, through joint work between the PPC and FAC. An urgent need for this was echoed by the Donors at the Framework Donors meeting. Although there is a linked hierarchy of programme planning, this should sit in a strong framework of corporate and financial planning (including all aspects of fundraising, workforce planning, etc). This should be much more than an aggregated budget. In fact, a financial and fundraising plan was prepared for the current intersessional, but does not appear to receive sufficient attention relative to annual budget and short-term financial management considerations. |
| <p>12. Change Management The DIRECTOR GENERAL establish and lead a change management process that will make an overall diagnosis and analysis of the problems in the Secretariat; will identify the needed changes to operational processes and organizational structures; and will guide management to map out and then implement the changes needed, while ensuring that the impact of changes are subsequently monitored.</p> | <p>Agreed</p> | <p>DG demonstrates strong commitment to change management but evidence of progress is limited. Some evidence that Council involved in the change management process through the Governance Committee although limited sense of urgency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 11.1 above. The Review Team have not found a 'concept paper for the Organisational Change and Development Process; unless this is the 'Director General's Plans for Organisation Development and Change.' (August 2008). However, that document sets out next steps, which included a process for sharing the change plan, and convening a Change Leadership Team (see below). There is a consensus that change was somewhat accelerated as a result of this response to the review. As above, there is some evidence that the Council was involved in the Change Management Process, and the Governance Committee continues to be involved. IUCN has recently developed a paper entitled 'A Modified Business Model for IUCN: Three Business Lines, Related Programme Priorities, and Organisation'. The paper is a draft, dated 28th July, prepared by the Director General and Deputy Director General, with input from participants at workshops of Global and Regional Directors held on 11 and 19-20 July 2011. Further comments on the paper are provided in Section 3.7.4 of the main report. |

3.2 Organizational structure and governance assessment

The arrangements for the achievement of the IUCN mandate and purpose can be taken to include:

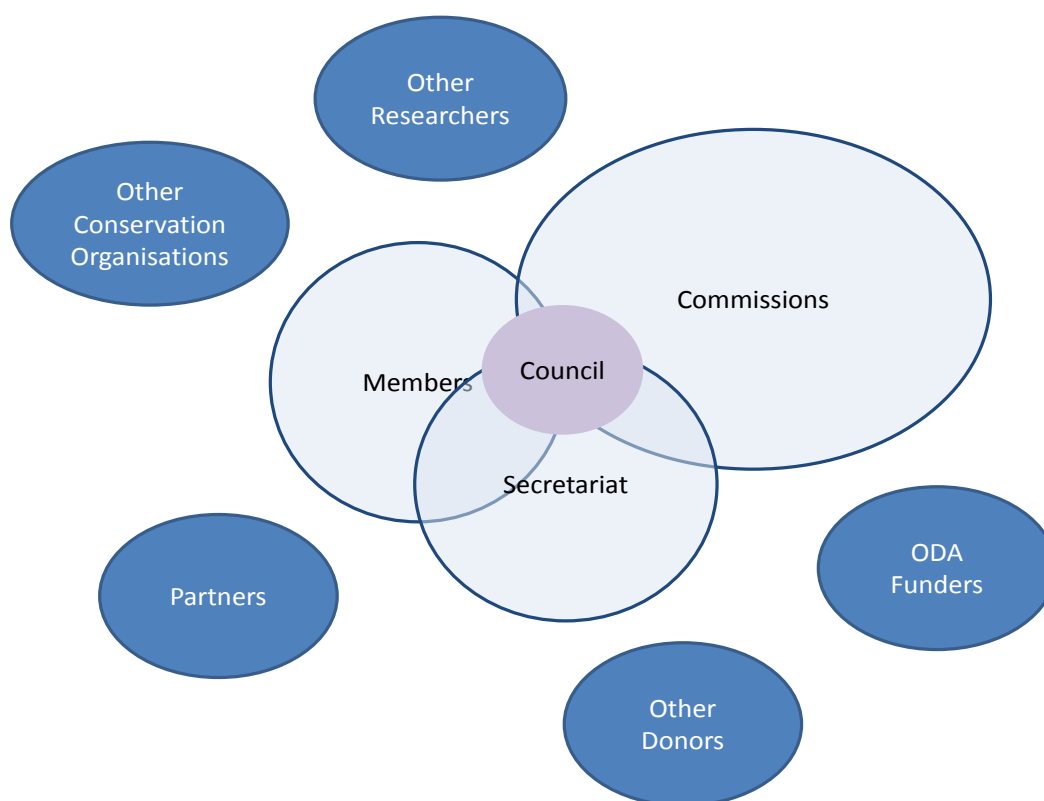
- The macro-organisational structure (including the three 'strands' of the union, the organisation of regional and national committees, and the organisation of commissions);
- The governance arrangements (including the statutory role of Congress, the role and structure of Council, the representational and decision-making framework); and,
- The micro-organisational structure (including the functional structure, geographic distribution, policies and plans, and human and financial resources deployed by the Secretariat).

Each of these is discussed in turn below.

3.2.1 Overview of the Union

Figure 3 below provides a simplified illustration of stakeholders' relationships with, and expectations of IUCN. (This is, of course, very simplified, the real-world relationships are far too complex to represent in a single diagram.)

Figure 3. Simplified Overview of the Union and its Stakeholders



The diagram shows a structure which is unusual but not unique. Globally, there are many member-based organisations with a professional secretariat, and which make use of expert panels for various purposes. The structure is commonly found in member bodies of the professions (for example scientific, financial, legal and medical), which often combine member services, research, education and technical advice. The governance and management issues associated with such tripartite structures are well-understood, and include: an uneasy balance of power and contributions between Secretariat, Members, and technical panels; cumbersome strategic planning processes necessitated by member-based 'democracy'; complex communications, brand and reputation management, and

perennial funding crises, typically engendered as the organisations' activities outgrow the revenue stream available from member subscriptions and other funding sources become necessary. IUCN has had to deal with all of these issues in various ways and at various times, and this is discussed in more detail below.

However, the IUCN structure is distinctive in some ways:

- Firstly, the diagram cannot reflect the relative size of the components. At present IUCN has approximately 1100 staff, 1100 members, and 11,000 commissioners. There are a relatively small number of members, which limits the extent to which the organisation can be funded from subscriptions.
- Secondly, the fact that IUCN's Member base is organisational rather than individual complicates the picture. And the huge diversity of Member organisations (from State Members to relatively small NGOs) results in a very wide range of expectations and influence. (See Annex 17 - Members' Survey Analysis).
- Finally, the relative scale and authority of the commissions goes far beyond that of any mere technical panel. In reality, they vastly dominate the numbers of people at least potentially 'representing' IUCN. However, their organisational linkages are weak (although this varies). As a result there is a large body of stakeholders who could be promoting IUCN activities and messages, but may be a) unrecognised as part of IUCN; b) in some respects misrepresent the Union agenda; c) compete for resources. The commissions represent an enormous strength, but also a very substantial reputational risk for the Union.

The distinction between the core elements of the Union and its stakeholders is not as clear as implied by the diagram. In reality, many stakeholders 'wear several hats'. For example: members of other conservation organisations are also members, are also Council members, and are also closely connected to specific commissions. A second example: members of donor organisations are also closely connected to specific commissions, through direct involvement in technical activities, or as funders and users of commission 'products'. In addition, many stakeholders are engaged in research, knowledge dissemination, influencing, etc in their own right, and as part of other partnerships and network, as well as with IUCN. This blurs the boundaries. There is a real likelihood of competing interests, and competition for resources.

3.2.2 Conclusions on IUCN overview

Important conclusions can be drawn from this overview of the Union. The Union should celebrate the strength in this complexity and variety. As a knowledge organisation, there are positive advantages to the diversity and changing nature of relationships between all of the stakeholders. This should facilitate broad knowledge exchange and learning, permeability to other sources of knowledge, and innovation. However, to operate effectively and coherently, such a diverse network of stakeholders needs sophisticated, light touch, but highly effective mechanisms for information sharing, coordination and alignment. IUCN attempts this through the work of the Secretariat, through the Congress, through Council activities, and through more structured relationships with commissions and members. This is possibly the most important challenge faced by IUCN. There are signs that Council members, the Secretariat, and some Commissions and Members are increasingly recognising this, and the One Programme¹⁴ is gaining momentum as a vehicle for capitalising on the totality of the Union. However, there is more to be done, and IUCN must continue to develop critical

¹⁴ The One Programme Charter which was endorsed by Council in June 2010, set out key principles for the 'effective and integrated delivery of the IUCN Programme'. This proposed a range of measures, including further decentralisation and delegation, cultural change, more participation in planning, and coordinated fundraising. The statement included a results framework with specific targets, indicators and reporting arrangements.

mechanisms such as the Constituency Support Group, the role of Network Coordinators¹⁵, and refining fundraising, planning and knowledge management systems to support the process.

3.3 IUCN Governance Arrangements

This section discusses the statutory basis for the Union, the role of Congress, the role and structure of Council, and the representational and decision-making framework.

IUCN's higher-level governance structure is determined by the Statutes and Regulations¹⁶, which set out the Objectives of the Union and define the organisational structure, including the operation of the World Conservation Congress and the composition and functions of the Council. The Statutes make provision for national and regional committees and fora, and for the commissions. In many ways, the Statutes are remarkably permissive. They specify critical governance arrangements (elections, voting, decision-making of the Congress, financial governance, etc.) but confer a great deal of flexibility in terms of how the Union interprets its objectives, interprets the functions of the Council (within the intersessional programme), and organises the Secretariat.

It is important to note the objectives of the Union as set out in the statutes, particularly in the light of the current debates about the business model, and balance between Member and Commission focus, and Secretariat and project focus. The objectives say that IUCN will 'influence, encourage and assist societies'. They also explicitly say that IUCN will:

- Mobilise its members..... to build alliances.
- Strengthen the institutional capacity of its members.....
- Promote enhanced co-operation betweenmembers.
- Encourage research and disseminate information about research (Review Team emphasis).
- Provide a forum for discussion.
- Develop expert networks and information systems.
- Prepare and disseminate statements about conservation.
- Influence national and international legal instruments.
- Make representations to governments and international agencies.
- Assist the development of mechanisms for debating and resolving environmental issues.
- Contribute to the preparation of international agreements.

It is striking that the objectives are fundamentally those of a Member organisation which is primarily concerned with: strengthening the individual and collective capacity of its membership; acting as a convener to mobilise Members' expertise and influence, using the strength derived from its membership to influence national and international policy and law. While the methods to be used include encouraging research and disseminating information, a strict reading of the Statutes would suggest that the current scale of project activities¹⁷, carried out through and by the Secretariat, represents a considerable drift away from these objectives. IUCN is conscious of this divergence, and the recent 'One Programme' initiative¹⁸ represents a significant effort to shift the balance by refocusing on the engagement of Members and Commissions in planning and delivery of the programme.

¹⁵ See discussion of Members and partners.

¹⁶ IUCN Statutes, including Rules of Procedure of the World Conservation Congress, and Regulations: amended 13 October 2008

¹⁷ Since 2004, project income has accounted for between 65% and 67% of total income. Membership and other unrestricted income has accounted approximately 15% over the same period, the balance being framework core income. (Source, Published Accounts, Financial Plan 2009-2012, various financial reports and presentations.)

¹⁸ IUCN One Programme Charter – Working together to maximise Programme results. June 2010.

In terms of participation, Congress is fundamentally important to IUCN's unique niche as a Union. As the mechanism for bringing together all Members to vote on the quadrennial programme, it is a powerful instrument to ensure ownership. Unfortunately, this mechanism also represents a costly and ponderous decision-making process, by which the programme is fixed once every four years, with scope for operational planning only within the broad programme parameters in the intersessional period. This reduces the organisation's agility. Despite the Secretariat's efforts to prepare for Congress, the resolution process almost inevitably means that IUCN is charged by Congress to do things which arise outside of structured planning processes, and without any evidence-based debate about programmatic or financial feasibility.

The Council is a large body, with a mixture of appointed and elected Councillors, including the Chairs of the Commissions. The 'representativeness' of the Council has positive and negative aspects. On the one hand, it brings together representatives of all stakeholders. On the other hand, it is difficult for Council to harmonise such diverse perspectives. The Chairs of Commissions cannot be expected to do other than represent the interests of their commissioners, at least to some extent. Equally, the elected Councillors may reasonably be expected to play a geographic representational role (again, at least to some extent). These interests, and the balance of the Council, do not necessarily facilitate the Council in making decisions from the perspective of the Union as a whole.

The Council is in no sense an executive board. The Statutes make provision for a Bureau which 'shall act on behalf, and under the authority of the Council between meetings of the Council'. However, it would be a mistake to interpret this body as a 'cabinet' or 'board of directors'. Consultation with Council members and others suggested that the Bureau plays a very limited role, although its members are individually influential.

Council is organised into a number of Committees which reflect the preoccupations of the Union. For the purposes of this review, the critical committees are the Governance Committee, Programme and Policy Committee, Constituency Committee, and Finance and Audit Committee. In addition, there are a number of working groups and task forces with particular responsibilities.

Observation of the May 2011 Council Meeting yielded a number of points:

- The Council, and many of the Committees are large, and the agenda are long.
- A number of members serve on several different bodies. This may confer continuity, but also carries the risk that some members may be more influential than others.
- The distribution of responsibilities, particularly between the Programme and Policy Committee and the Finance and Audit Committee means that it is difficult for any single committee or member to have comprehensive oversight of the programme and financial issues. It was reassuring to see that these two committees attempted to address the problem by meeting for a joint session. Although this session was very brief, and the process was essentially an exchange of information from the two previous separate meetings.
- Committees receive operational reports, discussion papers, and decision papers. There is a tendency for Committees to be drawn into detailed issues, but at the same time, the breadth of IUCN operations means that it is difficult for them to have a complete grasp of the work.
- In Committees, and in Council itself, it was difficult to trace a clear process of taking and recording decisions on each agenda item¹⁹. Where contentious issues were raised for debate, discussion was not always pursued to a clear conclusion. While it can be nothing more than an impression, it would appear that the Council and its Committees tend to operate more as discussion and advisory, than decision-making bodies. Why this is extremely

¹⁹ Note that this point does not refer to the documentation of Council and committee decisions. Each committee produces a detailed report with clear recommendations. The point refers rather to the *process* of discussion and decision-making.

beneficial in terms of the representational nature of the Union, it provides only limited decision-making support and scrutiny of the Secretariat and Commissions.

Finally, with respect to wider governance, international best practice indicates Finance and Audit committees should be separate, and that internal and external auditors should report to a separate Audit and Risk Committee.

The IUCN Statutes make provision for the establishment of National and Regional Committees (NRCs), but the provisions are quite limited. The Council shall recognise one committee per state or region, and all members may join their respective national committee, and participate in the election of a regional committee. National or regional committees are self-governing, and must establish their own legal personality prior to undertaking financial obligations. The Statutes require the committees to work in partnership with the Secretariat and the commissions. Most national committees publish bylaws, and statements of mandate or objectives. The latter typically include working in support of IUCN objectives, convening membership and ensuring that their views are represented, than disseminating knowledge products and other information. Some national committees go considerably further, actively implementing work programmes, and even funding other actors, in their own right. However, there are very few examples, and they are almost exclusively in Europe.

As of August 2011 there are 54 National Committees and 7 Regional Committees. There is no common model of how the NRCs operate (considerable diversity of operations), or how they relate to the Secretariat and Commissions. At one level this is a rational reflection of the diversity of national situations, but it also reflects the interests and capability of key individuals. IUCN needs to better understand the demands which NRCs make on Secretariat, time and resources, as well what defines success and best practice in their operation.

The IUCN Statutes make it clear that the Commissions are mandated by Congress. Statutes also specify the functions of the Commissions to include: analysis of issues, research and other scientific work; undertake work assigned to them within the IUCN programme, and provide advice. Commissions are governed by regulations, and are required to present a report to Congress, and, annually, to Council. In general commissions are governed by bye-laws and terms of reference. Each has a steering committee, which is responsible for guiding commission activities in line with the mandate from Congress, formulating policy, developing work plans and fundraising.

3.3.1 Conclusions on IUCN Governance Arrangements

IUCN bears a heavy cost for its democratic processes. This is not simply the financial cost of the Congress and Councils, but the loss of agility which results from the pre-eminence of Congress in setting the quadrennial programme.

It would appear from the Statutes that IUCN has drifted away from the original intentions of the founders of the Union, but we are aware that it has, rightly, begun to redress the balance towards its objectives.

Secondly, Council and its Committees fulfil a combined role of representation and advice, with some decision-making and oversight responsibilities. The size of the Council, and the nature of the membership, combined with the style of process adopted, makes it difficult for Council or its Committees to act as effective decision-making bodies. There is scope to build on the efforts already being made to improve the utility of committee processes to improve oversight, and focus deliberations at the appropriate strategic level.

Thirdly, we recognise, and it has been confirmed in discussion with Council members and others, that any process of high-level governance reform will necessarily be very slow, because of the need

for decisions to be taken at Congress²⁰. On balance, therefore, there is probably little to be gained by embarking on significant governance reform. However, IUCN may wish to consider the benefits which might accrue from the establishment of a smaller, more authoritative committee of Council, which is more formally tasked to both support and hold the Director General accountable.

3.4 Secretariat Staffing, Structure and Functions

Further detailed analysis of IUCN human resources is provided in Annex 15 – IUCN Structure and Workforce Analysis.

3.4.1 Growth in Staffing

The Secretariat as it appears today is the product of evolution over a number of years. Perhaps the most striking change is the rapid growth from less than 100 staff in 1985 to approximately 1081 staff in 2011, although anecdotal evidence suggests that the number has been relatively stable now for more than a decade. It is not easy to establish a single rationale or impetus for this growth: it appears to result from a series of incremental changes, partly triggered by opportunities, and partly triggered by availability of funds. It is not unusual for the Secretariat of a research, dissemination and influencing organisation such as IUCN to expand in this way. The organisation's aspirations to influence global policy and law on the basis of credible knowledge require it to engage in a series of professional activities. While the Statutes suggest that these should be undertaken through Members and Commissions, high-quality international research and knowledge management requires a professional organisation of expert staff delivering products which are credible to their peers. This is an expensive proposition, and there are almost no instances of similar organisations which are capable of funding these activities solely from Member subscriptions. However, while growth may be opportunistic, global experience shows that, it is rarely easy to reduce the establishment: once in position, Secretariat professionals tend to identify other worthwhile activities, and seek funding for these. Without careful control, this can result in an organisation which becomes 'the sum of the interests of Secretariat members' rather than an organisation correctly configured (and funded) to achieve specific strategic objectives. This theme is explored further below.

3.4.2 Distribution of Staff

Table 6 below summarises the distribution of staff.

Table 6 Geographic Distribution of Staff by Region and Type²¹

| | Management | Professional | Support & Service | Uncategorised | Total Staff | % of total IUCN Staff |
|---------------|------------|--------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| HQ | 31 | 104 | 57 | 10 | 204 | 19 |
| ARO | 27 | 141 | 132 | 0 | 300 | 28 |
| PACO | 2 | 93 | 108 | 0 | 203 | 19 |
| ESARO | 4 | 42 | 55 | 0 | 101 | 9 |
| Oceania | 3 | 9 | 8 | 0 | 20 | 2 |
| ORMA | 3 | 38 | 31 | 0 | 72 | 7 |
| Cambridge | 2 | 17 | 4 | 0 | 23 | 2 |
| ELC | 1 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 13 | 1 |
| Mediterranean | 1 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 14 | 1 |
| RAMSAR | 5 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 16 | 1 |
| RofE | 3 | 17 | 10 | 1 | 31 | 3 |
| SUR | 2 | 11 | 9 | 0 | 22 | 2 |

²⁰ One member suggested that it takes at least eight and possibly twelve years to make any significant change to governance.

²¹ Source: IUCN personnel database reports

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| TRAFFIC | 2 | 11 | 8 | 0 | 21 | 2 |
| US | 3 | 13 | 6 | 0 | 22 | 2 |
| WA | 1 | 11 | 7 | 0 | 19 | 2 |
| Total non-HQ | 59 | 425 | 391 | 2 | 877 | 81 |
| Total All Staff | 90 | 529 | 448 | 12 | 1081 | 100 |

This analysis shows that approximately 1/5th of Secretariat staff are located at HQ in Gland, and 4/5ths are in regions or other outposts. The detailed analysis which would determine which posts need to be located at HQ is beyond the scope and resources of this Review. What is clear is that the distribution between HQ and Regional/Country-based staff, which initially looks highly decentralised, appears different when looked at in terms of allocation of core funding. Then, a much larger proportion of staff at HQ are funded through core funding as opposed to project and programme funding which is predominantly used to employ staff away from HQ. From one perspective, it is unsurprising that the majority of technical and administrative support functions should be concentrated in Gland, and these are, of course, unlikely to attract programme or project funding. However, this analysis should lead IUCN to carefully examine the nature of the contribution made by these posts, and whether, in fact, a greater proportion of the costs of these activities should be borne by projects and programmes.

Without this, it is not possible to say whether the balance of posts between HQ and elsewhere is optimal. However, it should be noted that this proportion is not significantly out of line with comparable organisations. IUCN has stated its intention to localise posts wherever possible, but only a few which have been localised to date were identified in the course of this review. Outside HQ, by far the largest staff groups are ARO (300: 28%) and PACO (203: 19%). Again, it is beyond the scope of this review to assess whether the staff complements are appropriate to the volume of activity in these regions.

In terms of the categorisation of posts, approximately 90 posts are designated as management (of which 1/3rd are at Global HQ). The remainder are almost equally split between professional staff and support staff. However, both the latter terms cover a huge diversity of roles. For example, a mid-level accounts officer will be categorised as professional staff. Support staff includes everything from 'legal assistant' to 'driver'.

This broad categorisation would suggest substantial variations in managerial span of control. Considering the relationship between management and staff designated as professional, the ratio varies between 1:3 at HQ to a maximum of 1:10 in some smaller offices. This range is acceptable when dealing with professional staff, who can be expected to have a high degree of autonomy and responsibility for their own work. The categorisation is less helpful with respect to managerial span of control for support staff, partly because of the wide variety of jobs included in this category, and partly because this analysis does not give any indication of the 'depth' of management hierarchy in any of the offices.

Gender and Social Inclusion are important aspects of organisational demography, especially for a global employer such as IUCN, which has an interest in, and works with development livelihoods. A gender analysis was derived from the HR database²² and Table 7 below summarises the gender distribution.

²² The Review Team is unaware whether the HR database holds social inclusion information (such as ethnicity, religious orientation or disability). We did not request this to avoid breaching confidentiality.

Table 7 Geographic Gender Distribution²³

| | Total Female | Management % Female | Professional % Female | Service % Female | Support % Female | None % Female | %age Female |
|-----------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------|-------------|
| HQ | 117 | 26 | 58 | | 86 | 50 | 58 |
| ARO | 96 | 30 | 40 | | 25 | | 32 |
| PACO | 51 | | 15 | 17 | 35 | | 25 |
| ESARO | 38 | | 40 | | 38 | | 38 |
| Oceania | 12 | 33 | 44 | | 88 | | 60 |
| ORMA | 35 | 67 | 45 | | 55 | | 49 |
| Cambridge | 14 | | 59 | | 100 | | 61 |
| ELC | 9 | | 50 | | 100 | | 69 |
| Mediterranean | 7 | | 29 | | 83 | | 50 |
| RAMSAR | 9 | 20 | 89 | | | | 56 |
| RofE | 18 | | 76 | | 50 | | 58 |
| SUR | 14 | | 82 | | 56 | | 64 |
| TRAFFIC | 16 | | 73 | | 100 | | 76 |
| US | 14 | 33 | 62 | | 83 | | 64 |
| WA | 10 | | 45 | | 71 | | 53 |
| Total non-HQ | 343 | 22 | 41 | | 41 | | 39 |
| Total All Staff | 460 | 23 | 44 | 17 | 47 | 47 | 43 |

Overall, Table 7 indicates an acceptable gender balance, but this masks some important variations. It is notable that while women make up 44% of professional staff, they account for only 23% of management staff. This suggests that IUCN needs to pay more attention to gender, especially with respect to recruitment and career progression²⁴. A large multinational organisation such as IUCN should demonstrate good practice with respect to gender equality, and as a minimum this should include specific policies to ensure equal representation in recruitment, human resources development and career progression. Although aspects of social inclusion were not examined specifically, some cultural differences are clearly indicated from the gender balance of support staff (who will inevitably be recruited from the local population). Women are under-represented as support staff in ARO, ESARO and PACO, and over-represented in HQ, UK, and US locations (although caution should be used where total staff numbers are small). While variation between locations is to be expected, as a global employer, IUCN should provide gender and social inclusion guidelines to ensure that managers are sensitive to the issues.

3.4.3 Organisation and Job Design

The Review Team requested a set of organogrammes for IUCN offices with a view to assessing the detailed structures, including management hierarchy and span of control. However, it appears that organogrammes are not held or maintained centrally, and each office had to be requested to provide its own. While the majority did so, it proved impossible to reconcile most of those provided with the personnel database. (Annex 15 discusses this issue in more detail.) It therefore appears that IUCN does not maintain establishment (as opposed to personnel) records. Without these, it is

²³ Source: IUCN personnel database reports.

²⁴ The HR Policy mentions equality of opportunity, but there is no specific reference to gender or social inclusion. There is no specific guidance in the HR Procedures Manual.

difficult to see how the organisation can exercise central control or coordination of establishments. Without establishment control, the organisation is not in a position to develop or enforce any organisation structure or establishment models or norms (for example, in terms of the ratio of support staff to programme staff; the optimal size of units or functions; the optimal managerial span of control; or the necessary separation of duties).

IUCN makes use of job descriptions which provide a good level of detail of the expectations of each post. However, job roles are not standardised, with the result that the actual work undertaken by a particular post may vary widely from one location to another. For different reasons both Regional Programme Coordinators and Network Coordinators were cited as examples where the actual functions carried out depend on the specific views of the responsible Director and, to some extent, of the incumbent in the post. Other examples are apparent, particularly at middle and senior levels in Global HQ. While flexibility is necessary and desirable in a knowledge/intellectual capital organisation to permit innovation, there should be a high degree of consistency between posts engaged in the same function, regardless of their location or the preferences of an individual's line manager. This is particularly important to ensure that staff are receiving equal pay for work of equal value (in line with local employment market conditions).

A related issue is the very large number of individual job titles in use, which again appears to reflect a case-by-case approach to job design rather than a standard organisational model. The IUCN Grade Structure tends to support this argument: it consists of 14 distinct grade categories (including three administrative, two professional, and two or three managerial categories); some categories appear to include both support and professional staff, or managerial and professional staff, and several categories contain less than 10 posts.

3.4.4 Regionalisation and Field Offices

The distribution of staff demonstrates that IUCN has pursued its regionalisation agenda vigorously. Regionalisation has been seen as an important instrument to strengthen IUCN's operations as a Union of Members, Commissions and Secretariat. The 1994 Strategy emphasised that the Secretariat should be decentralised to regional or national level, and that regionalisation should be pursued to build a strong worldwide union and improve engagement with Members. Today, staff are distributed to some 60 (?) locations around the world.

The March 2007 review of regionalisation and decentralisation²⁵ made a number of recommendations for continuing purposive decentralisation. It proposed criteria for selecting new locations (including biodiversity values, niche and potential for IUCN, political and member support for operations, and financial viability), and recommended that the Director General should adopt a 'purposeful change' model for continuing decentralisation. This approach included consideration of setup investments, potential effectiveness and cost efficiency, and the need for rational structure and staffing.

It is not particularly apparent from the analysis of staff distribution that the actual distribution of IUCN offices achieves the objectives of the regionalisation strategy. Staff distribution would appear to support the hypothesis that offices are opened/maintained for a variety of reasons, and often quite opportunistically depending on the scope or need for programme work, and funding opportunities.

At the time of writing, IUCN is giving further consideration to its global reach, and updating its regionalisation strategy, but this is still a work in progress and no definitive conclusions have yet been reached²⁶.

²⁵ Creating a better future: Options for organizational change within the decentralized Secretariat of the World Conservation Union: A report of Regionalization and Decentralization Phase II March 2007

²⁶ See:

3.4.5 Global HQ Corporate Functions

At HQ, a number of key corporate functions were examined in detail.

The Programme and Policy Group was considered as a whole, in view of its responsibility for many of the policy, planning and evaluation functions which are critical to IUCN's organisational development.

The Group comprises four units²⁷:

- Global Policy (responsible for both internal policy and guiding external policy influencing work);
- Programme Cycle Management (responsible for the results-based management approach, as well as support to strategic and operational planning, monitoring and evaluation);
- Science and Knowledge Management (responsible for developing and sharing science knowledge, raising the IUCN science profile, and supporting policy influencing); and,
- Programme and Operational Support (responsible for coordinating support and capacity building for regions, and acting as a facilitator of linkages between regions and HQ).

This is a diverse group of essential functions, with a vanishingly small quantum of resources (two posts (at most) in each unit). A further difficulty is the diffuse responsibilities for core functions. For example, Results Based Management involves not only the Programme Cycle Management Unit, but also the Information Management and Finance teams, and Regional Coordinators. Similarly, Knowledge Management and Learning activities involve network and thematic coordinators, communications, and information management, as well as the Science and Knowledge Management Unit.

The Global Policy Unit itself illustrates the issue. With responsibility for coordination of a very wide range of policy development and policy influencing activities, this unit carries a great deal of responsibility for the success of IUCN influencing agenda. Policy influencing is not restricted to participation and multilateral processes. A 2005 review of IUCN's influence on policy²⁸ recorded movement towards an increasingly systematic approach in which policy development is informed by practice, and in which policy influencing takes place at every level - with programmes, commissions, country and regional offices all actually or potentially engaged and influencing policy. Given the strategic significance, and the complexity of coordinating these activities, and even allowing for the fact that the policy influencing role is distributed throughout the organisation, there is no doubt that the Global Policy Unit is remarkably under-resourced, lacking the capacity to support any but the most strategic interventions. A critical part of the Unit's role should be to develop the policy influencing capacity, and quality assure policy influencing initiatives and outcomes for IUCN as a whole. However, in reality the resources do not exist to do so to any significant extent.

The most notable candidate for role clarification is that of Programme and Operational Support, which appears to have very substantial overlaps not only with each of the other units in the Programme and Policy Group (especially Programme Cycle Management), but with the roles of network, thematic and regional coordinators, and many other HQ functions which are charged with

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1. DG paper 'Strengthening IUCN: Decisions on Organisational Change June 2007
 2. Draft POS paper on Presence in the Regions May 2010 (Work in Progress)

²⁷ The Review Team notes that the draft paper entitled 'A Modified Business Model for IUCN: Three Business Lines, Related Programme Priorities, and Organisation' (dated 28th July, prepared by the Director General and Deputy Director General) proposes some restructuring of this Group, but this does not negate the key points discussed in this report.

²⁸ IUCN Publication: Review Of IUCN's Influence On Policy Phase I: Describing the Policy Work of IUCN February 2005

aspects of regional engagement, oversight and support. A number of those interviewed in the course of this review found it difficult to articulate the precise role of this Unit, or that of the Advisory Group which supports it. A review of the recent activities of the Unit would tend to support this contention. For example:

- The Unit recently presented a short paper on Secretariat-wide capacity building priorities (potential overlaps with the HR, and numerous other HQ functions).
- The Unit recently presented an internal policy paper on Secretariat presence in the regions (potential overlap with the work of the policy, finance and constituency teams).
- The Unit has recently been directly involved in supporting regionalization, and strengthening the project portfolio of, the Global Marine and Polar Programme (potential overlap with the Biodiversity Conservation Group)

The range of these activities would tend to support the contention that the Unit was established in the first instance to resolve some specific issues in the decentralised organisation. However, IUCN should consider whether it requires such a capability on a permanent, basis. The role of the Programme Cycle Management Unit is less contested. In this case, the issue is that the role is extremely wide, and has (necessarily) been interpreted to cover all aspects of planning (from quadrennial strategy to support for project portfolio planning), monitoring, and evaluation (including impact assessment). All of these activities span all areas of organisational work - from developing a results framework for the One Programme Approach, to supplying guidelines for developing results frameworks for individual components of the operational plan. To date, the role has had a strong capacity development component, particularly in relation to supporting Network and Regional Coordinators with aspects of results based management and programme cycle management.

The Programme Cycle Management Unit is far too small to build and maintain an effective results based management (RBM) system. Much has been achieved in developing project portfolio and programme level monitoring, but the unit simply doesn't have the resources to permit the skilled evaluation and lesson-learning which a knowledge organisation such as IUCN requires. The work of this unit is discussed in more detail in the assessment of the strategic planning process below. However, it is apparent that IUCN urgently need to identify sufficient additional resources to enable this Unit to accelerate the development and implementation of results based management.

IUCN does not appear have a comprehensive model of knowledge management and learning²⁹. Aspects of the function are distributed between Programme Cycle Management (lesson learning), Communications (library, website, publications), Science and Knowledge Management and the Commission on Education and Communication. . The review team understands that, like policy influencing, knowledge management is a diffuse function, and that aspects are distributed between Programme Cycle Management, Communications, and Science and Knowledge Management. In addition, the work of the Commission on Education and Communication is central to the generation and dissemination of knowledge. Further, knowledge management and learning constitutes a part of the work of programmes and the other commissions, as well as the regional offices. This is to be expected, as much of IUCN's strategic niche is concerned with aspects of knowledge management: generation, packaging, dissemination, support for lesson learning and policy influencing. As with policy influencing, the Science and Knowledge Management HQ function has a role to play in building capacity for knowledge management functions, coordinating critical knowledge management policy and methods, and quality assuring knowledge management activities. Like the Global Policy Unit and the Programme Cycle Management Unit, Science and Knowledge Management has insufficient resources to fulfil these functions. There is only one designated Knowledge Management Officer within the Science and Knowledge Management. This is insufficient, and the post is not sufficiently senior to bring together all of the diverse aspects of knowledge

²⁹ A comprehensive definition would bring together ICT, scientific knowledge, internal and external communications, marketing, networking, monitoring and evaluation, and lesson learning and sharing.

management and learning, or mobilise an organisation-wide response. IUCN has prioritised ICT, particularly the Enterprise Resource Planning system (ERP), as an essential precursor to improved Knowledge Management. Although IUCN intended to establish a Knowledge Management Task Force, the Review Team was unable to identify any evidence of its operations, and analytical and policy documents provided to the Review Team are now several years old³⁰. It is clear that IUCN needs a Knowledge Management and Learning Strategy which has Council-level visibility, and which engages senior managers across the entire organisation. This will require a better-resourced team with the ability to conceptualise, lead and support the process of strategy development and implementation.

Apart from the Programme and Policy Group, other corporate functions were examined in more detail. While it is beyond the scope of this Review to carry out a comprehensive organisational assessment, a number of organisational and management issues which require attention are summarised below.

Firstly, it is apparent that three critical functions are under resourced, as follows:

- **Strategic Partnerships and Fundraising**

At present, the Strategic Partnerships Unit consists of only five staff. This is insufficient by any standard and is particularly important for IUCN at the current juncture. Even allowing for the fact that much fundraising is decentralised, leadership and coordination is essential for such a vital function. Fundraising is too important to be assigned to a small unit, even with substantial input from the Director General. Fundraising was included in the intersessional Financial Plan, and there was also a Fundraising Plan for the period³¹ - but although these are presented to Congress they are not a basis for action. In practice, fundraising is opportunistic, and the Unit is too small to take and sustain a strategic perspective.

IUCN needs a comprehensive organisation wide-strategy encompassing all aspects of fundraising. This should make the links between the programme, the financial plan, and funding, assigning responsibility for deliverables. While fundraising is primarily considered by the Finance and Audit Committee of Council, it needs to become more clearly a critical Council-level activity, and considered regularly and in-depth at this level. Within this, the functions of the Unit would be to: manage and oversee development and implementation of an organisation-wide fundraising strategy; monitor and report on fundraising activities; undertake research, and support key initiatives (especially core funders, philanthropy patrons and the ambassadors programmes).

- **Oversight**

At present there is a single post in this Unit, which replaces the previous Internal Audit function. The Head of Oversight is a new role. The Unit employs a risk-based approach which is set out in the Audit Policy and Risk Management Paper. The Oversight Unit reports to the Finance and Audit Committee (FAC) and the Director General. In summary, the necessary framework exists, but the function is seriously under-resourced. Current resource restraints limit the visits to regional and those other offices where the risk has been assessed

³⁰ The Knowledge Products and Services Study 2004, and the Methodology for Tracking the Knowledge Products of IUCN 2006.

³¹ See:

1. IUCN Fundraising Plan 2008-2012 (February 2008)
2. IUCN Business Strategy 2009-2012: Challenges and opportunities (January 2009)
3. IUCN Financial Plan for the period 2009-2012
4. Action plan for Enhancing the Effectiveness of Fundraising for IUCN Regional Programme (internal paper May 2011)

as high, on the ground of materiality, absence of audits, donor requirements, or findings from recent and external audit reports. The current resource level, which is low for an organisation of this scale, aggravates the high risk profile of IUCN (derived from, inter alia, funding uncertainty, a very large number of locations and activities, and considerable reputational risks). A minimum of three staff would allow for the implementation of a realistic programme of sustainable coverage based on a risk based selection criteria, and allow for the prompt response to any matters requiring urgent investigation.

- **Legal Advisor**

The resource constraints facing the Office of the Legal Advisor are similar to those of the Oversight Unit. This too is a single-post Unit, with the function under-resourced for an organisation of IUCN's scale, operating in an international context across multiple legal domains.

Under-resourcing is not an issue with the other corporate functions examined. For each of these there may be opportunities for IUCN to review the quantum of staff and consider redeployment to less well-resourced functions where possible.

- **Finance Group**

Globally, this is a large group of staff at present, however, this is directly related to the need to process transactions and it should be possible to redeploy some positions when ERP is fully operational.

In general, the Group is to be commended for strenuous efforts to strengthen financial management. In particular, the preparation of more robust multi-year financial plans³² and consistent monitoring and reporting of progress against these significantly improves IUCN's ability to manage financial uncertainty. Equally, efforts in 2010 to achieve the allocation of costs to activities³³ represent a major step forward. It is extremely regrettable that the proposals have not been accepted and this should be pursued with vigour. There is scope for further improvement (which should be facilitated by the introduction of the ERP). In particular, IUCN should consider introducing flexible budgeting, and should take the opportunity to build on its initial worthwhile efforts to strengthen systems and expertise with the management of foreign exchange and treasury management³⁴.

With respect to accounting, IUCN prepares its accounts in full compliance with Swiss law³⁵. While this fulfilled the organisation's legal obligations, Audited Annual Report and Accounts are critical accountability documents for Framework Agreements with national governments/agencies, and there is scope to consider bringing the accounts into closer compliance with international auditing and accounting standards (for example, to include segmental analysis, and to ensure that the accounts present audited financial data). Also, IUCN could consider development of a more explicit reserves policy/strategy to inform reading of the Balance Sheet.

- **Human Resources Management Group**

This is a decentralised function with a relatively small team at HQ (and it is creditable that the Head of Group post has been localised to the home country of the incumbent). The most important observation with respect to this function is that it is primarily focused on

³² IUCN Financial Plan 2009-12 and various PowerPoint presentations.

³³ Allocation of Service and Programme Support Costs to Corporate and Conservation Units (Internal Paper July 2010)

³⁴ Which included staff training; improving relationships with the main IUCN banking partner, and more active Forex management.

³⁵ Report and Accounts 2009.

personnel administration³⁶. Personnel administration is time-consuming in an organisation where there are a high number of contract appointments, and contracts are continually turning over, and the situation is exacerbated in some locations, because IUCN is seen as an unattractive employer, where employment and career prospects are unstable. Also, the high level of staff turnover associated with project activities necessitates a substantial personnel administration effort. Personnel administration is also very important in a globally-distributed organisation where compliance with local employment legislation, and responding to local employment market conditions are vitally important. There is no doubt that the Human Resources Management (HRM) Group provides an efficient personnel administration service³⁷.

However, modern HRM involves more than personnel administration, and despite the policy document, IUCN does not appear to have an approach to strategic HR management. A key example of this is the lack of establishment control described above. In addition, although there are job descriptions and an efficient job evaluation system, there does not appear to be any organisation design or organisation and methods function, which would provide guidance on locations, structure and job design and provide management with reassurance about efficiency of human resources deployment. Modern HR management is also concerned with optimising the cost effectiveness of the workforce, including a focus on minimising location and employments costs³⁸. Apart from appraisal, it's not clear how HRM contributes to organisational performance management. The capacity building function is not sufficiently developed: there is a limited training effort, and virtually no training and development budget³⁹. There does not appear to be any structured process of career management. The Review Team was not able to identify specific diversity (gender and social inclusion), or welfare policies or guidelines - all of which tend to be indicative of modern strategic human resources management. IUCN should give consideration to repositioning the human resources management function to deliver these strategic services to the senior management of the organisation. In addition, IUCN should give serious consideration to an expansion of both the resources and strategy for human resources development.

- **Communications Group**

This is quite a large unit, especially by comparison with those of the Programme and Policy Group. There are 14 positions at HQ and approximately another 25-30 (full time equivalents) in the regions⁴⁰. The Group is responsible for the communications strategy, communications products, and supporting the communications infrastructure (including the website and the library). Despite the number of staff, the communication budget has reduced substantially over the last 10 years. The ERP should make a significant difference both to communications, and to the consistency of communications. In particular, the CRM should make targeted 'marketing' easier. In the slightly longer term, there should also be significant impact on

³⁶ As evidenced by the nature of HR records which the Review Team has have been able to access - these are almost entirely organised to facilitate personnel record-keeping, rather than strategic Human Resources Management information.

³⁷ See IUCN Global Human Resources Policy June 2003, and IUCN Human Resources Procedures Manual Undated.

³⁸ For example, ensuring that the bare minimum of staff are located out of their home countries, and especially minimising the numbers of staff unnecessarily deployed in the most expensive locations such as Gland.

³⁹ This is particularly disappointing given the emphasis placed on training and development in the response to the 2007 Review.

⁴⁰ However, the regions are very variable. For example, ESARO has no-one while, PACO has a communications officer in almost each country office.

running the website. The Unit continues to work on branding and niche, and integrating communication strategies into programme and project design. The contribution of communications to organisation-wide Knowledge Management and Learning should be considered as part of any initiative to expand and strengthen the knowledge management learning function as described above.

- **Information Systems Unit**

The Information Management Group provides a range of services including systems and network administration, which are of critical importance in a globally distributed organisation such as IUCN. This includes operating a number of substantial systems, including the Human Resources Management System and Knowledge Management Platform, and the development of other applications such as the Congress System and Member and Commission Portals. In addition, procurement, licensing and maintenance of infrastructure, and operation of the global email and audio-video conferencing systems are key parts

This group is responsible for the development and rollout of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System, which is expected to have a fundamental impact on IUCN's ways of working, including human resources management, financial management, constituency relationship management, knowledge management, and many other features. IUCN has invested a great deal of financial and other resources in the development of ERP. It is regarded as the platform for all information management-related systems, including results based management and knowledge management. Unfortunately, IUCN has taken the view that development of ERP is a necessary prerequisite for development of other systems called for in the 2007 review, and the assessment team were advised by a number of key informants that the expectations of this initiative are unrealistic.

- **Constituency Support Group.**

Discussed under Section 4.1.1.

3.4.6 Conclusions on Secretariat Staffing, Structure and Functions

IUCN is a knowledge and intellectual capital organisation, and such organisations have particular staffing, structural and functional characteristics. Typically, they have large numbers of 'professional' staff who are expected to act autonomously and within the disciplines of their professional expertise. More than 50% of IUCN's staff fall into this category. Human resources management systems for these staff should emphasise capacity development and career management, and a focus on ethics rather than rigid direction.

Structurally, convening and influencing organisations such as IUCN should be lean, flat, flexible and responsive. For such organisations, there are positive advantages to encouraging short-term relationships and collaborations, and turnover of contract staff should be regarded as an opportunity rather than a cost. Strategic partnerships and permeability to other organisations and sources of knowledge and influence should be actively fostered. In this respect, IUCN has a major built-in advantage in the shape of its Members and Commissions, and it is good to see the organisation beginning to capitalise on these more effectively. However, the convening and influencing functions also have implications for structure and locations - to enable IUCN to provide services, and engage with a very wide stakeholder group. Analysis of the organisation structure and distribution of staff tells the story of opportunistic decentralisation and expansion. As a result, although the organisation has a presence in very many places, that presence is strongly skewed to the ARO and PACO regions. IUCN should consider the extent to which the current conformation matches its medium to long-term strategic objectives.

With respect to functions, organisations such as IUCN should operate minimal systems consistent with achieving strategic goals. Responsibility for policies and systems should be shared as appropriate, making use of short lifetime project teams, task forces, and communities of practice. IUCN has recognised this and there are some positive indications of its efforts to operate as network. However, it is precisely because of the flexibility of this approach is that some key systems must be fully resourced and operated effectively. This Review has identified four which need particular attention in this respect:

- Fundraising
- Programme Cycle Management
- Science and Knowledge Management
- Oversight

In singling these out, it is not the intention to suggest that there are no other functional issues. But these should be prioritised as critical to the operational, financial and developmental performance of the organisation.

IUCN is already working to strengthen other corporate functions, and the anticipated impact of the ERP on aspects of communications, knowledge management, financial and human resources management is very welcome⁴¹. Apart from this, credit is also due to the Finance Group for their efforts to reform financial management to comply with modern international expectations.

A final area for IUCN consideration is to repositioning the Human Resources Management Group to deliver strategic human resource services in addition to excellent personnel administration, as at present.

3.5 IUCN's Strategic Planning Process

IUCN has been evolving an approach to Results Based Management since 2001⁴². The system today is unique to IUCN, developed in part to reflect the organisation's exposure to, and need to satisfy the planning, monitoring and evaluation approaches and requirements of multiple donors. IUCN defines Result Based Management as:

- **Planning** - a corporate process designed around the intersessional period which involves quadrennial, biennial and annual planning and budgeting. A particular feature is the IUCN-specific 'Results Chain'⁴³
- **Project Cycle Management** - which includes standards and guidelines, the project appraisal process, and portfolio monitoring. The objective of this element is to ensure that the project portfolio, which includes hundreds of projects, and through which up to 80% of the programme is delivered, reflects the Global Results, is high quality, and is financially viable.
- **Monitoring and Reporting** - which involves reporting at both programme level (primarily reporting project achievements, see below) and global level. Since global results focus on policy, IUCN has developed an approach to monitoring policy influence. In addition, a monitoring framework for the One Programme is also under development.
- **Evaluation** - which is currently undertaken at two levels: project (these tend to be ad hoc, mostly driven by donor requirements); and corporate (cyclical strategic review of all

⁴¹ Although it must be understood that the ERP is just one tool of many to manage the entire spectrum of (communications, knowledge management, financial and human resources management).

⁴² An excellent overview is provided by: Results Based Management at IUCN: Planning Monitoring and Evaluation: update, next steps, roles and responsibilities March 2011

⁴³ In IUCN terms, a Results Statement identifies intended influence over policy, behaviour and governance, as a means to influencing impact over conservation and human well-being. During planning, component programmes are expected to identify a set of sub results that serve as the means for delivering the results.

components programmes over time). Programme level evaluation, although planned, has so far not been possible due to lack of resources.

The Review Team endorses the Results Based Management approach, and is impressed by the progress which has been made in developing and implementing the system, particularly given the chronic scarcity of resources described above. A number of successes are apparent: the strategic reviews⁴⁴ which have been completed have been well-received, and more are planned; results-based component programme planning is now well established, and arrangements for project planning, project appraisal and portfolio management are being rolled out. Although elements of the system are still under development, IUCN has made very significant progress, and it is already a useful tool.

However, the ultimate effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation system is limited by inherent constraints in IUCN's strategic planning model. Some of these arise from the nature of the organisation. The pre-eminence of Congress means that the primary planning framework is the quadrennial. This imposes a degree of rigidity on planning, both in terms of the need for plans to be comprehensive (to be authorised by Congress), and the need for objectives and programme plans to remain current over a four-year period. IUCN has tried to structure and focus the quadrennial programme around five Corporate and Thematic programme areas, and 12 Global Result Areas⁴⁵. However, to encompass the breadth of IUCN interests and activities the latter are so high level that they are (inevitably) completely non-specific⁴⁶.

Unfortunately this means that the Global Results Areas can provide direction in only the most general terms. Although the intersessional programme attempts to put 'flesh on the bones' by presenting a situation analysis, justification for IUCN's approach, and a narrative description of the specific areas of work which may be involved, this is not a substitute for specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented and time-bound (SMART) indicators. Part of the problem is that there is no definition of what can be classed as a result, leading to a situation where there is a perverse incentive for component programmes to claim tens or even hundreds of results. Without these, it is impossible for IUCN to describe its strategy or achievements with brevity and clarity, as illustrated by the recently prepared IUCN Progress Report and its annex⁴⁷. The Progress Report is a 75-page narrative document describing highlights of the work under every thematic area and global result in the 2009-10 period. The accompanying annex is a 163-page long matrix which compiles the reporting from each component programme of IUCN, covering regional programmes, global thematic programmes and commissions, and organized by programme area and global result.

The Review Team are sympathetic to IUCN's dilemma: the organisation is so diverse, and its programme and project activities so numerous, that unpacking the Global Result Areas may result in a long list of indicators. However, IUCN should make a determined effort, and seek external assistance if necessary, to create a list of, perhaps, no more than 3 to 5 indicators for each Global Result Area to provide more specific guidance. This is urgently needed: both by programme managers preparing operational plans to achieve the results; and by donors and other external stakeholders who need a clear understanding of the strategic direction, and an equally clear

⁴⁴ Programme on Protected Areas, Asia Region, and Mesoamerica have been completed. Global Marine Programme and West Asia have been planned. The current External Review and a planned review of Congress are also part of the strategic evaluation work.

⁴⁵ IUCN Programme 2013 to 2016 (Draft for Consultation April 2011)

⁴⁶ A random example: under TPA 3: Nature-based Solutions to Climate Change, Global Result Area 3.3 is: 'Knowledge, standards and tools to assess the impact of climate change on biodiversity continue to be improved and are widely available to support conservation, adaptation and mitigation at local, national and global levels.'

⁴⁷ IUCN Progress Report 2009-2010 and Annexes May 2011

summary of how programme achievements have contributed to impacts at the global result area level.

Partly as a result of the very high level at which the Global Results are defined, and partly reflecting the predominance of projects in IUCN's operations, **there is a 'disconnect' between IUCN's high-level strategic planning, as encapsulated in the Programme, and its operational planning.** The Results Chain suggests a logical flow from global result areas to component results, and these are, in turn, the basis for programme work plans and budgets. However, in practice, annual workplans are built from the bottom-up, resulting in portfolios of projects and programmes. Programme planners try to link each project or activity to a specific Global Result Area, but in the absence of more specific indicators there is no structured linkage.

At present, IUCN's routine monitoring system⁴⁸ is mainly concerned with the achievement of project results. Monitoring reports provide a statement of activities completed, and assessment of the extent to which these have contributed to the achievement of global results. Financial information is also provided. This project-level focus is unsurprising given the emphasis on donor-funded projects - most of whom insist on systematic project reporting. However it is also a symptom of the 'disconnect' described above. In the absence of specific indicators linking each programme or portfolio of projects to the global results areas, the monitoring system can only assess each project and programme in isolation, and then infer its contribution to the achievement of the relevant global result.

The Review Team concurs that effective project monitoring is necessary at the operational level, but it is not sufficient, of itself, to enable IUCN to monitor and report on strategic achievements. In the absence of an intermediate results structure which could be provided by the addition of more specific indicators as described above, the Programme Management Cycle Unit has been obliged to try to use the monitoring system to bridge the gap. The Progress Report described above is intended to make the vertical linkages to demonstrate how project level achievements amount to the achievement of portfolio and intersessional programme level results. This is a creative, but ultimately unsatisfactory solution, as described above.

The emphasis on project monitoring may also lead to unintended consequences in terms of undermining IUCN's efforts in other areas, such as the Value Proposition and the One Programme (networking, convening and policy influencing, for example). These areas are not directly reflected in the Global Results Areas, and so are not subject to systematic planning and performance measurement. Since people prioritise those things against which performance is measured, the implications for an unbalanced/distorted programme implementation effort are obvious. Again, the Progress Report was suggested as a possible mechanism for capturing and reporting on progress in these areas, but this addresses only the monitoring gap, and not the underlying planning gap.

Finally, IUCN faces the same challenge as many of its comparator organisations in terms of how to establish a simple and logical reporting structure. Respondents at the Framework Donor meeting were clear in their demands for a structure that links Strategy (Quadrennial Programme) – Implementation (activities and corresponding budget lines) – Results (Annual Reports). For comparison, IUCN management might find the Strategy, Implementation Plan, and Results documents developed by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) to be of interest and provide a contrasting approach:

- IIED Strategy 2009-14: www.iied.org/pubs/pdfs/G02532.pdf
- IIED Results 2009-10: www.iied.org/files/dd/IIED_Results_2009-10.pdf
- IIED Workbook 2010-11: www.iied.org/files/dd/IIED_Workbook_2010-11.pdf

⁴⁸ The basic monitoring and reporting tools are the Portfolio Tracking Sheet, the Biannual Review, and the Progress Report.

3.5.1 Conclusions on Result Based Management and Strategic Planning

With minimal resources IUCN has been able to make good progress with several aspects of the results based management system. In particular, conceptual frameworks, guidance materials, project cycle management arrangements, the network coordinator role/concept, and strategic evaluation have all been advanced since the last External Review recommended strengthening this area. The limitations to progress continue to be the flaws in the IUCN strategic planning model, and lack of resources in the Programme Management Cycle Unit.

The Review Team was impressed not only with the work of this Unit, but also the efforts being made by others, including finance, information management, and especially, some regional and network coordinators. There are a number of individuals throughout the organisation who have an interest in, and commitment to, effective results based management. The challenge for IUCN is to capitalise on these resources, and move the process of designing and implementing the system into a higher gear. This will involve three steps:

- Firstly, it is essential to develop more SMART indicators which will help to translate the Global Results Areas into an intermediate strategic planning framework which can be used directly by programme planners.
- It will then be possible to refine the monitoring framework to enable IUCN to report on strategic achievements (both programme areas and non-programme) objectively, quantitatively and succinctly, while continuing to report at the operational level as at present.
- Finally, a great deal of time has elapsed since IUCN first embarked on the introduction of results based management in 2001. It is now time to develop a simple time-bound plan for making the necessary changes, and allocate sufficient resources to complete the task so that strategic planning and monitoring arrangements are in place for the 2013-16 Programme.

3.6 Assessment of the financial position and the 'business model'

3.6.1 Financial Trends

The Secretariat and key Council members clearly understand the financial challenges which IUCN faces. The Finance Group has prepared exhaustive analysis of funding trends and expenditure trends over the past 10 years. A preliminary budget has been prepared for 2012 and bridging the funding gap has been the subject of numerous discussions by both management and Council. The summary of the financial position below has been derived from these analyses, and from detailed financial information provided to the Review Team.

IUCN has faced financial difficulties for the past few years. Setting aside a number of exceptional events⁴⁹, the overall financial trends are not positive. Figures 4 and 5 below⁵⁰ present the trend in IUCN's financial performance. Figure 4 illustrates the trend in IUCN's total budget over the period 2009 to 2012. Figure 5 illustrates the trend in income between 2004 and the present.

Figure 4 shows that IUCN is planning a relative reduction in all budget areas, with the exception of constituency engagement. While the trend was already downwards for some programmatic and support areas, there is a more significant correction in the budget for governance, Secretariat management, and accountability, reflecting IUCN's response to the budget deficit.

Figure 5 shows a clear trend that while restricted (project) funds had previously been increasing, that trend is now reversed. Framework (core) funding is decreasing. Both lines of funding are at

⁴⁹ Investment in the ERP and new headquarters, foreign-exchange losses, operational losses in one or two regions.

⁵⁰ Both reproduced from the 2012 Preliminary Budget Presentation provided to Council in May 2011

risk⁵¹ because some of the donors are themselves now experiencing funding cuts and changing priorities, exacerbated by the poor European and US economic environment. With respect to unrestricted funds, membership dues are largely static, and there is a modest increase in other unrestricted funds (from philanthropy, for example). There is little scope to increase membership income, even in the medium term, without substantially increasing the number of Members – and this would probably require a major policy decision to redesign the membership model. Logically, IUCN is devoting substantial effort to expanding other sources, especially philanthropy⁵², but this is unlikely to yield significant revenues in the short to medium term.

Figure 4 Total Budget Trends 2009-2012 CHFm

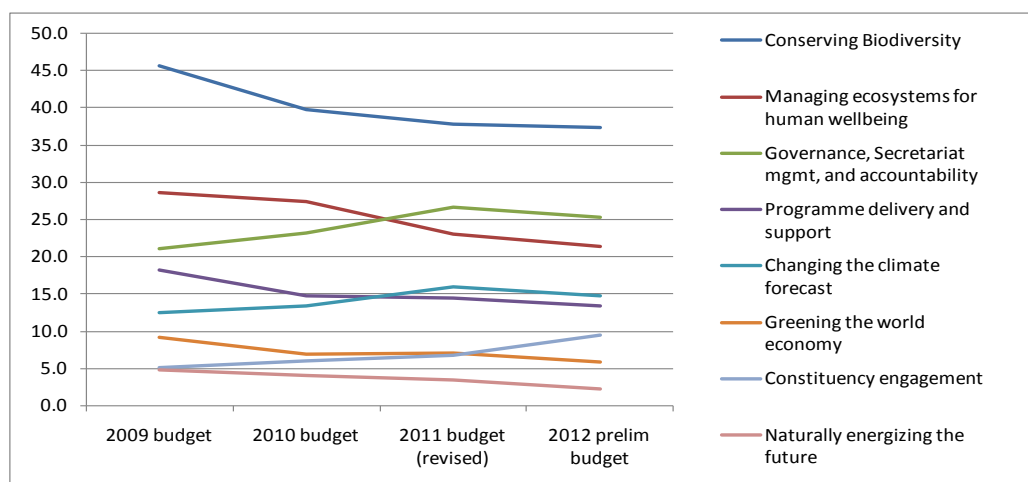


Figure 5 Total Income Trends 2004-2012 CHFm

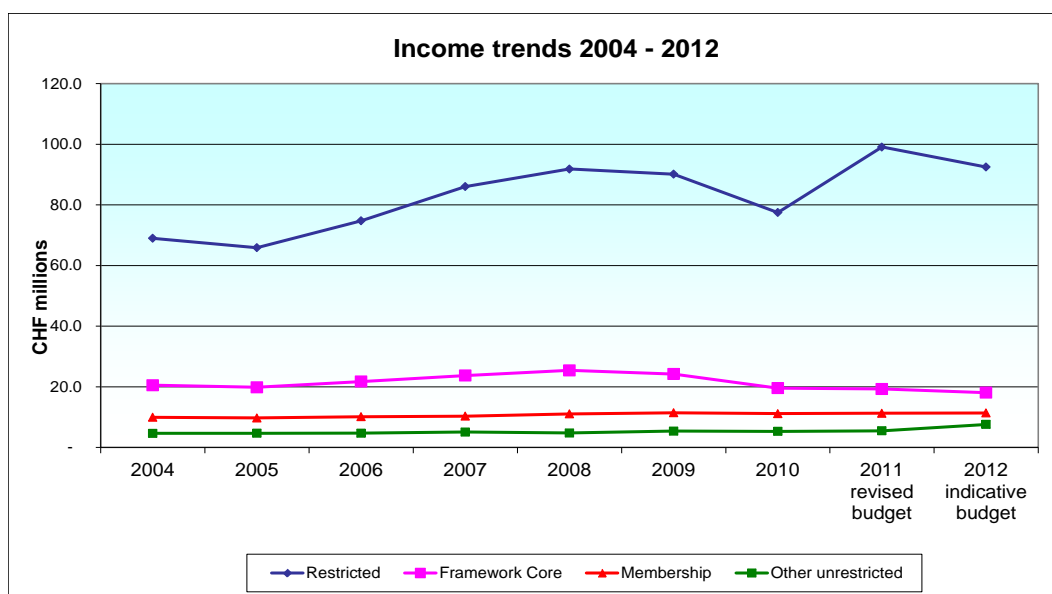


Table 8⁵³ below provides further insight into the structure of the preliminary budget for 2012.

⁵¹ However both the risk and materiality are greater with respect to core funding, which relies on relatively few large funders. A single decision to withdraw can have far-reaching consequences.

⁵² Through the new patrons and ambassadors programmes.

⁵³ Reproduced from the 2012 Preliminary Budget Presentation provided to Council in May 2011

Table 8 Preliminary Budget for 2012

| Table 7 : Total Expenditure (CHFm) | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| | EXPENDITURE | | | FUNDING SOURCES | | | | |
| | Total planned expenditure | Cost allocation | Adjusted expenditure | core income | Cost recovery and other | Total Secretariat | Project activities | Total funding |
| Corporate Units | 7.1 | 0.8 | 8.0 | 7.2 | 0.8 | 8.0 | - | 8.0 |
| Regional Components | 71.0 | 0.6 | 71.5 | 7.4 | 17.1 | 24.5 | 47.1 | 71.5 |
| Global Thematic (incl. Commissions) | 40.8 | 2.4 | 43.2 | 12.6 | 9.4 | 22.0 | 21.2 | 43.1 |
| Service Units | 7.6 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 3.6 | 0.2 | 3.8 | - | 3.8 |
| Other costs | 1.2 | - | 1.2 | 1.1 | 0.1 | 1.2 | - | 1.2 |
| Other costs and provisions | 2.0 | - | 2.0 | 2.0 | - | 2.0 | - | 2.0 |
| Total | 129.6 | 0.0 | 129.6 | 33.8 | 27.6 | 61.4 | 68.2 | 129.6 |
| available core | | | | 33.0 | | | | |
| surplus/(shortfall) | | | | - 0.8 | | | | |

3.6.2 Fund Allocation and Subsidy

Table 8 shows the balance of expenditure and income between the main elements of IUCN. Regions, and Global Thematic Units and Commissions⁵⁴ are, rightly, the biggest spenders and earners, accounting for 88% of the total budget between them (Regions: 55%, Thematics: 33%). Nevertheless, both are dependent on allocations of core income to supplement income from project activities and cost recovery – approximately 10% of the total in the case of Regions⁵⁵, and 30% for Thematic activities. Corporate and service units account for only 9% of the total budget, but are almost entirely funded from core income, with a very small element of cost recovery. It is clear from this analysis that not only the corporate and service units, but also the Global Thematic Programmes are heavily dependent on core funds - and are therefore most vulnerable to loss of funders. Surprisingly, given the extent to which allocation of core funds is contested, Regions are the least dependent on this resource. The budget does not specifically identify non-project activities⁵⁶, so that it is not possible to identify the proportion of expenditure on critical Value Proposition or One Programme operations, including the convening and influencing work which is at the heart of IUCN's niche.

More broadly, the analysis clearly shows that all of the organisation's 'front-line' (as opposed to corporate and service 'back-office') activities are subsidised to some extent, and this raises two obvious questions: What? and Why?: What are the specific activities from which IUCN is unable to cover costs from related income? And what is the justification for undertaking such activities? In reality, there are many good reasons why some front-line activities need to be subsidised - some of the more obvious examples are: convening and governance-related activities; proposal-writing; product or service development activities, and representational activities. In addition, the Review Team understands that projects and other funded activities which are not financially viable can be (and are) sanctioned on the grounds of strategic importance. It is important that an organisation of the scale and complexity of IUCN has a consistent policy and transparent system for determining whether specific activities should be subsidised, and tracking the true costs associated with them.

⁵⁴ In reality, commissions account for a very small proportion of these figures: approximately CHF1.5m for all six.

⁵⁵ Review of detailed financial information provided to the Review Team shows that this is consistent between regions, and over time.

⁵⁶ None of the detailed financial information provided to the Review Team disaggregated expenditure on these items.

This should go beyond the question of project financial viability, or charging legitimate project overheads. IUCN should identify what 'non-funded' activities are appropriate should be undertaken, and provide guidance to managers to ensure that these are controlled and tracked⁵⁷.

The previous section identified that the results based management system is unable to track Value Proposition and One Programme activities. This is also true of the budget structure, as described above. These activities, especially support and engagement with Members and Commissions, are a special case of subsidy. IUCN rightly invests a great deal of resources in these activities, but some are captured in corporate and service costs, while others are 'hidden' in the time spent by many staff members in all locations. The true cost is likely to be significant, and IUCN needs to know how much it is. IUCN should consider the benefits of preparing specific budgets for Value Proposition and One Programme-unique activities, and also whether specific fundraising initiatives to cover the costs of some of these activities would be worthwhile

3.6.3 The Business Model

This term 'business model' is in common use in IUCN, but means different things to different people. The Review Team understands this term to mean *the rationale of how an organization creates, delivers, and captures economic, social, or other forms of value*. The essence of a business model is that *it defines how an organisation delivers value to stakeholders, and gets them to pay for value*. It is used to give a high-level perspective on core aspects of an enterprise, including purpose, strategies, infrastructure, organizational structures, and operational processes and policies. The term was originally developed for use with the private sector, but the principles have also been applied to not for profit organisations such as IUCN⁵⁸. The IUCN Business Model should define the relationship between IUCN's Programme activities, the costs of delivery, and the sources of funds to pay for these. The Business Model is the tool that IUCN should use to examine and secure its organisational and operational sustainability.

However, IUCN appears to conceive the business model as another way of describing the thinking behind the programme. It has recently developed a paper entitled 'A Modified Business Model for IUCN: Three Business Lines, Related Programme Priorities, and Organisation'⁵⁹.

Although the introduction to the paper recognises that the Business Model is primarily concerned with matching funding with programme activities, much of the paper discusses programme activities, redefined as three 'business lines' (delivering knowledge products, providing results on the ground, and mobilising the Union). The paper seems to take as its starting point the current programme purpose and Value Proposition. It does not critically examine the appropriateness of these, or the underlying assumptions about IUCN's niche. In this respect, the paper is perhaps best considered as a restatement of the purpose and configuration of the Programme, rather than an explicit development of a business model which defines the relationship between IUCN's programme activities, the costs of delivery, and the sources of funds to pay for these.

The paper offers some useful analysis of some of the critical financial and organisational sustainability issues, and sets out criteria for identifying priority programmes, and lists a number of priority programmes in need of further development under each of the three business lines. It also proposes a number of structural changes to the organisation of the Secretariat, and proposals for

⁵⁷ The new time recording system could be of assistance: it could generate information to enable IUCN to assess the scope and scale of these activities, and derive an estimate of staff costs associated with them.

⁵⁸ Some examples of application of the Business Model concept to non-commercial organisations can be found in *Ten Non-profit Funding Models*, Stanford Social Innovation Review. 2009-03-05. William Foster, Peter Kim, Barbara Christiansen. March 2005

⁵⁹ The paper is a draft, dated 28th July, prepared by the Director General and Deputy Director General,. The paper was provided to the Review Team on Friday 29th July: unfortunately too late to permit dialogue on the contents of the paper.

cost savings and improved cost allocation and recovery to mitigate an expected further decline in core income.

In summary therefore, although the paper offers some useful guidance on operational matters, particularly on restructuring the programme and aspects of achieving cost savings, it lacks the fundamental strategic review of activities and costs, and matching these with funding and income earning opportunities, which characterises the generally-understood business model concept. Further, there is a risk that the paper will lead IUCN into a series of operational changes (for example, partial reorganisation, and cost saving initiatives) at the expense of a deeper strategic transformation of the business model.

3.6.4 Sustainability of the Current Business Model

In fact, IUCN does not have a single business model. It has a business mix of at least four different models, reflecting the different propositions and arrangements for project work, engagement with members, policy influencing, and internal service delivery. Each of these has a different audience, purpose, method, and funding base. A single model is not a realistic aspiration. Globally, there are no examples of large successful non-profit organisations which wholly support their core mission from income from separate income-earning ventures, and there are no examples which operate on a strictly fee-for-service model without important supplementary fundraising. The IUCN 'mix is even more complex than this, combining income-earning, fundraising, and member subscription funding models. The challenge for IUCN is to find the right formula to manage this mix.

It is apparent to IUCN and to the Review Team that the current position is unsustainable. The problem has a number of different aspects, as follows:

- The prospects for continued framework funding from overseas development assistance (ODA) donors are deteriorating. In the short term, this means that IUCN will continue to live with significant uncertainty. In the longer term, it is essential for IUCN to diversify and/or stabilise its core funding - both to reduce dependency on a limited number of funders, and reduce the risk of significant impact from the loss of a single major funder at short notice.
- Related to this, some types of core funding are undesirable. Firstly, because most ODA funding is restricted to a greater or lesser extent, it carries the risk that the organisational strategy and operations may be distorted by funders' interests and priorities, rather than those of its members. Secondly, core funding provided by donors which also fund project activities can have an unfortunate 'double jeopardy' effect whereby IUCN may be unable to argue for realistic provision of administrative overheads in project funds (because donors will argue that they are ready core funding administrative overheads). Given the extent to which IUCN depends on project funding, it is important that donors are aware of the consequences of denying administrative funding. IUCN could partly address this issue by developing a clear policy statement, which could be shared with donors, identifying which parts of the organisation do and do not receive core funding. IUCN has been very successful at obtaining project funds in the past, and this is very appropriate for project activities which genuinely match the IUCN niche and contribute to the achievement of Global Results. However, many within the organisation are conscious of the dangers associated with 'chasing' project funding to sustain operations. The most important are:
 - This is likely to distort priorities, not only of individual staff members, but of front-line units, where there is a strong incentive to earn funds to cover salaries, or preserve the viability of the unit, or in a particularly unfortunate cross-subsidisation scenario, earn funds to maintain staff so that they can work on other Value Proposition or One Programme activities - a situation

in which individual staff members are personally subsidising non-funded activities through their labour.⁶⁰

- Several external commentators warned of the impact on IUCN's credibility as a convening and influencing organisation if it was to be perceived as 'just another NGO chasing funds'. One or two organisations consulted suggested that this perception was already developing.
- The risk that IUCN will be perceived to be in competition with its Members and, potentially, Commissions, for scarce project funds. This may well jeopardise IUCN efforts in relation to the One Programme by reducing the willingness of these constituencies to engage and contribute.
- Membership and member income is static, and this position is unlikely to change unless the member proposition is changed radically (more members, higher fees, different services, etc.). IUCN needs to consider whether membership and providing services to Members is an important part of its core mission in its own right.

The most important conclusion which can be drawn from this analysis is that 'something's gotta give'. IUCN can continue on the current basis in the short, or even the medium-term, but continuing with the current balance of reliance on core and project funding and without resolving the cross-subsidisation issues will ultimately damage the organisation in ways which are not merely financial. However, the problems can be resolved. In essence, the solutions are simple: IUCN must increase revenue, and/or decrease costs. The Review Team is confident that the organisation has scope to do both, not least because almost all of those Secretariat members interviewed were able to identify opportunities for change. The remainder in this section discusses the available options, and discusses the barriers to change which IUCN may face.

3.6.5 Increasing Revenue

It is understood that, within an overall picture of declining allocation of aid based framework funding for intergovernmental organisations, opportunities continue to exist to win earmarked programmatic funding which will fit well with IUCN's Programme. However, diversification is vitally important. There are a variety of options for increasing revenue, many of which are already known to IUCN. Table 9 below illustrates some of the possibilities which are worth further consideration. The most useful will:

- Demonstrate a high degree of fit with IUCN's brand and niche;
- Be politically acceptable to Council, members, and commissions;
- Add value to, or derive value from existing IUCN activities, intellectual capital, or other assets; and,
- Reduce dependency on a small number of high-value conditional funding sources.

IUCN could use these criteria to screen possibilities. Some of the avenues suggested in Table 9 below are obvious, and IUCN is already pursuing, or considering them. Others are less obvious, and may require research and appraisal, or would require a long lead time for development.

⁶⁰ This is a reality: the Review Team interviewed a number of professional staff at different levels and in different locations, who reported that they had to win and work on projects to earn funds to cover their salaries so they could work on non-project activities which are more important for the IUCN Value Proposition.

Table 9 Options for Increasing Revenue

| Generic strategy | Specific aspects | Degree of difficulty/ lead time |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Fundraising | Philanthropy Private sector endowments | IUCN is already taking action on the first of these, notably with the new patrons and ambassadors programmes but a substantial research and development effort is needed, and there is likely to be there is a long lead time. Regionalisation and expanded effort requires investment in the fundraising function and is discussed elsewhere in this report |
| | Regionalise fundraising to broaden the potential and access new sources | |
| | Expand all fundraising efforts to become an organisation-wide, Council and commission priority | |
| Sale of services or products | Identify and sell services, based on information or expertise. | This would require an exercise to identify suitable services, and market research and development to identify potential clients. In addition to conventional consultancy and advisory services, suggestions have included developing new information products, and providing validation services (e.g. for CITES.) IUCN already does some of these things, but in an opportunistic manner. If this was be developed as a major activity, careful market analysis and feasibility analysis would be needed. |
| Membership and Subscriptions | Increase subscriptions, or identify additional services (information or others) which could be provided to Members by subscription. | Significant change to permit expansion of the Membership would probably require Statute changes, and therefore agreement at Congress. Either of these is a potentially valuable source of funds, but IUCN would need to consider the 'brand' implications, and costs involved in changing /expanding member services. |
| | Either by a general expansion, or by creating new classes of Member | |
| Brokerage or middleman role | Capitalise on convening and networking power by acting as a broker or fund manager. | This is a long shot and may not be appropriate to IUCN's niche and core business. Any opportunities identified would require careful appraisal. (Suggestions have included becoming a fund manager for GEF) |
| Raising revenue from IUCN assets | Capitalise on IUCN's real estate by developing, leasing or other means | IUCN should examine its asset portfolio to identify whether options exist to raise revenue, or at least defray costs. This requires careful investment appraisal, and caution to ensure that this does not detract from IUCN's core business. |

3.6.6 Decreasing Costs

There are only three ways to do this: by making economy savings, efficiency savings, and effectiveness savings. The first two are an integral part of routine good management practices, while the third requires strategic review by senior management, and preferably with engagement of Council members. IUCN has made efforts to improve economy, but needs deepen these, and to focus now on efficiency and effectiveness.

Achieving economy savings requires an instinctive attention to finding the most economic ways and means of working - ranging from applying downward pressure to transport, communications and energy costs (all of which IUCN is actively pursuing) to actively deprioritising 'optional' services (consultancy, catering services etc.) As a global organisation, IUCN has very considerable scope for relatively painless economy savings by reducing employment costs through relocating staff to their

home countries, and should focus much more effort on this initiative, by taking immediate steps to extend the existing programme and set targets for a significant number of relocations (say, 100 within the next year). This will significantly reduce location-related supplements and allowances, and would be worthwhile even if a financial incentive was introduced to encourage repatriation⁶¹. While there is a place for short-term cost saving exercises such as the recent across the board budget reductions, these have very limited utility, and an extremely negative impact on morale. Also, they increase competitiveness for scarce resources internally, as managers often miss the point', and focus on trying to get a larger share of a small cake, rather than taking an organisation-wide perspective.

Efficiency savings should be the outcome of improvements in how IUCN does its work. Improving efficiency is an iterative process and is heavily dependent on attitude change among all staff, but especially mid-level managers who control resources. Ultimately efficiency savings result from improving outputs per member of staff, and this requires two specific activities:

- Systematic and objective review of business processes to cut out unnecessary activities; and,
- Introduction of internal mechanisms to reinforce 'efficiency thinking'.

Global experience shows that the two most effective measures to achieve the latter are: introducing comprehensive time recording so that managers, and the organisation, are aware of where and how staff resources are being used; and introducing internal service delivery agreements and charging, coupled with delegated budgets for front line managers to buy corporate services to ensure that non-frontline services 'earn their living' through demonstrating relevance. (This was proposed last year, and it is regrettable that IUCN did not decide to proceed at that time.) Improving efficiency does not automatically lead to reducing staff numbers - it is much more likely that efficiency savings would enable IUCN to redeploy resources to under-resourced functions (such as fundraising, project cycle management, knowledge management and learning, and oversight, as described elsewhere in this report).

Effectiveness savings result from a strategic business review, often called a 'prior options analysis'⁶². This is not about 'making savings' but about achieving the most effective mix of activities to fulfil the core purpose which is financially and organisationally sustainable in the long term. IUCN should undertake this process for some or all of its activities. This can lead to:

- Identifying activities to cease (because they don't make an optimal contribution to the value proposition - whether front-line or back-office activities), outsource (which in this case could be to Commissions or Member Committees), scale-back, or redesign.
- Identifying structures/units/offices to close/ open/reorganise.

⁶¹ Ultimately, reducing the number of posts in Gland will bring IUCN to face the wider question of best use of the HQ building, and this should be the subject of a strategic review.

⁶² This term is mainly in use in public services. The term is used to emphasise that the starting point is not the status quo, but begins from a perspective that the function does not exist. The Prior Options Process reviews each function (or business) and asks:

1. Is the function needed at all? Who are its customers? Do they pay for it? What would happen if the function ceased?
2. Must the organisation be responsible for, or provide, the function at all? Is/can the function be provided by another organisation?
3. If the function should continue, then what is the scope for rationalisation? (how should it be delivered? what should be the scale? who should provide?)
4. How will the function be managed? (its organisational structure, its relationship with customers, its medium and long-term future and organisational efficiency plans)

A prior options review is intended to help the organisation 'think the unthinkable', and offers IUCN the opportunity to explore radical solutions⁶³. However, this is not to imply that solutions will be absolute: it is highly likely that IUCN will continue have a mixed business model as at present. The main purpose would be to find an optimal mix and balance which will secure IUCN's future – and that may involve significant changes in the number and scale of IUCN activities in the medium term. In view of the governance dimensions of radical change, IUCN should focus on preparation to propose any necessary reforms to the next Congress, with a view to implementation in the next Quadrennial.

3.6.7 Conclusions on the Financial Position and the Business Model

IUCN has initiated a number of measures to address financial sustainability in terms of developing new funding channels and seeking economy savings, and should renew and expand these efforts. However, the long term solution involves more fundamental and systematic examination and reform of the organisation's business mix, and the individual business models which comprise it. Actions fall into three categories:

- Systematic analysis of existing and new funding and income-earning opportunities to identify and pursue those which best match IUCN's niche and needs.
- A sustained and systematic focus on achieving efficiency savings, including business process reviews and the introduction of internal time recording and service agreements and charges.
- A high level process of prior options reviews to identify and make strategic changes in the business mix, and individual component business models to secure IUCN's long term future.

While the second of these is essentially an internal process for the Secretariat to undertake, the first and third will require wider input, and it is likely that any major initiatives or reforms will require Council, and probably Congress engagement.

These activities require different timescales, as follows:

- Short term/Secretariat action (one year):
 - Strengthen fundraising and systematically extend efforts to achieve economy and efficiency savings as proposed above;
 - Consider the scope to negotiate with framework funders or others for resources and support to a programme of strategic review and reform to the business mix and models;
 - Plan and undertake (with Council engagement) an in depth review of funding and income sources, and devising a new fundraising policy and strategy.
- Medium-term (two years):
 - Introduce systems and cultural change to improve cost efficiency - including service agreements and internal charging;
 - Plan and allocate resources for prior options reviews with the intention to propose structured reforms to the next Congress.
- Long-term (next Quadrennial)
 - Implement outcomes of prior options study to realign the business mix and models for long-term sustainability.

⁶³ For example, an extreme approach would be to become purely a membership organisation only, focussed on facilitating and capacitating members to deliver the strategic goals; or to rely on commissions for all research and technical development. Neither of these are 'real world' options and are not considered further.

3.7 Summary and conclusions

Objective 2 in the TORs require the Review Team to examine progress since the 2007 Review, with a particular focus on organisational issues. In considering the progress made, and more specifically the limitations to progress, the analysis above explores three important themes in particular:

- Whether the organisation's structure and governance arrangements support the achievement of the mandate and purpose effectively.
- Whether the key corporate and support functions are able to guide, support and oversee IUCN's activities to ensure that strategic objectives are met, and in particular, whether they are configured to support the implementation of IUCN's planned changes in response to the 2007 Review.
- Whether IUCN's current 'business model' is appropriately defined, and whether it confers long-term sustainability.

The diversity of IUCN stakeholders and the diverse nature of the relationships between them facilitates knowledge exchange, learning and innovation. However, the One Programme is absolutely critical to maintaining control and direction amid so much diversity. While it is gaining momentum, there is more to be done to develop critical mechanisms and ensure that each strand of the Union is fully involved in strategic and corporate planning and decision-making, and takes responsibility for the future sustainability of the Union.

IUCN bears a heavy cost for the democratic processes enshrined in its Statutes, both financially, and in terms of loss of agility and sub-optimal roles played by Council, Council Committees, and individual Council Members. While changing the governance arrangements would be a very lengthy process, IUCN needs to give consideration to ways and means, within the current Statutes, of harnessing the power of Council and Congress more effectively in pursuit of the organisation's future strategy.

IUCN's structure and staffing are typical of knowledge and intellectual capital organisations, with large numbers of 'professional' staff expected to act autonomously within the disciplines of their professional expertise. However, with staff as the most important resource, and the major cost driver of IUCN, the organisation must consider the development of more strategic human resources management functions, particularly focusing on capacity development and performance management of Secretariat staff, and on controlling the organisation structure, staff numbers, and employment costs.

The Members and Commissions confer a potential advantage as flexible resources which broaden the available expertise and enable IUCN to quickly respond to opportunities without the need to make long-term structural or staffing commitments. However, IUCN does not capitalise on this advantage effectively: instead the regionalisation strategy focuses entirely on expanding the number of locations which have a permanent Secretariat presence. More generally, it is not apparent that the actual distribution of IUCN offices achieves the objectives of the regionalisation strategy, as the number and relative size of offices would tend to support the hypothesis that new offices are opened opportunistically.

There are very striking imbalances in the allocation of resources between some functions. Corporate functions which are critical to implementing selected 2007 Review recommendations are seriously under resourced, especially Fundraising and Strategic Partnerships, Programme Cycle Management, Science and Knowledge Management, and Oversight.

IUCN's organisational planning and M&E suffers from inherent constraints in the Strategic Planning Model, which lacks specific intermediate indicators to translate Global Results Areas into a

meaningful framework to direct operations, and which does not reflect Value Proposition and One Programme activities, including Member engagement, convening and influencing activities.

Evaluation of IUCN's current financial position confirms IUCN's own analysis: that traditional funding sources are no longer reliable, and that new sources must be found. In addition, an analysis of the allocation of funds makes it clear that all of the organisation's front line activities are subsidised to some extent, and this is not always appropriate. Further, the structure of the Budget does not show clearly the extent to which funds are applied to critical Value Proposition and One Programme activities.

IUCN appears to conceive the business model as another way of describing the thinking behind the Programme. However, the business model has a different purpose and focus. It should define the relationship between IUCN's programme activities, the costs of delivery, and the sources of funds to pay for these. The Business Model is the tool that IUCN should use to examine and secure its organisational and operational sustainability. As such, it should define the necessary funding and income-earning bases to support the programme, and should ensure that IUCN undertakes only the optimal mix of activities which make a contribution to the Value Proposition.

4. Objective 3 - IUCN Implementation through Members, Commission members, and partners

Based on discussions with IUCN during inception and where feasible, the scope of objective 3 has been expanded to include the six IUCN Commissions. Specifically, this section covers:

- Progress in Member, Commission and partner engagement
- IUCN response to Member, Commission and partner demands
- Governance structures for Members, Commissions and partners⁶⁴

This section draws on the following key data sources:

2011 Review Team Evidence Base

This section of the report draws on the following evidence sources:

- Members web survey
- Commission members web survey
- Regional and Country Office visit – Staff interviews
- Regional and Country Office visit – Members interviews
- Regional and Country Office visit – Commission members interviews
- Regional and Country Office visit – Partners interviews
- Council meeting attendance
- Councillor interviews
- Document review
- Secretariat HQ visit and observation
- Secretariat HQ staff interviews
- National Committee of the Netherlands interview

4.1 Progress in Member, Commission and partner engagement

4.1.1 IUCN response to the 2007 Review Recommendations

The 2007 Review recommends that IUCN should establish:

1. A New Compact with Members
2. A New Membership Strategy 2009-12

Broadly, the 2007 Review recommendations and IUCN's response to them, covers activities to engage Members, Commissions and partners together. The rationale behind this combined and expanded scope to member engagement is illustrated through the One Programme approach and detailed in the One Programme Commitment Charter:⁶⁵

⁶⁴ The statutory basis of the Union, the role of the Congress, the role and the structure of the Council, and IUCN's representational and decision-making framework is discussed in section 3.3 IUCN Governance Arrangements.

⁶⁵ One Programme Commitment Statement –endorsed by Council at its 74th Meeting (June 2010).

One Programme Commitment Charter

We, the Members, the Commissions and the Secretariat of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) are committed to a coherent and *harmonious delivery of the IUCN Programme* which enables and leverages the *capacities of IUCN's constituent parts* and delivers conservation results optimally, effectively and efficiently.

We believe that *IUCN's mission can best be delivered* through active involvement, synergies and joint actions among the *Union's three constituent parts*:

(1) our government and non-government Members, including National and Regional Committees and Forums;

(2) our network of experts in our Commissions including their sub-groups – thematic and regional working groups/specialist groups - and their individual members; and

(3) our integrated and distributed global Secretariat.

(emphasis from the Review Team)

The major activities suggested by the 2007 review under the two recommendations are listed in the table.

| 2007 Review Member Recommendations | | |
|--|--|---|
| <i>Activity Recommended</i> | <i>IUCN Response</i> | <i>Review Team assessment of progress to date</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Policy Guidelines for the future development of IUCN as a membership organisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be developed pending completion of the membership mapping exercise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not yet implemented |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a Membership Mapping exercise which maps Members' capacities and interests against the Programme; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership mapping exercise being undertaken by Constituency Support Unit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 30% complete. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a new Constituency Policy and Strategy to guide IUCN's evolution until 2020; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be established pending completion of the membership mapping exercise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not yet implemented |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reorganise and strengthen the Constituency Support Group (CSG) to focus on Member and Commission engagement and communications; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reorganised and strengthened Constituency Support Group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity and orientation of CSG strengthened and refocused on constituency communications |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out an analysis of the Costs and Benefits of providing Member services; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis undertaken but not formally produced as a discussion paper | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal cost and benefit analysis not undertaken |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and establish best practice of the current and future roles of the National and Regional Members Committees; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsibility of the Governance Task Force of Council who have not formally reviewed the National and Regional Members Committees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not yet implemented |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new Membership Strategy based on consultation with the Members and input from the Commissions and Secretariat which includes targets for increasing Members in different | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing (2004) Membership strategy will remain in effect and no new Membership strategy developed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not yet implemented |

| 2007 Review Member Recommendations | | |
|---|--|--|
| <i>Activity Recommended</i> | <i>IUCN Response</i> | <i>Review Team assessment of progress to date</i> |
| regions; | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a Discussion Paper on the Benefits of Membership based on clear examples and including a stratified understanding of the motivations, capacities, expertise, and needs for each category of Membership; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be established pending completion of the membership mapping exercise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not yet implemented |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administer a Membership survey once each intersessional period. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous Members survey conducted in 2007. Next scheduled for late 2011. Delayed by the 2011 Review Members survey | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On hold pending completion of the 2011 External Review which included a Members survey. In 2011, the MU has sent specific surveys to NGO Members and to National and Regional Committees as part of the work with the Constituency Committee of Council. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the capacity of Members and Commission members to network and connect their actions in the field of global policy work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being done as part of the Network Approach to delivering the Programme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical resource constraints associated with the Network Approach. Very limited, if any, resources for Members and Commission members' capacity building. |

Based on the Review Team findings and the broad analysis summarised using the 'traffic light' system above, four of key points emerge.

First, the 2007 Review did not sequence or prioritise the recommendations and there is considerable overlap in the activities listed above. As a result, the IUCN response proved more challenging to sequence and prioritise.

Second, IUCN has focused its response in two areas:

- Restructuring and strengthening the Constituency Support Group (CSG)**, where considerable progress has been made. The CSG has restructured and re-orientated to focus more actively on constituency service provision. E.g. member and partner engagement and communications over the previous emphasis on membership dues collection. Further details on the extent to which this shift has met the demands of IUCN's constituency are provided in section 4.2 below.
- Conducting the Membership Mapping exercise**, which is only partially complete and progress has been slow. IUCN have interpreted the membership mapping exercise in the form of a live, relational database linked to IUCN's major systems rather than a static, one-time data collection exercise. This is sensible but is a larger, more ambitious task which is

dependent on the other systems - the ERP, CRM and Members Portal - being fully operational. A demonstration of the system given to the Review Team was impressive and its utility to IUCN was immediately obvious: as a database it will provide a mechanism to promote real networking among Members, Commission members and Secretariat. This will include providing the Secretariat (and potentially other IUCN constituency members) with considerable, 'real-time' information on Members' locations, contact details, technical interest areas, on-going and past project engagements with IUCN, and Congress attendance etc. Its utility as a tool to simply and efficiently assist Secretariat staff identify and connect potential project partners is apparent – something that should support the One Programme commitment to Programme Delivery through the Union.

Third, **several accepted recommendations have been placed on hold**, pending the completion of the membership mapping exercise. It is not entirely clear why this is. One factor is due to the availability of Information Systems staff to work on the Membership Mapping project. The Information Systems team does not have the capacity to manage the Membership Mapping application on top of the ERP, CRM, HRMS, Congress, and Portal systems. The team is also responsible for IUCN's information systems infrastructure as well as application development and global helpdesk functions, all managed by a team of 11 staff members.

IUCN should revisit the 2007 review recommendations to assess which are genuinely dependent on the completion of the membership mapping. Based on the table above, it is not apparent why the following are dependent on the completion of the membership mapping:

- A Discussion Paper on the Benefits of Membership based on clear examples and including a stratified understanding of the motivations, capacities, expertise, and needs for each category of Membership;
- A new Membership Strategy based on consultation with the Members and input from the Commissions and Secretariat which includes targets for increasing Members in different regions;
- A new Constituency Policy and Strategy to guide IUCN's evolution until 2020;
- Policy Guidelines for the future development of IUCN as a membership organisation.

Completing a number of these recommendations would prove extremely valuable for IUCN in terms of generating the knowledge to improve constituency engagement.

Fourth, despite IUCN's commitment in response to the 2007 Review recommendations to 'expand results and activities under these recommendations to include Secretariat, Commissions, and the Members', **less emphasis and resources have been allocated to better understand and engage Commission members**. This may partly be because the Commissions are well established as statutory units, each with their own steering committees, membership lists, and dedicated link to the Secretariat through Commission Focal Points. A detailed assessment of the governance structures and functioning of the commissions is beyond the scope of the terms of reference. In light of this, a key recommendation of the review is that IUCN takes a fresh look at the role played by the six Commissions as well as their relevance and fit to the IUCN programme. The last detailed review was undertaken in 2004. A fresh review would mark the first step in better understanding and engaging Commission members.

4.1.2 Strengthened Member, Commission and partner engagement in IUCN programming

The central tenant of the One Programme approach is the three strands of the Union together delivering the IUCN Programme. This means better integrating the work of the Members, Secretariat and the Commissions. Despite not directly responding to the two 2007 Review recommendations for

a new Compact with Members and a revised Membership Engagement Strategy, a number of features demonstrate strengthened engagement in IUCN programming:

- **Network Coordinators** - The delivery of IUCN's Core Programme Area (CPA) and four Thematic Programme Areas (TPA) is facilitated by five Network Coordinators within the Secretariat. Network Coordinators are a key component in the IUCN's 'networked approach' to delivering the Programme.⁶⁶ In IUCN's language Network Coordinators 'provide the key to unlocking the power of IUCN's members, Commissions and partners to deliver IUCN's 2009-2012 Programme.' Amongst other duties, the Network Coordinators are responsible for: providing Members with regular opportunities to participate in the CPA and TPAs; maintaining contact with key stakeholders of each network and regular liaison with the other networks; supporting the building of the capacity of the network members; ensuring policy and practice lessons are learnt and shared across the organization; developing and promoting cross-learning within the network and between networks; and, ensuring consistent and coherent messaging in the development and dissemination of relevant communications materials.

Whilst the networked approach, particularly the concept of the Network Coordinators, represents a step forward for IUCN in terms of membership engagement in the Programme, evidence from interviews with Network Coordinators, Regional Focal Points, Global Thematic Directors and the Constituency Support Group suggests that the network approach is under-resourced. Network Coordinators, as the main thread or conduit for engaging members, tend to be overwhelmed (as their wide-ranging responsibilities above would suggest) and struggle to cope with the demands of job. That is not to say that the networked approach has not been a success. Feedback from Member and Commission members interviewed during the field visits correspond to the positive responses to the approach given by Secretariat staff. All three strands of the Union recognise that Network Coordinators have significantly enhanced communication and knowledge sharing within the Union which has led to improvements in more strategic outcomes such as joint policy messaging. The sense of the review team is that further benefits could be realised through the networked approach if additional resources are provided to support Network Coordinators. IUCN should conduct a review of the Network Coordinator approach in order to learn lessons and decide whether or not additional resources are required.

- **Membership Focal Points** - the IUCN concept and language of a 'decentralised Secretariat' manifests itself through the creation of Membership Focal Points (MFP) - dedicated Secretariat staff based in the IUCN regional and country Offices whose provide a network role with/through the Membership Unit (MU) for both Membership matters and communications, and with other colleagues to engage Members. The MFP network provides more than just communications with Members – some MFPs have a Programme role, and many of those who do not, work closely with regional colleagues to engage Members in the Programme. Similar to Network Coordinators, the sense of the Review Team is that Membership Focal Points are providing a valuable service, bringing Members and the Secretariat closer together, and that IUCN may benefit from further resources being allocated to support them. These resources may focus on enhancing the role of MFPs from which is currently focussed primarily on facilitating a link between the Secretariat and Members, to one which includes aspects of Membership recruitment and capacity building.
- **Involving Members in Programme formulation** – IUCN has developed a number of guidelines and processes to include Members in Programme formulation. These include:

⁶⁶ Refocusing IUCN's Global Programme to support the One Programme concept. IUCN. 2008.

- Programme Development Guidelines which provide component programmes – regional programmes, global thematic programmes and Commissions – with a guide to the component programme planning processes. This includes details of the global, regional and Commission situation analyses which identify and engage Members in the content of the proposed Programme
- Regional Conservation Forums for Members and National and Regional Committees to discuss the content and roles of the proposed Programme.
- **Policy guidelines / strategy for member development** – IUCN has not updated its Membership Strategy since 2004. In 2008 the MU started a process to develop a new Membership Strategy. In 2009, when the Constituency Support Group (CSG) was created, the newly appointed Director of CSG, in consultation with the MFP and the MU concluded that the existing Membership Strategy (2004-2008) was still relevant and needed implementation. This means there is no up to date and explicit strategy / ‘road map’ detailing IUCN’s membership needs (type, size, location, technical/sectoral expertise) as well as how IUCN plans to recruit new Members to meet its needs. Currently IUCN’s membership development needs are discussed through the visioning exercise undertaken at consecutive Council meetings, and through the work to modify Statutes and Regulations to allow for a broadened membership.

Discussions with Secretariat staff, particularly MFPs engaged during the country visits identified that there is an implicit strategy for membership development but that this is piecemeal and not shared outside each of the Regions. The diagram below sets out the rationale for an informal membership development strategy in the ESARO region.

| ESARO Member Engagement Rationale | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| <i>IUCN Issue</i> | <i>Existing Member Capacity</i> | <i>Current Member Interest</i> | <i>IUCN Response</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transboundary NRM related to livelihoods and conservation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitate donor, member, partner and commission engagement |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Climate change REDD+ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Some | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build capacity – facilitate Members meetings / Members twinning N-S idea |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Green economy – macro-economic issues assoc. with trade | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● None | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Very little in existing membership (right membership issue?) but emerging issue for strategic partner such as South African government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Membership recruitment drive |

Similar strategies or rationales were evident in the PACO and ARO regions as well as the Secretariat HQ. IUCN should attempt to synthesise these strategies into a single, coherent strategy for membership development. The Review Team recognise that any revision to IUCN’s member engagement and membership development policy requires the support of Council and any significant change (such as a change broaden the scope of Members to allow private sector membership) will require IUCN statutory reform through Congress. This, in turn, will require IUCN to engage with the politics, power, and vested interests of its membership – a membership which historically has its roots in Twentieth Century site

conservation. As a first step in the membership development process, IUCN should identify gaps in the Membership according to the requirements of 2013-2016 Programme and findings from the External Analysis of Purpose and Niche, and start to address these gaps through a new Membership Strategy based on consultation with the Members and input from the Commissions and Secretariat. This would demonstrate where IUCN has existing Member capacity and Member interest against the Programme areas and where there are gaps that IUCN may need to fill. Finally, it is interesting to note that IUCN's response to ESARO membership engagement does not involve project implementation on the ground by IUCN. Instead, IUCN's appropriate role relates to member recruitment, member capacity building, and facilitating donor, Member, Commission and partner engagement. This finding chimes with some of the latest thinking within IUCN on its business model going forward, and in particular, an enhanced role for IUCN in terms of capacity building for Members.

The Review Team found less evidence of enhanced Secretariat engagement with the following key constituents:

- **Involving Members in Programme implementation** – Although there are requirements for component programmes to engage Members when planning and developing projects, the extent to which they are followed varies across the organisation. It is up to the individual component programmes and Regions to engage Members to implement programme activities. Some Regional and Country Offices visited, particularly the South African Country Office and ORMA Regional Office, were able to demonstrate very strong links with a core group of Members, who are involved both in shaping the Regional Programme and as project implementation partners. Similarly, some Secretariat-based component programmes had established strong partnerships with certain Members – a key example being the Global Protected Area programme engagement with protected area Members as well as the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) to compile and manage the World Database on Protected Areas.⁶⁷ Another example would be the collaboration between the Global Protected Areas programme, protected area Members and the WCPA working together on the Protected Areas programme of the Convention on Biological Diversity.⁶⁸ Although Member involvement in Programme implementation generally appeared strong it cannot be considered uniform and systematic. Further details on the demands of Members to be more involved in Programme implementation are provided in Section 4.2 below.
- **Involving Commissions in Programme implementation** - Like the Members, the Commissions form one the Union's three constituent parts. However, unlike the Members, the Commissions' role in implementing the programme is less straight forward. The voluntary nature of Commission members' involvement and the limitations this brings have long been recognised by IUCN. The guidelines and processes for involving Commissions in Programme implementation are less clear and Commission involvement is not uniform or systematic across the Programme. Instead, the extent and nature of Commission involvement tends to depend more on individual relationships e.g. Commission Chairpersons and their IUCN Focal Point within the Secretariat or between regional component programme staff and local Commissions members with relevant expertise. A particularly strong example of collaboration and mutual support exists between the expert members and groups of the Species Survival Commission (SSC) and the Red List Secretariat, who together produce the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. A similar example of collaboration between Secretariat and Commission in Programme implementation relates to the World Heritage Programme, where IUCN Secretariat staff come together with WCPA Commission members to evaluate natural World Heritage sites nominated for World

⁶⁷ <http://www.wdpa.org/>

⁶⁸ <http://www.cbd.int/protected/>

Heritage Status, and monitor the state of conservation of existing Sites, as well as providing technical advice to the World Heritage Committee.⁶⁹ The Review Team found that sharing a core objective is key to this functioning relationship between Secretariat and Commission. It is clear that in other cases, the degree of overlap between the interest and work of the Secretariat and some of the Commissions does not exist. In fact the mandates of some of the six Commissions, which have not substantially changed in over 40 years, may not be well aligned with the Core and Thematic Programme Areas in the current 2009-12 or draft 2013-16 Programme. As previously mentioned, IUCN should contract an independent review of the six Commissions to assess their relevance and fit to the IUCN Programme, operation and management, and scale / size.

- **Involving Partners in Programme formulation and implementation** – There are examples of strategies at the level of IUCN’s Core and Thematic Programme level for involving Partners in programme formulation and implementation. For example, under the current Programme CPA 1 a strategy for involving Partners was devised under the Global Protected Areas Review (GPAR) in February 2010. However, the Review Team is not aware of any overarching strategy or policy for involving partners in Programme formulation or implementation outside that of fundraising. In fact, the term ‘partner’ is interpreted broadly by IUCN, often to include any institution outside a Member. This ‘catch all’ category therefore covers donors, other funding partners, project partners who are not members, and other large conservation organisations (UNEP etc.).
- **Involving National and Regional committees (NRC) in Programme formulation and implementation** – A new framework for cooperation between committees and IUCN does not yet exist and relatively few actions have been taken by the Secretariat to define or strengthen NRC’s role in Programme formulation and implementation. The Review Team recognise that better engaging the NRCs is a challenging task for IUCN given the heterogeneity between NRCs in terms of ambitions, resources, activities, and legal structures. However, given that they are important instruments for involving Members, particularly in Programme formulation and preparation for Congress, IUCN should commission a review of NRC best practice in order to learn lessons about the value of the role they play and how this can be better harnessed.

By way of summary, the following table illustrates both the challenges and IUCN’s highly visible ‘successes’ of operating as a Union:

| Operating as a Union - Summary of Major Challenges as well as Major Successes according to IUCN’s Statutes | | |
|---|--|--|
| <i>IUCN statute</i> | <i>Constraint / Challenge</i> | <i>Success stories</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilise its members to build alliances. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on local Member interest and capacity which varies geographically. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members’ National Committees • South Africa – brings together over 20 conservation organizations from both the NGO community and government to address conservation issues specific to South Africa • Netherlands – a self-financing committee which funds its own global conservation activities – www.iunc.nl • IUCN’s positions in CBD and UNFCCC often have considerable endorsement |

⁶⁹ http://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/wcpa_worldheritage/

Operating as a Union - Summary of Major Challenges as well as Major Successes according to IUCN's Statutes

| <i>IUCN statute</i> | <i>Constraint / Challenge</i> | <i>Success stories</i> |
|--|--|--|
| | | from Members and Commissions |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the institutional capacity of its members. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical funding constraints for large scale institutional capacity building | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lots of historical examples of how IUCN worked with Ministries in Pakistan and Uganda for example to build capacity for environmental management – most governance work in forests and water strengthen local authorities and their ability to influence |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote enhanced co-operation between members. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration beyond communications and knowledge sharing between Secretariat and Members is dependent on available, often 'projectised' resources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN's Regional Conservation Forums |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage research and disseminate information about research. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dependent on raising funds for research which is often driven by donor interest not IUCN strategic priorities, and often 'projectised' requiring management by the Secretariat and involvement of Commissions and Members where funding permits. Expert commission members are essentially volunteers to IUCN so research inputs need to be managed within a framework of a volunteer network where opportunities for remuneration are limited. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Credible science and technical advice to the Parties of the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) The Global Protected Area programme engagement with protected area Members as well as the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) to compile and manage the World Database on Protected Areas. - http://www.wdpa.org/ |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a forum for discussion. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extremely costly both in terms of finance but also IUCN Secretariat staff preparation time. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN's World Conservation Forum Regional Conservation Forums incorporating the views and perspectives of Members in order to establish global conservation priorities. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop expert networks and information systems. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource constraints associated with facilitating expert groups and networks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species Survival Commission expert groups e.g. African Elephant Specialist Group – www.african-elephant.org/ Red List Updates |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare and disseminate statements about conservation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement in Nagoya on the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influence national and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complex attribution issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluations of Nominations for |

Operating as a Union - Summary of Major Challenges as well as Major Successes according to IUCN's Statutes

| <i>IUCN statute</i> | <i>Constraint / Challenge</i> | <i>Success stories</i> |
|---|--|--|
| international legal instruments. | requiring robust results framework | inscription under the World Heritage Convention. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helping governments create specific pieces of legislation to implement the Millennium Ecosystem Assessments (MEAs). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make representations to governments and international agencies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding issue – representations tend to be piecemeal rather strategic as dependent on projectised funding around specific issues. Potential issue of IUCN branding – perhaps IUCN does not fully realise/'market' its potential' as an international advisor. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN as an Agency of United Nations |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist the development of mechanisms for debating and resolving environmental issues. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge of incorporating the views and positions of a wide spectrum of Members and Commissions into a coherent set of global priorities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valuing nature - IUCN study demonstrating that locally controlled forest management covers 400m hectares, with 1.5 billion people involved, and worth USD 130 billion per year. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the preparation of international agreements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long time horizon and dependent on multiple complex external factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Red Listing (indicator for Millennium Development Goal 7) IUCN's positions influence final text of multiple international agreements such as the ABS Protocol and the Aichi Targets. |

4.2 IUCN response to Member, Commission and partner demands

This section draws on the two web surveys conducted by the review team – a survey sent to 1,143 Members resulting in 232 responses, and a survey sent to 10,143 Commission members across all six Commissions resulting in 2,180 responses. The section also draws on interviews with Members, Commission members and partners conducted during the field visits.

4.2.1 IUCN response to Member demands

The Members' web survey generated a wealth of information on IUCN's Members. So before setting out the nature of Member demands and IUCN's response to them, it is important to establish the nature of the Members themselves. A detailed analysis of the Members Survey is provided in Annex 17.

The Nature of IUCN Members - IUCN Members are a very heterogeneous group both in terms of the types of member organisation and number of employees. According to the web survey results, 67.5% are non-governmental organisations (NGOs), 6.2% are international NGOs (INGOs), 12.3% are government agencies, 4.5% are state members, 7.2 are research organisations, and the remaining 2.4 are other organisations. 54% have 25 employees or fewer; only 27% have more than 100, mainly

among government and research organisations. Some 23% of NGOs are very small organisations with only 5 people or fewer.

Overall the sample demonstrates a wide range of Membership size and type, with preponderance for relatively small NGOs working within their own country or regionally, who are likely to have become a Member relatively recently, since 2000.

Member demands on IUCN – The Secretariat is well aware that Members want to be more involved in the Union; hence the One Programme approach and the Secretariat’s drive to better engage and involve the Members in delivering the programme. The specific nature of this involvement is more nuanced. When asked about their views on the relative importance of different roles of the Secretariat, some interesting findings emerge. Members were asked to rate on a scale of 1-6, where 1 is low importance and 6 is high importance, the importance of the following Secretariat functions:

- a) Providing direct member services such as publications, advice, and facilitating communications and links between members
- b) Providing technical leadership in areas of conservation
- c) Obtaining funds for and implementing a large portfolio of conservation-related projects and programmes
- d) Influencing global, regional and national conservation policies

Ratings of 5 or 6, indicating high importance, were given by 50% to 66% for all four roles indicating multiple roles are expected of IUCN. However, the highest responses were for a) and d) and the lowest for b) and c). Clearly, Members regard IUCN membership as an opportunity to access member services at the same time as contributing to a higher level objective to influence conservation. This is interesting (and perhaps troubling) for IUCN as it suggests the Members expect the Secretariat to resource two distinct functions – the provision of services in return for Membership dues and the ability to influence conservation policy through a broad and powerful Union.

A slightly different finding emerged from the Review Team field visits where a polarisation of Members was apparent – those that use IUCN ‘extractively’ and those that contribute to the Union. The first group tend to operate in isolation of other Members and look to (and in some cases relied on) IUCN to obtain funds for implementing a portfolio of conservation-related projects and programmes. These tend to be smaller national NGOs operating in Country and Project-office locations where IUCN has fewer resources to engage its Members and NRCs also tend to be less active. The Members engaged in Ghana tend to fit this profile, where IUCN is better known for activities arising from the funding and influencing activities of the Netherlands National Committee than the IUCN Ghana Project Office.

The second group are those NGOs, INGOs, and government agencies who operate within a framework of a strong IUCN regional or country presence facilitated by a Membership focal point and unified through NRCs to address the major regional and national conservation priorities. These Members primarily view IUCN as a vehicle to influence global, regional and national conservation policies.

Finally, interaction between Members and Commissions tends to be restricted to ad hoc interaction when an employee of a Member organisation happens also to be a Member of one of the Commissions. There is little evidence of a formal process of direct institutional-level interaction between Member organisations and Commissions. Rather, Members engage with IUCN through the Secretariat and likewise with Commission members.

IUCN response to Member demands – A key factor in better involving Members involves how well informed Members are with current plans and objectives. Three clear findings emerge from the responses:

- More than half the Members say they are familiar with the 2009-12 Programme; consider that the Value Proposition clearly shows the unique selling point of IUCN and gives focus to the organisation; and think that IUCN has a clear purpose with indicators of achievement.
- Significant minorities of the INGO and NGO Members are not familiar with the Programme; disagree about the Value Proposition; and do not share the view that IUCN has a clear purpose with indicators.
- A quarter of all respondents don't know about the Value Proposition.

When asked if they agree with the statement that IUCN has become much better at engaging Members in delivering programme results, 52% agreed or strongly agreed; 29% disagreed or strongly disagreed. And 20% said they did not know (perhaps because they are among the more recent new members). When responses are cross-tabulated against number of projects the Member is participating in, it is clear that frequency of agreement rises and frequency of 'don't know' falls with increasing involvement in projects. Participation in projects is the practical route to greater understanding and awareness about IUCN.

A similar picture emerges from the responses gathered about the way changes have developed in IUCN's relationship with Members. Members were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 6, where 1 is no improvement and 6 is extensive improvement:

- a) Communications from Secretariat to Members
- b) Links between Members and Commissions
- c) Clearer benefits and responsibilities of Members
- d) Communication between Members
- e) More efficient and effective services from the Secretariat

A majority of respondents (45%) rated sub-question a) improvements in communications between the Secretariat and Members, at 5 or 6. But for b) to e) the majority response (47% to 53%) was for 'only slight change' scores of 3 to 4. Put simply, there is clear evidence that communications from the Secretariat to the Members has improved but in other areas less progress is evident.

Improving links between Members and Commissions goes to the core of the substantive challenge to secure both collaboration and division of labour among Members and Commissions. Commissions are in essence volunteer networks. Similarly, Members are essentially a very diverse group of institutions affiliated to IUCN. Given this context, Members and Commissions essentially rely on the Secretariat to facilitate and maintain links within the Union. This facilitation requires resourcing. And facilitating a global network of this nature is resource intensive, considerably more resource intensive than the funds provided by Members dues. The challenge is compounded by the relative lack of interest in IUCN's donors in allocating funding to relatively intangible, non-projectised activities such as maintaining and enhancing links between Members and Commissions.

Survey questions 14 to 17 examine Members understanding of and perceptions about IUCN's strategy planning and planning coherence. When asked if they agreed or disagreed, 75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that IUCN's work now demonstrates better integration and understanding of the complex interface between the environmental, economic and socio-cultural components of sustainable development. 66% believe that IUCN's current strategies and programmatic approach have brought a greatly sharpened focus to the organisation. Somewhat lower majorities of 54% and 56% respectively agree or strongly agree that IUCN's organisational structure is well suited to its objectives and the IUCN's work in their (the member's) country is well aligned with the priority biodiversity and conservation needs of the country. This is interesting as it supports the hypothesis that IUCN has the vision in place, has the 'buy-in' from Members and Commissions, but has not yet refined the organisational structure to implement the vision.

Slightly less positive responses were generated when Members were asked about their views of IUCN effectiveness. A majority of Members (49% and 42% respectively) disagreed or strongly

disagreed that IUCN is effective at engaging with policy/law makers in their country and their region. Significantly, minorities of 15% and 21% said they didn't know. Positively, in response to IUCN's capacity to influence, three quarters of all Members responding to the survey agree or strongly agree that IUCN has adopted methods that provide better communication of important conservation messages.

Finally, the survey asked Members a set of questions on IUCN as a whole. Members were asked if they agreed that there is clear evidence that the IUCN project portfolio is being realigned to be more focused on strategic influencing, learning, innovation and knowledge management: 53% agreed or strongly agreed that it is, but 32% reported that they did not know. Asked to take a broad view of IUCN as a whole and rate the Union as it stands today, 50% of Members either agreed or strongly agreed with the description that 'IUCN is an organisation that has evolved to meet global conservation challenges'. However, a slightly larger proportion (55%) either agreed or strongly agreed that 'IUCN is an organisation whose potential is yet to be realised'. Again, these responses convey a sense of progress and improvement in Member engagement but also a sense that 'there is more to be done.' This is a sentiment that is likely to be shared across the Union.

In summary - it is possible to draw a number of broad conclusions on IUCN's response to Member demands. These conclusions, although broad, tend to match the responses provided to the Review Team when interviewing Members throughout the field visits.

- Responses to the Member survey are largely positive expressing support for IUCN, buy-in to the Programme, and the ways in which IUCN has already improved under the One Programme Approach. In particular, communication between the Secretariat and Members has improved;
- There is less evidence of progress in areas beyond communication from the Secretariat to Members. In particular, perceptions of progress are not high in:
 - Engaging Members in the formulation of the Programme – supporting the Programme is different to be involved in its formulation;
 - Engaging with policy/law makers;
 - Effective capacity development for Members; and,
 - Staff and resources for strategic influencing.
- There are a high proportions of 'don't know' responses to some questions and there are significant gaps in Member awareness about issues of strategy and planning such as the Value Proposition;
- There is more scope and desire for certain Members to be engaged in project implementation, reflecting the polarisation of Members demands and interests but also highlighting the key challenge facing IUCN of how to resource these demands;
- Members think that IUCN is not effective at engaging with policy makers and there has been little improvement in developing Members' capacity for this role.

4.2.2 IUCN response to Commission Demands

Following a similar format to that of the Members' survey, the Commissions' survey generated a wealth of information on IUCN's Commissions. So before setting out the nature of Commission demands and IUCN's response to them, it is important to establish a bit more detail on the varied nature of the Commissions themselves. As well as drawing on the results of the web survey, the Review Team engaged the IUCN's Regional Offices in country to assist in the selection of members of expert Commissions for interview and focus groups during the fieldwork and this forms a core element of information gathered for the Review. A detailed analysis of the Commissions Survey is provided in Annex 19.

The Nature of IUCN Commissions - The Commissions 'shall be networks of expert volunteers entrusted to develop and advance the institutional knowledge and experience and objectives of

IUCN' (IUCN Statutes s. 73). A total of 10,143 people across the six Commissions were contacted and asked to complete the survey.⁷⁰ The survey website was visited by 2,180 respondents in English; 441 in Spanish and 143 in French. These generated 2,764 usable responses as a small number of people reviewed the survey but did not complete it. The usable responses represent 27% of the Commission members contacted – a response rate in line with ITAD's experience surveying other volunteer networks.

The vast majority of Commission members are employed by organisations: around 90% for all. NGO's are most common for members of CEC, CEESP and people belonging to multiple Commissions. Research organisations are most common for CEL and the SSC, and government agencies for the WCPA. Respondents are drawn widely from geographical regions around the world, with 24.5% from Europe, 19% from North America (excluding Mexico), 13% from South America, 5% from Mesoamerica, 11% from Africa, 15% from Asia and 7% from the Pacific. The predominance of respondents from Europe and North America is unsurprising. All regions are represented with the smallest response from Commission members based in West Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. Respondents are mostly relatively recent members of Commissions: of those who could remember the year, 70% joined during or after the year 2000; 22% joined during the 1990's and the remainder before then, with four respondents dating back to the 1960s.

Respondents were asked if they were currently actively engaged in any specific work for a Commission and if not, whether they had ever been engaged on previous occasions. A total of 1,000 members responded about current work (36%) and 1,271 about previous work (46%) implying that 18% of members have not yet undertaken any specific tasks in their role. That only 18% of Commission members who responded have not yet undertaken work for a Commission is impressive and reflects the prestige associate with being a Commission member, IUCN's efforts to engage Commissions in the programme of work, and the vital and unique role played by Commissions within IUCN. Similar global networks or 'communities of practice' are likely to have a much higher proportion of silent, 'passive' members.

These findings reflect a core feature of the way Commissions work: they provide a large pool of voluntary expert knowledge, which may be called on relatively little or for only very specific purposes. Findings from interviews undertaken with Commission members at the Council meeting in Gland in May 2011 and throughout the field visits suggest a number of additional Commission characteristics:

- Commissions tend to be 'shallow' – concentrated around a relatively small core and characterised by a 'powerful' Chairperson and Deputy, the Commissions Steering Committee, and a small group of active Members. The implication being that there is a much wider 'pool' of silent Commission members who neither contribute, nor are engaged by IUCN. In terms of response bias, it is these 'silent' members who are least likely to have responded to the Commission members' survey.
- Commissions and Commission members' needs are less well understood than the needs of Members. The voluntary nature of their relationship with both their own Commission and the IUCN goes some way to explaining this, but other factors include the difficulty of engaging Commissions into the implementation of the Programme beyond engaging specific, relevant individuals.

⁷⁰ Commission on Education and Communication (CEC); Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP); Commission on Environmental Law (CEL); Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM); Species Survival Commission (SSC); World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)

- Experts are motivated to apply to join a Commission primarily because of the reputation of the Commission in its own right rather than as a mechanism through which an individual can engage with the wider Union.

Although beyond the scope of this Review, all three of these issues require further examination by IUCN and should be included in the TORs for a review of the Commissions mentioned above and picked up in Section 5.3 Recommendations.

Commission member demands on IUCN – When asked to rate their views on the relative importance of different roles of the Secretariat on a scale of 1 to 6 where 1 is not at all important and 6 is very important, ratings of 5 or 6, indicating high importance, were given by 43% to 58% of members for all four roles:

- a) Providing direct member services such as publications, advice, and facilitating communications and links between members;
- b) Providing technical leadership in areas of conservation;
- c) Obtaining funds for and implementing a large portfolio of conservation-related projects and programmes; and,
- d) Influencing global, regional and national conservation policies.

The highest responses were for a) and d) and the lowest for b) and c), which closely echoes the response to the same question in the Members' Survey, and again relates to IUCN's substantive challenge of finding sufficient resources to facilitate a network and provide services to Commission members.

Members of Commissions were asked whether they benefitted more or less than they contributed from membership. The majority response (55%) was that members benefitted and contributed more or less equally. When asked to rate the value they gain from membership on a scale of 1-6 (1= low value, 6 = high value) against six types of benefit, the most important was 'connections to peers and other researchers working in the same field.' Second was the 'access to the latest knowledge and best practice that membership brought'; followed by 'benefits from the prestige and brand value from IUCN.' All were rated strongly at 4, 5 and 6.

By comparison, the ability 'to influence policy and bring about behavioural change among policymakers' received relatively low values, spread across 1 to 4.

In summary and perhaps surprisingly the results indicate that membership of an IUCN Commission is about networking and shared knowledge with peers far more than engaging in or influencing policy through IUCN at institutional level. IUCN is not seen as a source of funding for researchers or as an entry point to the wider Union.

IUCN response to Commission member demands – Similar to Members, a key factor in better engaging Commissions involves how well informed members are with current IUCN plans and objectives. A little over half of the respondents (54%) agree they are familiar with the content of the IUCN 2009-12 Programme (question 9). A substantial proportion, 32% disagree and are not familiar; and a further 15% say they don't know, which can be interpreted as a 'soft' version of disagree. Similarly, some 46% agree that the IUCN 'Value Proposition' clearly shows the unique selling point of IUCN and gives focus to the organisation (question 10) but a staggering 44% say they don't know, with the highest proportions among the CEESP, CEL and SSC. Overall, 50% of respondents agree or strongly agree that since 2009, IUCN has become much better at engaging members in delivering programme results; a further 32% don't know, and this rises to 42% for members of CEESP. Taken together, these responses suggest that members of Commissions are not, in general, familiar with some strategic aspects of IUCN, such as the Programme document and Value Proposition. The voluntary nature of their relationship may be a large factor in that.

During the 2009-12 Programme period, the adoption of the 'One Programme' concept has been a major initiative by the Secretariat. Responding to question 20, 46% of Commission members thought (correctly) that the core feature of the One Programme is 'Active involvement, synergies and joint actions among the Union's three constituent parts: (1) Members; (2) network of experts in the Commissions; and (3) Secretariat'. At less than half, this is a low percentage for an initiative that is so central to IUCN's strategy.

Questions 24 and 25 explore IUCN's adoption of methods for improved communication and progress in areas where IUCN has been effective in supporting capacity for influence. 71% of all Commission members responding agree or strongly agree that IUCN has adopted methods that provide better communication of important conservation messages.

In response to a question asking members to rate improvements in the following four areas (1=no improvement, 6=extensive improvement) fairly consistent but less positive replies were received:

- a) Clear roles and responsibilities for national and regional committees in policy/law and regulatory influencing;
- b) IUCN objectives that aim to influence policy are well coordinated and prioritized across the Union;
- c) IUCN has conducted an effective capacity development programme for members; and,
- d) Regional offices have dedicated staff and resources for strategic influencing.

For three actions (a, c, and d), the main response was for ratings 2 and 3 conveying a message that Commission members perceive improvements to have been slight. Responses to action b were clustered slightly higher around ratings 3 and 4. Together these results indicate that IUCN is considered by members of Commissions to have begun to improve its effectiveness at policy influence but from a relatively low base. And that a major part of this has been that IUCN has adopted better communications methods.

A final section of the survey asked Commission members to take a broad view of IUCN as a whole and rate the Union as it stands today and as they would like to see it in the future, against a number of statements. The responses convey positive perceptions about an organisation that has changed to meet new challenges and has proven effectiveness in areas such as the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), the support to Red Listing provided by SSC members and Specialist Groups, and the WCPA member support to compile and manage the World Database on Protected Areas. These are very similar to the findings in the Members' Survey.

However, the responses also indicate the perception that IUCN is an organisation that does not realise its potential. When asked about their vision for IUCN in the future, amongst the generally positive responses two points emerge:

- Commission members (like Members) want to see a more effective use made of the unique feature of IUCN, its Union, Commissions, and Membership. This indicates strong support for the concept of 'One Programme', even though many members were clearly not familiar with it; and,
- The tension between being a field project organisation and being a policy influencer remains, with only modest support for shifting out of projects.

In summary - it is possible to draw together a number of conclusions on IUCN's response to Commission members' demands. These conclusions support the responses provided to the Review Team when interviewing Commission members at the Council meeting in Gland in May 2011 and throughout the field visits.

- The survey findings reflect a core feature of the way Commissions work: they provide a large pool of voluntary expert knowledge, who may be called on relatively little or for only very specific purposes. How best for IUCN to realise the potential of these volunteers to

contribute to the Programme requires further investigation, and is likely to differ between Commission. Similarly, the governance structures within the Commissions requires review, particularly focussing on the extent to which these Commissions are 'shallow' and managed by an established elite which may or may not serve IUCN's best interests.

- The way Commission members interact with the Secretariat and Member-organisations leads to them being not well informed about the IUCN Programme or of more strategic aspects such as the Value Proposition, One Programme, theory of change, and developments in planning, monitoring and evaluation. This raises the question as to whether IUCN is realising the potential of its Commission members, who tend to commit to primarily to a Commission and secondly to the wider Union.
- The survey indicates that where the Secretariat has tried to improve relationships and services, Commission members regard the improvements as relatively modest. The exception being an improvement in communications from Secretariat to Commission members. A strong additional finding that was evident through interviews with Council members is that they want to be involved earlier and more significantly – in formulating IUCN's strategy and Programme rather than simply commenting and approving which is not seen as genuine participation in the Union.
- Membership of an IUCN Commission is about networking and shared knowledge. It is not seen as a source of funding nor does it bring influence over policy or IUCN's strategy. Experts join Commissions in their own right, not to engage IUCN as a Union. How best to engage Commission members into the wider work the Union requires further examination.
- IUCN is considered by members of Commissions not to be very effective at policy influence. However, there is evidence that Commission members perceive this to be improving, albeit from a low base.
- The survey responses convey positive perceptions about an organisation that has changed to meet new challenges but also an organisation that does not realise its potential. These are very similar to the findings in the Members' Survey.
- Finally, Commission members (like Members) want to see a more effective use made of the unique feature of IUCN, its Union and Membership.

4.3 Governance structures for Members and Commissions

This section relates specifically to the governance structures put in place by IUCN for Members and Commissions. Further details on IUCN's wider governance structures are provided in Section 3, IUCN's organisational model above.

The Review Team found very new and additional or substantially revised changes in governance structures directed specifically at Members, Commission and partners. As detailed throughout this section, significant progress has been achieved by IUCN in defining and communicating the One Programme approach which, in essence, could be considered a new governance structure. However, as this Review has also demonstrated, progress with the One Programme has tended to focus on formulation, commitment and communication rather than tangible and visible implementation. IUCN document review confirms this finding – there are countless references throughout the IUCN literature to 'providing Members and Commissions with greater involvement in IUCN policy and programme' and that this will be achieved through the One Programme approach/ concept. But there is very little, if any, elucidation of what this means in practice – what action has or is to be taken, what is the nature of the activities, and how is success in this regard to be measured?

Despite that lack of tangible governance structure change and against a backdrop of considerable resource constraints, a number of measures for Member and Commission engagement have been introduced or strengthened since 2007:

- Establishing the Network Approach through Network Coordinators within Core and Thematic Programmes areas in Secretariat HQ and Membership Focal Points in Regional and Country offices.
- The Constituency Support Group has been restructured and strengthened and has improved communications from the Secretariat to Members, Commissions and partners.

Governance structures designed specifically to better engage and involve Commissions are less visible. Commissions' needs are less well understood by IUCN and the mechanisms for integrating Commissions into key strategic initiatives such as the One Programme are less clear given the nature of Commissions as pools of voluntary expert knowledge. The focus of attention going forward for the Secretariat should be to devise some practical and implementable mechanisms to better engage and involve Commissions in formulating, agreeing and implementing the IUCN Programme.

4.4 Summary and Conclusions

In terms of response to and progress since the 2007 Review, IUCN has focused its efforts in two areas:

- **Initiating the Membership Mapping.** Other recommendations have been delayed by slow progress with the Membership Mapping exercise or deemed not relevant. A new Membership Strategy based on consultation with the Members and input from the Commissions and Secretariat which includes targets for increasing Members in different regions will be essential in light of discussions to revise and enhance IUCN's business model. A new Membership Strategy should also define what IUCN can expect from its Members in terms of reporting results and contributing to the Programme.
- **Strengthening the CSG.** Emphasis within the CSG has successfully been refocused away from Membership (dues/subscriptions) administration towards communications and engagement. However, improving communications from the Secretariat to Members and Commissions about the IUCN Programme or of more strategic aspects such as the Value Proposition and One Programme, is not the same as engaging IUCN's constituents in implementation, and neither does it amount to a profitable two-way exchange of knowledge.

As a vehicle for leveraging the capacities of IUCN's constituent parts, progress with the One Programme has tended to focus on formulation, commitment and communication rather than tangible and visible implementation. A number of structures have been created to support the One Programme approach, notably the Network Approach. IUCN should review the success of the Network Approach in order to learn lessons and, if findings are positive, should ensure the critical network functions – Network Coordinators and Membership Focal Points – are adequately resourced and scaled-up to engage Members and Commissions in implementation beyond communications.

Put simply, IUCN has done the thinking. Now is the time to start doing – so that Members and Commissions see what delivering One Programme means in practice. This sentiment is echoed in the findings from both the Members' and Commissions' surveys. Both surveys convey positive perceptions about an organisation that has changed to meet new challenges but also an organisation that does not realise its potential. Both Commission members and Members want to see a more effective use made of the unique feature of IUCN, its union and membership.

Finally, IUCN should oversee a review of the Commissions which covers two broad areas:

- How best to maximise the value provided by the Commissions' unique feature - access to a global pool of voluntary expert knowledge biodiversity and conservation; and,
- The governance structures, relevance, and degree of fit of each of the Commissions relative to the IUCN Programme.

5. Overall Conclusions, Recommendations & Future Directions

5.1 Overall Conclusions

Three broad conclusions emerge from the review:

1) **IUCN is producing results at a global level.** These results manifest themselves in different ways - IUCN is involved in a very wide range of activities leading to physical outputs of tools, conventions, standards, guidelines, as well as some higher order outcomes and impact in terms of improved physical and biological structure of habitats, landscapes and watersheds. The Programme is generally relevant to global biodiversity and conservation priorities but there is less evidence of relevance with respect to IUCN's niche and even less detail on relevance relative to defined beneficiary groups or stakeholders. This represents a missed opportunity. Ultimately this stems from very limited agreement or clarity about what IUCN's niche, purpose and unique attributes are. This pivotal absence has held back the development of clear indicators of performance and has enabled a drift in the work of the Union in response to external factors. IUCN struggles to demonstrate effectiveness in a clear and convincing way above the level of individual projects despite the fact that much of the work of the Union is of high standard and is valued among scientists and policymakers.

Detailed aspects emerging from the review include:

- There is very limited formal agreement or clarity about what IUCN's niche or unique attributes are. Although IUCN does have unique and valuable attributes, these have yet to be characterised by the organisation in a manner that would convince donors and other funders in relation to core funding the organisation as opposed to funding its projects.
- IUCN lacks a clearly defined and shared purpose statement together with a concise set of objectives which define the purpose. There are a number of documents which may help define IUCN's purpose – these include the IUCN Constituency Act, Value Proposition, and Mission Statement.
- The Programme is generally relevant to global biodiversity and conservation priorities. However the Review found that there is less evidence of relevance relative to IUCN niche and less detail on relevance relative to specifically defined beneficiary groups or stakeholders. But, there is evidence that the situation is improving. This includes innovations such as Regional Conservation Forums and the Network Approach rolled out by the Regions with support from Secretariat HQ.
- The breadth of IUCN's influencing and capacity building activities across a range of partners is impressive, and there is evidence of innovation in many arenas of the programme such as how to measure wellbeing, and working at the landscape scale etc.
- IUCN's promising monitoring and evaluation system is picking up results from the regions and connecting them to global results. Over 870 have been identified. However, IUCN does not yet have a system for separating physical outputs from behavioural results which would help develop a theory of change for global policy actions or effects on the ground and results indicators at the outcome and purpose level are yet to be fully defined;
- In terms of outputs, over 400 publications have been produced, which include some in those known as 'high impact' journals such as Nature and Science. Assessing and quantifying the impact of these outputs is challenging.
- IUCN does not have an explicit Theory of Change with which to illustrate how IUCN activities

produce outputs, outcomes and ultimately impact at the global level. Developing a Programme-level theory of change would help address issues of niche, relevance and effectiveness by placing IUCN within the change process the organisation aims to support and inform.

2) **Some progress has been made towards all the 2007 Review objectives, but overall that progress has been slow and lacking in urgency.** The 2007 Review put forward a large number of detailed, technical recommendations designed to address how the three strands of the Union interact and to strengthen work planning, management and evaluation. The strongly technical nature of many of the recommendations has deflected attention from more strategic concerns and the Secretariat has been slow to engage with either the Members or Commissions in the process of change.

Detailed aspects emerging from the review include:

- New ways need to be found to harness the power of Council and Congress more effectively.
- Human resource management needs to be developed in a more strategic fashion.
- Regionalisation and country presence has been opportunistic and should be re-examined to capitalise on the existing strengths and capacities of Members and Commissions.
- Resource allocation is out of balance among core corporate functions.
- The Strategic Planning Model lacks specific intermediate indicators to translate Global Results Areas into a meaningful framework to direct operations.
- The structure of the budget needs to be improved to show clearly how funds are applied to critical activities, where possible based on results rather than historical allocations.
- The Business Model should be used to examine and secure IUCN's organisational and operational sustainability, define the necessary funding and income-earning to support the programme, and ensure that IUCN undertakes only the optimal mix of activities for its purpose.

3) **Although communications from the Secretariat have improved, little progress has been made in restoring and rebalancing the combined Union of Secretariat, Members and Commissions, in IUCN's strategy, planning and implementation.** As a vehicle for leveraging the capacities of IUCN's constituent parts, progress with the One Programme has tended to focus on formulation, commitment and communication rather than tangible and visible implementation.

Detailed aspects emerging from the review include:

- A need to involve the three strands of the Union in the implementation of the One Programme approach.
- The adoption of Network Coordinators and Membership Focal Points is welcomed and effective but development of a membership strategy has failed to materialise.
- Members and Commission members have a low level of awareness and understanding of issues of IUCN's strategy and planning and are not involved much before the implementation stage of projects.
- Members think that IUCN is not effective at engaging with policy makers and there has been little improvement in developing Members' capacity for this role.
- Both Members and Commission members want to see IUCN make better use of its tripartite structure.

5.2 Discussion

A simple yet representative narrative summarises the current status of the IUCN Programme:

IUCN is clearly delivering many impressive results at the level of global biodiversity conservation. But it is challenging for IUCN to credibly and transparently assess and claim credit for these results in the absence of a robust results and reporting framework maintained by definitions (programme purpose and niche), relevant results indicators, and supported by an underlying theory of change. These absent components represent a missed opportunity for IUCN as the organisation is not claiming results it potentially could. It also represents a danger of complacency - that IUCN is happy with the current status quo without questioning what unique value it offers and can offer in a future characterised by increasingly scarce donor resources. Similarly, the results and reporting framework which currently focus on Secretariat-managed projects and programmes, risks underestimating the value and results presented to the Union by the Commissions and the Members – IUCN's truly unique feature.

The findings of this review indicate that whilst IUCN continues to produce results of high international standing and is held in high regard globally, there is a clear sense of drift in terms of focus and priorities, based around a clearly defined niche and purpose. IUCN would benefit from a fundamental review of its niche, the demand for its services, and the best organisational configuration to deliver its purpose, including sensible decisions about its geographic presence.

The unique value of Union has largely been lost in the way the Secretariat engages with Members and Commissions and the Secretariat has grown into the dominant party. Structural and strategic attempts to regenerate 'Union' (e.g. One Programme and the Value Proposition) have not been implemented with force or urgency, to date focussing more on communication than implementation.

The 'democracy' of the organisation mitigates against effective strategic managerial control. This is reflected in the proliferation of IUCN offices on an opportunistic rather than strategic basis; in the historical rather than results-based allocation of core funds; and in the organisational culture where a few powerful individuals 'can do whatever they like'.

IUCN's culture powerfully resists change. Evidence for this comes from the incredibly long time which it takes to make any changes; the fact that IUCN finds it difficult to drop any activity or structure; and the contrast between the large number of documents and papers written which propose or announce change, and the limited evidence that change actually happens on the ground.

Despite the Value Proposition, and One Programme rhetoric, the structure of the Programme and the structure of the budget suggest that IUCN is more interested in its project activities, especially those which are delivered by the Secretariat, than in its non-project convening and influencing work, or in the work of Commissions and Members. Programme growth has expanded through access to project finance, as has the Secretariat. In turn, the size of the Secretariat has created dependency on continuing project financing for sustainability.

Core funding is of increased importance but, without clear high level objectives, effectiveness of IUCN is not demonstrable by aggregating from individual projects. Moreover, these miss out key areas of influence and policy engagement.

IUCN needs to develop an effective Strategic Planning, Business Planning, and results reporting framework. The current arrangements actually detract from the organisation's ability to plan and report on its performance. Similarly, IUCN should review how it is allocating resources to HQ corporate and support functions. The Union will never have effective M&E, knowledge management and learning, fundraising, or oversight unless it takes these functions seriously and resources them adequately.

In summary, IUCN as a Union is unique and valuable. It is producing results relevant to global biodiversity and conservation priorities. In order to maintain and enhance its contribution and safeguard its future, IUCN should dedicate appropriate resources and commitment to addressing the recommendations set out in the following section.

5.3 Recommendations and Future Directions

The approach of the Review Team is to produce fewer, yet more strategic recommendations than the 2007 Review. Hence, recommendations and future directions are divided into one overarching recommendation and a series of subsidiary recommendations. For guidance purposes, an indicative timeframe and responsibility have been assigned to each recommendation although the Review Team recognise that the timing and sequencing of addressing the recommendations will be directed by Council.

The recommendations should be interpreted positively by IUCN stakeholders, particularly senior Secretariat management and IUCN's Framework Donors. Taken together, the set of recommendations are designed to equip IUCN to bring about the sweeping change required to fill its niche as the global conservation Union. This is an invaluable role which the IUCN is uniquely placed to undertake.

Overarching Recommendation

1 Critically assess and (re-) define IUCN's purpose – IUCN's Union is what makes it unique but as an organisation that has progressively neglected its Union in favour of becoming a project implementing body it has moved away from its niche and lost sight of its purpose. Over the next four years (intersessional period 2013-16) IUCN should take progressive and decisive steps to re-discover its purpose, re-define its niche as the global conservation union, and re-configure the organisation to meet global challenges.

Timeframe – 2 years (to have a proposal adopted by Council in time for implementing the 2013-2016 Programme)

Primary responsibility – DG & DDG

Subsidiary Recommendations

2 Instigate a critical external questioning of purpose and niche - In advance of quadrennial programme-planning, IUCN should hire a major international consultancy to conduct an independent external analysis of global biodiversity and conservation trends in order to make transparent and independent proposals about where the Union best fits and has most to contribute within the field. This is the 'market analysis' alluded to in Chapter 2.

Timeframe – 1 year

Primary responsibility – DG & DDG

3 Interrogate the Value Proposition and develop a Union-wide Theory of Change – Looking internally, IUCN should manage a Union-wide consultation process to revisit the Value Proposition in order to define a statement which is unique and of practical value to managers and stakeholders. This should involve a broad discussion of how IUCN can bring about change and culminate in a Union-wide Theory of Change which explicitly sets out the pathways to IUCN's intended outcomes and impact, as well as a cascading set of subsidiary theories of change for the Secretariat, Members, and Commissions. Engaging external support to facilitate this process is strongly recommended.

Timeframe – 2 years

Primary responsibility – DG & DDG

4 Develop an intermediate framework of SMART indicators - which will help to translate Global Result areas into a strategic plan which can be used directly to guide operations. A monitoring framework can then be devised which provides objective and succinct reports on strategic achievements. This should be based up and follow on directly from the theory of change

development process above. IUCN should develop a time bound plan, and allocate sufficient resources to put these mechanisms in place for the 2013-16 Programme.

Timeframe – 2 years

Primary responsibility – Global Director - Policy, Programme and Capacity Development Group & Head – Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit

5 Define a sustainable IUCN business model along the lines discussed in Chapter 3 - Adopt a short, medium and long-term action plan to develop a Business Model based on: a systematic analysis of existing and new funding and income earning opportunities: high-level process of prior options reviews to identify any strategic changes in the business mix, and a sustained and systematic focus on achieving efficiency savings.

Timeframe – 2 years

Primary responsibility –DDG

6 Simplify and strengthen management reporting – Work with the Framework Donors to devise a logical reporting structure that meets Framework Donor reporting requirements and links Strategy (Quadrennial Programme) – Implementation (activities and corresponding budget lines) – Results (Annual Reports). Good foundations exist in much of the project M&E work. Trying to map project achievements to Global Results has proved unwieldy, but a different approach such as by rating project performance might allow faster and simpler aggregation, and a more analytical product for management.

Timeframe – 1 year

Primary responsibility –DDG

7 Combining recommendations 5 & 6 on the business model and management reporting - IUCN should consider the benefits of preparing specific budgets for Value Proposition and One Programme-unique activities, and also whether specific fundraising initiatives to cover the costs of some of these activities would be worthwhile.

Timeframe – 1 year

Primary responsibility - DDG

8 Establish a smaller, more authoritative Committee of Council - Within the limitations of the Statutes, IUCN should consider ways and means of harnessing the power of Council to bring about change more effectively. In particular, IUCN should explore establishing a smaller, more authoritative Committee of Council, which is formally tasked to support and hold the Director General accountable.

Timeframe – 2 years

Primary responsibility –President and DG

9 Invest in the under-resourced core functions of fundraising, M&E, knowledge management - IUCN must continue to develop critical mechanisms for information sharing, coordination and alignment, if it is to capitalise on the diversity of the Union. In particular, fundraising, planning and knowledge management systems must be refined to ensure that they support One Programme objectives.

Timeframe – 3 years

Primary responsibility –DDG and relevant Operational Component Programme Heads

10 Re-position the human resources management function to address some of the strategic human resources issues. - In particular, HRM should: provide guidance on structure and job design;

provide performance management support, and especially capacity building; provide control of establishments, and optimise staff costs through strategic initiatives such as localisation of posts.

Timeframe – 3 years

Primary responsibility – DG and Global Director, HRMG

11 Learn from the Network Approach - Review the success of the Network Approach in order to learn lessons and, where findings are positive, ensure the critical network functions – Network Coordinators and Membership Focal Points – are adequately resourced and scaled-up to engage all three strands of the Union – Secretariat, Members and Commissions in Programme implementation beyond communications.

Timeframe – 1 year

Primary responsibility – DDG, Global Director, Programme and Policy Group, and Global Director, Constituency Support Group

12 Strategically address gaps in the Membership – Building on the visioning exercise undertaken at Council and the work of the CSG to modify Statutes and Regulations to allow for a broadened membership, identify gaps in the Membership according to the requirements of 2013-2016 Programme and findings from the External Analysis of Purpose and Niche, and start to address these gaps through a new Membership Strategy based on consultation with the Members and input from the Commissions and Secretariat. Specific activities may include: A membership ‘stakeholder analysis’ which maps Members capacity and interest against the Core and Thematic Programme Areas in the draft 2013-2016 Programme; and, a plan for Members recruitment based on the situation at Region and Country-level.

Timeframe – 1 year

Primary responsibility – DG and Global Director, Constituency Support Group

13 Contract an independent review of the Commissions - The Commissions play a key role in IUCN bringing the contributions of thousands of volunteer experts organized in 153 Specialist Groups or expert networks, the largest number (109) of which is in one Commission – SSC. The design of the mandates of the six Commissions is questionable for today’s challenges and not well aligned with new paradigms for looking at biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources, but their statutory position means that they are very hard to change. IUCN has had, more or less, the same six Commissions for 40 years. New ways of working in scientific collaborations and expert networks, and better-understood ways of obtaining the best from volunteers, suggest that some, if not most of the Commissions need major updating in how they work with their members. IUCN should contract an independent review of the six Commissions to assess their relevance and fit to the IUCN Programme, their operation and management, and scale/size. A critical component of the review should be to assess how Commissions can be strengthened, building on the last detailed review undertaken in 2004.

Timeframe – 1 year

Primary responsibility – DG, DDG, and Global Director, Programme and Policy Group

14 Review the work of the National and Regional Committees – Building on the work started by the MU in 2010, conduct an independent review of best practice of National and Regional Committees in order to better understand their role and contribution to IUCN and how this can be unified into the IUCN Programme. The review should include issues of funding and fund-raising, and governance arrangements for National Committees and the Secretariat at country level.

Timeframe – 1 year

Primary responsibility – DG and Global Director, Constituency Support Group

