

IUCN-THE WORLD CONSERVATION UNION

Making Regionalisation Work Effectively

Compass Partnership

October 1998

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Significant progress has taken place in pursuing the policy of regionalisation throughout the Secretariat. The developments have been undertaken in a pragmatic and flexible way which has given great energy and momentum to the policy. It has been partly funded by reducing the number of staff at the Centre.

The mission of IUCN implies effective action at both global and local levels. The Central Secretariat and the Regional Secretariat both have roles to play in achieving impact at both levels. At present these roles have not been clarified and the exchange of skills and experience between the Centre and Regions is not taking place as effectively as it should.

In a complex, regionalised and international organisation, the Centre has a responsibility to demonstrate leadership on strategic issues and to set common standards in operations. It should also support regional colleagues by actively networking the knowledge and experience gained throughout the organisation.

As the energy and resources of the Secretariat have focused on giving effect to the policy of regionalisation the global role of the Secretariat and the leadership role of the Central Secretariat have diminished.

The expectations which Central and Regional colleagues should hold of each other are not clear. In early stages of development regions are largely dependent on the Centre for human and financial resources. In later stages, this balance shifts and different ways of working are required. Better understanding of the implications of regional development needs to be established throughout the Secretariat and operationalised through clearer planning processes.

The implications of regionalisation for the Membership, Council and Commissions have not received sufficient attention. The respective roles and responsibilities of these elements of the Union and their developing relationship with the Secretariat need to be reviewed. The present lack of clarity around how Members, Council and Commissions should operate in a regionalised Union is inhibiting the effectiveness of the Secretariat.

Summary of recommendations:

Planning

1. A clear overview for progressing regionalisation throughout the Secretariat should be developed by Management Board which sets out the role of the Centre and the Regions, criteria for establishing regions, timescales for development of regions and resources required to support regionalisation.
2. Work plans should be prepared by all sections of the Secretariat. The next round of plans should clearly define the respective roles and responsibilities of Central and Regional staff and identify resources required to progress regionalisation

Management structure and teams

3. The new Director General should review the senior management structure to strengthen management to meet the challenge of managing a complex international organisation
4. The Global Secretariat should be led by a Management Board which takes responsibility for overall strategic development of the organisation, overall programme policy and strategy and overall financial strategy.
5. The Management Board should define and propose to Council a limited number of global initiatives on which IUCN should focus its resources at a global level.

The Centre

6. The Central Secretariat should recognise its responsibility to fulfil three broad roles: leadership, regional support and networking. The terms of reference for the Centre should be agreed and widely communicated throughout the Secretariat.
7. The Central Secretariat should be led by a Central Management Team of senior managers who meet regularly to ensure that the Centre is meeting its responsibilities of leadership and support for the wider Secretariat.
8. The capacity of the Central Secretariat should be strengthened to meet the challenges of its leadership role. Skills and qualities required for key roles should be reassessed.
9. IUCN should invest in Communications and Fundraising to strengthen its future prosperity.

The Regions

10. Regional Directors should actively contribute to the strategic development of the organisation as members of the Management Board
11. Regional staff should include in their Work Plans details of their contribution to global initiatives and to carry out this work to agreed organisational standards.
12. The Secretariat should recognise clear stages of development in regions, assess the respective roles of the Central and Regional Secretariat for each stage and assess the resource requirements for fulfilling those roles.

Membership, Governance and Commissions

13. To deal with the organisation-wide issues raised by regionalisation, Council should establish time limited working groups.
14. Issues raised in this report relating to Members and their relationship with the regionalised Secretariat should be reviewed by such a small working group.
15. Council should also review the role of Councillors in the context of the regionalising Union and develop clear terms of reference for the regional and global roles of Councillors and Council
16. Council should charge a working group with the responsibility for reviewing the overall relationship between the Secretariat and the Commissions and to specify future relationships in a regionalising Union

GLOSSARY

Throughout this report the following terms are used:

Union: the association of Members, Commissions and staff of the global secretariat

Secretariat: the staff employed by the Union at HQ, Regional and Country offices, and in outposted technical and representational offices throughout the world

Central Secretariat (Centre): the staff and functions that have a pan-regional or global function in relation to the Union, irrespective of where they are located

Management Board: the Board of Senior Managers, Regional Directors and other senior staff who make up the current senior management team for the Secretariat

AUTHORS

This report has been prepared by LESLEY ELLARBY and MIKE HUDSON of Compass Partnership and ANGELA CROPPER.