UNIVERSALIA

IUCN External Review 2015

Volume I
Main Report

Contents

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Exhibits

A c r o n y m s

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
BIOPAMA	Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEC	Commission on Education and Communication
CEESP	Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy
CEM	Commission on Ecosystem Management
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
CGIAR	Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research
CI	Conservation International
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
COF	Commission Operating Funds
CSC	Commission Steering Committee
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
ELC	Environmental Law Centre
EU	European Union
FASU	Framework of Action for Strengthening the Union
GD-PAME	Global Database for Protected Area Management Effectiveness
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GBIbio	GEF Benefits Index for Biodiversity
GISD	Global Invasive Species Database
HDN	Index of Human Dependency on Nature
IBAT	Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool
ICCA	Indigenous Peoples' and Community Conserved territories and Areas
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group
IFC	International Financial Corporation
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development

Acronyms

IOA	Institutional and Organisational Assessment
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
KBA	Key Biodiversity Areas
LOE	Level of Effort
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NRGF	Natural Resources Governance Framework
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECMs	Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures
ORMACC	Oficina Regional para México, América Central y el Caribe
RAF	Resource Allocation Framework
RBM	Results-Based Management
REWARD	Regional Water Resources and Drylands Programme
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organisation
RFP	Request for Proposals
RLE	Red List of Ecosystems
RLTS	Red List of Threatened Species
ROWA	Regional Office for West Asia
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SGs	Specialist Groups
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
SOS	Save Our Species
SPICEH	Specialist Group on Indigenous Peoples, Customary & Environmental Laws and Human Rights
SSC	Species Survival Commission
SSG	Species Specialist Group
STAR	System for the Transparent Allocation of Resources
SULi	Sustainable Livelihoods Initiative

Acronyms

TEEB	The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity
TEMTI	Theme on Environment, Macroeconomics, Trade & Investment
TFSP	Task Force on Systemic Pesticides
TILCEPA	Theme on Indigenous Peoples & Local Communities, Equity and Protected Areas
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TOR	Terms of Reference
TWAP	Transboundary Water Assessment Programme
UDG	Union Development Group
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WANI	Water and Nature Initiative
WCC	World Conservation Congress
WCEL	World Commission on Environmental Law
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WCPA	World Commission on Protected Areas
WCS	World Conservation Strategy
WDPA	World Database on Protected Areas
WPC	World Parks Congress
WRI	World Resources Institute
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

1   Introduction

The Universalia Management Group Limited (Universalia) is pleased to present this final report of the 2015 External Review to the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN).

Created in 1948, IUCN is among the world's oldest and largest global environmental organisations, with a hybrid membership of more than 1,200 State and Non-State Institutional Members and close to 15,000 Commission Members. It is a science-based organisation that helps produce, disseminate and mobilise knowledge, standards and tools amongst stakeholders, partners and decision makers at all levels. It does so with the express purpose of informing and promoting practices, influencing action on the ground, and developing policies to address local, regional and global biodiversity conservation and sustainable development concerns.

IUCN and its Framework Partners[1] have commissioned External Reviews of IUCN every four years since 1991. The last reviews were carried out in 2011 and 2007, one year before the IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC). The final report of the 2015 review will be presented to IUCN Members at the next Congress, to be hosted in Hawaii in September 2016.

Purpose and objectives

The External Review is intended to inform strategic and programmatic development processes underway at IUCN, as led by the new Director General, Inger Andersen. It is expected to feed into other review and/or planning processes (e.g. the strategic planning process for the 2017-2020 Programme, and changes in operational programmes). The External Review should also be an important input to discussions and negotiations of framework agreements between IUCN and its Partners.

As per the Terms of Reference (see Volume II, Appendix I), the 2015 External Review of IUCN had three main objectives:

1) To assess the relevance, effectiveness and impact of **knowledge chains** in the IUCN Programme;

2) To assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and lessons learned of working with scientific and technical networks of experts from the **six IUCN Commissions**;

3) To assess the role and the **niche of IUCN** as a Union of governments, non-governmental organisations and individual scientists, and the **fit-to-purpose** of IUCN as an organisation.

The objectives are inter-related, given IUCN's pre-eminence as a knowledge and science-based organisation, the centrality of Commissions in constructing usable knowledge products, and the strategic role of the Union (including but not limited to the Secretariat) in deploying and leveraging these knowledge products.

Methodology

The following is a summary of the methodology used for the 2015 External Review. The full methodology is presented in Volume II, Appendix II.

Guided by OECD-DAC's Evaluation Quality Standards and Guidelines, the evaluation was utilisation-focused and used a mixed methods approach that included document review, extensive desk study, institutional and knowledge chain mapping, comparative analysis, global surveys, face-to-face and virtual interviews, and focus group meetings.

Data collection and analysis were guided by an evaluation matrix (see Volume II, Appendix III). The matrix outlined the main evaluation dimensions pursued, as well as key questions and sub-questions, indicators, and means of verification.

Document review was an on-going activity from inception right through to composition of the final report. It comprised the following: 1) a review of documentation related to IUCN generally (including IUCN Programme, strategic, financial and other institutional documents), Commission and knowledge product documents, donor reports, monitoring and evaluation documents, documents from and about other biodiversity conservation, sustainable development, and knowledge-based organisations. A list of documents reviewed is presented in Volume II, Appendix IV.

Institutional mapping was undertaken early in the process to ensure the evaluation team could appreciate the structural complexity of IUCN. Knowledge chain mapping was also undertaken both early on and throughout the review process.

To examine IUCN's niche, the evaluation team pursued comparative analysis with 10 other conservation, sustainability and knowledge-based organisations.

Surveys were sent to three groups, covering all IUCN components: Secretariat staff, Commission Members, and Institutional Members (including Framework Partners). Numbers of surveys delivered, and response rates by survey type are included in Exhibit 1.1. Surveys are presented in Volume II, Appendix VII and survey data are presented in Volume II, Appendix VIII.

Exhibit 1.1 Survey Response Rates

Survey Type	Number of Surveys Delivered	Total Complete Responses	Response rate
Members	1,507	235	15.6%
Secretariat	1,075	350	32.5%
Commissions	13,936	1,767	12.7%
TOTAL	16,518	2,352	14.2%

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 203 stakeholders, both in person and virtually, during both the inception and data collection phases, covering all IUCN components as well as selected people from comparative organisations. Six focus groups were also undertaken.

Interviewees and focus group participants included IUCN leadership, including the Director General, and a sample of Global Directors, Programme Directors and staff persons, Regional Directors and staff persons, Union Development Group staff, Commission Chairs and Members, Institutional Members from diverse regions, Framework Partners and Donors, Head and staff from the Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Unit, organisational partners, and others. Volume II, Appendix V presents a list of stakeholders consulted. Interview protocols are found in Volume II, Appendix VI.

Following the data collection phase, the evaluation team shared preliminary findings with IUCN on four separate and related occasions, with different IUCN stakeholders:

- 1 October 2015: Director General, Office of the Directorate staff, and Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Unit Staff
- 6 October 2015: Framework Partners, Council representatives, Secretariat staff members
- 17 October 2015: Commission Chairs
- 20 October 2015: Council.

The draft report was submitted on 20 November 2015. Comments were received throughout the month of December, with the last received on 4 January 2016. A revised draft report was submitted to IUCN on 22 January 2016. Subsequently, a final report was submitted to meet the March 2016 final deadline.

Limitations

For the niche and fit-for-purpose sections of this report, data collection for making comparisons with other biodiversity conservation and/or sustainable development organisations was reduced by the sometimes-limited availability or non-responsiveness of organisations selected for that purpose. However, overall, this did not impinge very much on data collection.

Given the mandate, including the timeframe and resources available for the External Review, it was agreed during inception that the External Review would use a sample of four knowledge products for the knowledge chain analysis. Given the large quantity of knowledge products mobilised by IUCN's Members, Commissions, Secretariat and partners, a larger sample would have undoubtedly shed light on additional and important insights.

As large networks of volunteers with limited resources, much of what happens within Commissions goes untracked and unrecorded. As such, relatively limited documentation exists and is available about each of the Commissions, including what they do, how they function, and how they are perceived by their diverse Membership. Therefore, the External Review significantly relied on interview and survey data for such matters, which surfaced many, diverse and even contradictory perspectives that needed to be acknowledged, considered, and where possible reconciled.

Finally, 'volunteer' Commission Members vary greatly in the amount of time they contribute. Therefore, survey responses about the Commissions may be skewed toward the perspective of those Members who are more engaged and active.

Organisation of the report

Following this introduction, Volume I of this report is organised as follows:

- Chapter 2 presents the context and profile of IUCN

- Chapter 3 examines IUCN's role and niche

- Chapter 4 provides an assessment of knowledge products and knowledge chains mobilised by IUCN's Members, Commissions, Secretariat and partners

- Chapter 5 examines IUCN Commissions

- Chapter 6 presents a review of IUCN's Fit for Purpose

- Chapter 7 provides conclusions and recommendations.

2   Context and Profile of IUCN

The global context

The loss of biodiversity threatens the integrity, diversity and resilience of the world's ecosystems *and* their ability to provide services to billions of people around the world who rely on nature to support their livelihoods. Major drivers of biodiversity loss are persistent deforestation, land conversion, wetland degradation, climate change, pollution and the spread of invasive species. High population growth coupled with massive extraction, global production, international trade, unsustainable use and consumption of goods and resources are key underlying threats to the global environment, biodiversity and human livelihoods.

The relationship between natural and human environments has been a source of concern for many centuries in all corners of the world. Since the middle of the 20th Century, this concern has manifested on a global scale in the form of conferences, reports, strategies, Conventions, goals and plans.[2] As such, the interdependence of human and natural environments has been firmly articulated along with a human responsibility for ensuring that environmental, economic and social considerations would together guide humanity in responding to biodiversity and sustainability challenges.

IUCN in the world

It was in this context that IUCN was created in 1948. It built upon, was inspired by, and expanded the work of earlier conservation civil society organisations.[3] Its mission is '[t]o influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable'.

Towards fulfilling this mission, IUCN developed its most recent Programme (2013-2016), with the following three objectives and assumptions:

- **Valuing and conserving nature:** Credible and trusted knowledge for valuing and conserving biodiversity leads to better policy and action on the ground.

- **Effective and equitable governance of nature's use:** Improved governance arrangements over natural resource management strengthen rights and deliver equitable conservation with tangible livelihoods benefits.

- **Deploying nature-based solutions to global challenges in climate, food, and development:** Healthy and restored ecosystems make cost-effective contributions to meeting global challenges of climate change, food security and social and economic development.

As described in the 2013-2016 Programme, the following four points effectively describe how IUCN works as a Union:[4]

- IUCN generates and disseminates credible and trusted knowledge on conservation and sustainable development

- IUCN convenes and builds partnerships for action across governments and civil society

- IUCN bridges local, regional and global policy and action

- IUCN develops standards, influences practices and builds capacity for conservation and sustainable development.

A new Programme (2017-2020) is being developed for presentation at the WCC in September 2016.

Working together for impact

IUCN is a complex Union, comprising the IUCN Secretariat, headquartered in Gland, Switzerland, six Commissions with nearly 15,000 Members, and more than 1,200 Institutional Members including both governments and civil society organisations.

Given this complexity, and the sheer number and diversity of its constituent components, IUCN developed the One Programme Charter and approach. Adopted by Council in May 2011, the One Programme was designed to favour the strategic, coherent, complementary, effective and efficient functioning of these components.

Stemming from this, the Framework of Action for Strengthening the Union (FASU) was also developed. FASU is an IUCN Council-led process to strengthen the Union as an effective whole, and favour IUCN's profile, influence and leadership both within and beyond the biodiversity conservation and sustainable development communities.

Given the global context, and IUCN's longstanding biodiversity conservation and sustainable development-related engagements, IUCN is currently invested in thinking about how to more effectively catalyse and mobilise the knowledge → policy → action linkages that it pursues.

It is within this context that the 2015 quadrennial External Review of IUCN is situated. The current report reflects the Review team's understanding of where IUCN is currently positioned in the biodiversity conservation and sustainable development fields, how it works as a Union of three component parts, the role and activities of its unique Commissions, and how its knowledge practices are pursued, intent on informing IUCN future direction and engagement.[5]

3   I U C N   R o l e   a n d   N i c h e

3.1   Introduction

This chapter discusses IUCN's role and niche as a Union of Institutional Members, Commissions and a Secretariat. It addresses the extent to which IUCN has defined and occupied a unique niche, and the extent to which there exists a shared understanding of niche amongst all components of the Union.

3.2   Clarifying IUCN's Niche

Finding 1: **Since the last External Review, IUCN has made attempts to clarify and consolidate its niche. IUCN's niche statement remains a work-in-progress, notably since it does not account for its key convenor role.**

The issue of IUCN's niche has challenged the organisation for decades and was raised in previous External Reviews (in 2007 and 2011). In the last four years, IUCN has made effort to clarify its niche, beginning with the 2012 document on the Business Model in IUCN, which kicked off an internal process of defining niche and aligning the Union with its niche and purpose.[6]

Strengthening the IUCN Union and leadership. The Framework of Action to Strengthen the Union (FASU) led by Council in 2013 set in motion a series of steps to raise IUCN's profile, leadership and influence in parallel to exploring what was needed to strengthen IUCN as a Union, notably on matters of membership, governance and structure. IUCN undertook its own internal consultation process, also seeing the development of multiple documents under the guidance of a Steering Committee to advance this agenda.[7]

IUCN's niche statement, as shown in the sidebar, was developed as part of the 2013-2016 Programme document. It captures important elements that are validated by the data in forthcoming chapters of this report.[8]

However, the niche statement does not mention IUCN's convenor role, which is at the heart of its unique offering. IUCN's scientifically-informed knowledge and knowledge products, which are key assets, are only hinted at by the use of the words 'world's authority' which is in itself problematic, for reasons stated in 'Governance of Nature's Use – A Niche for IUCN?'[9]

> **IUCN Niche Statement**
> IUCN is the world's authority on conserving nature and natural resources for people's livelihoods, setting standards, fostering policies and bringing together a diverse membership of States, government agencies and civil society for nature-based solutions to global challenges and environmental governance, aimed at sustainable development and biodiversity conservation on the ground.

The 2015 Review Team believes that the niche should reflect a response to an external demand and that the niche statement is too long and complex and does not serve its branding well. As it stands, IUCN's niche statement is not clear enough to inform external messaging.[10]

Most consulted stakeholders perceived IUCN's niche as that of a global and trusted convenor, fulfilling a bridging role that leverages knowledge for impact. IUCN's convenor role goes far beyond hosting and organising events, to include elements of multi-sectoral stakeholder gathering and engagement, knowledge sharing, brainstorming, problem-solving and new knowledge creation and production. This mirrors what we find in the literature, where convening is understood as the 'gathering of participants that meet for a set period of time to work collaboratively with a specific purpose, towards intended outcomes'.[11]

Formulating the niche. Overall, the External Review Team advances that IUCN's niche should present the organisation as a trusted convenor, a platform uniquely able to create opportunities for bridging the perspectives of multi-sectoral and multi-level stakeholders who engage with the scientifically-informed knowledge it co-creates, for the purposes of influencing biodiversity conservation and sustainable development policy and practice.

3.2.1 Stakeholder Perspectives

Perspectives of internal IUCN stakeholders

Finding 2:   **All consulted internal IUCN stakeholders acknowledged the importance of IUCN's role as a convenor, while emphasising different aspects of this role. In particular, stakeholders across all groups feel that IUCN's critical policy-influencing role could be developed yet further.**

IUCN's role as a convenor comprises multiple dimensions.
IUCN is a platform for bringing diverse people and organisations together with purpose. It is a leader in scientifically-informed standard setting, an amplifying conservation and sustainability voice, and a programme implementer. It pursues policy-influencing processes. Each of these dimensions is valued differently by varied IUCN stakeholder groups.

Exhibit 3.1 Perspectives on Standard Setting

- Amongst Secretariat staff, most respondents interviewed agreed that IUCN occupies a unique position as a convenor that creates the context and opportunities for bridging the perspectives of different stakeholders or constituencies.

- Headquarter staff also highlighted standard setting as IUCN's real comparative strength. Regional Office staff tended to see IUCN's niche as more about being an amplifying voice on particular conservation and sustainability issues, promoting agendas through and on behalf of the programmes being implemented by IUCN and its Members.

- Councillors from multiple IUCN regions expressed that IUCN's niche stems from the organisation's acknowledgment of its work as both scientifically-based and politically-situated. This reaffirms IUCN's standard-setting role, while valuing (and recognising the challenges inherent to) multi-level and multi-sectoral engagement, both in terms of practice and policy development.

Respondents from all components of the Union agreed or strongly agreed that that IUCN is a world leader in constructing and producing scientific evidence aimed at biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

Its role in leveraging the knowledge for policy influence, in particular, was identified as both an area of successful engagement *and* for further strategic development:

- Survey data points to the Union-wide perception of IUCN as a world leader in using scientific evidence to influence policy and support policy implementation: 77% of Secretariat, 90% of Commissions, and 84% of Institutional Member respondents agree/strongly agree with this.

Favouring policy influence. At the same time, interview data points to strategic ways in which IUCN could ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness in influencing policy:

- Respondents converge around the idea that IUCN should assume more active leadership in creating convening processes on a wider thematic base than it has traditionally done.[12]

- Respondents also noted that IUCN should further develop its capacity as a key communication channel for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development communities' policy positions to be visibly articulated in appropriate venues.

Statements from across the Union in support of these perspectives are available in Volume I, Appendix XVII.

Exhibit 3.2 Perspectives on Policy

Q. IUCN is a world leader in using scientific evidence to influence policy development and/or support the implementation of policies aimed at biodiversity conservation.

Perspectives of Donors

Finding 3:   Donors largely agree with the perspectives of internal IUCN groups on IUCN's niche as a convenor. They also identify consensus-building and policy influencing as areas for further development.

Consulted donors see IUCN as a global *convenor*, but still only nascent as a *consensus-builder* offering a platform for reconciling different approaches to challenging issues at the knowledge-policy-practice interface. Donors allude to IUCN's capacity to mobilise a vast network of organisations. They note that IUCN's hybrid membership confers it a special role as a trusted convenor in the context of trans-sectoral cooperation, and that IUCN has proven to be a trusted convenor with the private sector – a role that remains underdeveloped. The 'technical advisory panel' was put forth as a good example of IUCN's convening capacity and power, coupled with the scientific knowledge brought to bear by panel members.[13]

More policy influence. At the same time, consulted donors largely concur with other IUCN stakeholders, that policy influencing should be the focus of strategic organisational efforts, in line with its niche.[14] In referencing IUCN's privileged position at the UN table (with its Observer Status), most donors agree that IUCN could make yet better use of its high profile and diplomatic role, specifically in terms of bringing concerted attention to, and convening around key global conservation and sustainability challenges.[15]

3.3   Comparative Advantage of IUCN vs. Other Organisations

Comparison with global convenor organisations

Finding 4:   **The power of other global convenor organisations stems from leveraging knowledge and expertise with respect to policy debates, in policy platforms, and towards influencing key decision makers. By comparison, IUCN's knowledge production role is disproportionate to the policy-influencing role conferred upon it as a major convenor.**

Comparing IUCN with global convenor organisations. Four organisations were selected for comparison: Brookings Institution, The Aspen Institute, Demos, and CGIAR – Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research. All four play a convening role to effect change and provide solutions to global challenges, and consider the convenor role as central to their influence and impact.

Common factors that support the convenor role in these organisations include:

- Programmes/strategies specifically designed for convening, and very targeted;
- Expert knowledge or scholarship provided by senior experts and researchers who are not strictly from the academic world but are brought in from their respective professions (politicians, economists, businesspeople, etc.) and as such also bring their experience and reputation to bear on the subject;
- Links to the academic world *or* the offer of training programmes to build capacity and contribute to a new generation of leaders or experts;
- A multiplicity of convening forms – seminars, conferences, expert panels, roundtable discussions, consultative forums, etc. – which they mostly host (but may also participate in) that take place at global, regional and/or national level[16];
- Convening serves to generate debate, make explicit diverse perspectives, build consensus, develop a product, make recommendations, or take action around a shared vision; and
- All make use of convening to bring about some form of change on key and targeted issues.

An analysis of comparative features of convening organisations can be found in Volume I, Appendix I.[17]

Effective convening organisations share four characteristics: i) diversity of participants, ii) clear purpose, iii) knowledge and expertise leveraged, and iv) outcome, influence or product.[18] IUCN shares many of these characteristics with the other convening organisations. However, while IUCN produces a large quantity of knowledge, products and outputs, produced largely as a result of its ability to convene and draw on the expertise of various expert groups, the organisation is not doing a commensurate job of strategically packaging this knowledge for end-users.[19]

On greater client orientation. According to one Secretariat staff member, 'We need to tailor our work towards the decision-makers […] and help translate our publications into something that is more client-oriented', echoing an impression widely validated by interviews and survey responses. Another key staff person echoed this point in saying that 'the Union has almost no measures in place related to… input-output-uptake-impact. We have been struggling to put this in place [to have greater uptake of our knowledge products].'[20]

Comparison with other global biodiversity conservation and sustainability organisations

Comparing IUCN with global biodiversity conservation and sustainability organisations. Six comparator organisations were selected: The Nature Conservancy (TNC), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Conservation International (CI), World Resources Institute (WRI), Wetlands International, and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).[21] Volume I, Appendix III identifies some of the basic features of these organisations – their institutional structure, thematic areas of focus, geographic focus (if any), areas of collaboration with IUCN, and whether they have a relationship to the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

Finding 5: **The comparison of IUCN with other global biodiversity conservation and sustainable development organisations highlights IUCN's strength as a convenor.**

The comparison of IUCN with other conservation and sustainability organisations highlights IUCN's comparative niche and strength as a convenor (See Volume I, Appendix IV). The key takeaway is that convening stands out as a comparative strength of IUCN in its field.[22] Moreover, the global comparator organisations that are also Members of IUCN perceive IUCN as a 'convenor', a 'mutual broker' and facilitator, whose authority is anchored in its high-level convening products, such as the Red List of Threatened Species (RLTS) and the Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs).

Unlike Member NGOs, IUCN does not lobby behind a specific agenda. IUCN is not perceived as 'biased' the way advocacy-based organisations often are. Members also recognise that IUCN's hybrid structure and Membership, as a multi-stakeholder organisation, favours its role as a trusted advisor and consensus-builder. The comparative strengths of these organisations are described in Volume I, Appendix XI. Two further observations cut across all comparator organisations:

- **The use of practice:** They are all strong in leveraging scientific knowledge for policy influencing in their thematic areas.
- **Engagement with the private sector:** Four of the organisations – WRI, WWF, TNC and CI –have greater depth and scope of experience with the private sector than IUCN. In different ways, each has taken on the private sector as a partner, client and sometimes donor in achieving their goals. Understandably, IUCN is positioned differently because of its membership mix. At the same time, how IUCN wishes to influence the private sector is an important strategic question addressed below.[23]

IUCN stands to learn from Members or partners on the following:

- Pursuing more innovative solutions to financing, notably in the form of public-private partnerships and client-based products and services that generate revenue;
- Developing more effective communication materials[24]; and
- Developing and conveying its brand as convenor.[25]

Comparison with organisations that have member associations

Finding 6: **Organisations with member associations exhibit some of the same challenges confronting IUCN.**

Comparing IUCN with organisations that have member associations. Two biodiversity conservation and sustainability organisations were selected for comparative analysis, to glean lessons with respect to characteristics shared by IUCN.[26] They are referred to as 'Devos International' and 'People International'.[27] Aspects of each that are informative for IUCN's

organisational context, including challenges, are discussed in Volume I, Appendix V. Key challenges brought to light by this analysis include:

- Difficulty aligning national chapters to a common agenda or set of objectives, owing to their relative autonomy;

- Challenge of establishing accountability of relatively autonomous member associations;

- Challenge of demonstrating results across the movement;

- Diversity and breadth of its membership are both an asset and a challenge;[28]

- Failure to fully utilise the value of the network;[29]

- The use of 'volunteer professionals' is considered an outdated model and no longer sustainable by the organisation in question.

When comparing these two member network organisations to IUCN, a few important insights emerge:

- A common tension lies in valuing the different perspectives of members vs. the need to speak with one voice;

- The Secretariat is largely the locus for coordinating and providing tools, frameworks and guidelines for implementing a common set of principles, strategies, or priorities;

- These organisations are challenged by the need for accountability vs. member autonomy, which is a feature of global networks;

- Having a global network is one of the greatest assets for achieving large-scale impact. Seeing the necessity, these organisations are taking steps towards a common set of strategies and better knowledge management systems, to better report global impacts; and

- Scientific and/or empirical evidence constitute a critical asset to the influence these organisations can have.

IUCN and the comparator organisations, all of which are also networks, experience some of the same tensions (summarised in Volume I, Appendix XII). These tensions are not easily resolved. However, the chapters below seek to address many of them within IUCN's own context.

Conclusions

Clarifying IUCN's niche is of major importance. IUCN is an organisation whose niche, among other things, is its ability to convene different Commissions, Members, partners and other actors, intent on advancing conservation and sustainability outcomes. Comparison with global biodiversity conservation and sustainable development organisations (including Members of IUCN) has brought IUCN's niche as a convenor to the fore. Other organisations share some of the same assets as IUCN – influencing policy, using scientific evidence, setting standards – but none has the same convening power as IUCN.

Understanding IUCN's key assets. Evidence from the comparison of IUCN with other convening organisations points to the fact that the knowledge produced by, or residing within such organisations (e.g. in the form of experts) is a key asset; scientifically-informed research and analysis is an important lever for influencing policy and making an impact. The authority underpinning this convening function stems largely from the scientifically-informed work it undertakes, and its effort to inform the decision-making and practices of policy-makers, civil society and private sectors leaders and others across the global environment. While IUCN is perceived as an organisation that leverages knowledge for policy influence, there is as yet much work to be done to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness in this respect, a matter taken up in the remainder of this report.

4   Knowledge Products and Knowledge Chains

4.1   Introduction

At its core, IUCN is a knowledge-based organisation that produces, disseminates, mobilises and leverages biodiversity conservation and sustainable development knowledge, standards and tools with and amongst stakeholders, partners and decision makers at all levels. It does so intent on informing and promoting practices, influencing action on the ground, and contributing to the development of policies to address local, regional and global biodiversity conservation and sustainability concerns.[30] In its 2013-2016 Programme, IUCN presented a simplified result chain, situating policy- and action-relevant knowledge and expertise as its key output.[31] Providing knowledge products is one of four key priorities of IUCN (as articulated in its 2013-16 business lines).[32] Most aspects of IUCN's work are built upon the Union's knowledge products and knowledge chains.

Exhibit 4.1 Simplified Results Chain
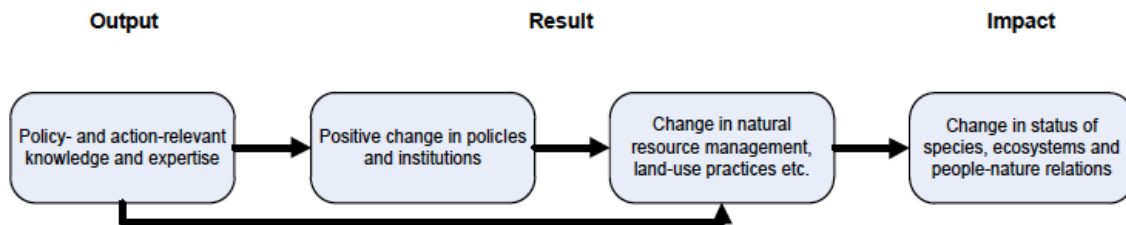
IUCN's Flagship and programme-based knowledge products. Given the importance of reliable and effective knowledge in achieving its Programme's objectives, IUCN (often with partners) has developed a host of diverse Flagship and programme-based knowledge products. A Flagship Knowledge Product has been defined by IUCN as follows: 'IUCN's flagship knowledge products are combinations of standards, data, processes, tools, and products developed and maintained by the Union as global public goods towards the conservation and sustainable use of the world's biodiversity.'[33] For the purposes of this review, we have defined programme-based knowledge products to mean those knowledge products without Flagship status during the review period, developed without a formal Commission partner, and managed through a Secretariat-based programme.

Sampling knowledge products for the External Review. For the current study, after consulting with the IUCN PM&E Unit and External Review Steering Committee, four knowledge products were selected as a sample for analysis. These are: IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (RLTS), Protected Planet, Natural Resources Governance Framework (NRGF), and the Water and Nature Initiative (WANI) Toolkits.[34] This chapter looks at their relevance, effectiveness, outcome pathways, and governance and management according to the following structure:

- Relevance of Knowledge Products
- Effectiveness of Knowledge Chains in the IUCN Programme
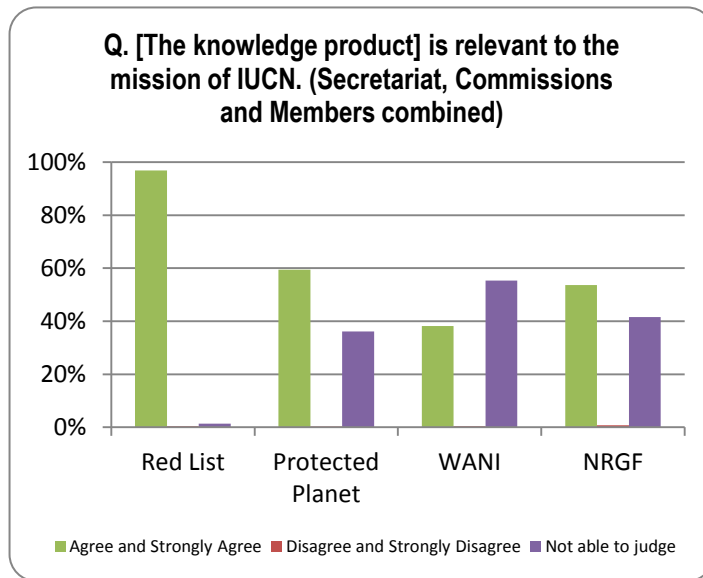- Knowledge Product Governance and Management

4.2   Relevance of Knowledge Products

Relevance to the IUCN mission

Finding 7:   **All surveyed stakeholder groups perceive the RLTS to be of highest relevance to both the Union as a whole and to their own priorities. While 40-60% of respondents considered the other sampled knowledge products relevant, a significant percentage was not able to judge – suggesting that these knowledge products are not as visible across the Union as the RLTS.**

The four sampled knowledge products are perceived across the Union as relevant to the mission of IUCN to varying degrees. With the notable exception of the RLTS, a high percentage of respondents indicated they were not able to judge their relevance. At the same time, expressions of disagreement and strong disagreement as to their relevance were very near negligible.

Exhibit 4.2   Relevance of Sampled Knowledge Products to the Mission of IUCN

Q. [The knowledge product] is relevant to the mission of IUCN. (Secretariat, Commissions and Members combined)

■ Agree and Strongly Agree   ■ Disagree and Strongly Disagree   ■ Not able to judge

All consulted IUCN stakeholder groups perceive the RLTS to be of highest relevance to both the Union as a whole and to their own priorities. This comes as no surprise given the longstanding history of the RLTS, its Flagship Knowledge Product status, and overall prominence within the Union.[35]

Each stakeholder group perceives the other three sampled knowledge products to be fairly relevant, both to IUCN overall and to its own work, with WANI Toolkits consistently scoring lowest. While a high percentage of each group considered itself 'not able to judge' for these knowledge products (except in the case of the RLTS), a very low percentage expressed disagreement across the board. This suggests that for many across the Union, the remaining selected sample of knowledge products (and knowledge chains) is not visible enough for them to articulate an opinion (a matter demanding attention, notably for the Protected Planet Flagship Knowledge Product).

Responding to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development needs

Finding 8:   **Sampled knowledge products are predominantly and appropriately demand-driven, having been developed in response to articulated biodiversity conservation and sustainable development needs.**

Responding to articulated needs. Each of the four sampled knowledge products was developed in response to diversely articulated biodiversity conservation and sustainable development needs. They are predominantly and appropriately demand-driven, where expressions of need and demand have emanated from sources at multiple levels, while speaking to IUCN's niche (see Exhibit 4.3).

Exhibit 4.3 Relevance of Sampled Knowledge Products to the Mission or Information Needs of IUCN Components

Q. [The following knowledge product] is relevant to the mission or information needs of [the Secretariat; my Commission; my organization]
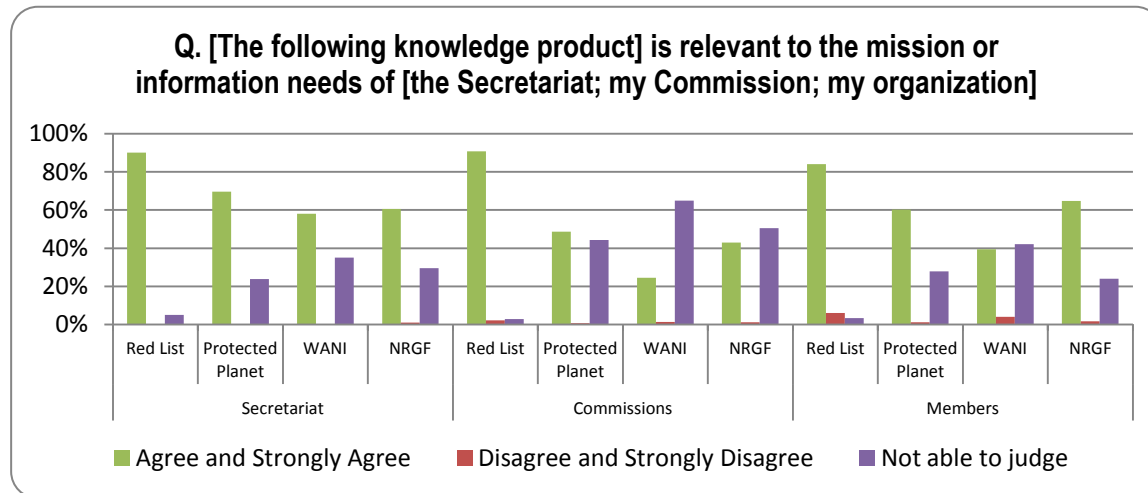
The demand-driven nature of these products enhances their relevance to the community of users sampled, i.e. the IUCN Union. At the same time, it has taken leadership for these to be developed and made available to the biodiversity conservation and sustainable development community, which IUCN continues to provide (see Volume I, Appendix XIII for exemplary statements reflecting multiple dimensions of these points).

Relevance to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development frameworks

Finding 9:   Sampled knowledge products reflect an organisation whose thematic niche is appropriately situated at the intersection of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

Advancing biodiversity conservation *and* sustainable development. In 1980, IUCN and others published the World Conservation Strategy (WCS).[36] It united the priorities of conservation and development in advancing a 'sustainable development' agenda, directly shaping the subsequent and still contemporary global discourse of sustainability. IUCN has since then been positioned as an organisation that works to advance biodiversity conservation both for its own sake, as 'pure conservation', *and* as constitutive of sustainable development, as per the most recent IUCN Programme.

Such an understanding of IUCN is appropriately widespread, *but not unanimous*, across the Union, and is commensurately reflected in the perception of Union stakeholders of sampled knowledge product relevance to either/both the 'biodiversity conservation' and 'sustainable development' movements (see Volume I, Appendix XIV for data-specific insights).

Slightly more biodiversity conservation than sustainable development. Overall, the data indicates that sampled knowledge products are perceived as slightly more relevant to biodiversity conservation than to sustainable development, but still relevant to both. This reflects an organisation whose thematic niche is at the intersection of these movements, as per the WCS.[37] The relevance of sampled knowledge products to high-level conservation and sustainable development frameworks is also shown in Volume I, Appendix VI.[38]

Overcoming the false dichotomy of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. Thus, this suggests that continued talk of niche-related 'soul searching' on the matter of whether IUCN is, or should be more of a biodiversity conversation *or* a sustainable development organisation

is based on a false dichotomy that detracts from the strategic, programmatic, conceptual and practical complementarities between them. The IUCN 2013-2016 Programme has appropriately transcended such a dichotomous approach to its niche, with its three Programme Areas. Interview data suggested that a few holdouts across the Union (particularly those involved in species-specific activities) continue arguing the merits of IUCN framing itself as a 'pure conservation' organisation, out of sync with the majority of the Union and the post-WCS era.

4.3 Effectiveness of Knowledge Chains in the IUCN Programme

The effectiveness of IUCN knowledge chains is examined in terms of:

- Input: IUCN-approved standards, quality of data and information, incorporating Indigenous knowledge

- Understanding Outcome Pathways

The 'Generic Knowledge Chain Diagram' (see Exhibit 4.4) has been used to guide our inquiry into the effectiveness of knowledge products and knowledge chains, on the premise that knowledge products are just one component of a larger knowledge chain that is understood to include need/demand, input, output, uptake and impact.[39] The issue of need/demand was addressed above, and the rest and discussed in the following sections.

Exhibit 4.4 Generic Knowledge Chain Diagram
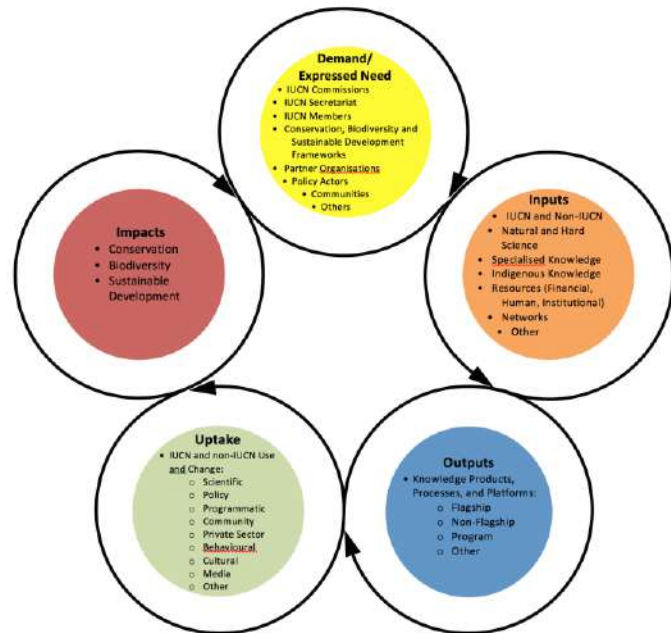
4.3.1 Effectiveness: Input

IUCN-approved standards

Finding 10:   Most but not all Flagship Knowledge Products are appropriately based on, or derive from IUCN-approved standards. This raises concerns about the quality, consistency, and branding of Flagship Knowledge Products and related sub-products for IUCN.

The basis of Flagship Knowledge Products. IUCN declares itself to be 'a leading provider of biodiversity knowledge, tools and standards used to influence policy, undertake conservation planning and guide action on the ground'.[40] One of the defining features of Flagship Knowledge Products is that they are based on six elements: IUCN-approved standards, rules and procedures, a dataset, tools, training and capacity-building to support application and use, and products per se. Of its six Flagship Knowledge Products named as such in the 2013-16 Programme[41], only three are based on IUCN data standards.[42]

- The IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria[43];
- The IUCN Protected Area Management Categories[44] and the IUCN Governance Types;
- The IUCN Red List of Ecosystems Categories and Criteria.[45]

At the time of writing, a fourth standard was appropriately being prepared for the identification of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs). The other two IUCN Flagship Knowledge Products being developed (the NRGF and HDN) are not (yet) based on IUCN-approved data standards. It is not likely that either will see the development of IUCN-approved data standards in the short-to-medium term, given that these are in various stages of conceptual development. Without such standards, the notion that these are Flagship Knowledge Products is problematic.[46]

IUCN-approved data standards are at the base of the legitimacy and authority of Flagship Knowledge Products in the world, and thus also more broadly of IUCN's work, relevance and effectiveness. These standards are used in international Conventions, like the CBD, and are very much a component of IUCN authority and reputation in the field.

Investing in Flagship Knowledge Products. One Secretariat staff member echoes a wider concern across the Union about the relative paucity of investment in the development and mobilisation of standards as compared to their importance: 'Mobilisation of knowledge products according to approved standards is by far IUCN's strongest niche, but core investment in these is pathetic and must be strengthened'. Among other things, mobilisation may be understood as the development of Flagship Knowledge Product derived sub-products, and their use in political processes at different levels (see Volume I, Appendix XV for an example of challenges that may emerge from the development of sub-products derived from, or constitutive of so-called Flagship Knowledge Products that are without established and agreed-upon data standards).

Quality of data and information – Flagship Knowledge Products

Finding 11:   Most surveyed stakeholders across the Union express confidence in the quality of RLTS data. Less than 50% of consulted stakeholders express confidence in Protected Planet data, with a high proportion not able to judge. This disparity between Flagship Knowledge Products is a matter of concern for a knowledge-based organisation.

On the quality of knowledge product data and information. IUCN's reputation, ability to work and convene effectively, influence policy and practice on the ground are based, in no small measure, on the quality of the both hard and social scientific data that both inform its Flagship Knowledge Products and that are made available through those products. The effectiveness of sampled knowledge products is based on their use, anchored in the extent to which data and information informing these knowledge products are perceived to be of high quality and reliable, based on the best available sources.

Exhibit 4.5 RLTS Informed by a Diversity of Sources

Q. The Red List of Threatened Species is informed by a diversity of authoritative sources.
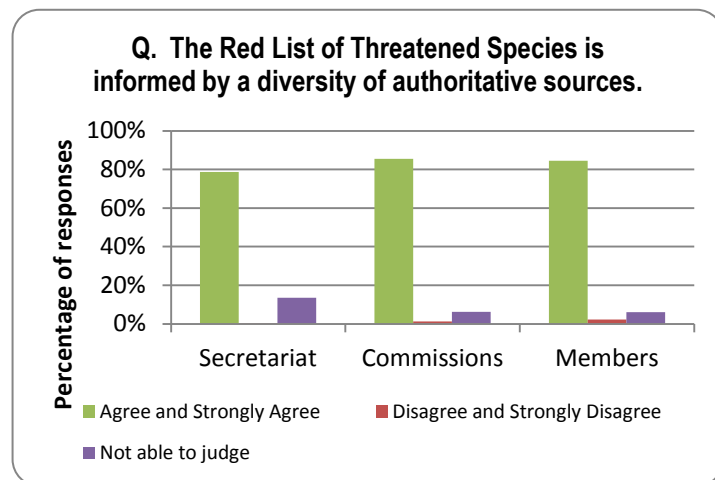
On information and data quality of the RLTS. To elicit perspectives on Union-wide perceptions of quality and confidence, the survey asked if specific knowledge products, the RLTS and Protected Planet' are 'being informed by a diversity of authoritative sources'.[47] Respondents from all components of the Union perceive the RLTS to be informed by a diversity of authoritative sources and may all be understood to have confidence in its quality. This is due in part to the fact that the RLTS is subject to stringent and public quality assurance processes.[48]

Exhibit 4.6 Protected Planet Informed by a Diversity of Sources

Q. Protected Planet is informed by a diversity of authoritative sources.
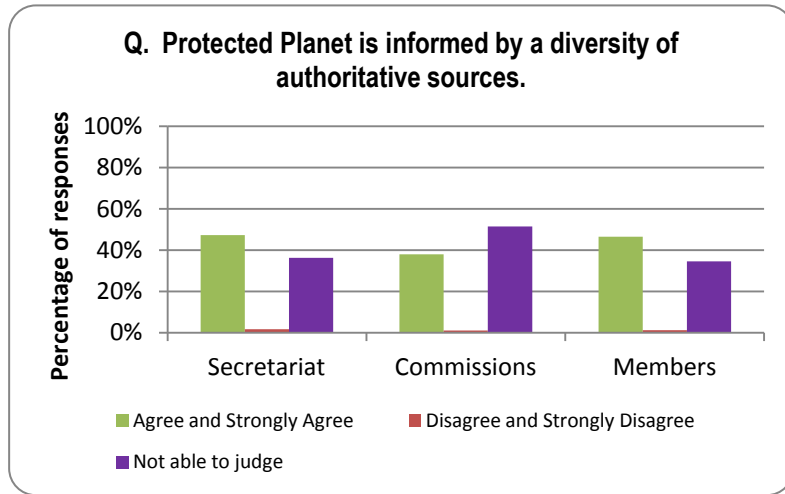
On information and data quality of Protected Planet. When asked if the Protected Planet Flagship Knowledge Product is informed by a diversity of authoritative sources, less than 50% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. A high proportion of respondents were not able to judge. This despite the fact that the 'World Database on Protected Areas User Manual 1.1' contains clear and thorough quality assurance processes.[49] This suggests that Protected Planet data and information related quality processes are less known across the Union than for the RLTS, despite both being Flagship Knowledge Products.

Confidence in the quality of data (and data related processes) informing Flagship Knowledge Products are fundamental to IUCN's ability to deliver on its niche. Concern has been raised across the Union that IUCN's investment in knowledge products may not be commensurate with their centrality.[50]

Quality of data and information – programme-based knowledge product

Finding 12:   Most surveyed stakeholders across the Union are not able to judge the quality of data and information informing the WANI Toolkits.

Exhibit 4.7 WANI Toolkits Informed by a Diversity of Sources

Q. The WANI Toolkits are informed by a diversity of authoritative sources.
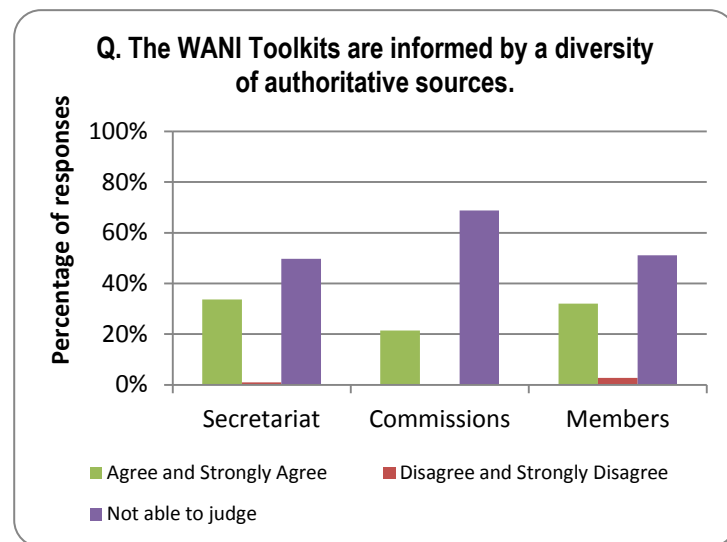
On information and data quality of WANI Toolkits. In addition to reviewing a sample of Flagship Knowledge Products and sub-products, the External Review also examined what we understand to be programme-based knowledge products. When asked if the WANI Toolkits are informed by a diversity of authoritative sources, the majority of survey respondents indicated they were not able to judge. Quality assurance mechanisms for the Toolkits are not as clear, transparent and publicly accessible as for the Flagship Knowledge Products sampled and discussed above.

Commissions have not been formally involved with the WANI Toolkits. While low for all Union respondents, only 21.4% of Commission Members who took the survey agreed or strongly agreed that WANI Toolkits are informed by a diversity of authoritative sources, and 68.8% were not able to

judge. In particular, this reflects the fact that Commissions were not formally involved in the WANI programme and in the development of the Toolkits. Specific experts in the field of water governance, including a few Commission Members, were consulted or directly involved in the authorship of the Toolkits, on a selective basis.[51] Key informant interviews also point to an ad hoc rather than a formal and thorough quality assurance practice.

Data coverage and deficiency

Finding 13: **The effectiveness of Flagship Knowledge Products is sometimes limited by the unavailability of data and also the extent of data coverage.**

The importance of data coverage. The more comprehensive are Flagship Knowledge Products, the more effective they have the potential to be. Bearing this in mind, data coverage and data deficiency are concerns confronting IUCN Flagship Knowledge Products. This is made evident by the External Review Team's examination of the RLTS, selected for illustrative purposes and also to frame a proposed Union-wide response.

Data coverage for the RLTS. An updated IUCN RLTS, released at the Rio+20 meeting in June 2012, included 63,837 assessed species that were assigned to eight categorisations of risk. As of November 2014, 76,199 species had been included in the RLTS, of which 22,413 are threatened with extinction. Impressive progress has been made over two years. The Red List Committee has set an ambitious target of 160,000 assessed species for 2020 (see Volume I, Appendix VII).

Continued data deficiency persists for the RLTS, meaning 'species for which insufficient or inadequate information is available to make an informed assessment'. In some cases, data simply does not exist and fieldwork is required to construct it. Data deficiency rates include 1% of birds and nearly half of all cartilaginous fishes and freshwater crabs, among others.[52]

The causes of data deficiency are known and multiple. In many cases, as with the Global Invasive Species Database (GISD)[53], the data source has been identified, but integration has not yet been completed. Additionally, IUCN SSC Commission Members involved in the species Specialist Groups (SGs) note with frustration how difficult it sometimes is to access data from the private sector and Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), as well as forest inventory data and data from certification schemes.[54]

Data concerns related to Protected Planet. While the RLTS has been used to illustrate this point, key informants from across the Union involved in Protected Planet also highlighted critical concerns about the availability and consistency of data included therein, while noting that much progress has recently been made (e.g. inclusion of new datasets). In particular, they point to the on-going funding-related challenges associated with ensuring that comprehensive and high-quality datasets inform Protected Planet.[55] This matter is discussed below with respect to IBAT (see Section 4.3.2).

Incorporating Indigenous knowledge

Finding 14: **A scientifically-informed and knowledge-based organisation, IUCN has started developing processes, mechanisms and protocols for engaging Indigenous Peoples, and incorporating Indigenous knowledge in Flagship and programme-based knowledge products, methodologies and practices.**

IUCN and Indigenous knowledge. A Union of Institutional Members, Commissions and Secretariat, IUCN has traditionally made relatively little space for Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous knowledge. There is, as yet, no formal Membership category for Indigenous Peoples.[56] And, Flagship Knowledge Products have traditionally been informed with hard and social science data, without

explicitly seeking and including Indigenous knowledge. Such knowledge has occasionally found its way into programmatic work at IUCN on an ad hoc basis.[57]

Discussion on the importance of addressing this issue is ongoing, dating back years even decades. Recently, IUCN has sought to develop a more intentional, engaging and inclusive approach to Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous knowledge (see Volume I, Appendix XVIII).[58] Indeed, it is now widely acknowledged both outside and within IUCN that Indigenous knowledge is of great value and an important resource to the field of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.[59] Overall, IUCN is evidently becoming much more intentional about engaging with Indigenous Peoples and seeking to recognise and integrate indigenous knowledge into IUCN approaches, methodologies and practices.

4.3.2 Effectiveness: Understanding Outcome Pathways

Finding 15: **Knowledge products mobilised by IUCN constitute diverse knowledge chains, favouring conservation and sustainability outcomes along multiple, often complementary pathways. Such outcomes could be increased from a more intentional and strategic mobilisation of knowledge products along these multiple outcome pathways.**

On knowledge chains and *outcome pathways*. For knowledge-based organisations like IUCN, it is valuable to see the knowledge chains of which its knowledge products are constitutive, and thus also the *outcome pathways* to which they contribute.

Exhibit 4.8 Leveraging Knowledge Effectively
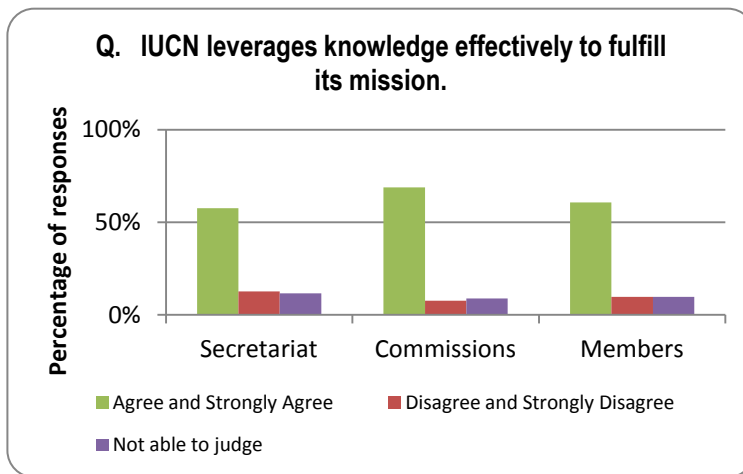
Perceptions of the Union on leveraging knowledge. The External Review was mandated to examine these knowledge chains and provide guidance on how their effectiveness, and that of IUCN more broadly, might be understood and improved upon. To begin with, the Union perceives itself to leverage knowledge quite effectively in fulfilment of its mission, though with room for improvement (see Exhibit 4.8).

Identifying outcome pathways. The External Review found that the four sampled knowledge products favour biodiversity conservation and sustainable development outcomes along the following six IUCN outcome pathways:

- 1: Influencing and informing policy processes and mechanisms
- 2: Influencing action and practice
- 3: Influencing and managing resource allocations
- 4: End user targeting of knowledge products
- 5: Informing research projects
- 6: Popular accessibility of Flagship Knowledge Products

Each outcome pathway is discussed below, aiming to highlight their individual, and IUCN's overall effectiveness. Further, these are not discrete outcome pathways but are often complementary.[60]
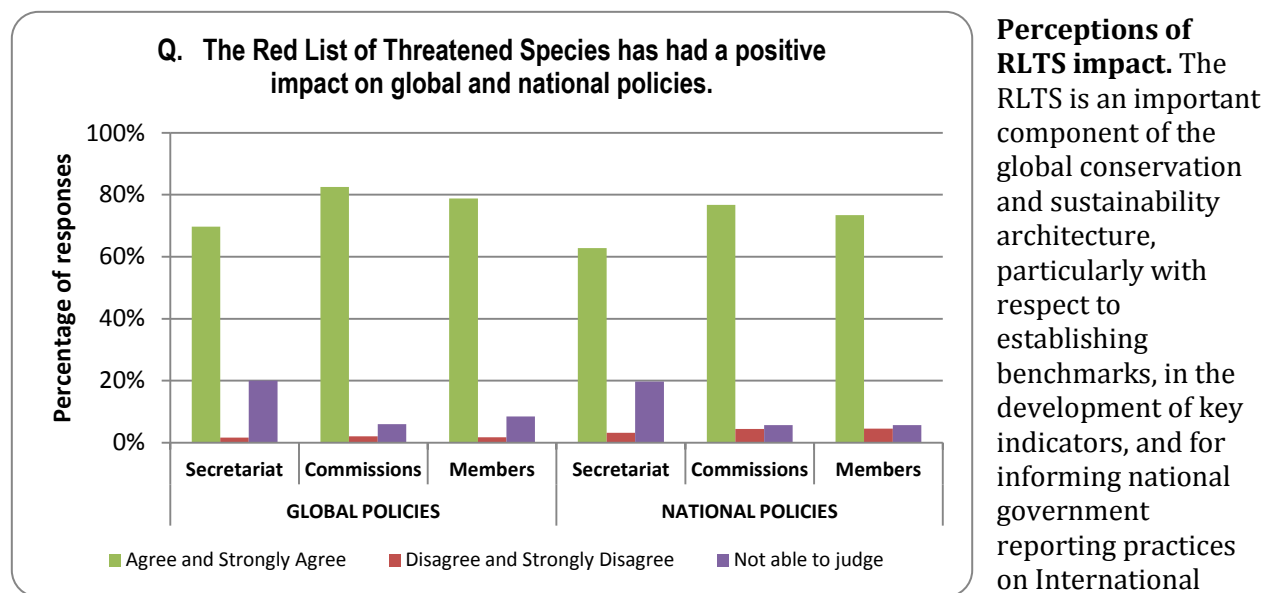
Outcome Pathway 1: Influencing and informing policy processes and mechanisms

Finding 16: **Flagship Knowledge Products influence and inform global, regional and national policy processes and mechanisms in effective ways. Awareness of such outcomes across the Union varies significantly by knowledge product.**

Influencing and informing policy processes and mechanisms. Biodiversity conservation and sustainable development outcomes are favoured when Flagship Knowledge Products are used to influence and inform global, regional and national level policy processes and mechanisms. This includes the use of knowledge products in the establishment of baselines and monitoring mechanisms, including tracking progress on species, habitats, genetic diversity, equitable development, and other issues. They have influenced and informed environmental, political, economic and socio-cultural decision-making at global, regional, national and even site-specific levels. The RLTS and Protected Planet are used to illustrate the fact that Flagship Knowledge Products influence and inform policy processes and mechanisms in effective ways.

Exhibit 4.9 Red List of Threatened Species Impact on Global and National Policies

Q. The Red List of Threatened Species has had a positive impact on global and national policies.

Perceptions of RLTS impact. The RLTS is an important component of the global conservation and sustainability architecture, particularly with respect to establishing benchmarks, in the development of key indicators, and for informing national government reporting practices on International Conventions.[61] In the survey, the RLTS is perceived by Secretariat, Commission Members and Institutional Members to have had a positive impact on global policies and also national policies, as shown in Exhibit 4.9.

Perceptions of Protected Planet impact. The Protected Planet Flagship Knowledge Product has been integrated into the global conservation and sustainable development architecture, much like the RLTS.[62] However, the perception of surveyed stakeholders is that the Protected Planet's impact on global and national policies is significantly less than for the RLTS, as shown in Exhibit 4.10.

Only 30.9% of Secretariat staff, 31.1% of Commission Members, and 39.6% of Institutional Members perceive that Protected Planet has had a positive impact on global policies. Also, 25.7% of Secretariat staff, 26.3% of Commission members and 33.5% of Institutional Members perceive that Protected Planet has had a positive impact on national policies.

Exhibit 4.10 Protected Planet Impact on Global and National Policies

Q. Protected Planet has had a positive impact on global and national policies.

Percentage of responses

GLOBAL POLICIES   NATIONAL POLICIES

■ Agree and Strongly Agree   ■ Disagree and Strongly Disagree   ■ Not able to judge
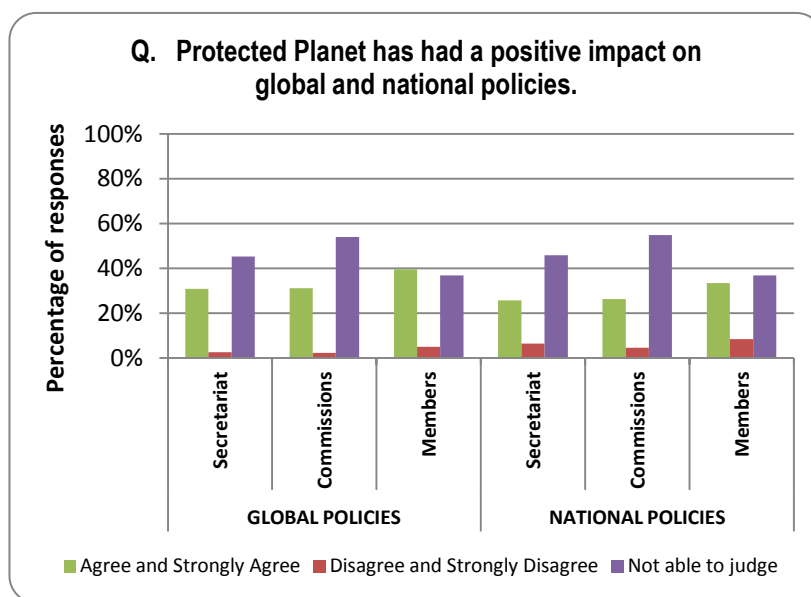
Inability to judge impact. While the perception of positive impact is relatively low, a high proportion of respondents indicated not being able to judge impact. This ranged from 36.3% of Institutional Members not able to judge Protected Planet's global impact, to 54.9% of Commission Members unable to judge Protected Planet's national impact. These figures reinforce the idea that policy influence, and outcome pathways more broadly should be tracked for impact, as there is little hard data available from IUCN on this matter.

Outcome Pathway 2: Influencing action and practice

Finding 17:   Programme-based knowledge products influence global, regional and national level actions and practices throughout the world, notably as a resource for IUCN convening.

Influencing and informing action and practice. Biodiversity conservation and sustainable development outcomes are favoured when programme-based knowledge products are used to influence and inform global, regional and national level actions and practices. The evidence points to this happening as a dimension of IUCN's broadly conceived convening function. Specifically, along any given knowledge chain, programme-based knowledge products are a means by and with which to engage diverse and relevant sectors and actors across the conservation and sustainability communities, and beyond them.[63]

Such engagement takes place at different stages along a knowledge chain, from responding to the articulation of need and demand and contributing key inputs, right through to either strategic or even unintentional uptake processes. The IUCN WANI Toolkits illustrate such effectiveness, as documented in the case study of Jordan's Zarqa River Basin Restoration Project (See Volume I, Appendix XX). This project is not unique or exceptional, as the Water Programme and the Toolkits more specifically have been useful in IUCN's convening function around the world.[64]

Outcome Pathway 3: Influencing and managing financial resource allocations

Finding 18:   Knowledge products inform and influence the way in which resources are used and managed. Awareness of such outcomes across the Union varies significantly by knowledge product.

Informing the management and allocation of financial resources. Biodiversity conservation and sustainable development outcomes are favoured when Flagship Knowledge Products influence and are used in the management and allocation of global public and private financial resource. The following examples highlight this point, drawing on the RLTS:[65]

Global Environment Facility (GEF):

– From 2006-2010, the GEF has used IUCN RLTS information as part of its Resource Allocation Framework (RAF), where resources were allocated based on their potential to generate environmentally beneficial outcomes as well as implement GEF projects.[66] In 2008, GEF-4 Indicative Resource Allocations for the Biodiversity and Climate Change Focal Areas Based on the Midterm Reallocation was USD 1.03 billion geared to biodiversity conservation and another USD 1.03 billion geared to climate change.[67]

– The GEF Benefits Index for Biodiversity (GBIbio), a ranking system of countries' ability to meet GEF biodiversity objectives (as part of the RAF), was constructed using data and information from IUCN, WWF, BirdLife International and FishBase.[68]

– Subsequently, from 2010, it used it its System for the Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR), the current resource allocation framework, determining how much money each eligible country receives from GEF. [69] Through STAR, USD 968 million has been allocated to biodiversity conservation, USD 1.088 billion to climate change, and another USD 328 million to land degradation.[70]

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF): CEPF is a joint program of l'Agence Française de Développement (AFD), CI, the European Union (EU), GEF, the Government of Japan, the MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank. IUCN acts as the Regional Implementation Team of the CEPF in 20 key biodiversity hotspots around the world. Of note, in 2008, CEPF and IUCN launched a 9-year, USD 8 million investment portfolio intent on conserving critical habitat in the East Melanesian Islands. IUCN acts as a Regional Implementing Organisation for the CEPF.[71] Results of the IUCN RLTS assessments influence investments made by this fund.[72]

Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund: This fund supports projects intent on addressing concerns associated with the conservation of species highly threatened with extinction. With an endowment of EUR 25 million, the fund disburses some USD 1.5 million annually. Results of the IUCN RLTS assessments are used as the primary (but not only) data source informing investments made by this fund.[73]

Knowledge products are authoritative references for the management and allocation of financial resources. The RLTS is 'used as an authoritative reference by international agencies, governments and/or civil society organisations', as perceived by a high proportion of cross-Union respondents (see per Exhibit 4.11), in the way these bodies plan, deploy, monitor and evaluate the use of their conservation and sustainability geared resources. By comparison, a high proportion of respondents across the Union were not able to judge this matter with respect to Protected Planet and the WANI Toolkits. In the case of the WANI Toolkits, more than double the number or respondents expressed not being able to judge as expressing agreement or strong agreement with the survey statement.

Exhibit 4.11 Knowledge Products: An Authoritative Reference
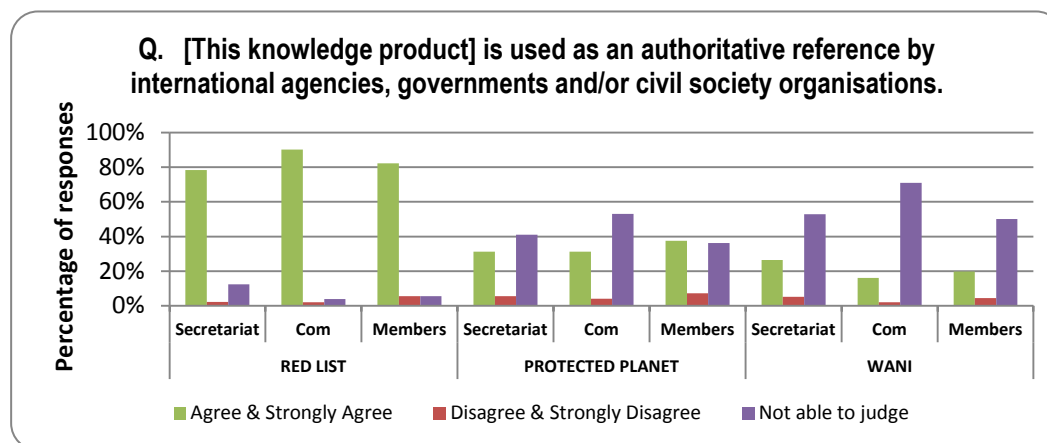
IUCN has also been playing a growing role in managing global financial resource allocations, informed by its own knowledge practices and products. In 2014, IUCN was recognised as a Project Agency for the GEF. IUCN has reported that

'[t]his newly designated status will increase opportunities for a broader and stronger implementation of IUCN's work programme through the flow of additional resources and a strengthened position of IUCN in global environmental governance. It will also boost our impact on biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration and sustainable development around the world.'[74]

IUCN is increasingly well positioned to play a leading role in the global management of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development resources, given experience with GEF, CEPF and others.

Outcome Pathway 4: End user targeting of knowledge products

Finding 19: **IUCN is effective at constructing a diversity of knowledge products, standards, tools and processes. Its effectiveness in generating biodiversity and sustainability outcomes is amplified when its knowledge products are targeted at specific end users.**

IUCN produces a diversity of knowledge-based outputs, which include knowledge products, standards, tools and even processes. This diversity may be understood in the following ways:

- Framing: IUCN knowledge products are framed in a multiplicity of ways, reflecting the range of issues articulated in the 2013-16 Programme;

- Thematic diversity of IUCN Flagship Knowledge Products and Standards: Species, Ecosystems, Protected Areas, Biodiversity Areas, Dependency on Nature, Governance;

- Diversity of form, methodology, product and process: RLTS as database and integrative platform; Protected Planet as database and integrative platform; WANI Toolkits in the form of tools used in stakeholder processes; NRGF as both regional scoping and legal assessment methodology; etc.

However, diversity for its own sake may detract from IUCN strategic objectives and priorities, given notable capacity and resource pressures and constraints.

Targeting users is linked to the uptake of knowledge products and tools. While all four knowledge products examined by the Review Team were deemed relevant for the Union, targeting users more intentionally with specific knowledge products and tools favours their uptake and

valued biodiversity conservation and sustainable development outcomes. An examination of the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT) demonstrates the value of targeting intended users more specifically when constructing knowledge products, sub-products and tools.

Focus on the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT)

IBAT is a knowledge-based mechanism for making IUCN knowledge from three of its leading databases usable by targeted decision-maker group. These are the RLTS, Protected Planet, and KBAs. Managed by IUCN, IBAT is collaboratively governed with two IUCN Institutional Members, namely BirdLife International and CI, as well as its partner organisation, UNEP-WCMC.

Exhibit 4.12 IBAT Governance and Management
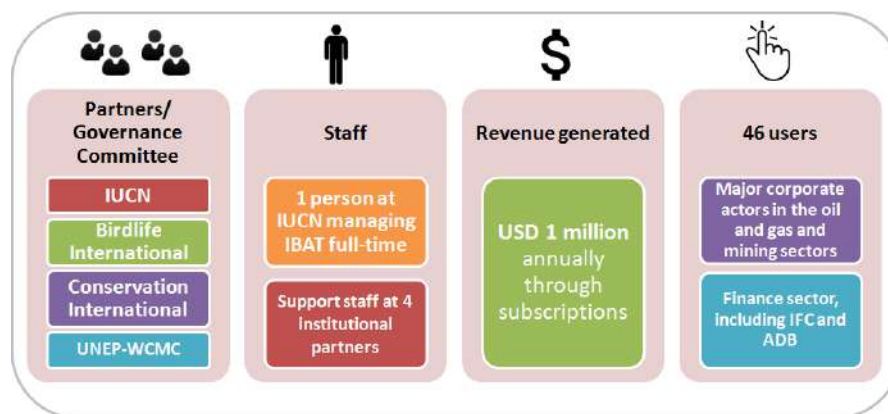
IBAT works at understanding end-user requirements and repackaging information from Flagship Knowledge Product databases in ways that respond to user needs. It is premised on the idea that information available in these databases can be rendered, packaged and made available in targeted user-friendly formats, and that doing so contributes more effectively to conservation-related financing, business practices, and learning processes widely (see Exhibit 4.13).

Exhibit 4.13 Partial IBAT Knowledge Chain

The Review Team's assessment of the effectiveness of tailoring knowledge product development to end-user needs reflects IUCN's own internal reflections on this matter:

> 'The sustainability of all knowledge products clearly lies with the appreciation of their value by end-users, which drives demand for and thus investment in the maintenance of the underlying data. It would not be appropriate for IUCN to maintain knowledge standards to the exclusive benefit of any individual single end-user constituency. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that mechanisms to encourage feedback from users as to how data best be presented to inform their decision-making are extremely valuable.'[75]

And also:

> 'It has become clear that many end-users are best served by the delivery of integrated knowledge products, customised to meet the needs of particular applications.'[76]

At the time of writing, three forms of IBAT had been developed: IBAT for Business; IBAT for the World Bank Group; and IBAT for Research and Conservation Planning.

Currently, IBAT for Business has an impressive 46 private sector users paying for the service, including major corporate actors in the oil and gas as well as mining sectors (who use this information to meet Global Reporting Initiative/GRI reporting requirements). IBAT for the World Bank Group has multiple paying users in the finance sector, including the IFC and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). IBAT for Research and Conservation Planning provides this knowledge without costs for non-commercial purposes. According to a key informant:

> 'IBAT is [one of] the only initiative[s] at IUCN intentionally trying to make information contained within IUCN databases, produced by IUCN Commissions, available and usefully packaged with a diversity of end-users in mind, beyond the scientific community.'[77]

While the data contained within Flagship Knowledge Product databases is a Global Public Good, the packaging, marketing and relational dimensions of IBAT-type work is not. As such, the end-user targeting of biodiversity and sustainable development knowledge amounts to a legitimate business model where private and finance sector actors pay for the knowledge-based service (both through a partnership model, as in the case of the Proteus Partnership, and in the form of user-based subscriptions).

A great deal has been accomplished with the current staffing and support arrangement for IBAT. As things stand, one IUCN staff person manages IBAT full-time with support provided from staff from the four institutional partners. IBAT generates upwards of USD 1 million annually, with resources largely being used to maintain the quality of databases upon which IBAT and indeed all of IUCN depends.

IBAT has appropriately sought to attract and increase its users, while maximising revenue for IUCN notably used for maintaining the quality of its underlying datasets. Were IUCN intent on aggressively increasing IBAT's user base, and should subscriptions increase so as to further stretch the initiative's ability to keep up with demand, it may very well prove necessary to review IBAT staffing, to both ensure increased use of Flagship Knowledge Product databases and maximise IBAT's value proposition (notably financial return).

Outcome Pathway 5: Informing research projects

Finding 20: **Biodiversity conservation and sustainable development outcomes are favoured when knowledge products inform research projects. However, data on the extent to which such knowledge has informed research projects is not comprehensively compiled by IUCN.**

Sampled knowledge products have long contributed to academic, NGO, government and private sector research. IUCN continues to make its knowledge products available to the research community and general public, and increasingly so through electronic means:

- The IUCN website[78] received upwards of 1.4 million visitors in 2014, up 3.69% from 1.36 million in 2013. There were just under 5 million page views and 2 million visits. More than a million visitors accessed IUCN publications in 2014. About 54% of IUCN's publications are

in electronic format and fully accessible to the public.[79] IUCN publishes peer-reviewed publications, which are indexed in the ISI Web of Science and thus available to the scholarly community. A record 84 scientific papers were published by 'IUCN' (as author) in 2014.[80]

Knowledge products are well-situated to inform research agendas. The contemporary research environment sees an ever-increasing inter- and multi-disciplinarity that is based on high quality research and endeavours to have policy impact. Scientifically-informed knowledge products are well-situated to inform such research projects. This has not been lost of the WCMC, WCPA and the Global Protected Areas Programme. The Protected Planet strategy for 2015-2020 intends to:

> 'Promote the use of the WDPA in academic research by actively contributing to or leading on scientific research, and attending key international and regional scientific congresses.'[81]

Metrics on knowledge products and research. A first metric for appreciating the extent to which IUCN data has informed research is found in the numbers of citations of these knowledge products in research publications. Google Scholar queries provide the following data[82]:

Exhibit 4.14 Research Citations of Knowledge Products

Search terms – both of the following:		Google Scholar results (13 January 2016)
With all the words	**With the exact phrase**	
IUCN	Red List of Threatened Species	32,800
IUCN	Red List of Ecosystems	161
IUCN	Key Biodiversity Areas[83]	976
IUCN	Protected Planet	357
IUCN	World Database on Protected Areas	2,000

A Google Scholar search for conservation-related knowledge products generated by IUCN Institutional Members and partners yields the following results, for comparative purposes:

Exhibit 4.15 Research Citations of conservation-Related Knowledge Products of IUCN Members and Partners

Search terms – both of the following		Google Scholar results (13 January 2016)
With all the words	**With the exact phrase**	
BirdLife	Important Bird Areas	5,760
TNC	Natural Capital Project	419
WRI	Global Forest Watch	984
WWF	Living Planet Index	1,330
ZSL	EDGE of Existence	45

Clearly, the RLTS is a key resource in conservation and sustainability related research, having received an incomparable number of academic citations.[84]

A couple of academic, published papers informed by Flagship Knowledge Products include:

- Hoffmann, et al. (2014) The difference conservation makes to extinction risk of the world's ungulates. *Conservation Biology* 00 (0):1–11.

- Rodrigues ASL, Brooks TM, Butchart SHM, Chanson J, Cox N, et al. (2014) Spatially Explicit Trends in the Global Conservation Status of Vertebrates. *PLoS ONE* 9(11):e113934.

A paucity of analysis. Notwithstanding the metrics above, the External Review Team has not seen nor found any evidence that there exists an analysis of the use of knowledge products mobilised against IUCN standards in the peer reviewed literature. (For an example of the way Protected Planet has informed the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) Project, see Volume I, Appendix XIX)

Outcome Pathway 6: Popular accessibility of Flagship Knowledge Products

Finding 21: **The widespread and effective use of the RLTS and Protected Planet Flagship Knowledge Products is constrained by their limited accessibility to different and diverse communities of users.**

The accessibility of Flagship Knowledge Products is a matter of interest and concern across the Union. Accessibility is a key factor in their uptake and performance, and also in creating opportunities for IUCN to penetrate other than its' traditional constituencies, an IUCN priority articulated by IUCN Global Programme leadership. Thus, the discussion on accessibility of Flagship Knowledge Products is pursued first in terms of favouring the usability of data by diverse groups, and secondly in terms of the general public.

The narrow accessibility of the RLTS. To begin with, of particular concern is that the RLTS in its current form is for the most part accessible to a fairly narrow group of scientific users, requiring specialists to translate the data for its use (as discussed above with respect to IBAT). It is not considered to be broadly 'user friendly' in a way that could be accessed by diverse academic and professional users, thereby limiting its potential for uptake and impact.[85]

Targeting diverse user groups. The RLTS does not provide data in relevant ways for sub-national and local communities, an important area of exclusion in the RLTS knowledge chain, according to RLTS Focus Group participants. Some of the as yet undeveloped opportunities which IUCN could pursue through appropriate partnerships include developing a phone App (with access to specific topics, taxa or localities), land planning tools and field guides derived from the Flagship Knowledge Products. On a more mundane but equally relevant point, efforts have been made to provide the RLTS in IUCN's three official languages, without as yet succeeding to do so comprehensively.[86]

Understanding potential user interests and needs. On the second point, a nascent effort has been made to popularise the RLTS through the Amazing Species profiles, which is a good start with much potential.[87] While not non-existent, Protected Planet does not have a strong non-academic, popular user orientation, nor does it have a clear sense of how popular users are using or wish to use Protected Planet. There is only nascent vision and discussion of how Protected Planet might develop in response to popular need and demand. A whole range of possible sub-products might be developed drawing on Flagship Knowledge Products, aimed at young people and others, through educational and entertainment products, including licensing arrangements not unlike that with National Geographic.

Insights on engaging young people. On the matter of engaging young people in ways that popularise Flagship Knowledge Products, it may be insightful to draw insight from work led by the Commission for Education and Communication (CEC) and the WCPA:

- Pushing Boundaries Challenge: In the lead up to the 2014 World Parks Congress, CEC, WCPA and partners asked young people to create and share media forms in response to the question: 'How are you creating a protected Planet?'[88] This served to create popular engagement around the concept of 'protected planet' and also generate media linked to the

Flagship Knowledge Product. IUCN has seen the development of a diverse community, including Young Professionals, in part through the development of such popular forms of knowledge-based engagement.[89]

Conclusion

The complementarity of outcome pathways. The six outcome pathways discussed in this chapter, while distinct, should be understood not as exclusive but as complementary to one another. They reflect the fact that each knowledge product discussed in this report is constitutive of multiple knowledge chains and thus also multiple and diverse outcome pathways. These outcome pathways are simply and diversely understood as policy-oriented, action-based, financial, academic and popular.

The value of targeting end-users. They also highlight the fact that for knowledge to reach communities of actual or potential users, it benefits from being produced and packaged in ways that renders this knowledge accessible. This is true of academic users, policy-oriented and corporate users, as well as community-based users and young professionals.[90]

4.4   Knowledge Product Governance and Management

The knowledge nomenclature

Finding 22: **IUCN is aware that its knowledge nomenclature is unclear and a source of confusion across the Union. The IUCN Council has put a hold on further knowledge nomenclature discussion and decision-making until certain building blocks are in place within the Union.**

A confusing knowledge nomenclature. Formally, during the 2013-2016 Programme period, IUCN has used the terms 'Flagship Knowledge Products', 'knowledge products', 'knowledge baskets (with specific reference to the NRGF) and 'sub-products'. Informally, people across the Union have also used the following terms, 'knowledge systems' and 'knowledge platforms' (in reference to Protected Planet, for example). The TOR for this External Review introduced the concept of 'knowledge chains' to IUCN.

A hierarchy of knowledge products. While the language of Flagship Knowledge Products is conceivably intended to give value and visibility to well-known and much respected knowledge products like the RLTS, its use has created a hierarchy of knowledge products that has not clearly been understood or appreciated across the Union during the 2013-2016 Programme period.[91]

IUCN is aware of this and then initiated a process for revising the governance, naming and branding of knowledge products, as per IUCN Council Decision C/83/16, on 'The naming and governance of IUCN Knowledge Products'. As part of this process, the Global Director, Biodiversity Conservation group, working with the Head, Science and Knowledge, had been given a mandate to engage 'with all relevant stakeholders in the Commissions, Members, Partners and Secretariat'.[92]

The status of processes for clarifying the knowledge nomenclature. Subsequently, at the 87th Council meeting of IUCN, held in September 2015, a decision was taken to put discussions related to this process on hold.[93] This is to be revisited once certain other important developments will have taken place (e.g. KBA Standard; continued development of the NRGF and the Human Dependency on Nature – renamed as People in Nature; renegotiation of the RLTS Partnership Agreement expiring in mid-2016).

Horizontal and vertical integration of knowledge products

Finding 23: **Horizontal and vertical integration of knowledge products is being pursued by IUCN, with varying degrees of planning and progress. Horizontal integration of Flagship Knowledge Products is moving forward appropriately, creating complementarities between them. Less in evidence, the pursuit of vertical integration may be understood as the development of 'baskets of knowledge'.**

The integration of Flagship Knowledge Products has been prioritised by IUCN, and understood as follows: "Integration' of flagship knowledge products means that the different products will be made to 'talk to each other' but will not be formally merged.'[94] In the current External Review, integration is discussed as both horizontal and vertical.

Horizontal integration refers specifically to the integration of Flagship Knowledge Products. This entails specific efforts to cultivate overlaps and consistencies between these products, to favour richer datasets, so that users could engage with them in more effective and complementary ways, and to favour cost-saving as well. Such integration is taking place between the RLTS, Protected Planet, and KBAs through the IBAT tool, as discussed above. Horizontal integration has clearly been prioritised at IUCN.[95]

Vertical integration refers to the integration of diverse knowledge products (and sub-products) under the banner of specific (or even multiple) Flagship Knowledge Products. Although difficult to quantify, there is evidence of such integration by Thematic Programme. The pursuit of vertical integration may be understood as the development of 'baskets of knowledge'.

For example, Global Protected Areas Programme knowledge products are well integrated with those of the World Heritage Programme under the banner of the Protected Areas and World Heritage Thematic Programme. Both are being integrated into Protected Planet. BIOPAMA (Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme)[96] and Panorama (good practice cases related to protected areas) are important examples of this taking place.[97] With Protected Planet as the Flagship Knowledge Product, such vertical integration currently enables development of the following Protected Planet knowledge basket (which is illustrative, not comprehensive):

- Data enrichment of Protected Planet (through BIOPAMA and the World Heritage Programme);
- Engagement processes linked to Protected Planet (through BIOPAMA);
- Capacity-building linked to Protected Planet (through BIOPAMA); and
- Good practice examples stemming from Protected Planet (through Panorama and the World Heritage Programme).

It is conceivable that it could enable the following as well:

- Reporting on IUCN Programme Priorities by Flagship Knowledge Product/Basket, in addition to Programme, Global Programme and Priority reporting.
- Funding *by* Flagship Knowledge Product/Basket, since they would be directly linked to clearly reported outcomes, as above. This would create another funding stream that addresses the serious and ongoing challenge of funding knowledge products at all levels (see Chapter 6).

There is little horizontal-and-vertical knowledge product integration in evidence across Thematic Programmes where they are linked to Flagship Knowledge Products. Such integration does not appear to be a priority for the Union at the moment, despite the benefits of doing so. For example,

Water Programme work, the WANI Toolkits and the WANI results report[98] are not integrated with Protected Planet. This, despite the fact that the WANI methodology (including the Toolkits) has been used in the development of protected areas (in Costa Rica, Peru and elsewhere). Indeed, an important opportunity to link WANI results with Protected Planet effectiveness is currently being missed.

Overall, the outcome pathways that link the various and often disparate components of work at IUCN together are often unknown and invisible within the Union for the simple reason that linkages are either not being made or not being seen.

Flagship Knowledge Product development

Finding 24: Governance and management mechanisms in place at IUCN have thus far proven wanting in their support of the NRGF's development.

Concerns about the governance and management of the NRGF. Given the centrality of knowledge to IUCN, the development of new IUCN Flagship Knowledge Products/Baskets is a matter of major importance. Yet, the NRGF's development process to-date has revealed lacunae at IUCN in this regard. The External Review team found that IUCN provided inadequate governance and management leadership towards ensuring that adequate oversight and support was provided for the NRGF's development. According to one key informant, '[t]here was no formal suite of governance steps or triggers' related to the development of this or other Flagship Knowledge Products. While Council was consulted on and informed of the development of the NRGF, Council approval on this came along with the overall approval of the 2013-2016 Package.

Premature labeling of the NRGF as Flagship Knowledge Product. Mindful of IUCN's longstanding environmental governance work, the NRGF was initiated in 2011, considered and approved at the 2012 WCC, and mandated to move forward.[99] The 2013-2016 Programme prioritised the development of the NRGF as a new Flagship Knowledge Product. While the Union generally agrees that the NRGF is relevant to the mission of IUCN (see Exhibit 4.2 above), it is widely and frequently opined that Flagship status and labelling was premature.[100]

A Leadership Group was then developed that oversaw the creation of a Working Group with a mandate and resources to develop the NRGF (see Volume I, Appendix VIII). Appropriately, CEESP was mandated to play a leadership role in developing the NRGF, in close collaboration with the WCEL and the IUCN Secretariat (Social Policy, Nature Based Solutions Group, and the ELC).

Overall, the NRGF Working Group has been mixed in its ability to deliver on its mandate, given the time and resources invested by IUCN. A Union-wide conversation on IUCN's practices, roles and leadership in the field of environmental governance has been initiated, though it is, for the time being, fragmented and unintegrated. While the inception meeting included the participation of Global Programme Directors as well as relevant Commission Chairs and Members of CEESP and WCEL, there has been relatively little intra-Union-wide engagement with leadership since then.[101] According to the majority of people consulted within IUCN Secretariat, people who believed they should be meaningfully engaged in the NRGF development process have not been *adequately, effectively and/or meaningfully* consulted to inform it.[102]

On the continued relevance of the NRGF. The NRGF is widely understood by sampled informants across the Union as a means for creating greater internal coherence to the work being undertaken on governance within the Union. As one Framework Partner explained, echoing the sentiments of most across the Union, 'NRGF should be the mechanism through which all IUCN [governance] products and approaches are centrally engaged and catalysed'.[103] To date, a broad survey or stock

taking of what is going on across the Union related to governance has never been undertaken with any degree of methodological coherence, causing concern across the Union as to the validity of the methodological approach being pursued (see stakeholder comments in sidebar).[104]

Today, there are two NRGF approaches and processes (as part of four NRGF modules under active development).

- The first is an ELC-led legal assessment process, which includes 'a set of tools and resources for assessing and improving legal aspects of natural resources governance'.[105]

- The second is a regional and modular process, based on the development of a set of governance values and principles, which have sought to 'provide a platform for engagement across the Union, including the three regions where NRGF scoping is being undertaken (Mesoamerica, Eastern and Southern Africa, and South East Asia)'.[106]

These two approaches have largely been un-integrated at the level of leadership, though several interviewees indicated this is slowly changing. The process has generated notable outcomes, detailed in an update shared by the NRGF Working Group with Council in October 2015, with highlights as follows:[107]

- The legal component of the NRGF has been effective in delivering assessments based on the work of IUCN Members and multi-sectoral partners in different parts of the world.

- The regional, modular process has developed a series of values and principles of natural resources governance that will continue to frame its development, as well as that of corollary products. Conceptual development is ongoing.

- Scoping continues in 3 IUCN regions in consultation with the Regional Offices.

Conclusion

In our assessment, the NRGF receives a mixed review in terms of the development process and the outcomes to date. The Working Group, comprising 35 members, has been mandated with guiding the technical development of the NRGF. There are methodological reasons for some of the challenges facing the NRGF noted above, but it would be fairly straightforward for these to be adjusted. A methodological adjustment would enable greater NRGF integration into, and engagement with, a broader cross-section of the Union, so long as the resources are made available for such broad engagement, particularly with the Regional Offices.[108]

A lack of structurally appropriate and effective governance mechanisms. More significantly, the review finds that shortcomings in NRGF development stem from a lack of structurally appropriate and effective governance mechanisms. In our opinion, the Leadership Group was too narrowly constructed to favour an effective Union-wide engagement and buy-in, dominated as it was by CEESP and the Nature-Based Solutions Group at the Secretariat, with WCEL and ELC involvement. It is not clear why the other IUCN Commissions were not mandated to participate in the development of this Flagship Knowledge Product/Basket, given their own leadership and experience in the field.

Stemming from this, the Working Group responsible for taking this work forward has also been narrowly comprised, missing an important opportunity to ensure the development and implementation of a more broadly inclusive methodological approach (with lessons for the governance of Flagship Knowledge Products more widely at IUCN). In our opinion, the NRGF working group should continue to see its development process pursued, but with appropriate governance guidance, support and oversight.[109]

5   IUCN Commissions

5.1   Introduction

This chapter examines the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the six IUCN Commissions:[110] Species Survival Commission (SSC), World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL), Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), and Commission on Education and Communication (CEC).

5.2   Relevance of Commissions

Roles and functions

The six IUCN Commissions represent an important vehicle for achieving IUCN's strategic objectives. Collectively they provide a link to approximately 15,000[111] volunteers who bring a broad range of expertise relevant to IUCN's work. In order to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of the IUCN Commissions, it is important to clarify their roles and functions. According to IUCN Statute 73, 'The Commissions shall be networks of expert volunteers entrusted to develop and advance the institutional knowledge and experience and objectives of IUCN.'[112] The IUCN Statutes also list a broad range of functions that Commissions might fulfil.[113]

> The functions of the Commissions shall be to fulfil their missions as defined in their mandates, including: (a) to analyse issues and prepare assessments, reports, action plans, criteria and methodology and undertake research and other scientific and technical work; (b) to undertake tasks assigned to them within the integrated programme of IUCN; (c) to provide advice on any matter within their fields of competence; (d) to broaden knowledge and competence on matters relating to their mandates; (e) to work with Members and the Secretariat to develop activities within the various Regions, and to support Members and components of IUCN with necessary expertise; and (f) to undertake such other responsibilities as may be assigned to them by the World Congress and the Council.

The unclear and inconsistent mandate of Commissions. The IUCN website describes a relatively narrow mandate: '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.'[114] Finally, the mandate in the One Programme statement endorsed at the 2012 WCC is broader and more aligned with description in the Statutes:

> Our Commissions are six networks of volunteer conservation scientists, experts and managers, each with specialist and regional sub-groups. We broaden conservation knowledge and competence, and help drive IUCN's work into new areas of conservation. We provide knowledge and the conservation science and management base for the IUCN Programme. We work with Members, Council and the Secretariat to provide expertise and leverage financial and human resources for Programme delivery.[115]

In addition to these slight but important differences in descriptions of Commissions, interview respondents' perceptions of the work of Commissions similarly varied. It is therefore useful to describe the range of roles Commissions have played in the period under review in order to discuss the relevance and effectiveness of Commissions within IUCN.

Finding 25:   The Commissions remain an important asset within IUCN because they serve a range of knowledge-based functions.

Across the Union and beyond, the Commissions are generally perceived as vital parts of the organisation, fulfilling a wide range of knowledge functions as well as engaging stakeholders in biodiversity conservation and sustainable development locally and internationally. Commissions are networks of experts; knowledge is at the heart of what they do. However, the type of knowledge, the forms in which it is transmitted, and the ways in which it is used, vary considerably.

This review identified six types of knowledge-based roles currently fulfilled by Commissions: (1) Collate and/or produce and/or package knowledge; (2) Share knowledge; (3) Develop policy proposals; (4) Inform IUCN programme development and implementation; (5) Provide advice as required; and (6) Introduce new ideas to IUCN. Perspectives vary considering the degree of importance of each of these roles and how they are fulfilled.

1. Collating and/or producing and/or packaging knowledge

As knowledge-oriented networks with large numbers of Members, the Commissions are particularly effective at collating knowledge (both data and findings) gathered and/or produced by their Members. This is most evident in relation to knowledge concerning the state of species and of protected areas contributed by Members of SSC and WCPA and made available through the RLTS and Protected Planet. The Commissions and the Secretariat, as well as organisational partners and Institutional Members all play roles in collating and packaging this knowledge. For instance, WCEL and ELC have published a series of papers on environmental law and policy, with the most recent in 2015 entitled 'Ethics and Climate Change', which is a study of national commitments.[116]

All of the Commissions are currently engaged in the production of some sort of knowledge product or basket. These vary significantly in terms of process and product. Some Commissions are involved less in collating and packaging State of the Environment data than using findings to produce new ideas and approaches. This is the case with CEM (in developing and disseminating ecosystem management approaches), CEESP (by bringing in the perspective of a broader range of actors and highlighting different forms of governance), and CEC (in introducing new knowledge about behavioural change and developing communication tools that incorporate this knowledge). This suggests that different Commissions have proven more suited to producing quite different types of knowledge products.[117]

2. Sharing knowledge

In addition to more formalised knowledge products, all Commissions share their knowledge (with varying degrees of effectiveness) among their own Commission Members, IUCN more broadly (including other Commissions and Institutional Members) and the wider world. The informal sharing of knowledge among thousands of people playing active roles in biodiversity conservation and sustainable development around the world is potentially a tremendous support to the efforts of IUCN as a whole, and to other part of the Union more specifically.

Achieving this potential requires that Commissions provide forums and platforms for information sharing among their Members and with other parts of IUCN. Good examples of this have been the recent SSC Leaders Meeting and the WPC. Task Forces and Specialist Groups are also good vehicles for facilitating exchange around common interests. Online platforms that facilitate many-to-many as well as one-to-many communication are similarly useful, and all Commissions are using them.[118]

3. Developing (and sometimes promoting) policy proposals

The Commissions are understood to have a role in processes of policy influencing. WCEL formerly played a particularly important role in the policy arena. Its currently weaker role is sometimes attributed to the fact that many of the key conservation-related Conventions have already been accepted. Many respondents indicated, however, that there is still much to be done in terms of implementing Conventions, integrating environmental concerns into inter-governmental agreements that are not focused on the environment, and addressing legal aspects of emerging issues. There were suggestions that the WCEL could and should rise to the occasion.

Other Commissions are taking up contemporary challenges, including those that challenge the power of large corporations. SSC and CEM formed a Task Force on Systemic Pesticides to undertake a comprehensive scientific review of the issue and make policy recommendations.[119] The Commissions were directly involved in presenting and defending their recommendations. This challenging process provided an opportunity to reflect on the limits of scientific knowledge to influence policy, and highlighted a need to generate public pressure and garner political support. It suggests opportunities to use the IUCN network to disseminate information and to call upon both Commission and Institutional Members to support policy initiatives.[120]

4. Informing IUCN programme/project development and implementation

Commissions inform IUCN programme development in a variety of ways. Commission Chairs, in their roles as Council Members, bring the knowledge of their Commissions into the Council process. Commission Members are involved in IUCN programme planning processes.[121]

With respect to implementation, some Global Programmes are collaboratively managed by Commissions and the Secretariat. In the case of the Global Species Programme and SSC, this management is relatively seamless.[122] Commission Members are also involved in implementing IUCN projects on the ground. Some Secretariat staff in Regional Offices spoke of involving local Commission Members in a variety of ways, ranging from asking their advice to contracting them to undertake specific tasks. Commissions are also informing funding allocations (e.g. Save Our Species).[123]

- A total of 73% of survey respondents from Commissions agreed that, 'The work of IUCN Commissions contributes significantly to implementing the IUCN Programme 2013-2016'. Only 2.5% disagreed with the statement, and 25% were undecided or unable to judge. Also, 78% of Institutional Members and 59% of Secretariat staff who responded to the survey agreed with this statement.

5. Providing information and advice as required

Expectations of Commission functions. In taking the survey, Secretariat staff indicated that they expected Commissions to perform the following functions:

- Share knowledge with other IUCN actors 51%

- Be a source of innovation within IUCN 50%

- Respond to the needs of the Secretariat 20%

Secretariat staff in particular noted the importance of the Commissions' networks as a means to rapidly access key information related to a vast range of species and geographical locations:

> 'The knowledge assets are very important – knowing that there is a specialist group for all the species. We had an unidentified being (not even known if plant or animal) identified through SSC in 24 hours.'

'They can tell you if government is misreporting information. If they know it's not true, they can play a community watchdog role.'

Secretariat respondents also articulated that Commissions should collaborate with the secretariat as the 'knowledge arm' in projects; be more of a two way street between Secretariat and Commissions; and provide objective scientific analysis.

6. Introducing new ideas to IUCN

Within the Union, Commissions are largely perceived as vehicles for innovation, to varying degrees. As such, it is important for Commissions to have the leeway for new directions in their work to emerge. They are also understood as channels through which new ideas are communicated to different parts of the Union. The presence of Commission Chairs on Council is an important conduit. Task forces, Joint Initiatives and some Specialist Groups represent important vehicles for exploring new themes of potential importance for IUCN.[124]

When asked to select the main contributions of their Commission to IUCN (all that apply), the following proportions of Commission Members selected 'innovative approaches' as one of the main contributions: CEC 51.3%, CEESP 54.6%, CEM 38.4%, SSC 22%, WCEL 32.1%, WCPA 48%. In parallel, 50% of Secretariat respondents and 35% of Member respondents think that Commissions should be a source of innovation within IUCN.

In interviews, Steering Committees Members of all the Commissions were more likely to emphasise the innovation role than surveyed Commission Members. This may indicate that actors at the centre of the Commissions are involved in innovation, but that this is not being communicated to their wider memberships. This is one example of insufficient communication within Commissions as discussed further in Section 5.3.1. It also presumably means that the broader membership is not participating in key discussions – and if they are unable to contribute their ideas, then the potential for innovation is reduced.

Continued relevance of all the Commissions

Finding 26: **The rationale and thematic areas of all six Commissions are considered relevant. They are able to absorb other contemporary issues such as climate change and to address emerging issues through increased integration and joint initiatives that involve more than one Commission.**

There was little support across the consulted stakeholders for eliminating any of the Commissions. Most interview respondents commented that it would be wasteful to disband existing Commissions and create new ones. When people were asked in interviews what they thought about the different Commissions or whether they saw them all as still relevant, they generally said that the six thematic areas still made sense.[125]

The existing thematic areas are still considered relevant and seen as able to absorb other contemporary issues, including through Joint Task Forces, Specialist Groups and other sub-groups,[126] often involving Members from more than one Commission.[127]

All of the Commissions have some sort of formal mechanism for collaboration with other Commissions (See Volume I, Appendix XVI for details). Specialist Groups and other sub-groups play an important role in creating space to address emerging issues and facilitate collaboration among Members of different Commissions with shared interests.

Membership and Engagement

Finding 27: **The Commissions act as a vehicle for engagement that is under-valued and under-utilised. IUCN Commissions are insufficiently recognised and appreciated as multi-functional membership networks.**

The importance of engagement. Complementing, supporting, and building on the knowledge-based functions described above, the Commissions are seen as playing an important role in engaging people in the work of IUCN. The following statement echoes the wider function and contribution of Commissions and their work.

> Protected Planet is like the glue that holds a network together. If you think of the Red List of Threatened Species not as a list but as an accelerator of a network, then it's even more powerful – you've got a huge constituency of people who feed into it and are committed to it.[128]

An under-valued engagement capacity. Yet, a great many interviewed respondents from both Commissions and Secretariat felt that the capacity of Commissions to engage people is under-valued. Commissions are a vital entry point for the many individuals who want to be involved in the work of IUCN.[129] This was mentioned in a 2001 study of the SSC[130] and remains unchanged today as reflected in responses from Members of all Commissions.

Steering Committee members are often very actively involved in multiple ways but the general Commission membership wants more information about how they can contribute to achieving IUCN's objectives and some sort of support for doing this. One Secretariat staff member commented, with wider resonance:

> I don't think we're mobilising the Commissions sufficiently. I would love to think every manager of a protected site could potentially be a Member of a Commission – they're working on the ground, but we don't know who they are, don't know how to contact them. There are 200,000+ protected areas in the database and we're not able to send the people managing those areas our information.

Limited perspectives on Commissions. The 2004 External Review of IUCN Commissions viewed them as formal knowledge networks where one of their characteristics is that the breadth of their mandate is limited to meeting a clearly defined need.[131] This is a limited view of Commissions; they are better viewed as *multi-functional expert membership and engagement networks*. Seen through this lens, Commissions represent an important vehicle for IUCN to achieve global reach. They have a key role to play in strengthening the knowledge-policy-action links that are foundational to IUCN.[132]

Tracking expanded perspectives on Commissions. According to the staff of some IUCN Regional Offices, Commission Members are being called upon to both advise and support implementation of projects on the ground, which offers important learning and strategic opportunities. By involving local Commission Members, IUCN is able to take advantage not only of their expertise but also of ready-made channels to share learning (throughout a Commission and beyond) and contribute to strategic development through Commission participation in policy and programme development. These are types of impacts and of action-knowledge-policy links that currently go untracked and are not fully exploited.

Alignment of the Commissions with the IUCN Programme

Finding 28: **'The IUCN Programme' is understood differently by individual IUCN stakeholders across the Union, referring either to the *Programme Framework* (or *Priorities*) or to the *Programme results*. This leads to divergent opinions about whether the Commissions are aligned with the IUCN Programme. The planned activities of all six Commissions were aligned with at least one of the three programme areas in the Framework.**

There is considerable debate about whether and how the Commissions are contributing to the IUCN Programme, and the extent to which they should be expected to do so. The divergence of opinion seems to be partly rooted in different ideas of what is meant by the 'IUCN Programme,' variously understood as: the Programme Framework[133], Programme results and indicators, the IUCN Business Model[134], and/or the 'One Programme Charter[135].

Overall Commission alignment with the IUCN Programme Framework. If the IUCN Programme is understood in terms of the elements of the Programme Framework, then it can be said that the intended work of all six Commissions is aligned with one or more of the programme areas. This is explicitly stated in all of the Commissions' mandates.

Commission alignment with programme results. If the programme is understood to be programme results, only SSC (in collaboration with the Global Species Programme) and WCPA (with the Global Protected Areas Programme) articulated their planned work in terms of the Global Programme Results within its strategic plan. There is no unified and coherent system in place for Commissions to report on their work in the context of Programme results. Also, some Commission Chairs indicated that they would not have the resources to undertake this sort of reporting.

Different ideas about what is meant by 'Programme' may explain some of the variation in how different IUCN constituencies assess the contribution of Commissions. In response to the survey statement that 'IUCN Commissions contribute significantly to implementing the IUCN Programme' 78% of Member respondents, 73% of Commission respondents, and 58% of Secretariat respondents agreed. The lower concurrence of Secretariat staff may be due to their focus on Programme results, which they have to deliver; Commission and Institutional Members may tend to think in the more general terms reflected in the Programme Framework.

Clarifying matters of Commission alignment. Given this variation in interpretation, there is a need to clarify whether Commissions should be required to align their work with only the IUCN Programme Framework or with the Programme results as well. The Review Team analysed relevant IUCN Statutes and the One Programme Charter and found that some degree of alignment with the IUCN Programme is expected, albeit with a degree of openness and flexibility with respect to the way and the level at which Commissions contribute to the Programme. This implies that the minimum requirement for the work of Commissions should be that it aligns with the Programme Framework; Commissions may then choose whether and how to align with Programme results.[136]

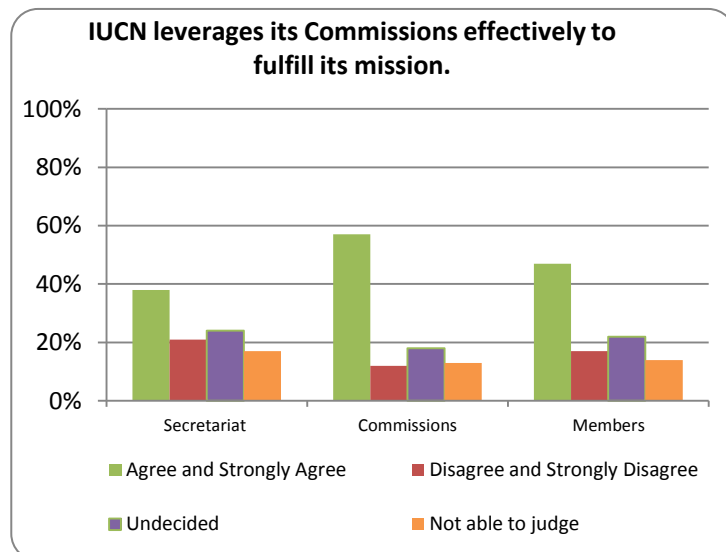## 5.3   Effectiveness of Commissions

Finding 29: **Views are mixed among IUCN constituencies concerning the effectiveness of Commissions within IUCN. At the same time, IUCN Commissions are inconsistent in their use of available reporting structures, such that the results of the work of all of the Commissions and their contributions to the IUCN programme are inconsistently captured and reported.**

Mixed views on IUCN's leveraging of Commissions, with a need for more data. Surveyed Commission Members, Secretariat staff, and Institutional Members have mixed views about the extent to which IUCN leverages its Commissions effectively to fulfil its mission, with 38% of Secretariat respondents, 47% of Institutional Member respondents and 57% of Commission Member respondents agreeing that IUCN does this effectively. Also, more respondents are either undecided or not able to judge than disagree that IUCN leverages its Commissions effectively (see Exhibit 5.1).

There is quite a range of views within and across IUCN constituencies as to the effectiveness of Commissions, explained as follows:

1) Perspectives vary concerning what the Commissions should be doing: This results from different understandings of their role and functions, and whether they should align their work with IUCN Programme results as well as the IUCN Programme Framework, as discussed above;

2) Perspectives vary concerning how different components of the IUCN system are contributing to effectively leveraging the Commissions. As Commissions are integral parts of IUCN, their effectiveness is a product of both how each individual Commission is structured and functions as an individual unit and its relationships with other parts of the Union; and

Exhibit 5.1 Leveraging Commissions effectively

3) It is difficult for many people within the Union to assess the effectiveness of the Commissions. This is partially due to the fact that IUCN Commissions are inconsistent in their use of available reporting structures, such that the results of the work of all of the Commissions and their contributions to the IUCN programme are inconsistently captured and reported. The second and third aspects are explored below.

5.3.1 Structure and Function of Commissions

Several key issues were raised by respondents concerning the structure and function of Commissions. These include the size of Commissions, their communications capacity and the role of Commission Chairs, as discussed below.

Size of Commissions

Finding 30: There is no single, ideal size for Commissions, given that each Commission is unique, their contributions to IUCN are different and diverse, and their activities ebb and flow over time.

During interviews, numerous respondents raised the issue of the ideal size of Commissions. Many interviewees argued in favour of large Commissions as a key vehicle for volunteer engagement. However, some respondents maintained that Commissions have become too large, which dilutes their reputation as networks of global experts.[137] The two perspectives were captured by a Commission Member, as follows:

The more willing people you get who want to be part of something, the more you should encourage them. Meanwhile, you have Commission Chairs who say no, we only want to have the top experts in the world, otherwise we are not expert Commissions. These are really different interpretations. It depends where IUCN as an organisation wants to go.

While there is no across the board argument for privileging larger or smaller Commissions, the External Review Team recognises the merits of larger Commissions with Steering Committees comprising top experts in their field.

Large Commissions are able to bring together knowledge about large numbers of species and geographical contexts. SSC in particular is well structured to benefit from numerous sub-groups of expertise. A larger WCEL Membership would create a much-needed space for lawyers and experts from around the world to talk, think and learn about environmental law, which is an emerging sector that lacks this space.[138] A larger WCPA offers the advantage of having many eyes and ears on the ground to monitor protected areas, and along with CEM, can benefit from opportunities for peer exchange and learning in relation to different management approaches. A large CEESP allows for the multiple disciplinary and cultural perspectives that should be brought to bear on the work of IUCN. CEC has the potential to be itself a large communication network sharing the approaches and content that provides a base for effective education and engagement on a global level.

At the same time, smaller and more specialised Steering Committees would comprise the top experts in their field. Among their responsibilities would be to recruit and integrate new talent that reflects the diversity of perspectives present within the Commission, while engaging a new generation of actors. Attention must of course consistently be given to gender balance[139] and regional representation.

Communications

Finding 31: **Some Commissions are relatively ineffective at communicating with other parts of IUCN and even with their own Members. This has implications for building relationships, knowledge and information exchange, and for transparency within and outside Commissions.**

On the internal and external communications of Commissions. Good communication among Commission Chairs, Steering Committees, sub-groups and the general membership provides the basis for networking, information sharing, constituency building, and transparency. It also allows the Chair to represent the voices of Commission Members on Council. Furthermore, having a good understanding of the work of their Commission is an important motivator for Commission Members.[140] Interviewed and surveyed Commission Members indicated that internal and/or external communications are ineffectively managed by some of the Commissions.

- Lack of communication and opportunities for engagement were identified as a problem by a large number of survey respondents. CEC and WCEL were seen as least effective at engaging their membership but some Members of every Commission said that they lacked opportunities for engagement.

- Some CEM Members who responded to the survey complained of inadequate communications in terms of both frequency and opportunities for their own engagement.

- While WCEL has been investing a lot of energy in recruiting new Members from underrepresented areas, both new and older Members responding to the survey said that they received almost no information from the Commission.[141]

Multilingual communication remains a challenge for Commissions (as with other parts of IUCN), principally due to limited resources.

A review of the online presence of Commissions showed that they make use of the IUCN portal, the IUCN website, and their own websites and social media (see Section 5.2) to communicate with their Members, other parts of the Union and the wider world. The quantity of material available in the portal and on the websites and the style and format of their communication varies considerably. Some approaches are more comprehensive than others but all can be said to provide the basic minimum of information required, with the exception of WCEL, which provides virtually no information about its activities on either the IUCN website or portal. The few documents that are available are years out of date with the last Steering Committee Minutes posted in 2010.

Finding 32:   The process of invitation/application and appointment of new Commission Members is considered unclear and lacking transparency.

An important communication problem is the process of invitation/application and appointment of new Commission Members. It is difficult for interested people to find out how get involved in a Commission via the IUCN website.

As all of the Commissions have different procedures for becoming a Member, it increases confusion and makes it difficult to automate the process at the level of IUCN.[142] This unnecessarily increases the administrative load. Some Commissions receive enquiries or applications every day, which is a testament to the attraction of Commissions and their function as an entry point to IUCN and also how much time can be wasted through an inefficient process.

The role of Commission Chairs

Finding 33:   Commissions operate in a hierarchical manner with considerable power invested in the Chair. For the most part, the strong leadership of Chairs continues to be appreciated and supported by Members.

The centrality of Commission Chairs. While some stakeholders have called for a more decentralised leadership of Commissions, most desire strong leadership on the part of the Chair. This responds to the fact that Commission Members are dispersed and loosely connected. Members of the Union also like to have a specific person with whom they can interact concerning the work of a Commission.

Commission Chairs have considerable power within their Commissions[143] and the role of Chair has become extremely demanding. Now that Commissions have become large membership networks, Chairs play both a governance and a large coordinating role (with the assistance of Steering Committees). Their performance can affect the potential of thousands of Members to effectively contribute to IUCN.

Finding 34:   The importance of the Commission Chair's role requires institutional structures that ensure adequate processes for selection, support and accountability. The effectiveness of most Commissions is undermined by lack of resources for a full-time Chair (or fully supported Chair) along with administrative support.

The important role of Chairs, and to a slightly lesser extent Steering Committee Members, requires that they are carefully selected, appropriately supported, and able to deliver the accountability for which they are responsible. Current IUCN procedures are inadequate with respect to selection mechanisms, provision of support and accountability processes.

Qualities of Commission Chairs. According to the IUCN guidance document 'Commission Chairs - Election, Role and Function'[144], Commission Chairs must be outstanding individuals with notable attributes and credentials.[145] The required range of attributes may be difficult to discern or verify,

and the current brief guidance document provides no information about how to proceed in identifying candidates.

On support to Commission Chairs. Once elected, Chairs do not receive any orientation concerning how to perform their roles as Commission Chairs within IUCN (whereas they do receive training and support for their roles as Council members). They also receive no financial support for their time consuming role unless they can obtain it themselves.

Another area where the institutional structure may be insufficient is in relation to the Chair's responsibilities vis-à-vis accountability for the work of his or her Commission. The IUCN Regulations state that:

> The President and each Commission Chair, in the presence of the Director General, shall undertake an annual appraisal of the performance of each Commission and its Chair in relation to the annual work plan and the mandate of that Commission. (Regulation 78(c))

This regulation provides no guidance with respect to the form that reporting on the annual work plan should take or by what measures it should be appraised. The Regulations further state:

> The Chair is responsible for ensuring that there is proper authorization of expenditure for Commission activities and operations and that there is proper accounting of all Commission funds. (Regulation 82)

On financial accountability. While the Review Team acknowledges that authorising and accounting for expenditures is essential, this does not ensure that money is well spent – which would require expenditures to be considered and reported on in terms of the Commission's planned activities and actual results.

Many consulted stakeholders feel that Commissions need a full-time Chair and administrative support in order to function effectively. They often referred to the SSC as an example of how the role of Chair works well as a paid position with its own Secretariat support.[146] Commission Chairs and Steering Committee Members said that they need to receive some sort of manual, training and support to effectively carry out their roles. SSC has a manual for Steering Committee members, which could serve as model for others.

5.3.2 Relationships between Commissions and other Parts of the Union

Finding 35: **The effectiveness of a Commission depends on the quality of its relationships within the Union. Collaboration between Commissions and other parts of the Union remains modest overall, if judged against the One Programme Charter ideal, but is variable by Commission.**

Statute 75 says that IUCN Commissions are expected to 'work with Members and the Secretariat to develop activities within the various Regions, and to support Members and components of IUCN with necessary expertise'. Commissions must collaborate with other parts of the Union in order to fulfil one of their key functions and they depend on the Secretariat to support their work. Commissions also need to work with one another to share knowledge and to integrate their activities when appropriate. The effectiveness of a Commission thus depends on the quality of its relationships with other parts of the Union.

Between Commissions

When asked whether there is active collaboration between IUCN Commissions, 43% of Commission respondents, 21% of Secretariat respondents, and 30% of Institutional Member respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Approximately half of all survey respondents were either undecided or not able to provide judgement on this question. In other words, work remains to be done to improve active collaboration among IUCN Commission, given the One Programme approach being pursued.

According to some Commission Chairs, relationships between their Commissions have been strengthened through their personal interaction at Council meetings and other IUCN events. Other Members interviewed cited the importance of joint working groups (e.g. Task Forces and Specialist Groups) to enhance collaboration between Members of different Commissions.

With Institutional Members

Finding 36: **Institutional members want a stronger relationship with Commissions to benefit from their knowledge and technical support. Many feel that they are not well informed about the work of Commissions or about how they might collaborate with them.**

According to the survey, Institutional Members want greater alignment with both Secretariat and Commissions; 24% of them citied this as an area for improvement. An International NGO Member said they had not identified many ways to interact or collaborate with the Commissions and other parts of IUCN. Several Institutional Members commented that there was a lack communication about the work of the Commissions with one suggesting that:

> The information generated by the Commissions should be better disseminated so that IUCN Members are more informed. This information should be summarised as the information is very extensive, to improve comprehension and application of this information.

On strengthening collaboration through awareness. Another proposed 'a newsletter (every 6 months) that would disseminate information on the activities that are taking place in the Commissions, so that Members are able to work more effectively with Commissions where possible.' As one respondent pointed out 'strengthening collaboration between the specialised Commissions and Institutional Members would help to reinforce the capacity of Members and improve their effectiveness on the ground.'

With Secretariat

Finding 37: **Commission effectiveness is limited by the quality of relationships with the Secretariat, due in particular to wanting clarity around expectations and a lack of supportive structures.**

Reasonable Support

Historically, a key function of the Secretariat has been to support the work of Commissions. Key stakeholders perceive that this situation has recently been reversed and that the role of Commissions is now seen as providing resources (primarily knowledge) for the Secretariat to implement projects or formulate policy proposals. A few active Commission Members expressed resentment about this, with others arguing that Commissions as resources to the Secretariat was not an effective model for the Union.

Most Commission Members interviewed said they felt that Commissions currently received inadequate support. Regulation 81 states that '*The Director General shall ensure that the Secretariat provides reasonable support to the work of each Commission*.' The meaning of provision of 'reasonable support' is unclear to all across the Union.

Collaborative relations

The ideal for most respondents was collaboration between Commissions and their Secretariat counterparts, where both were seen as equal partners with clear roles. Commission Members and Secretariat staff appear to agree that active collaboration between these two IUCN components could be improved.

- In the survey, 49% of Secretariat respondents and 52% of Commission respondents agreed that 'there is active collaboration between Commissions and the IUCN Secretariat.' Among Commission Members, 31% were unable to judge and 12% were undecided. Secretariat staff was more likely to disagree that there is active collaboration with Commissions: 14% disagree/strongly disagree while 18% were undecided and 17% felt they were unable to judge. More than others, Secretariat staff would like to see more active collaboration with Commissions.

An overview of collaboration. In the case of SSC working with the Global Species Programme, such collaboration seems to be quite seamless. It is working reasonably well with WCPA and the Global Protected Areas Programme and with CEM and the Global Ecosystem Management Programme. CEESP and the Secretariat have faced some challenges in their efforts to work together on the NRGF but collaboration has been improving. There were beginnings of closer collaboration with CEC when there was a dedicated staff person (who has recently resigned), after a period of virtually no interaction. WCEL and its primary Secretariat counterpart, the ELC, have had little functional relationship at the leadership level during the first half of the quadrennial period under review, though this situation has recently been improving (e.g. on the 2014 WPC, the 2016 WCC, the Law for Sustainability initiative).[147] WCEL does interact to some degree with other parts of the Secretariat.

Several interview respondents pointed out that the quality of relationships between Commissions and the Secretariat varies greatly *depending on the individuals involved*, noting that there have been historic high and low points in relationships between the Secretariat and each of the Commissions. A protocol for relationships between Commission and Secretariat could be established at the start of every new Programme cycle, and reviewed and adjusted annually. A protocol document to which both parties adhere would lay out the parameters that govern the relationship and articulate expectations on both sides. It could also detail roles and responsibilities around particular activities and projects. This would contribute to resolving some of the current difficulties in some Commission-Secretariat relationships, and prevent others from emerging.

Structural presence

The value of Focal Points. In order to facilitate collaboration between Commissions and Secretariat, it is essential that all Commissions have a Focal Point within the Secretariat. It was suggested that these Focal Points be situated at strategic level, i.e. within IUCN management, which seems a good idea because it allows managers to think about how to collaborate with Commissions across the programme or service that they manage. A Focal Point at this level should be complemented with administrative support within the Secretariat and/or within the Commission. Currently, there seems to be a very mixed approach to identifying Focal Points and providing administrative support to Commissions.

Commissions need support both for their internal management and for developing and sustaining relationships with other parts of the Union and with funders. A position with responsibility for Commissions within the Union Development Group (UDG) was suggested in order to ensure that

Commissions are fully integrated within IUCN. The UDG currently has staff for Council and Institutional Members. However, given the close relationships between the work of individual Commissions and particular programmes or units, this review process concluded that it would be more effective to invest resources at the points where collaboration for specific objectives is necessary rather than in creating a centralised function.

Fundraising

Considerable frustration was expressed concerning issues of fundraising. Some Secretariat staff complained that Commissions approached funders without consulting the Secretariat. Some Commission Members say that when they do approach the Secretariat concerning fundraising, they are not offered any substantive support.[148] If Commissions are to fulfil their role as innovators, it is important that the Secretariat remains open to new ideas and priorities. It is also perceived as unfair when Secretariat staff use the work of Commissions to pitch to donors and then do not properly resource Commissions.[149] The extent to which this practice takes place is unclear, but the perception is in evidence.[150]

Planning and reporting

Poor relations between Commissions and Secretariat emerge on issues of planning and reporting. A mismatch of expectations around compliance and appropriate reporting frameworks appeared to have led to mistrust and devaluing one another's work. Among others, one possible has been a tendency on the part of Secretariat staff (and other actors) to compare and judge Commissions according to the same criteria despite significant differences in their processes, products and resources. During interviews, staff compared them in terms of fundraising capacity, Flagship Knowledge Products, institutional structures and relationships with the Secretariat. There was a tendency to use SSC as a standard against which others were measured.[151] An extensive discussion on planning and reporting structures and mechanisms is pursued below.

Volunteering

There is a sense among many Members of *all* Commissions that their work is under-valued by the Secretariat because they are volunteers. As a CEC Member described it:

> There is confusion around the idea that because the Commission is made up of volunteers, the work is free. As long as the Secretariat keeps thinking in terms of the Commission provides free work, this is not going to work. It contributes to de-valuing. People de-value what is free.

The reverse was claimed by some of the Secretariat staff consulted, who said they resented being seen as somehow less legitimate because they are not 'volunteers'. They feel that some Commission Members unfairly claim the moral high ground and ignore the fact that many IUCN staff are highly committed to their work, and that their contributions may exceed the requirements of their jobs.

Another bone of contention concerns whether Commission Members are really volunteers. Some respondents within the Secretariat thought that all Chairs were paid through the Commission Operating Fund (COF) or that they are fully funded by their employers for their work as Commission Chairs. There are also conflicting ideas about volunteerism[152] and a belief that Commission Members being contracted as consultants represents a conflict of interest even though IUCN has a specific policy to support the contracting of Commission Members.[153] In contrast, active Commission Members and those who interact closely with Commissions are conscious of the very large amounts of time contributed by many Commission Members, noting that even if they are paid for some of what they do (and most are not), their additional volunteer contributions are considerable.

According to the literature, working for nothing is not one of the main features of volunteerism, which are characterised as follows: its main motivation is not financial gain; it's based on the free will and personal choice of the individuals; and it

> *So much volunteer time goes into Commission –and people need to feel they are directing their work.*
> - Commission Member

aims at generating benefits for others or the society at large, not for the volunteers.[154] This means that volunteers must feel that they are able to direct their work – albeit within an agreed upon framework. Otherwise, this undermines the spirit of volunteerism and de-motivates volunteers. It is motivating for volunteers to have their skills and expertise recognised and to receive occasional tokens of thanks, which are well combined in the SSC Honours and Awards.

Lack of coherent planning and reporting structures to assess effectiveness

Finding 38: **Coherent and consistently used structures for planning and reporting by Commissions are lacking, which creates problems in terms of accountability, expectations and consequently relationships between the Commissions and the Secretariat.**

It is difficult to assess the effectiveness of the Commissions due to the lack of coherent and consistently used reporting structures that capture the results of the work of all of the Commissions and their contributions to the IUCN programme.

Commissions should align their work with the Programme Framework, i.e., with at least one of the three Programme areas or priorities. Within this framework, it should be up to each Commission to articulate its contributions to the IUCN Programme and this is appropriately done in the context of presenting the Commission's mandate or strategic plan for the quadrennial Programme. The Commissions would then be able to report on their contributions to the IUCN Programme in relation to their own mandate/plan and in accordance with their commitment to accountability.[155]

According to the IUCN Statutes, Commissions are obliged to report to Council. However, in keeping with the coordinating role of the Secretariat, the format of the report should logically be agreed upon between Commissions and Secretariat. The Secretariat also has the capacity to support Commissions in articulating how its work is aligned with the IUCN Programme and they should agree on the formulation. As such, the expectations would be clear on both sides; for the time being, they are not.[156]

The Review Team found that structures for planning and reporting by Commissions, and between Commissions and Secretariat, are not coherent or consistently used. As such, it is very difficult to judge the alignment of the Commissions' work with the IUCN Programme, and thus a source of constant disagreement. In this vacuum, the ways in which Commissions report to Council is variable but the focus tends to be more on activities than results.[157]

Planning and reporting for strategy, learning and accountability

Finding 39: **The new Programme cycle provides an opportunity for Commissions to articulate and communicate their work within an inter-sessional plan, along with annual plans and reports, which describe the links to the 2017-2020 IUCN Programme. A range of appropriate tools are currently available, some of which may require adapting to the needs of Commissions and all of which may require Secretariat support to at least some Commissions.**

A number of tools are included with IUCN's 'Project Guidelines and Standards for Project Planning, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation,'[158] The Introduction to the 'Project Guidelines and Standards' states that 'IUCN's Commissions are highly encouraged to make use of the Project Guidelines and Standards'.[159] However, as 'the Project Guidelines and Standards' is 'aimed primarily at managing the project cycle for field projects or projects which combine a field component with policy influencing, knowledge generation or capacity building',[160] the full process of applying them is more detailed and complex than is required to run the sort of activities currently covered by the COF. The Commissions can however usefully draw on the 'Project Guidelines and Standards' and, as described below, make use of some of the tools.

The new Programme cycle provides an opportunity for Commissions to articulate and communicate their work through a four-year strategy and annual plans, which describe the links to the 2017-2020 IUCN Programme. This is presumably made easier by the fact that Commissions have been participating in the development of the new Programme and it will therefore reflect their own work. Each Commission's strategy can be articulated using the 'Guidelines for preparation of workplans to implement the IUCN Programme 2017-2020', which have a specific goal of linking work across Regions, Global Thematic Programmes and Commissions and of fostering communication and collaboration among different parts of the Union. Like Regional Offices and Global Thematic Programmes, Commissions are required to prepare a work plan for the implementation of the IUCN Programme 2017-2020.[161] This is an appropriate requirement but some Commissions may need assistance to prepare a work plan within this framework.

Within the framework of this inter-sessional work plan, Commissions can plan and report annually and may need support from the Secretariat to do this. IUCN's 'Tool 4.1 Annual Work Plan Template' is an appropriate template for this (if Commissions are not already doing something equivalent). It is a simple Word document with a table that requires basic information about outputs, milestones, activities, responsibilities and budget. As it has a column for 'Progress towards outputs', this template could also be used for reporting purposes instead of the slightly more complicated 'Tool 4.4 Progress Monitoring Template' and 'Tool 4.5: Progress Monitoring Report progress monitoring template'.

The Annual Work Plan Template asks for basic information about funding sources and budget amounts related to different activities. Receiving this information would allow the Secretariat to compile information about existing funding for the work of Commissions and use this as a basis for collaboration with all Commissions to identify and access funding sources. A key manifestation of this should be a Fundraising Plan for each Commission prepared jointly by Commission Members and Secretariat Staff every four years and adjusted annually.

The following structures, tools and mechanisms are suggested for use by Commissions in collaboration with the Secretariat (while noting that any Commission that has something equivalent already in place should be free to continue using it).

Every four years:

- Planning and reporting templates, including budget templates, related to the current Programme – and support to use them;
- Protocols for relationships between Commission and Secretariat (including Regional Offices);
- Fundraising plan and coordination/collaboration between Commissions and Secretariat to implement it; and
- A planning and monitoring mechanism for enhancing network effectiveness and opportunities for engagement within Commissions, and between Commissions and other parts of the Union.

Every year:

- Review of all of the above and adjustments, as required; and
- Annual work plan and report with support, as required.

Commissions will likely find value in using the relevant existing tools identified above with support from the Secretariat. IUCN should endeavour to adapt tools to the needs of Commissions and work to fill the identified gaps.
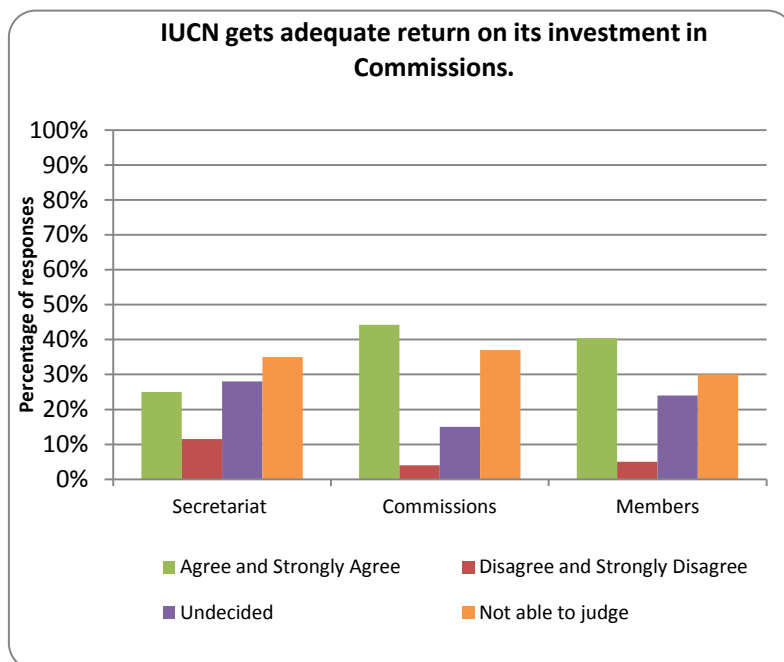
5.4 Efficiency of Commissions

Finding 40:   It is not possible to assess the efficiency of Commissions with respect to returns on financial investment due to lack of planning and reporting systems and data.

Expenditures of COFs are not linked to planning and reporting, and there is no system in place that provides information about funds received by Commissions from other sources.

Perspectives on IUCN's return on investment in Commissions. Survey respondents appear to agree that it is difficult to judge whether IUCN gets adequate return on investments in Commissions (see Exhibit 5.2). Indeed, the majority of survey respondents (63% of Secretariat, 52% of Commission, and 54% of Institutional Member respondents) were either undecided or not able to provide judgement on the extent of return on investment. Approximately 41% of all survey respondents agreed with the statement, while a small number actively disagreed (12% of Secretariat, 4% of Commissions and 5% of Members).

Exhibit 5.2 Return on investment in Commissions

IUCN gets adequate return on its investment in Commissions.

Legend: Agree and Strongly Agree / Disagree and Strongly Disagree / Undecided / Not able to judge

The efficiency of Commissions is also viewed in terms of the value of volunteer contributions versus the costs of managing them, which include both the COF provided to Commissions and the costs of human resources within the Secretariat devoted to supporting Commissions. There have been on-going efforts to put a value on volunteer contributions, which are extremely difficult to measure.

Valuing volunteer time. Aside from only being able to make vague estimates of the time that thousands of Commission Members might spend, it is even more challenging to determine what counts and what it counts for.[162] Many respondents thought it beyond question that the contributions of thousands of volunteers are an efficient return on IUCN investment. Even where a Commission's plans or activities are not explicitly aligned with the IUCN Programme, there are Members in some parts of each Commission's network who are likely contributing to achieving IUCN objectives. Most Commissions can and do cite examples of such accomplishments. As one Partner organisation respondent commented:

> If you look at the WCPA, what they pulled off with the Global Conference on World Parks [sic] [IUCN World Parks Congress 2014]. They got the Promise of Sydney out on where we should go with Protected Areas. Everyone doing volunteer work together, to launch at the Congress a global body of work that no organisation could pull off without this team of global experts across the world and I think that's incredible. If it wasn't volunteers, an organisation couldn't fund that many experts. You could fund 5 or 10, not 300.

Finding 41: **The process by which Commissions are mandated and required to renew their mandates every four years is seen as a wasteful procedure.**

An ongoing discussion about whether some or all of the Commissions should cease to exist is linked to the process of renewing their mandates every four years at the WCC. This process in turn relates to institutional persistence in treating IUCN Commissions as typical 'Commissions', which exist for a fixed amount of time to deliver on specific objectives, which is a characterisation that many respondents felt to be inaccurate. One Commission Member commented, 'What we call a Commission in IUCN is a very interesting construct. It's a membership network rather than a panel of experts.'

This misalignment between Commission function and the process by which the Commissions are mandated is seen by many to result in a wasteful procedure through which Commissions renew their membership every four years. If Commissions were instead treated as permanent fixtures of IUCN (which better reflects the reality), the time and energy spent on the current process could be shifted to strategic planning and budgeting for the work of the Commission. Rather than approving a 'mandate', the Council could approve a strategic plan and related budget for each Commission. This budget could include funds sought from the COF as well as from other sources, which Commissions and Secretariat could collaborate in trying to secure.

IUCN Commissions – At a Glance

The table below provides a partial and an at a glance perspective on the assessment of Commissions as part of the 2015 External Review. Drawing on qualitative and quantitative data from the study, and analysis undertaken and shared in the overall report, this table is an analytic translation of it all, reflecting the expert opinion of the External Review Team. This table should not be taken as a 'scorecard', but as guidance regarding the key areas of actual 'contributions' of the different Commissions and potential areas for further development. It recognises the fact that all Commissions are different, that they, like all organisations, go through life-cycles, and should not necessarily be compared with one another on all counts.

	SSC	WCPA	CEM	WCEL	CEESP	CEC
Alignment with Programme Framework	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high
Relevance of Thematic Focus	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high	High
Analytic, Scientific, Research	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high	Moderate
Knowledge Product Leadership	Very high	Very high	Very high	High	Very high	Moderate
Advisory Capacity	Very high	Very high	Very high	Moderate	High	Low
Innovation	Moderate	High	High	Moderate	Very high	High

	SSC	WCPA	CEM	WCEL	CEESP	CEC
IUCN Programme Development	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high
One Programme Approach – Secretariat/HQ	Very high	Very high	Very high	Low	High	Moderate
One Programme Approach – Secretariat/RO	Overall untracked and under-exploited	Overall untracked and under-exploited	Overall untracked and under-exploited	Overall untracked and under-exploited	High	Overall untracked and under-exploited
One Programme Approach – Other Commissions	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high	Moderate
One Programme Approach – Institutional Members	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear	Moderate	Low
Membership Engagement	Very high	Very high	Low	Low	High	Low
Stakeholder Engagement	Very high	Very high	Moderate	Moderate	Very high	Moderate
Communication	Very high	Very high	Moderate	Virtually nonexistent	High	Moderate
Strategic Planning	Very high	Very high	High	Low	High	Moderate
Planning and Reporting	Very high	Very high	Moderate	Virtually nonexistent	High	Low
Efficiency	Inadequate financial reporting	Inadequate financial reporting	Inadequate financial reporting	Inadequate financial reporting	Inadequate financial reporting	Inadequate financial reporting
Fundraising	Very high	Very high	Moderate	Virtually nonexistent	High	Low

Conclusion

There is considerable variation in how the Commissions are viewed by people associated with IUCN. Different ideas are in circulation about their role and functions, and the degree to which they should be aligned with the IUCN Programme (and even different ideas about what is mean by the 'IUCN Programme'). This review has concluded that the Commissions remain an important asset within IUCN because they serve a range of knowledge-based functions and are also an important vehicle for engagement[163], which has yet to be fully exploited by IUCN. With respect to the thematic focus of the six Commissions, all are still considered relevant to the work of IUCN but there is variation, real and perceived, in how effectively they carry out their work (see Volume I, Appendix XXIII for a partial and an at a glance perspective on this variability).

A Commission's effectiveness is a product of its structure and functioning as an individual unit and also its relationships with other parts of the Union. It is the challenges within these domains that most limit Commissions' effectiveness, rather than lack of Programme alignment or inadequacy in terms of knowledge-based functions. Poor internal and external communication, for example, limits the impact of some Commissions, as does the lack of opportunities for meaningful engagement of their Members.

Relationships among Commissions and other parts of the Union still fall short of the One Programme vision. Collaboration with the Secretariat, which is vital for effective functioning of Commission, ranges from very satisfactory to fraught or virtually non-existent. When this relationship works well, it is attributed to complementarity of the individuals currently concerned rather than structures and tools that support trust, respect, and a shared understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved.

This indicates an opportunity to fill a gap by implementing mechanisms that facilitate constructive relationships and provide support for all Commissions to articulate, assess, enhance and communicate their work within the IUCN Programme Framework and as an integral part of the Union.

6   Fit for Purpose of IUCN

6.1   Overview

Contents of the fit-for-purpose are provided herewith. This chapter assesses IUCN's internal capabilities for fulfilling its role, as discussed in terms of its niche as a convenor organisation.[164] To this end, a fit-for-purpose lens examines the degree of alignment of IUCN with its niche, and the organisational pre-conditions for being aligned with it. As such, the following aspects are discussed in detail below: The One Programme in review; the IUCN Programme and how IUCN manages itself for effectiveness; the fragmented Union, which is about leveraging the Union; programmatic siloing; membership and engagement; strategic communications; IUCN's human resource capacity; the funding model; and monitoring & evaluation and learning at IUCN.

6.2   The One Programme in Review

Finding 42:   Since the last External Review, IUCN has embarked on a series of initiatives to make changes intent on strengthening the Union.

IUCN's own efforts to identify what differentiates it from other organisations are noteworthy. Over the past decade, IUCN has engaged in a deep process of evolving and refining its strategy for driving global change. It has made efforts to identify 'what makes IUCN a unique organisation' in the global conservation and sustainability community, to align internal planning, and to enhance engagement of stakeholders. Several key documents are a testimony to that, as shown in the timeline in Appendix XXIV.

In its overall efforts to strengthen the Union, the development of the One Programme is a keystone. In particular, since the last External Review in 2011, IUCN has embarked on a series of initiatives to make changes intent on strengthening the Union. Grounded in a history dating back to the early 1990s, the concept of the 'One Programme' *per se* first arose at the Barcelona WCC in 2008, but it was not until 2011 that things truly got underway. The One Programme Charter is largely emblematic of the widespread internal agreement that IUCN needed a cultural shift in the direction of greater collaboration amongst its constituent parts.[165] The One Programme Approach and the principles of the One Programme Charter are wholly aimed at leveraging the different parts of the Union in support of stronger delivery and impact of the IUCN Programme. In sum, IUCN remains cognisant of the need to strengthen the Union.

IUCN's strategic documents are a relevant resource for the review of the One Programme. *Acting collectively* demands very specific organisational behaviours and initiatives to succeed. On this matter, the following sections explore the extent to which the Charter and Programme (2013-2016) have brought together parts of the Union more effectively, how well these documents, reviewed here below, help IUCN attract resources, and the extent to which they improve its branding capability and communication with donors and other stakeholder groups.[166] Finally, consideration is also given to how appropriate and well-pitched the ideas reflected in the documents are.

One of the first strategic documents that IUCN drafted is the Business Model document. This was completed just after preparation of the Programme 2013-2016. It proposed using the following business lines to better frame IUCN's work and the One Programme: Providing knowledge products; Delivering results on the ground; Strengthening policy and governance; and Engaging and leveraging the Union.

The four business lines are all highly relevant and useful in giving depth to IUCN's niche. They are a valuable guide to IUCN in building a shared understanding of how the Union works. As indicated in the Business Model document, the first three business lines are reflected in the Programme Framework. The fourth is there to address 'the difficult task of securing adequate funding for IUCN's policy influencing, convening power and the running of Congress, Council and Commissions'. The document contains an analysis of the challenges and opportunities to raising money for each business line. These are well articulated and the External Review, through its own data analysis, concurs with many of the challenges and opportunities identified in the Business Model document. As such, they are addressed as well in different sections of the current Review.

The Business Model document was followed by a series of three other strategic papers:

■ Review of Roles and Responsibilities within the Union (October 2013)[167]

■ The Voice of Nature and Sustainability (October 2013)[168]

■ The Governance of Nature's Use: A Niche for IUCN? (April 2014)[169]

The first two of these documents is commented on below. The third, 'The Governance of Nature's Use: A Niche for IUCN?' has already been discussed in Section 3.2 of this report, on IUCN's niche.

The Roles and Responsibilities Review is an important source document for this External Review. This document affirms the importance of re-articulating and clarifying what is expected of different parts of the Union in light of the One Programme, i.e. the contributions they should make and the attitudes and behaviours they should pursue to support joint action.[170] For instance, Chapter 5 of this report discussed the importance and challenges associated with this, and the implications in terms of Commissions-Secretariat relations.

The other documents cited above are also found to advance IUCN's alignment efforts. The second document, 'The Voice of Nature and Sustainability' is also a highly relevant and timely document, as it analyses the effectiveness of IUCN's key messages and its policy influencing strategies, in light of the Programme Framework.[171] It emphasises that all components of IUCN are responsible for consistent messaging on IUCN's brand. It articulates key messages aligned with and updated to IUCN's three areas in its Programme Framework. Of note, Global Communications at Secretariat has recently reported investing resources towards assuring that this is pursued by the Union; a matter that needs attention.[172]

6.3   IUCN Programme: How IUCN Manages Itself to be Effective

Finding 43:   IUCN's Programme articulates a common set of goals and priorities for the Union, but the Union has not been consistent in implementing a practice of collective action in realising its goals and priorities.

The One Programme Approach is a positive commitment for IUCN to build upon. As spelled out in the Charter, it fully recognises and seeks to address the untapped potential of the Union, with the different components meant to be working in a coordinated fashion to bring about results. The One Programme is recognised by respondents as an overall positive endeavour, providing a coherent, relevant strategy and, at a minimum, a framework for how to improve coordination and convey to others what IUCN does. The One Programme is a major advance, with room for improvement at the level of practice.

The One Programme brings aspirational coherence to IUCN. However, it does so without as yet effectively translating operationally and with consistency in terms of how the Union works together; to wit, *collective action* does not yet define the practice of the Union. Interview respondents across the Union consistently point to a dichotomy between the One Programme Approach and its implementation in pursuit of IUCN goals and priorities.

The One Programme has not yet permeated all parts of the Union. This matter has been visibly demonstrated in Chapter 5 in relation to Commissions and other components of the Union. There is still a ways to go for the One Programme to filter down to all levels and parts of the Union in a consistent fashion across the board (though there are exceptions, including the governance and implementation of the RLTS). And the reality of competition between parts of the Union for the same funds runs counter to the principle spelled out in the Charter.

Institutional Members agree that further progress is needed. Clear evidence for this emerges from the comments submitted by Institutional Members who completed the survey. Of the 111 comments[173], the most cited area for improvement was IUCN's need to refocus its strategic priorities by better aligning the national/regional and global levels of IUCN.[174] Members particularly thought that IUCN should ensure a better distribution of funding at the national level, to enable national-level actors to carry out their work effectively.

One measure is the participation in IUCN's Programmes. The Secretariat's annual reports to Framework Partners include updates on implementation of the Programme and the One Programme Charter. The 2013 Annual Report to Framework Partners noted the following results: Global and Regional Programmes reported that 50% of the programme work was delivered with Institutional Members, 40% with Commissions, and 5% with National/Regional Committees. This is a useful benchmark for future progress.[175]

The Secretariat also sees the need for more coherence. Secretariat survey data show that Secretariat staff also identified 'coordination and consistency' within the Union as a critical area for improvement. Of the 176 Secretariat survey respondents, 21% felt that IUCN should continue its efforts to ensure that all programmes are coherent and that the various components and programmes of IUCN share a common vision and a related, if complex and multifaceted theory of change.

6.4   The Fragmented Union

On the whole, the External Review found a Union that remains fragmented. Overcoming this problem will add significant value to IUCN's leadership role in the biodiversity conservation and sustainable development movements.

Communications is an area that deserves strengthening. In general, there is evidence of inconsistencies in communications across Units in the Secretariat and parts of the Union. Many interview respondents across the Union referred to structural and programmatic *siloing* in the organisation, which hinders the coherence needed for IUCN to operate according to a shared agenda.

Formal mechanisms to promote good internal communications are missing. Cooperation that does occur across Units in the Secretariat or between Commissions and the Secretariat was frequently mentioned as the result of the good relations people have with one another.[176] Finally, IUCN's Membership engagement strategy and practices only modestly leverage Member interests, capacities and resources, and there is room for improvement on this front. The lack of systematic linkages in constructing teams and conducting the work of IUCN is a fundamental issue.

Resourcing the distributed Secretariat

Finding 44: **Funding strategies and practices do not consistently support programme delivery in ways that advance the One Programme. They tend not to make best use of all parts of the Union, nor do they exemplify the notion of the 'team best fit' for the task. This results in mistrust and competition between the Secretariat and Institutional Members.**

What follows is an analysis of resources – how they are generated and distributed across the Secretariat in their respective offices across the globe.[177]

The distribution of staffing across the Secretariat is telling. Exhibit 6.1 shows that Regional Offices and Outposted Offices[178] account for three-quarters of Secretariat staff. Programme Groups situated in Headquarters in Gland, Switzerland – which include the Biodiversity Conservation Group, the Nature-Based Solutions Group, and the Policy and Programme Group) – constitute 17% of this, and the Directorate and Corporate Units, also in Gland, 8%. Thus, the staffing distribution is such that the vast majority of staff is located in Regional and Outposted Offices.

A second data point concerns the role that the staff plays in raising funds. This is to cover staffing and other costs associating with delivering results on the ground. Staffing constitutes the biggest cost to their total expenditures and is proportionally the same for Regional and Outposted Offices as it is for Global Thematic Programmes, at 77% and 78% respectively (according to 2014 budget figures).[179]

Regional and Outposted Offices rely largely on programme or project funding to cover their costs. In 2014, 86% of expenditures for these Offices was sourced from project funds, although this varies between offices.[180] Similarly, Global Thematic Programmes that are led by staff in Headquarters also rely extensively on project funds to cover their costs – the Ecosystem Management Programme at 79%, the Forest & Climate Change Programme at 91%, and the Marine and Polar Programme at 88%.

Exhibit 6.1 Staffing Distribution
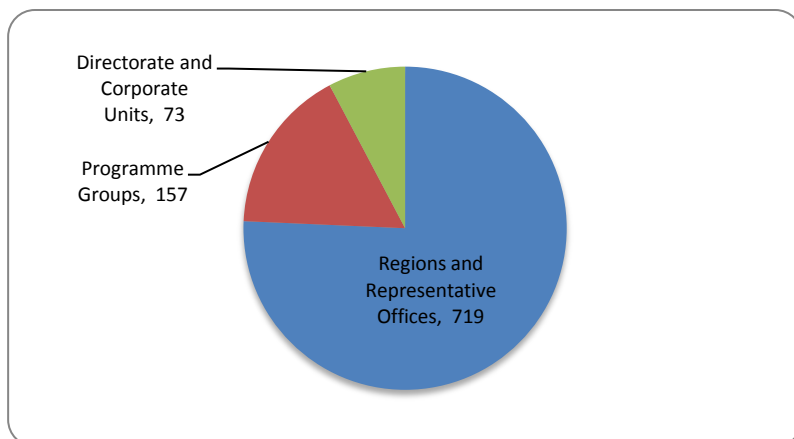
The second principal source of income is core funding. Regional and Outposted Offices receive core funding but this amount is small compared to project funding at 19% for the regions as a whole. For Global Thematic Programmes, the proportions are lower for those units overseeing and implementing programmes (such as the Nature-Based Solutions Group and the Biodiversity Conservation Group). The bulk of core funds for IUCN covers the Policy and Programme Group within the Global Thematic Group and, as well, Corporate Services and nearly all of the unrestricted budgets for Commissions. Moreover, while core funding is desirable, it is has been more difficult to increase. The ratio of core to project funding for IUCN has remained relatively the same since 2012, at 30% vs. 70%.

The reliance on project or restricted funding for delivering results on the ground has its challenges. Although it is easy to understand why offices would rely primarily on project funding, this fundraising strategy for programmatic work has its consequences:

- Under pressure to cover their operational costs, Regional Offices are susceptible to chasing after donor funds that end up reducing efficiencies (e.g., too many small projects) and risk diluting IUCN's strategic focus.[181] Maintaining adherence to a set of strategic directions through piecing together projects to achieve a higher level result is also very challenging.[182]

- Compelled to fundraise, Regional Offices are thus in a position of competing with IUCN Members, a perspective and concern that has been shared widely across all stakeholder groups – Members, donors, Secretariat and Commissions.

A strategic alignment in fundraising strategies and choices between offices is needed. This pertains to the fundraising between Regional Offices and Headquarters, so that all efforts to secure project funds support and contribute to the One Programme. While Regional Offices have also expressed a need to respond to the demands of national government, who are often Members of IUCN, this choice can also be made in the context of 'the team best fit' for the work and a prioritisation agreed upon by the Regional Office with other parts of the Union.[183] There is also evidence of lack of trust between Headquarters and some Regional Offices, stemming in part from poor communication between them, such that a targeted focus on improving these working relations would go some way towards amplifying IUCN's overall effectiveness.[184]

Regional and National Committees

Finding 45: **Regional and National Committees are well-positioned to play convening and policy influencing roles in their respective locations. However, to link national, regional and global levels, they need to be better informed about IUCN's programmes while also contributing to them. There also need to be clearer and enforceable accountability mechanisms in place to favour greater coherence and alignment of Regional and National Committees with IUCN priorities, objectives and approaches.**

National and Regional Committees play an important role within the Union as convenors. They perform this role by providing scientific, conservation-related information to state authorities, and playing an advisory role to these authorities.[185] An outline of their roles and responsibilities is found in the FASU's 'Review of Roles and Responsibilities within the Union.'[186] Their primary obligations are shown in the sidebar.

National and Regional Committees are also expected to align with the One Programme. Their Members are encouraged to follow the Operational Guide[187] and ensure that proposed activities are consistent with the IUCN Programme (including agreed regional or national work plans). The One Programme Charter

> **Obligations of National and Regional Committees**
> - May have their own separate legal personality distinct from that of IUCN in a form acceptable to the Council
> - Must be self-governing and must not impose financial obligations or liabilities upon IUCN
> - Shall work in partnership with the Secretariat and the Commissions and any in-country National or Regional Committee to formulate, coordinate and implement the Programme of IUCN
> - May use the IUCN name and logo in conjunction with the name of its state or region, once officially recognised by the Council

extends their responsibilities to identifying and applying expertise and resources existing within IUCN Members in each country, in alignment with the Programme. The Charter also encourages

National Committees specifically to coordinate their fundraising activities with the Secretariat, and to work with Members to leverage additional financial and human resources to support Programme delivery.

Yet, both Committees have a wide berth in how they execute their roles. While both Regional and National Committees are strongly encouraged to align with IUCN's priorities, detailed mechanisms for coordination of the Programme are not defined. And though they may operate within the Programme, they essentially have no formalised accountability to it. Notably, National Committees, which serve a coordinating and policy-influencing role,[188] are at times perceived by the Secretariat as putting their own national priorities and fundraising for their own purposes first, at the expense of IUCN's overall Programme priorities. The reality produced by the structure of National Committees, loosely connected to IUCN, is evident in the diversity in size and behaviours. While one Committee may expect IUCN to provide project funds, another competes with IUCN.[189]

Several reasons were consistently put forth to explain why National Committees may not align:

- They have variable capacity to align and meet the expectations of their roles;

- They receive little support from IUCN. The most recently available data show that a mere 5% of the global and regional programme work from Headquarters was delivered with Regional and National Committees;[190]

- While required to submit an annual report to the Director General and to Council,[191] they do not all and consistently abide by this requirement such that Secretariat is not fully aware of their activities; and

- There is evidence of poor communication between Headquarters and the Committees.[192] Communications and feedback between IUCN Headquarters and Regional and National Committees relies on an ad hoc system that appears to under-utilise these Committees' capacity.

Responsibility for this lack of alignment is shared by national and regional actors, as well as by Headquarters.[193] Overall, there is room for improving relations and alignment of Secretariat with Regional and National Committees (as well as others across the Union).

6.5   Programmatic Siloing

Finding 46:   Both programmatic and mental siloing have proven to be limiting factors on IUCN's effectiveness and its ability to report on its effectiveness.

IUCN's limitations are strongly related to an internalised siloing. First, there is evidence of programmatic siloing at IUCN. Second, there is a persistent belief that programmatic siloing is underway, even where there is evidence that it is being overcome. In other words, IUCN suffers from both *programmatic* and *mental* siloing to varying degrees. Both of these forms of siloing have proved to be important factors in limiting IUCN's effectiveness, and its ability to report on its effectiveness. The relationship between the Global Water Programme and the Freshwater Biodiversity Unit illustrates this point effectively, and is articulated in Volume I, Appendix XXI.

6.6 Membership and Engagement

The membership mix

Finding 47: IUCN has not updated its membership strategy in over 10 years. Various important constituencies are currently ineligible for Membership. IUCN is currently revising both its membership categories and strategy.

IUCN's membership composition is provided herewith. Exhibit 6.2 shows 2015 membership breakdown. State Members represent 7% percent of IUCN's 1,308 Members as of 1 January 2016. With the exception of the year 2013, IUCN has had a net gain in state Members since 2010.[194] State Members engage with IUCN seeking programmatic support in meeting their obligations under international agreements.

Exhibit 6.2 Number of Members in 2015
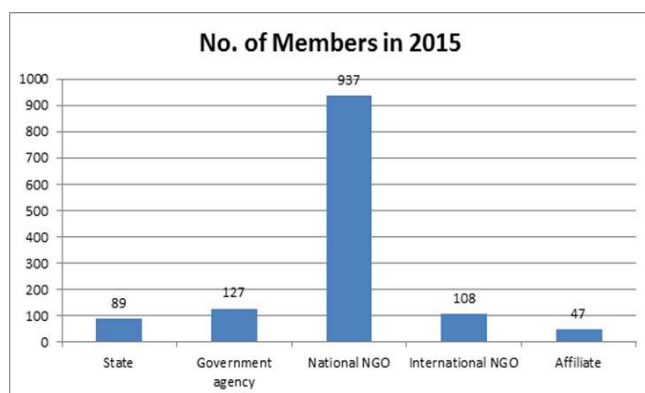
The membership has a preponderance of national NGOs. They constitute the vast majority of IUCN Institutional Members (71%).[195] Members are consulted by IUCN for the development and implementation of knowledge products, and also on policy positions. They are invited or encouraged to feature their work on the IUCN portal; they are implementers/grantees in the SOS initiatives; and they participate in Regional and National Committees, IUCN regional or global programmes, Commissions, and the WCC.[196]

Membership differs in terms of its fee distribution, with state Members at the fore. The vast majority of revenues in 2016 is contributed by state Members at 78% of total fees as shown in Exhibit 6.3. Government agencies account for 8.5%, national NGOs for 10%, international NGOs for 1%, and affiliates for a paltry amount. the distribution has not changed much over the years. In addition to their membership fees, some international NGOs provide funding to support programming (e.g. Birdlife, CI, TNC, etc.). They also have various forms of partnerships with IUCN at global level. From a revenue point of view, nonetheless, state Members are a comparatively highly important membership category.

Exhibit 6.3 Membership Dues by Value (CHF Million)

Category	2013 Actual CHF m	2014 Actual CHF m	2015 Actual CHF m	2016 Budget CHF m
States	10.1	9.8	10.1	10.1
Government Agencies	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
National Non-Government Organizations	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.3
International Non-government Organizations	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Affiliates	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Total	**12.6**	**12.3**	**12.7**	**12.8**
Annual growth	9%	-2%	3%	1%
Growth over intersessional period				11%

Membership growth and mix are the two critical issues with regard to fit-for-purpose. With a larger network it becomes difficult for IUCN as a whole to influence and mobilise Members towards the One Programme. Secondly, IUCN is currently considering its *membership mix,* and its relative importance to growth.

IUCN's membership strategy needs updating. The last membership strategy dates from April 2004. The forthcoming 2017-2020 Programme intends to update the strategy.[197] Constituencies identified as currently ineligible for Membership include: Indigenous Peoples Organisations (IPOs), local and regional authorities and agencies, youth, the private sector, and cities. The Governance and Constituency Committee is working on options to include IPOs, and local/regional authorities and agencies.

Engaging with the private sector is another critical consideration. Engaging with constituencies does not necessarily entail creating a Membership category. With specific regard to the private sector, a very large and significant stakeholder group, how best to engage businesses consistently and over the long term in the work of conservation and sustainable development merits serious and focused consideration. It is acknowledged, in stakeholder responses, that engaging with the private sector is a potential threat to the activist-orientation of some existing Members, but the imperative to engage with those who are doing 'the most damage to the planet' holds.[198] While traditional membership for the private sector may not be the best solution, other avenues merit further examination, according to respondents, including a non-voting membership status. Engaging the private sector may entail further developing strategic partnerships that generate much-needed revenue for IUCN and reputational capital for the commercial actors.

Strengths of membership

Finding 48: **IUCN's diverse membership is a recognised source of strength for enacting its niche, notably supporting its role as a major convenor. Gains which IUCN receives from this membership are most evident when Members participate in various fora, programmes and collective actions to advance its objectives. Members value the networking and collective voice afforded them by IUCN membership.**

IUCN's membership mix is very important to its niche. It bears reiterating that IUCN's niche has been discussed in terms of its convenor function.[199] In interviews, Secretariat staff, Councillors, Committee Members, Commissions Members and private sector actors all acknowledged that IUCN's membership mix is an essential part of its niche, defined as such.

Exhibit 6.4 Survey Responses on Benefits of IUCN Membership

No.	Statements that begin with: 'By being a Member of IUCN . . .' N = 137	Agree or Strongly Agree
1	My organisation has **stronger influence** on the changes (related to policy or impact) we seek.	52%
2	My organisation is part of a **collective voice** on the biodiversity conservation and/or sustainable development issues important to us.	82%
3	My organisation has expanded its **partnerships and/or networks**.	71%
4	My organisation has gained **credibility** needed to advance our cause.	61%
5	My organisation has gained **capacity** needed to advance our cause.	54%

A critical question on the value proposition that Membership offers to both IUCN and Members merits attention. Surveyed Institutional Members were asked about the benefits of IUCN

membership.[200] Exhibit 6.4 shows the percentage of respondents who agreed with each statement. These statements correspond to the benefits of IUCN when appealing to potential new Members.

The benefit of *collective voice* obtained the highest score of the 5 available options. Since the bulk of IUCN's membership consists of national NGOs, it is no surprise that they value having opportunities to network, dialogue, and cultivate consensus and/or strategic alignments with foundations, bilateral institutions, multilateral institutions, global NGOs, and state Members. This is also evident in the 71% who feel they have expanded their partnerships and networks.[201] Members also enjoy the closer relationship they can have with national governments.[202]

Other potential benefits scored lower than the collective voice. While over half the respondents agree on the other three statements, it is interesting to note that the direct effects of membership on their own organisations in terms of credibility and capacity scored relatively lower than being part of a greater voice. It is also interesting that influencing the policies or impacts they sought scored significantly lower than being part of a collective voice or expanding partnership and/or networks.

Members also have 'rights' according to IUCN Statutes, and very few obligations. Aside from paying dues, they may be required, on request, to provide IUCN information on how their activities are supporting IUCN's objectives.[203] However, there are no mechanisms or incentives to support Members sharing information with the Union or to place their materials on the portal, other than the wider motivation of effective biodiversity and sustainability outcomes through *active* participation in IUCN activities. Members have the right to participate in the WCC as well as other rights that revolve around such participation (e.g. submitting motions). Their individuals may join Commissions and contribute to their work. They have rights related to information about IUCN and to express opinions about the application for admission of new Members.

At the same time, how effectively IUCN is able to mobilise Members is critically important. In mobilising Members (and other parts of the Union as well as partners), IUCN can contribute much to building alliances for conservation and sustainability action.[204] The Union has proven able to promote enhanced cooperation between non-governmental and governmental Members. It stands to reason that IUCN gains from its Membership when Members participate in or engage in IUCN fora, programmes, and collective actions to advance its objectives. [205]

6.7 Strategic Communication

There are many aspects to communication of central importance to IUCN's niche. These include the internal communication flows across the Union which strongly affect IUCN's capacity to deliver efficiently and achieve impact; communication with its Members with its myriad effects, such as Member interest and participation, leveraging the membership towards common goals, achieving global impact, speaking with one voice; and communication with donors through its branding, impact reporting and messaging to retain, attract and partner with donors of a wide range. Each of these will be addressed separately.

Communication internally

Finding 49:   IUCN is not in the practice of socialising its knowledge across the Union. It has not created an internal, enabling, communicative environment for different components of the Union to collectively and holistically address emerging global challenges.

Poor and inconsistent communication in IUCN is a critical threat to the cohesiveness of the Union. This occurs widely in IUCN – at all levels and multi-directionally – Headquarters-Regional Offices-Commissions-Members-Regional and National Committees-Council. One key stakeholder group remarked that IUCN was a 'case study on how *not* to do internal communications.'

IUCN suffers from coordination problems. Although the One Programme has put in place the *principle* of coordination amongst constituent parts of the Union, the obligation (or accountability) to do so does not exist.[206] Problems pertaining to the coordination necessary to produce IUCN's niche include: (a) how teams are constructed for the work to be completed, and (b) how the staffing structure facilitates or hinders the cooperation that is needed.[207]

Lateral communication in IUCN remains uncommon and unstructured. And the process for constructing teams around a piece of work is quite variable at IUCN. One of the criteria for selecting Global Programmes in the 2017-2020 Programme draft is 'increasing One Programme collaboration through the participation of one or more Global Thematic Programmes, one or more Commissions, multiple regions and multiple Members to achieve results.' To favour such programmatic practices and outcomes, the paucity of cross-Union communication mechanisms needs to be addressed:

- The Secretariat Communications Unit is not working in concerted and coordinated fashion with communications approaches undertaken by Global Programmes (e.g. Global Water Programme) [208];

- Communication between individual Commissions and Regional Offices is highly variable and ad hoc;

- Councillors expressed a desire for more communications support from IUCN's Secretariat to enable them to conduct outreach;[209]

- There is uneven awareness across the Union of the different knowledge products and of the work undertaken by different commissions; and

- While there is currently a communication bulletin, a monthly email from the Director General, a publications bulletin and a climate change bulletin, there is, as yet, no internal newsletter circulating important highlights of activities, programmes, challenges, and other matters of concern across the Union. The development of such a newsletter in the form of a listserv was underway at the time of writing.[210]

Communication with Members

Finding 50: **The global reach of IUCN, symbolised by the oft-cited Membership of over 1,200 Member Institutions, is not appropriately supported by a communication system that informs and engages Members in ways that add value to IUCN's influencing potential.**

IUCN does not do sufficient outreach to its extensive Membership. Reference is frequently made to the global network of over 1,200 Members in the Union. The External Review has found that IUCN does not have an adequate system for informing and engaging its Members. In comments from Institutional Members who completed the survey, the need to improve communication with Members was the second most frequently cited area for improvement. Commission Members are in agreement with this.

On Secretariat outreach to Members and Commissions. Comments from Commission Members who completed the survey supported the view that the Secretariat does not do enough to reach out to Members and Commissions. They expressed that IUCN tends to privilege a few of the bigger players in the field.

Institutional Members have made similar statements. The survey conducted with Institutional Members reveals a relationship with IUCN that is marred by confusion and lack of clarity. Most commonly, Members feel they do not know what their roles and responsibilities are within IUCN. They describe having only limited meaningful interaction with the rest of the Union.

The language of communication is also of concern. Materials in Spanish and French are clearly not sufficiently available, as compared with those in English. Moreover, the web portal is not consistently accessible in all three Union languages – English, French and Spanish – a fact that undermines IUCN's ability to fulfil its niche globally.[211]

Further, the Commission that has a communication objective is not inwardly directed. The Commission on Education and Communication (CEC) does not often or consistently play a role within IUCN's communications system.[212] The Commission directs its communication efforts to its own Members and recently launched a news blog for that purpose. Otherwise, its focus is primarily on external audiences to influence behaviours in favour of biodiversity and sustainability outcomes.

Nonetheless, Members have at their disposal key opportunities to learn about IUCN. One is the WCC (every four years) and another is the Regional Conservation Forums. Beyond that, IUCN does not use information technology and social media effectively to link and engage with Members, despite the fact that this capability exists within the Union.

Communication externally

Finding 51: IUCN's investment in external communications is not currently commensurate with its role as a convenor.

External communications for IUCN is extremely important to its niche. This is particularly so for an organisation with a prominent convening role. In terms of staffing, the Global Communications Unit has a team of seven people: 3 permanent full-time staff, 2 part-time staff (50% and 60%), and 2 temporary staff. In 2014, Global Communications accounted for 7% of Corporative Services expenditures. An additional full-time position has been budgeted for 2016.

The Strategic Partnerships Unit plays an important role. The Unit manages donor relations has a staff of five and its costs are 6% of Corporative Services. IUCN also has communications officers or specialists located in Commissions or attached to projects (which is highly variable by Commission). Efforts are being made to strengthen functional lines of these staff to the Global Communications Unit, with slow and limited progress.

IUCN cannot easily be compared with other convening organisations on the subject - on the resourcing for communications. Such comparison is difficult to make because their product and service mix is different.[213] The panoply of services and products that could potentially come under the rubric of communications is fairly broad for convening organisations, which means the costs incurred for communications can be similarly wide-ranging.[214] While this makes it difficult to make reliable comparisons, benchmarks are indeed available. In the for-profit sector, the average allocation for communications of the total organisational budget is 10% (which includes marketing). For advocacy organisations, it is slightly higher.[215] Therefore, IUCN's investment in communications, while not extravagant, is quite reasonable.

This begs the question, what might explain IUCN's continued branding issues? Among all categories of consulted stakeholders for this review, and in comparison with other global conservation NGOs, IUCN struggles to communicate effectively its niche and brand.[216] This is due to the fact that IUCN has not appropriately and effectively strategized its corporate and project communications as well as its branding.[217] A few salient points are worth noting:

- IUCN has a limited public profile or recognisable brand in North America and Europe.[218] The RLTS, which is more widely known, is often invoked to create the association with IUCN;

- IUCN struggles to attract new donors who do not know IUCN, and to craft a compelling, clear message of IUCN as a convenor;

- Donors are not hearing compelling reasons for them to fund an organisation that includes state actors as Members;

- IUCN has not been effective at showcasing impact and results on the ground, which is what donors want to hear about; and

- The proliferation of logos in IUCN (with Commissions, Programmes and projects) remains unresolved from a branding and communications perspective. The logos of IUCN, its Commissions, knowledge products and partners, are supposed to be shown accordingly, reflecting the diversity of IUCN and its networked nature. Efforts are now underway at IUCN to address this matter.[219]

Perhaps most importantly, Communications remains fragmented across the Union. IUCN does not have a current, integrated communications strategy for the entirety of the Union. The inclusive development of such a strategy would likely move the organisations towards addressing many of its persistent communications and branding challenges.

6.8 IUCN's Human Resources

Finding 52:   IUCN is in the process of making some human resource reforms that are likely to contribute to better utilisation of expertise.

Having the resource requirements to support IUCN's niche raises the issue of competencies – the availability, spread, and relevance to its priority areas in the One Programme. IUCN's Human Resources Unit is currently undertaking a global skills audit that is being carried out in three phases. To be completed in April 2016, it will elucidate where better alignment of skills and positions is needed, among others. As well, the performance appraisal system recently put in place was designed to ensure that managers are linking their workplans to the four organisational results.

Human resource management in IUCN is an issue of how best to use its expertise. By taking the measures just indicated, IUCN is acting on the recommendations of the 2011 External Review to develop more strategic human resource management functions towards maximising the effect of its investment in professional staff, hired for the expertise in their fields. As the 2011 Review acknowledged, this expertise is a critical asset for convening organisations, but keeping costs down in this context is achieved by maintaining high-quality staff in a 'lean, flat and flexible organisation.'[220]

IUCN had a recent restructuring. IUCN has undertaken a restructuring, mainly due to a financial crunch, subsuming the Green Economy and Governance Group under the Nature-Based Solutions Group and the Law Group merged with the Policy Group. The Economy and Environmental Governance Group was dismantled, and then Business and Biodiversity was acquired under Nature-Based Solutions. The Global Marine Program moved from Biodiversity Conservation into Nature-Based Solutions. Presumably, this has generated a cost savings for IUCN.[221]

Also at issue is how conducive the new structure is to the execution of the One Programme. IUCN attempts to demonstrate the alignment by the organigram (dated May 2015) that matches functions of the Secretariat to the four business lines. How well this works in reality is less subject to scrutiny. While the staffing structure did not emerge as a major issue in the interviews, some respondents contend that the new structure diminishes the role and effect of social and economic aspects of the work that ought to be elevated in making the links between conservation and sustainable development. Ultimately, the skills audit referred to earlier may help IUCN to make adjustments in the placement and distribution of skills but staff will still need to cooperate across disciplines and silos to increase effectiveness.

6.9 Funding Model

IUCN funding sources

Clearly, IUCN is highly dependent on government funding. IUCN's funding sources, as shown in the pie chart below, demonstrates a heavy reliance on governments, development aid and environment ministries or departments (represented overall by the 'governments' category, at 48%).

**Exhibit 6.5 IUCN Funding Sources, 2014**
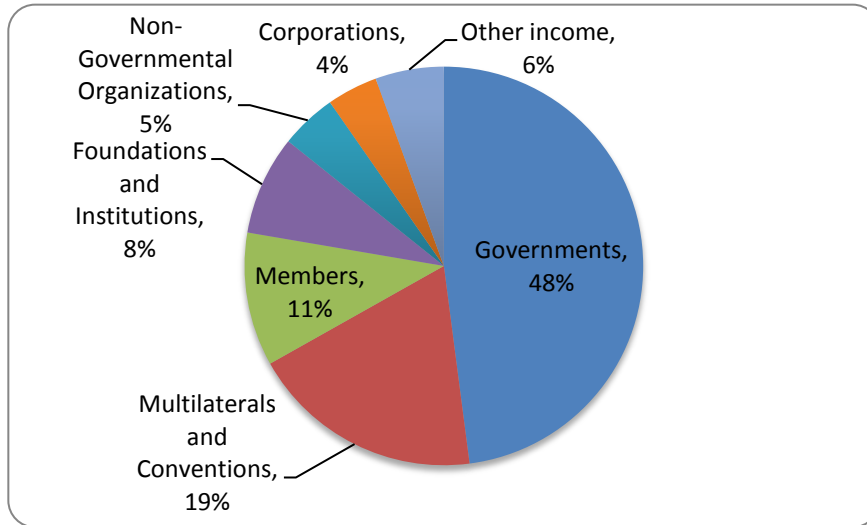
Besides government, other funding sources are shown accordingly. Multilateral donors and conventions contribute 19%. Membership dues amount to 11%. The 'foundations and institutions' revenue stream, at 8%, consists of institutions, foundations, associations, trusts and universities. NGOs are a source of 5% of IUCN's revenue, while corporations contribute no more than 4%. Other income, such as royalties and publications, amongst others, is at 6%.

IUCN's funding mix has remained roughly the same for the past three years, as seen in Exhibit 6.6. With the lion's share, governments have contributed steadily. Contributions from multilaterals and conventions have grown somewhat. NGOs, as a revenue source, have seen a reduction.[222]

Exhibit 6.6 Funding Sources, 2012-2014
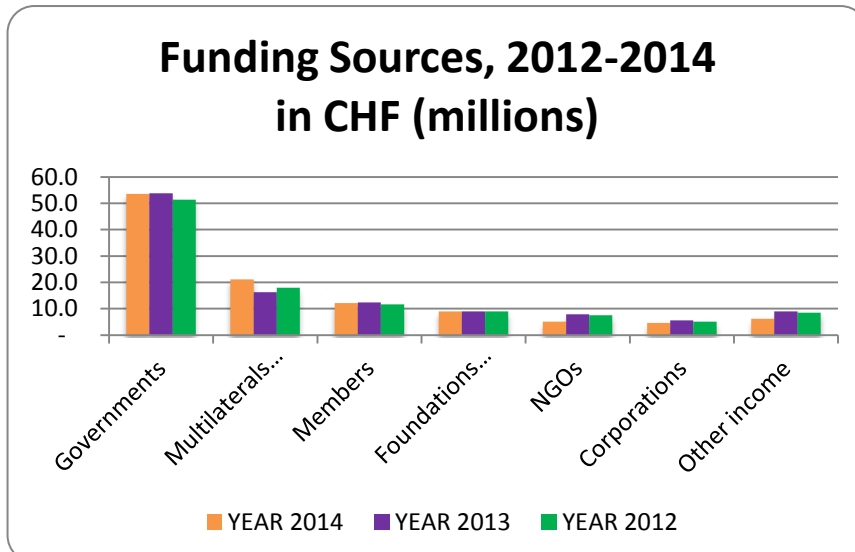
A further analysis of IUCN's funding strategy pertains to the proportion of restricted vs. unrestricted funding. IUCN's revenues are primarily generated by project funds, which constitute 70% of income, with the remaining 30% from core funding, as shown in Exhibit 6.7 below. This again illustrates its funding model as dependent on restricted funding. There are also various degrees of restrictions in the latter category of funding.

IUCN's core funding consists of membership fees and Framework Partner funds. Framework Partners provide a mix of core funding that is variably un-earmarked (Framework unrestricted) and restricted (Framework programmatic). Currently IUCN has nine Framework Agreements with eight Governments and one Foundation.

Exhibit 6.7 Core Funding and Project Income, 2014
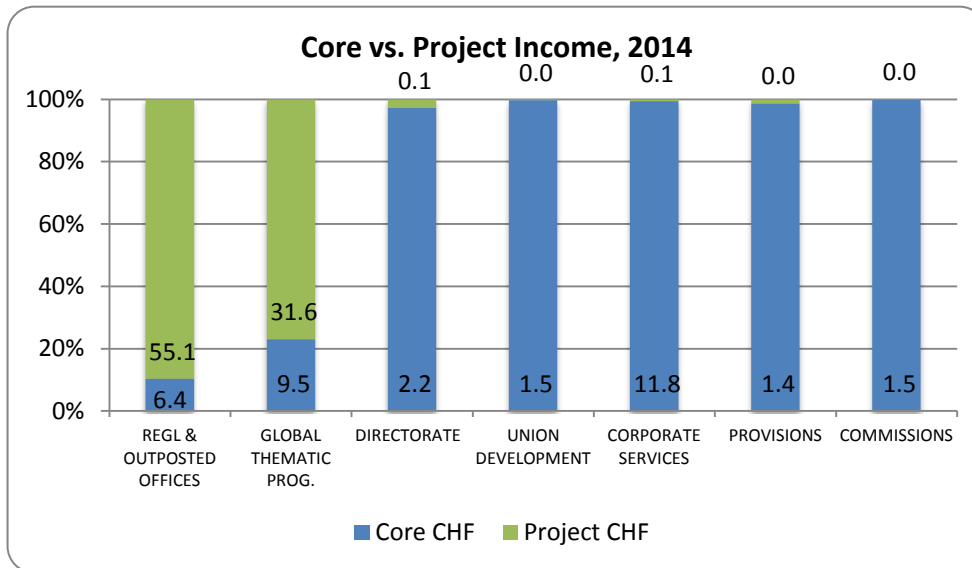
Commissions receive some core funding in the amount of CHF 1.5 million in 2014, or an average of 240,000 per Commission. However, this does not represent the complete budget of each Commission, which develop and implement their own funding strategies. The Secretariat does not collect information about funding sources for Commission work and as recommended earlier in this report, the annual workplan template could offer an opportunity to compile such information.

Adapting its funding strategy

Finding 53: Facing the reality of declining ODA and Framework Partner funding, IUCN is compelled to adapt its funding strategy to the emerging financing modalities for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

There are three types of funding in IUCN: (a) Framework unrestricted which is likely to continue but is tapering off; (b) programme restricted which is generally tied to a theme or a location and has good potential for further exploitation; and (c) project restricted which is expected to remain stable.

IUCN is well aware that the funding environment for its brand of work is changing. The organisation's leadership believes that ODA and Framework Partner funding is in decline, and more specifically, that the era of unrestricted funding from Framework Partnerships will draw to a close in the coming decade.

Project funding is high and not showing any signs of abating soon. It is a key way to resource IUCN's work, which is a good sign. However, alternative major sources of funding are not yet secured. As such, IUCN is actively revisiting its funding strategy. This section of the report highlights some of the way in which this is taking place, while also pointing in new and promising directions.

The Strategic Partnerships Unit is pursuing different avenues for new funding. It has developed an overarching strategy to guide IUCN's engagement with five funding groups (Framework Partners and bilaterals, governments, multilaterals, foundations, and high net worth individuals) that was presented to the Finance and Audit Committee in 2014. While it continues to undertake this strategic work, it lacks the authority and capacity required to coordinate fundraising across IUCN.

Framework funding and DAC donor dependency

IUCN is faced with the prospect of declining unrestricted funds. The Business Model document (2012) to support the One Programme, 2013-2016, acknowledges the downward trend in funds from the more traditional donors, and the reality that programme and project funding are tied to changing donor priorities. Still, the proposed approach envisioned an improved ability to attract ODA funding as a result of having better targeted programmes that can demonstrate 'results on the ground' and that are aimed at global public goods. Today, IUCN leadership has articulated the expectation that unrestricted funds are likely to dwindle in the years to come and that diversification of funding sources is imperative.

The External Review Team envisages a three-pronged strategy to address this issue. It is fundamentally aimed at favouring the growth of programme restricted funding:

- In the short term, IUCN is likely to maintain most but not all of its Framework Partnership arrangements for unrestricted funding. It will also likely maintain restricted project-based ODA funding. This is not a sustainable funding model for IUCN into the future;

- In the medium and longer-term, IUCN should consider investing its energies in seeking to secure programme restricted funding, notably from non-DAC countries.[223] IUCN will rely upon its Council Members to broker strategic engagements with potential funders in East Asia (including China and Japan) and West Asia (across the Middle East)[224]; and

- In the longer term, in line with growth in foundation funding, IUCN should consider investing its energies to seek out foundations, as part of a diversified funding strategy, intent on securing programme restricted funding from these sources.[225]

Engaging with foundations

IUCN income from foundations is proportionally low. Including institutions, associations, trusts and universities), foundation funding has remained around 8% of IUCN revenues over the last few years. IUCN is now appropriately intent on expanding foundation support as a proportion of its funding overall, having identified foundations as key targets for enhanced strategic partnerships in 2015-2017.

IUCN has taken important steps towards increasing foundation support and followed trends. IUCN recently conducted a market study on engaging US foundations as funders, given that US foundations average 32.5% of IUCN's foundation monies. IUCN's Strategic Partnerships Unit has identified the following trends for US foundations:[226]

- They generally do not give unrestricted funding, although some are willing to provide more general operating support, so they may be open to programme restricted funding arrangements;

- Many larger funders prefer to use coordinated mechanisms, e.g. the Coral Triangle Initiative, for hotspots and trendy issues in order to access expertise, pursue system-level change, and aggregate growth capital;

- There is a trend towards innovative funding and financing models (bonds, collaborations, public-private partnerships), market-based approaches, and a preference for tackling root causes and systems change;

- Foundations want to be seen as catalysts for investment;

- They require cultivating individual relationships between high-level staff and foundation directors and managing directors;

- They tend to have evolving strategies that are frequently being updated; and

- American philanthropy has been growing for the fifth year in a row but giving to international organisations has declined for three years in a row.[227]

Engaging with foundations takes a certain kind of know-how and investment. Relationships with foundations are highly reputation-sensitive. Weak project-based management and reporting, uncoordinated engagement from key leadership, and disagreement on priorities would all threaten the relationship IUCN has (or will have) with a foundation.[228]

Financing for Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development

Global trends in financing biodiversity conservation are germane to identifying a role for IUCN. UNEP's Global Environment Outlook (GEO5) for 2012 provides a retrospective analysis of financing for biodiversity conservation in the chapter on 'Global Responses'.[229] The IUCN Global Situation Analysis 2013-2016 also notes that global trends in national expenditures for biodiversity conservation are not meeting targets. Grant-making mechanisms are becoming part of the solution, and IUCN is well positioned to be significantly involved.

The GEF Project Agency status of IUCN is a case in point. To reiterate an earlier mention, IUCN is a GEF Project Agency. For IUCN to obtain this accreditation, it spent three and a half years, and CHF 600,000 upgrading its internal systems to become compliant.[230] IUCN's efforts to become a GEF Project Agency have been more strategic than financial, at least in the short-term.[231] GEF investments are expected to support IUCN's niche through the selection of projects that align with global or regional programme priorities.[232] The 9% GEF Project Agency fees it receives cover administrative oversight and are not as such an income source for IUCN. As the agency that is managing the portfolio of grants, IUCN will not be executing projects, except in exceptional situations when it is well positioned or specifically requested to do so. With IUCN as grant manager, GEF Funding will likely result in increased resources available to IUCN Members for the execution of projects.[233]

IUCN is well-placed to expand its grantmaking role. Given that IUCN is in compliance with GEF's Minimum Fiduciary Standards and Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards, it is eligible to be fast-tracked through the accreditation processes of other environment/climate financing mechanisms. Notably, this is the case with the Green Climate Fund. This fund seeks to provide support to developing countries to limit or reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to the impacts of climate change, taking into account the needs of those developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

IUCN is also well-positioned to contribute to the design of the next generation of instruments.[234] In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the new global Action Agenda for financing sustainable development following the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (in Addis Ababa). The Action Agenda puts forward a series of bold measures to overhaul global finance practices and generate investments for tackling a range of economic, social and environmental challenges.[235] It recognises the need for public and private resource mobilisation to meet the sustainable financing challenge. Major areas for priority attention include: The mobilisation of domestic resources; Private business and finance; International development cooperation; International trade; Debt and debt sustainability; Addressing systemic issues in the international financial system; and Science, technology, innovation and capacity-building for sustainable development. It calls for the establishment of a Global Infrastructure Forum led by multilateral development banks to bridge the infrastructure gap through high-quality long-term investments.[236]

In sum, the financing mechanisms under consideration are in a state of change. IUCN is well-placed to influence the agenda, having had strong engagement to date in the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. It is expected that IUCN will keep abreast of potential and emergent opportunities, such as more public-private partnerships, impact investing,[237] and increasing cooperation with philanthropic actors, governments and others.

Private sector funding

The share of funding to IUCN contributed by private firms is small. Corporations accounted for only 4% of IUCN's budget in 2014. IUCN has made modest progress in engaging the private sector more dynamically and meaningfully, intent on increasing this proportion. For instance, 20+ major companies participated in the WPC, notably through the Business and Biodiversity Pavilion.[238]

IUCN is also a founding member of the Natural Capital Coalition, whose vision is of 'a world where business conserves and enhances natural capital.'[239] Its Natural Capital Protocol project is being funded by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Betty Moore Foundation. According to Strategic Partnerships at IUCN, such funding models ensure a more attractive and inclusive approach for engaging the private sector, while enhancing IUCN's credibility and future funding prospects.[240]

Nonetheless, engaging with the private sector comes with risks. Other global conservation NGOs interviewed for this Review have been forthcoming on this issue. IUCN's Business and Biodiversity Programme has issued a Business Engagement Strategy (2012) and Operational Guidelines for Business Engagement, endorsed by the Council in October 2015, to support its implementation.[241] The Guidelines include a risk and opportunity assessment process to ensure that the opportunity of a business engagement to deliver positive outcomes for biodiversity clearly outweighs any reputational and management risks.

Other Potential Funding Sources

Two other funding options are known in the business of biodiversity conservation. IUCN is exploring other fundraising avenues, such as digital fundraising in the US and among high net-worth individuals. The latter are significant funding sources for WWF and for The Nature Conservancy, for example. Other global NGOs have much more diverse funding portfolios (see Volume I, Appendix IX).

In terms of online fundraising, Global Giving was interviewed for this Review.[242] Girl Effect funded by Nike has had a fundraising page on the Global Giving site; it has reached 91% of its funding goal to date and donations have funded interventions in a number of countries. An organisation like IUCN can use the Global Giving platform to raise funds for member projects or for its own programmes.

The demand for IUCN's products and services

Finding 54: **IUCN is pursuing possibilities for generating revenue from products and services backed by a few solid but exceptional examples. IUCN has not yet adopted a client orientation in its organisational culture to adapt its products and services with revenue generation in mind.**

IUCN has been exploring the possibility of payment for services – capacity-building, management, project agency and independent certification and verification – and also fundraising for knowledge products (see Volume I, Appendix XXII for a discussion on the RLTS). The most emblematic example of packaging its expertise and standards tailored to a specific audience is IBAT.[243]

Discussions are underway with the World Bank. In the interest of leveraging knowledge products for revenue generation, the IUCN Council has called on the Director General to engage in a discussion with the World Bank, other International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and interested governments on the provision of sustained investment and funding of Flagship Knowledge Products, for their development and maintenance.[244]

The financial sector itself is an untapped market for IUCN's products and services. Amongst other high-end, high-impact possibilities for IUCN's products and services is to offer a means to the financial sector to assess natural capital risks that are dependent on biodiversity. IUCN's DC Office is exploring this option. For the financial institutions to understand the importance of nature represents a significant policy change, in support of mitigating climate change, and a gain for IUCN in terms of its clientele.

The notion of developing a clientele for demand-driven products and services remains under-exploited. Many respondents across all stakeholder groups offered suggestions on how IUCN could expand on ways to raise funds by meeting the demand, which further implies understanding what the demands are, for which IUCN is well-situated. This is premised on IUCN becoming more client-oriented, which also entails bringing in the client at the development stage. It was further suggested that IUCN needs to target those audiences that are not yet users of its knowledge and package it in ways that are useful to them. Notably, IUCN needs to think beyond influencing the practices of the private sector and engaging them in partnerships with the public sector. It is not simply a question of which products and services have the capacity to generate revenue; to achieve impact, it is also about *who* to target and which decision makers IUCN is seeking to influence.[245]

6.10 Monitoring & Evaluation and Learning

Finding 55: **The recent move to measure results according to IUCN's business lines (reflecting strategic priorities) is an important step forward for its M&E system.**

There are different levels of Monitoring and Evaluation in IUCN to consider. It is helpful to distinguish strategic, programmatic, project levels and types. Historically, up to the previous quadrennial period, IUCN pursued M&E reporting on a programme-by-programme basis, informed by project level reporting. This provided IUCN with project and programme related data that largely focused on outputs, without speaking to outcomes and strategic organisational priorities. With the 2013-2016 Programme, IUCN M&E reporting moved to include a more strategic orientation,[246] on a priority-by-priority basis according to IUCN business lines.

High-level annual reporting takes the form of three annual reports geared at different audiences, as follows[247]:

- ■ **'Annual Programme Report:** reports on programme result and impact indicators included in the IUCN Programme 2013-2016. The main audience is the Union as well as external audiences such as Framework Partners and partner organisations.

- ■ **Annual Progress Monitoring:** developed by the IUCN Secretariat for Council. It is based on agreed indicators covering progress in programme implementation, finances and One Programme collaboration. Documents can be retrieved in the Union Portal.

- ■ **Annual Reporting for the IUCN Framework Partners:** based on agreed indicators and requested analysis covering progress in programme implementation, use of IUCN resources and Union development and governance.'

Impact reporting is also being discussed in its relationship to fit-for-purpose. IUCN endeavours to measure its contributions to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development impacts every four years. In so doing, notably reporting on results and impacts, IUCN is becoming more fit-for-purpose for building a knowledge base that could track its work for results, and its contributions, at multiple levels.

Finding 56:   For a knowledge organisation, IUCN's investment in monitoring, evaluation and learning remains low.

The External Review team supports IUCN's strategic re-orientation of M&E reporting. At the same time, for this to be done effectively and sustainably, appropriate resources are required. Our review finds that IUCN's investment in this regard is at the low end, and even lower than the industry standard. Less than 0.5% of IUCN's budget is allocated to PM&E Unit Monitoring and Evaluation activities.[248] Typically, organisations allocate 1-5% of their budget for such activities, with as much as 10% allocated for the M&E of more experimental strategic work.[249]

A certain level of resource commitment to M&E is in order. Indeed, 'Conventional wisdom long held that a serious commitment to evaluation required spending on the order of 5 to 10 percent of programmatic budgets.'[250] By comparison, 'Oxfam has committed to investing at least one percent of its program budgets to monitoring, evaluation, and learning.'[251] Increasing this budget, by even a small amount, would allow IUCN to more effectively link its strategic M&E with programmatic M&E across the Union, as it has prioritised and started to address.

Finding 57:   IUCN's organisational culture and practices do not favour organisation-wide learning.

Organisational learning has not been sufficiently emphasised. According to the 2015 Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, through its M&E work, IUCN is driven by a desire to improve planning processes and organisational performance. While of utmost importance, this only reflects one component of results-based management (RBM) evaluation.[252] The other component involves organisational learning, an often overlooked or under-valued dimension of M&E work.

As one Secretariat survey respondent noted, reflecting a wider sentiment at IUCN:

> 'I think the recent focus on knowledge products is relevant, but we should also consider how we can better capture less formal, internal knowledge. IUCN has the potential to become a genuine learning organisation, facilitating and encouraging learning across the Union in order to permit the IUCN to adapt continually and transform itself in a highly dynamic and competitive world.'

As a membership organisation, IUCN is conspicuously bereft of offers aimed at learning / sharing.   The potential for learning, exchange, and knowledge sharing across the membership is under-exploited. The launch of the IUCN portal is valuable, but a 'Member space' does not exist and, as such, it does not offer a platform for sharing knowledge or lessons learned. For such a large organisation that is a community of communities, there are relatively few facilitated virtual spaces or structured opportunities for developing communities of practice across the Union. There are no webinars or a calendar of virtual learning events, which would be typical of professional associations, for example. These require resources (staff and money, but only few) but may be worth exploring as part of the membership strategy. A number of options were presented by Members in the 2007 Survey of Member Voices.[253]

There are a number of important organisational-cultural obstacles at IUCN that do not favour organisation-wide learning:

- Competition for resources across the Union;
- Global Programme driven learning, where it takes place;
- Siloing between Global Programmes; and
- Siloing between Commissions and Secretariat, but also with Members, thereby preventing Union-wide education and learning processes to be developed collaboratively.

A particular concern relates to learning as might involve Regional Offices. Given the high cost-recovery rate from projects that Regional Offices operate on, there is little time available for engaging in reflection and learning – unless woven into the strategic and operational fabric of projects. One example of this taking place, which provides an excellent model, derives from the Global Water Programme, and specifically WANI. All people involved in the WANI initiative had favourable remarks about the learning culture that has been cultivated in this programme.[254]

A shift in organisational culture begins at the top. Support for these forms of cooperation internally requires a modelling of behaviours from the leadership itself. Indeed, the One Programme Charter articulates among the roles and responsibilities of the leadership a code of behaviour – that they must lead by example and show cooperation, non-competition and dedication to the Programme. They must also encourage appropriate behaviours, good communication and respect for each other's culture, roles and mandates between and across the respective parts of the Union.[255]

Conclusion

Various internal capabilities have been examined, many of which show promise. In assessing these capabilities against IUCN's fit-for-purpose for fulfilling its niche and roles, results show that IUCN has made demonstrable efforts to define its niche and strengthen the Union through the One Programme approach, seeing notable strides with the 2013 Council-led FASU process.

Progress in alignment has been made by Secretariat, but internal shortcomings remain. Notably, the Secretariat has been aligning the different components of the Union as per the One Programme Charter. At the same time, it would be premature to say that IUCN is a collective action, effectively working in combination towards the realisation of its goals and objectives. A notable One Programme-related challenge facing IUCN derives from a persistent structural and programmatic siloing, a matter compounded by the often separate and parallel fundraising strategies and practices of Headquarters and Regional and Outposted Offices.

Resourcing strategies lie at the root of the tensions and mistrust between parts of the Union. The resourcing strategies of the Secretariat for 'delivering results on the ground' have been known to result in competition over project funding with Institutional Members. Further, Regional Offices struggle to remain faithfully aligned with the One Programme in their programmatic work because they rely on restricted, project funding as their principal source of income. The tensions between focus and funding, coupled with enduring communication issues between Headquarters, Regional Offices, Institutional Members and Commissions, have fuelled a measure of mistrust rather than the cooperation needed for greater coherence and alignment. Similar issues are visible in the relationships of Secretariat with Regional and National Committees. While the Committees play an important convening role, they tend to be loosely connected to the rest of the Union, with no direct lines of accountability. As such, the One Programme remains more an ideal than a culture being practiced.

IUCN's membership mix and global reach with its potential for influence deserves attention. IUCN is clearly aware of the need to update its membership strategy, to give due consideration to expanding the membership mix (e.g. with respect to Indigenous Peoples Organisations), and decide how best to establish a relationship with the private sector. Further, IUCN's capacity to leverage bigger change lies in its global reach. But a 'collective voice' through the alliance-building and collaboration across its membership is not yet commensurate with IUCN's potential as a global convenor. While IUCN endeavours to add value to the efforts of Members, IUCN's membership is clearly an important revenue base, with state Members contributing the most.

Resolving internal issues will amplify IUCN's potential for more effective fundraising. IUCN's recent efforts to improve external communications, address branding issues, explore strategic partnerships, and reform its human resource policies demonstrate awareness of the challenges to be tackled. The human resource reforms and GEF accreditation are still too recent to ascertain results, while the Strategic Partnerships Unit has concertedly done the groundwork to diversify its funding base, in light of declining trends in unrestricted ODA and Framework Partner funding. IUCN's pursuit of public-private partnerships, philanthropic funding, net worth individuals, amongst others is well-placed. The pursuit of client-oriented products and services holds much promise as well. Overcoming persistent obstacles and stepping up its efforts to improve results-based reporting and knowledge sharing across the Union would surely create greater coherence, in support of IUCN's funding, programmatic and overall goals.

7   Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1   Introduction

The External Review Team has compiled a series of Strategic and Operational recommendations that speak to the issues covered in each section and by chapter. We believe these recommendations to be appropriate and important, and consider all Strategic Recommendations to be of relatively equal importance overall. However, and by way of guidance, we have annotated each of the Operational Recommendations according to *Strategic Priority*, *Urgency* and *Feasibility* on a scale of 1-3, where 1 is the highest.

All recommendations have been listed comprehensively below, as per the chapters to which they refer. Subsequently, in an effort to provide yet more strategic guidance, a table of the top 10 most important recommendations has been constructed.

7.2   IUCN Role and Niche

Strategic Recommendation 1 (Council, Senior Management)
(Linked to findings 1-6)

1. IUCN should more explicitly bill itself as a trusted convenor, a platform uniquely able to create opportunities for bridging the perspectives of multi-sectoral and multi-level stakeholders who engage with the scientifically-informed knowledge it co-creates, for the purposes of influencing biodiversity conservation and sustainable development policy and practice.

Operational Recommendations

- 1.1 **IUCN should build its brand to further reflect its convenor role more explicitly.** It should thus revise its niche statement accordingly. (Senior Management, Global Communications Unit) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 1.2 **IUCN should create and facilitate convening and consensus-building processes** to reflect, give visibility to, and leverage its Flagship Knowledge Products and Global Thematic Programme priorities and work. (Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions, Members) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 1.3 **IUCN should further develop its capacity as a key communication channel** for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development communities' policy positions to be visibly articulated in appropriate venues. (Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Global Communications Unit, Commissions, Members) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 3, Feasibility 2*

- 1.4 **IUCN should use its Observer Status at the UN more effectively**, with a more active and visible presence at all relevant conservation and sustainability meetings and processes. (Director General, IUCN Washington DC Office, Environmental Law Centre) – *Strategic Priority 3*, *Urgency 3, Feasibility 1*

Strategic Recommendation 2 (Council, Senior Management, Business and Biodiversity Group, Members)
(Linked to findings 3-5)

2. IUCN should revise its private sector engagement strategy to be both strategic and opportunistic.

Operational Recommendations

■ 2.1 **IUCN should develop an updated private sector engagement strategy** dually aimed at those that explicitly position themselves as champions of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and others that continue to have highly adverse biodiversity conservation and sustainable development impacts. (Business and Biodiversity Group, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions, Members) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

■ 2.2 **IUCN should leverage its involvement in 'technical advisory panels'** to further engage with private sector actors and draw them into thematically appropriate, IUCN-facilitated convening and consensus-building processes. (Business and Biodiversity Group, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions, Members) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

■ 2.3 **IUCN should seek strategic opportunities to meet with industry representatives** at high-level forums and within networks that convene private sector actors around global environmental challenges. (Business and Biodiversity Group, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions, Members) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 1*

7.3   Knowledge Products and Knowledge Chains

Strategic Recommendation 3 (Council, Senior Management, Commission Chairs, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors)
(Linked to findings 7-11, 13-14)

3. IUCN must ensure and protect the quality, consistency and branding of *Flagship Knowledge Products* that mobilise IUCN standards.

Operational Recommendations

■ 3.1 **IUCN should prioritise, leverage, mobilise and give visibility to all Flagship Knowledge Products** that mobilise IUCN standards equally, though not necessarily similarly. (Commission Chairs, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

■ 3.2 **Flagship Knowledge Products should be developed, positioned and branded** as responding to both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development priorities, objectives and needs (Council, Senior Management, Commission Chairs, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Partners) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

■ 3.3 **Flagship Knowledge Products should be based on IUCN-approved standards** before being recognised and labelled as such, and to ensure the quality of derivative sub-products. (Council, Senior Management, Commission Chairs, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Partners) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 1*

- 3.4 **Matters of quality, data coverage and deficiency of the Flagship Knowledge Products** merit concerted attention, given the centrality of this work to IUCN as a whole. More numerous and more intentional partnerships with universities across the world should be pursued to address this matter. (Senior Management, Commission Chairs, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Partners) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2*, *Feasibility 2*

- 3.5 **IUCN is encouraged to continue developing processes, mechanisms and protocols for incorporating indigenous knowledge** in all Flagship Knowledge Products, and should encourage the development of appropriate partnerships with CEESP, other relevant Commissions as well as organisational and institutional relationships to this effect. (Commissions Chairs, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Partners) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 3.6 **A revised funding strategy for Flagship Knowledge Products is warranted**, in concert with the overall revision in IUCN's funding strategy. (Council, Senior Management, Commission Chairs, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Partners) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

Strategic Recommendation 4 (Council, Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors)
(Linked to findings 7-9, 12, 14)

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4. IUCN must ensure and protect the quality, consistency and branding of its *programme-based knowledge products*.

Operational Recommendations

- 4.1 **IUCN programme-based knowledge products should be developed, positioned and branded** as responding to both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development priorities, objectives and needs. (Council, Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Partners) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2*, *Feasibility 2*

- 4.2 **Towards favouring the quality of its programme-based knowledge products, at least one Commission should formally be involved** in their development, production, deployment and/or use, where it has relevant expertise. (Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commission Chairs) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 1*

- 4.3 **IUCN is encouraged to continue developing processes, mechanisms and protocols for incorporating indigenous knowledge** in programme-based knowledge products, and should encourage the development of appropriate partnerships with CEESP, other relevant Commissions as well as organisational and institutional relationships to this effect. (Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions Chairs, Partners) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 4.4 **Programme-based knowledge products across the Union should be subject to a peer review process**, inclusive of internal and external actors to IUCN, to ensure IUCN branded product quality. (Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 1*

Strategic Recommendation 5 (Council, Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions, Members)
(Linked to findings 15-21)

5. IUCN should be strategic and intentional about mobilising its Flagship and programme-based knowledge products along clearly articulated and monitored outcome pathways.

Operational Recommendations

- 5.1 **IUCN is encouraged to pursue a knowledge chain analysis for each of its Flagship Knowledge Products**, intent on making visible each of their individual and complementary outcome pathways. (Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions, Members) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 5.2 **IUCN is encouraged to pursue a knowledge chain analysis for a strategic selection of programme-based knowledge products**, intent on making visible each of their individual and complementary outcome pathways. (Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions, Members) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 5.3 **IUCN should develop a policy-oriented *outcome strategy* for its knowledge-based work**, drawing and building upon the knowledge-policy interface and influencing approach underpinning the IPBES Platform, anchored in knowledge generation, assessments, policy support tools and capacity-building. (Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors Commissions, Members) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 5.4 **IUCN should develop reporting and monitoring mechanisms designed to track outcomes** along each of the pathways for all Flagship Knowledge Products and a strategic sample of programme-based knowledge products. (PM&E Unit, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions, Members) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 5.5 **IUCN should more intentionally leverage Flagship Knowledge Products and programme-based knowledge products to continue influencing and informing policy** processes and mechanisms, at global, regional and national levels, notably through convening processes and by enacting the One Programme Approach. (Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions, Members) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 1*

- 5.6 **IUCN should more intentionally leverage Flagship Knowledge Products and programme-based knowledge products to influence action and practice** multi-sectorally and at multiple societal levels, drawing on the outstanding strategic work, relationships and practices of the Global Water Programme and others across the Union. (Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions, Members) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 5.7 **IUCN should continue cultivating its brand, leveraging its knowledge products, and seeking opportunities to influence and manage financial resources allocations** in the field of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. (Strategic Partnerships Unit, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions, Members) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 5.8 **IUCN should learn from, and build upon the 'IBAT Model'**, and further tailor Flagship Knowledge Product and where appropriate programme-based knowledge product knowledge product development and management with specific end-users' needs in mind, articulating intended use, policy influence, as well as implications for action and practice. (Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commission Chairs, IBAT Staff) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 5.9 **IUCN should continue informing and further influencing research agendas** by ensuring its work is accessible to the research community and also by building research-based alliances with academic, NGO, government and private sector entities. A thorough analysis of the use of Flagship and programme-based knowledge products in the peer review literature would be a necessary first step. (Global Programme Directors, Commission Chairs) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 1*

- 5.10 **Intent on expanding the community of Flagship and programme-based knowledge product users,** IUCN should strategically and selectively develop popular applications, diverse licensing agreements and partnerships to imagine, create and finance how to move this forward. (Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commission Chairs, Members) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 5.11 **IUCN should ensure that Flagship and programme-based knowledge products are available in all of IUCN's three official languages.** (Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commission Chairs, Members) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

Strategic Recommendation 6 (Council, Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions, Members)
(Linked to findings 22-24)

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6. IUCN should further pursue the coherence and effectiveness of its knowledge products governance and management structures and practices.

Operational Recommendations

- 6.1 **IUCN's knowledge nomenclature should be finalised and publicised** across the Union within a reasonable timeframe, so this updated understanding of concepts and terms may appropriately inform development of the knowledge components of IUCN's next quadrennial Programme. (Council, Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 1*

- 6.2 **Horizontal integration of all Flagship Knowledge Products should continue**, as has been prioritised by IUCN, ensuring complementarities between them. (Council, Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 6.3 **Vertical integration of knowledge products should be pursued** in planned and coherent ways, building 'baskets of knowledge' through links that are intentionally made between products across the Union (as in the case of Protected Planet), through the creation of integrative knowledge tools (e.g. IBAT), and through monitoring and reporting mechanisms. (Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Programme Directors, Commissions, PM&E Unit) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 6.4 **IUCN should develop a funding strategy that is built around its development of 'baskets of knowledge'.** (Senior Management, Strategic Partnership Unit, Commission Chairs, Global Programme Directors) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 6.5 **IUCN should ensure that development of the Natural Resources Governance Framework** (and all new Flagship Knowledge Products) is provided with appropriate guidance, support and oversight. (Council, Senior Management, Commission Chairs, Global Programme Directors) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 1*

7.4 IUCN Commissions

Strategic Recommendation 7 (Council, Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commission Chairs)
(Linked to findings 25-26, 28, 29)

7. Serving multiple functions, the six existing Commissions should be maintained.

Operational Recommendations

- 7.1 **Commissions should provide multiple forums and platforms** for information sharing and strategic development among their Members and with other parts of IUCN. (Commissions, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors) – *Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 7.2 **Commissions should further integrate new issues and thematic areas as they arise**, notably through joint initiatives involving more than one Commission. A review and renewal of Commission Task Forces, Specialist Groups and other sub-groups is merited. (Commissions, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors) – *Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 7.3 **At a minimum, Commissions should align with the IUCN Programme Framework** and choose whether and how to align with Programme results. (Commissions, Council, Senior Management) – *Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 1, Feasibility 1*

- 7.4 **IUCN should replace the statement about Commissions currently on the website** with a new one based on the One Programme statement, which uses simple and evocative language. The broad role of Commissions as both expert and membership networks should also be emphasised in all IUCN communication materials. (Commissions, Global Communications Unit) – *Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 1, Feasibility 1*

Strategic Recommendation 8 (Council, Commission Chairs, Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors)
(Linked to findings 27, 30-32)

8. IUCN should clarify its position on a series of structural matters related to Commissions, notably on their size, matters of communication and membership.

Operational Recommendations

- 8.1 **The growing size of Commissions should not be discouraged** – each Commission should grow according to its needs and the level of interest of potential Members. Commissions must ensure that their size does not hinder the active participation of their Members. (Commission Chairs, Council) – *Strategic Priority 2, Urgency 2, Feasibility 1*

- 8.2 **Commission Chairs and Steering Committees should develop a plan to recruit, integrate and meaningfully engage new Members** in ways that reflects and appropriately expands the diversity of scientific, social and political perspectives present within a Commission, engaging a new generation of actors. Attention must consistently be given to gender balance and regional representation. (Commission Chairs, Global Gender Office, Regional Directors) – *Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 8.3 **Commissions should put in place the structures and mechanisms to ensure that there is regular communication among all Members** and opportunities for everyone to play an active role, e.g. encouraging all Members to join or create Specialist Groups. Steering Committees should communicate their work and make sure that opportunities for engagement and communication are available to the broader membership. (Commissions) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 8.4 **Commissions need to clearly define and communicate what they are doing** (as well as what they will do and have done), how it links to the IUCN Programme, and what sort of relationship they expect with Secretariat. They can then be judged by compliance with agreed upon terms and their own plans. (Commission Chairs, Senior Management, Global Communications Unit) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 8.5 **IUCN Commissions should review and revise the materials they have posted on their websites**, to ensure they all meet and ideally surpass the basic minimum of information required. (Commissions, Global Communications Unit) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 1*

- 8.6 **IUCN should implement a standard process for becoming a Commission Member,** with additional specific criteria or procedures as required for different Commissions, to be managed using an online system. A single entry point for applying to join a Commission should be on the Commissions page of the IUCN website. This page should provide information about the specific procedure and requirements for joining each Commission. An online application process should be developed, requiring both general information and specific information to be forward to the Commission in question. (Global Communications Unit, Commissions, Senior Management) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

> **Strategic Recommendation 9 (Council, Commission Chairs, Senior Management)**
> (Linked to findings 33-34)

9. The role of Commission Chair should be recognised as a full time job. Appropriate support should be provided to Commission Chairs for the effective management of IUCN Commissions.

Operational Recommendations

- 9.1 **IUCN should allocate resources to either support the Chair** to work full-time or provide full-time staff support to the role. (Council, Commission Chairs, Senior Management) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 9.2 **Institutional structures need to be put in place to ensure that appropriate Chairs are selected**, supported and able to deliver the accountability for which they are responsible. (Council, Commission Chairs, Senior Management) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 9.3 **Given the importance of the role of Commission Chair, it would be appropriate to have a detailed job specification** and a matrix for assessing candidates running for election, more akin to a senior management position. (Council, Commission Chairs) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 9.4 **It would similarly be appropriate to assemble a nominating committee** for the election of Commission Chairs, combining the perspectives of different parts of the Union given that the effectiveness of a Commission is strongly linked to relationships with the rest of the Union, many of which are mediated by the Chair. (Council, Commission Chairs, Senior Management) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 9.5 **Commissions Chairs should be provided with appropriate orientation** (training, advice and documentation) to support them in effectively performing their roles. The following documents and processes should be developed overall for Commissions: (1) a manual and training for Commission Chairs and Deputy Chairs, including guidance for establishing a Steering Committee; (2) a manual for Steering Committee Members, and ideally sub-groups and a handbook for new Commission Members (these can be based on existing SSC and WCPA documents). (Council, Commission Chairs, Senior Management) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

Strategic Recommendation 10 (Council, Commission Chairs, Senior Management)
(Linked to findings 35-41)

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10. IUCN should ensure that relations between Commissions and other parts of the Union are conducive to their effectiveness and to that of the Union as a whole.

Operational Recommendations

- 10.1 **Joint Task Forces, Specialist Groups and other sub-groups should be encouraged**, supported and given greater visibility across the Union. (Council, Commission Chairs, Global Communications Unit) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 1*

- 10.2 **A newsletter specifically of Commission activities should be developed** and shared with all Institutional Members on a biannual basis. (Commission Chairs, Global Communications Unit, Strategic Partnerships Unit) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 1*

- 10.3 **The basic meaning of the concept of 'reasonable support' to be provided by Secretariat for Commissions must be clarified** and revised every four years, as part of quadrennial Programme development. (Council, Senior Management, Commission Chairs) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 10.4 **A protocol for relationships between Commission and Secretariat should be established collaboratively** at the start of every new Programme cycle, and reviewed and adjusted annually. A protocol document (including the programme, plan, roles, budget, etc) to which both parties adhere would lay out the parameters that govern the relationship and articulate expectations on both sides. It could also detail roles and responsibilities around particular activities and projects. (Commission Chairs, Senior Management, Council) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 10.5 **A review should be undertaken of the arrangements for focal point and administrative support within the Secretariat for each Commission.** Arrangements that maximise effectiveness and efficiency should be identified and adjustments made when required. Focal points within the Secretariat at a strategic level are recommended. (Council, Commission Chairs, Senior Management) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 10.6 **A coherent and consistently used system of planning and reporting for Commissions should be developed and implemented** that involves collaboration between Commissions and Secretariat to establish an agreed upon framework. A host of existing documents, tools and mechanisms can be drawn upon for this (e.g. 'Project Guidelines and Standards for Project Planning, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation') or developed as needed, where gaps have been identified on all aspects of leadership and performance (e.g. joint fundraising targets). (Commission Chairs, Senior Management, Council) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 10.7 **IUCN should consider a major statutory change, which would see the end of Commissions seeking approval from Congress for their mandates** and replaced with approval of their strategic, operational and financial plans for the coming four years. This would shift energy toward a strategic exercise and away from one that is essentially bureaucratic and also sustains an unhelpful discourse about questioning the Commission's existence rather than its work. Doing so would surely entail a significant cost-savings that could instead be used to support Commission Chairs. (Council, Commission Chairs) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 3*

7.5   Fit for Purpose of IUCN

> **Strategic Recommendation 11 (Council, Commission Chairs, Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Members)**
> (Linked to findings 42-46)

11. IUCN should continue undertaking initiatives intent on strengthening the Union, as per the One Programme Charter.

Operational Recommendations

- 11.1 **In conceptualising the 2017-2020 Programme, its programmatic work and the development of Flagship and programme-based knowledge products,** IUCN should ensure that the One Programme approach is encouraged in meeting programmatic priorities. (Secretariat, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commission Chairs) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 11.2 **IUCN must actively construct teams 'best fit' for delivering the Programme.** Every thematic and regional programme should operationally map and plan their One Programme engagement, including working with Commissions and implementing partnerships. (Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commission Chairs, Members) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 11.3 **A strategic alignment should be pursued in fundraising strategies and choices** between Regional Offices and Headquarters, so that all efforts to secure project funds support and contribute to the One Programme. (Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 11.4 **IUCN's Regional and National Committees should be better informed about IUCN's programmes while also contributing to them.** Although the One Programme is not binding for Committees, they should still be held accountable to the One Programme Charter's principles, one of which is to 'cooperate and not compete.' A set of guidelines should be developed and endorsed by Council to more clearly establish the conditions upon which Committees operate. (Global Programme Director, Regional Directors, Regional and National Committee Chairs, Council) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 11.5 **To foster an organisational learning culture, IUCN leadership needs to follow through on the aspirations of the One Programme Charter,** encouraging and motivating behaviours that break down silos. Different Commissions, programmes and units across the Union should develop and mobilise knowledge products, sub-products and ensuring programmatic work collaboratively, also fundraising and reporting together if and as appropriate. (Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commission Chairs, PM&E Unit) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

Strategic Recommendation 12 (Council, Senior Management Team, Commission Chairs, Governance and Constituency Committee)
(Linked to findings 47-48)

12. IUCN should continue updating its membership strategy, to ensure it has the right membership size and mix for effectively delivering its 2017-2020 Programme and in alignment with its niche.

Operational Recommendations

- 12.1 **IUCN should conclude its deliberation on new Membership categories** ahead of the 2016 WCC, notably with respect to Indigenous Peoples Organisations (IPOs) and the Private Sector. The External Review Team recommends the creation of a new, voting, membership category for IPOs. It also recommends that consideration be given to a non-voting observer status membership for private sector actors. (Council, Governance and Constituency Committee) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 1*

- 12.2 **IUCN membership strategy should include a clear articulation of the value proposition for Members**, and of the rights but also obligations of Members, given that the latter remains unspecified. (Senior Management Team, Senior Governance and Constituency Team) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 3, Feasibility 1*

Strategic Recommendation 13 (Global Communications Unit, Senior Management Team, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commission Chairs, Strategic Partnerships Unit)
(Linked to findings 49-51)

13. IUCN should more intentionally socialise its knowledge across the Union, creating an enabling communicative environment for different components of the Union to collectively and holistically work together.

Operational Recommendations

- 13.1 **The Global Communications Unit should develop a whole of organisation communication strategy**, doing so in ways that actively engage all relevant communications actors across the Union, and then making it available across the Union in a timely fashion. (Global Communication Unit, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commission Chairs) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 13.2 **The Global Communications Unit should work in more concerted and coordination fashion** with the communication approaches undertaken in Thematic Global Programmes and Regional Offices. (Global Communication Unit, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 13.3 **A protocol should be developed to provide guidance on communication practices** between Commissions and Regional Offices. (Commission Chairs, Regional Offices) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 13.4 **IUCN should develop more effective communication materials** (such as Wetlands strategic intent document[256]) to explain the work that IUCN does clearly and with appeal to specific audiences, notably to support Councillors in conducting strategic outreach. (Global Communications Unit, Council) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 13.5 **IUCN should develop a mechanism for communicating regularly and effectively with its different Member constituencies**, to counter the general distance experienced by the majority of Members. (Global Communications Unit) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 13.6 **IUCN should compile an accurate description of how Commissions operate** and make this available in the Commissions section of the IUCN website. Commissions and Secretariat should provide links to this information in key documents where Commissions are mentioned. (Global Communications Unit, Commission Chairs) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 1*

- 13.7 **A regular newsletter should be developed and circulated** across the Union and strategically outside it, featuring campaigns and strategies, Commissions, Programmatic highlights, Member highlights, knowledge product information, and biodiversity conservation and sustainable development outcomes and successes in which IUCN has participated. (Global Communications Unit) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 13.8 **IUCN should finally resolve its branding issues** pertaining to the use of IUCN logos. (Global Communications Unit, Global Programme Directors, Commission Chairs) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 1*

- 13.9 **IUCN should endeavour to make its public materials (e.g. website) equally available in all IUCN official languages.** At the moment, much basic but important text is only available in English. (Global Communications Unit) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

Strategic Recommendation 14 (Human Resources Unit, Senior Management Team)
(Linked to finding 52)

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14. IUCN should continue pursuing its human resources reforms, towards ensuring a better utilisation of its vast expertise.

Operational Recommendation

- 14.1 **IUCN should be prepared to respond to insights and recommendations emerging from the global skills audit underway**, slated for completion in Spring 2016. (Human Resources Unit) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

Strategic Recommendation 15 (Senior Management Team, Strategic Partnerships Unit, Framework Partners, Commission Chairs, Council)
(Linked to findings 53-54)

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15. IUCN should continue revising its funding strategy to account for the current downward trend in unrestricted ODA funding and the emergence of interesting alternatives.

Operational Recommendations

- 15.1 **The Strategic Partnership Unit should have the authority and capacity to coordinate fundraising across the Union.** (Council, Senior Management Team, Strategic Partnership Unit) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 1*

- 15.2 **IUCN should develop fundraising packages for specific potential donors**, which brings together an *appropriately designed* and *tailored* mix of knowledge products, programmes, Commissions, regional and other considerations. (Strategic Partnership Unit, in conversation across the Union) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 15.3 **While diversifying its' funding strategically, IUCN should focus on securing programme restricted funding.** This will involve investing human and financial resources in relationship-building with potential Framework Partners, as well as branding and marketing IUCN, in ways that respond to their specific interests and priorities. (Council, Senior Management team, Strategic Partnership Unit, Framework Partners) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 15.4 **IUCN should seek out a non-DAC donor for programme restricted funding in the next quadrennial period**, accounting for the rising development, humanitarian and South-South cooperation funding coming from China, India, Brazil, Saudi Arabia and South Africa in particular. (Council, Senior Management team, Strategic Partnership Unit, Framework Partners) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 3*

- 15.5 **IUCN should actively target and build relationships with foundations** as potential donors for programme restricted funding into the forthcoming quadrennial period. (Senior Management Team, Strategic Partnerships Unit, Commission Chairs) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 3*

- 15.6 **IUCN should solidify its position as a conservation and sustainability financial resource manager and grantmaker**, through its involvement with GEF. It should subsequently consider expanding its role and capacities in this respect, towards eventually seeking project agency status with the Green Climate Fund and others. (Senior Management Team, Strategic Partnership Unit, GEF Unit) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 15.7 **IUCN should develop a strategy for reaching out to high net worth individuals**. (Council, Senior Management team, Strategic Partnerships Unit) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 15.8 **IUCN should continue seeking project-based funding** (including funding that is aligned with its Global Thematic Programmes), while desisting from pursuing project funding that is likely to put it in competition with its own Members. (Strategic Partnership Unit, Global Program Directors, Regional Directors) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 1*

- 15.9 **Secretariat and Commissions should align and design their fundraising strategies** so that they avoid overlaps, take advantage of their respective strengths, are properly supported, report on their activities, and continue to enact the One Programme approach to the benefit of both. (Senior Management Team, Strategic Partnerships Unit, Commission Chairs) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 1*

- 15.10 **IUCN should develop a stronger client orientation across all of its** work. It should consider doing so by selling knowledge packages and services based on existing Flagship and programme-based knowledge products, selling capacity-building services, and in other innovative ways to be developed. It should also consider developing strategic partnerships with public institutions and private sector actors for these purposes. (Senior Management Team, Global Programme Directors, Commission Chairs, IBAT Staff) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

Strategic Recommendation 16 (Senior Management Team, PM&E Unit)
(Linked to findings 55-57)

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16. IUCN should continue revising its M&E system, in line with both the strategic-orientation and learning prerogative of Results-Based Management (RBM) approach to Monitoring and Evaluation.

Operational Recommendations

- 16.1 **IUCN should continue taking steps to link its strategic and programmatic M&E approaches**, so that it can more clearly articulate both its activities and its contributions to biodiversity and sustainability outcomes. (PM&E Unit, Global Programme Directors) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 16.2 **IUCN should develop its PM&E approach and practices to more intentionally value and pursue learning across the Union.** (PM&E Unit, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commission Chairs) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2*, *Feasibility 2*

- 16.3 **IUCN should develop appropriately collaborative monitoring processes** specifically designed to generate hard as well as perceptual data on the effectiveness of Flagship and selected programme-based knowledge products as well as Commissions – *Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 1, Feasibility 2*

- 16.4 **IUCN should develop mechanisms for increasing the participation of Members in M&E activities.** They have valuable experience and insights about IUCN's work that is not adequately being captured. Also, data generated through M&E practices could be targeted to the specific end-uses of Members, in ways that could be beneficial to the Union. (PM&E Unit) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 2*

- 16.5 **IUCN should intentionally build experience-sharing and dialogical learning processes** into mid-term and/or end-term programmatic cycles, drawing on the experiences of the Global Water Programme, in ways that also contribute to reporting and accountability. (PM&E Unit, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors) – *Strategic Priority 1*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 1*

- 16.6 **IUCN should consider increasing its M&E budget** so that it is more in line with comparable organisations and the industry standard, were resources to become available for such purposes. (Senior Management team, PM&E Unit) – *Strategic Priority 2*, *Urgency 2, Feasibility 3*

7.6   The Top 10 Recommendations

Exhibit 7.1Top 10 Recommendations

Evaluation Areas	Strategic		Operational		Priority Level
	Recommendation	**Target Audience**	**Recommendation**	**Target Audience**	
IUCN Role and Niche	**1. IUCN should more explicitly bill itself as a trusted convenor**, a platform uniquely able to create opportunities for bridging the perspectives of multi-sectoral and multi-level stakeholders who engage with the scientifically-informed knowledge it co-creates, for the purposes of influencing biodiversity conservation and sustainable development policy and practice.	Council, Senior Management	**1.1 IUCN should build its brand to further reflect its convenor role more explicitly.** It should thus revise its niche statement accordingly.	Senior Management, Global Communications Unit	Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 1, Feasibility 2
Knowledge Products and Knowledge Chains	**3. IUCN must ensure and protect the quality, consistency and branding of *Flagship Knowledge Products* that mobilise IUCN standards.**	Council, Senior Management, Commission Chairs, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors	**3.1 IUCN should prioritise, leverage, mobilise and give visibility to all Flagship Knowledge Products** that mobilise IUCN standards equally, though not necessarily similarly.	Commission Chairs, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors	Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 1, Feasibility 2
	4. IUCN must ensure and protect the quality, consistency and branding of its *programme-based knowledge products*.	Council, Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors	**4.2 Towards favouring the quality of its programme-based knowledge products, at least one Commission should formally be involved** in their development, production, deployment and/or use, where it has relevant expertise.	Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors	Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 2, Feasibility 1

Evaluation Areas	Strategic		Operational		Priority Level
	Recommendation	Target Audience	Recommendation	Target Audience	
	5. IUCN should be strategic and intentional about mobilising its Flagship and programme-based knowledge products along clearly articulated and monitored outcome pathways.	Council, Senior Management, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commissions, Members	**5.8 IUCN should learn from, and build upon the 'IBAT Model'**, and further tailor Flagship Knowledge Product and where appropriate programme-based knowledge product knowledge product development and management with specific end-users' needs in mind, articulating intended use, policy influence, as well as implications for action and practice.	Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commission Chairs, IBAT Staff	Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 1, Feasibility 2
IUCN Commissions	**9. The role of Commission Chair should be recognised as a full time job. Appropriate support should be provided to Commission Chairs for the effective management of IUCN Commissions.**	Council, Commission Chairs, Senior Management	**9.5 Commissions Chairs should be provided with appropriate orientation** (training, advice and documentation) to support them in effectively performing their roles. The following documents and processes should be developed overall for Commissions: (1) a manual and training for Commission Chairs and Deputy Chairs, including guidance for establishing a Steering Committee; (2) a manual for Steering Committee Members, and ideally sub-groups and a handbook for new Commission Members (these can be based on existing SSC and WCPA documents).	Council, Commission Chairs, Senior Management	Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 2, Feasibility 2

Evaluation Areas	Strategic		Operational		
	Recommendation	Target Audience	Recommendation	Target Audience	Priority Level
	10. IUCN should ensure that relations between Commissions and other parts of the Union are conducive to their effectiveness and to that of the Union as a whole.	Council, Commission Chairs, Senior Management	10.3 The basic meaning of the concept of 'reasonable support' to be provided by Secretariat for Commissions must be clarified and revised every four years, as part of quadrennial Programme development.	Council, Senior Management, Commission Chairs	Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 1, Feasibility 2
Fit for Purpose of IUCN	13. IUCN should more intentionally socialise its knowledge across the Union, creating an enabling communicative environment for different components of the Union to collectively and holistically work together.	Global Communications Unit, Senior Management Team, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commission Chairs, Strategic Partnerships Unit	13.1 The Global Communications Unit should develop a whole of organisation communication strategy, doing so in ways that actively engage all relevant communications actors across the Union, and then making it available across the Union in a timely fashion.	Global Communication Unit, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors, Commission Chairs	Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 1, Feasibility 2
	15. IUCN should continue revising its funding strategy to account for the current downward trend in unrestricted ODA funding and the emergence of interesting alternatives.	Senior Management Team, Strategic Partnerships Unit, Framework Partners, Commission Chairs, Council	15.1 The Strategic Partnership Unit should have the authority and capacity to coordinate fundraising across the Union.	Council, Senior Management Team, Strategic Partnership Unit	Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 1, Feasibility 1
			15.2 IUCN should develop fundraising packages for specific potential donors, which brings together an *appropriately designed* and *tailored* mix of knowledge products and baskets, programmes, Commissions, regional and other considerations.	Strategic Partnership Unit, in conversation across the Union	Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 1, Feasibility 2

Evaluation Areas	Strategic		Operational		
	Recommendation	Target Audience	Recommendation	Target Audience	Priority Level
	16. IUCN should continue revising its M&E system, in line with both the strategic-orientation and learning prerogative of Results-Based Management (RBM) approach to Monitoring and Evaluation.	Senior Management Team, PM&E Unit	**16.3 IUCN should develop appropriately collaborative monitoring processes** specifically designed to generate hard as well as perceptual data on the effectiveness of Flagship and selected programme-based knowledge products as well as Commissions.	PM&E Unit, Commission Chairs, Global Programme Directors, Regional Directors	Strategic Priority 1, Urgency 1, Feasibility 2

E n d   N o t e s

[1] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark; Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland; Agence Française de Développement (AFD); Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea; Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad); Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida); Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC); Environment Agency of the United Arab Emirates; and the MAVA Foundation

[2] UNESCO Biosphere Conference (1968), Club of Rome's Limits to Growth (1972), the UN Conference on the Human Environment (1972), Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (1979), World Conservation Strategy (1980) Road to Extinction Symposium (1984), World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission – 1983), Brundtland Report – *Our Common Future* (1987), UN Conference on Environment and Development (The Earth Summit, 1992), UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD – 1992), UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC – 1992), Millennium Development Summit and Goals (2000), World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002), UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20, 2012), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs –2015).

[3] These included the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) (see http://www.rspb.org.uk Consulted 27 October 2015) and the Fauna and Flora Preservation Society (now Fauna and Flora International; see http://www.fauna-flora.org Consulted 27 October 2015). Its founders include world re-known scientists and conservationists, Julian Huxley and Harold Jefferson Coolidge, Jr.

[4] IUCN. (2012c, September). 'The IUCN Programme 2013–2016'. Adopted by the IUCN World Conservation Congress. International Union for Conservation of Nature. pp.3-4.

[5] In January 2015, Inger Andersen took over from Julia Marton-Lefèvre as Director General of IUCN. The 2015 External Review of IUCN thus arrives early in Ms. Andersen's term.

[6] See also Chapter 6 for further discussion.

[7] As this is also strongly related to fit-for-purpose, the specifics of such actions are also discussed in chapter 6.

[8] This is the case with respect to its standard setting, policy-oriented work, and its diverse and hybrid membership.

[9] IUCN (2014a, April).

[10] The 'Governance of Nature's Use' document makes a case for framing IUCN's niche more explicitly to address different governance (of nature's use) situations and recommends a reformulation of the niche statement to reflect that. However, the statement, in the External Review Team's view, is also jargon-laden and the focus on the cooperation amongst constituent parts of the Union would have little meaning to external stakeholders.

[11] Monitor Institute and Rockefeller Foundation (June 2013). 'Gather: The Arts and Science of Effective Convening'.

[12] Including more active involvement on climate change, water governance and energy policy work, based on extensive interview data from Institutional Members and Secretariat, with more specifically thematic orientations coming from individual Commissions.

[13] The Western Gray Whale Advisory Panel has existed since 2004 to provide advice to Sakhalin Energy in Russia. Other panels include the Biodiversity Advisory Panel to Holcim, the Technical Advisory Panel on Climate Change to support the Government of Pakistan, the Independent Advisory Panel to Shell in Nigeria providing advice on the remediation and rehabilitation of biodiversity and habitats in the aftermath of the oil spill sites in the Niger Delta.

[14] This was also one of the conclusions of the 2007 External Review.

[15] One foundation expressed the desire to see IUCN act more boldly on harder issues and regarding higher profile actors; e.g. leveraging its membership to address China's practices and impacts beyond its borders.

[16] With Demos being an exception, working only at national level.

[17] Similar to IUCN, both Brookings and Aspen leverage the power of scientific research and expertise to effect change through the forums they host and do not act as advocacy organisations. CGIAR is different, as its aims are achieved by building consensus around a shared vision and agenda for addressing global problems of poverty and hunger. Demos is the least relevant, as it leverages its own research to influence policies in the UK, but is a good example of research as the primary asset, rather than the experts as convenors.

[18] Volume I, Appendix X provides some illustrative examples of IUCN's capacity in these areas. These characteristics have also served as the working definition for a 'convenor' in this review.

[19] Stakeholders interviewed noted that they were not always certain what effect this knowledge was having on policies, procedures and interventions. See also Chapter 4 on knowledge chains.

[20] This point was conveyed effectively by one Secretariat staff person who noted, 'We are not leveraging our learning properly yet across the Union and so our influence is not as great as it should be. While IUCN's global knowledge products tend to focus at the global level, implementation and ownership resides at the national levels. Therefore, too much of a focus on global conventions can compromise national delivery, ownership and change.'

[21] TNC, WWF, CI and WRI are Institutional Members of IUCN. For this comparison, data sources included interviews and web-based searches. Only Wetlands International was not interviewed. An interview was requested but did not meet with a response.

[22] A detailed comparison based on selected characteristics that these organisations may have in common with IUCN is presented in Volume I, Appendix IV.

[23] See IBAT discussion in Chapter 4, Outcome Pathway 4; see also Chapter 6 on Membership and Engagement.

[24] Such as Wetlands strategic intent document. http://www.wetlands.org/Portals/0/publications/Strategy%20paper/WI-SI2011_2020-web.pdf (Consulted 6 January 2016).

[25] Drawing on the example of other convenor organisations such as Brookings or Aspen.

[26] Attempts to interview two other organisations did not meet with success.

[27] The names have been fictionalised to maintain anonymity, given their request for confidentiality.

[28] It takes time to rally around a common agenda, while lacking the agility to shift gears.

[29] There are un- and under-exploited opportunities for shared systems and better efficiencies.

[30] See IUCN. (2012c). 'The IUCN Programme 2013-2016'. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. 26pp; IUCN (2012a) 'IUCN Knowledge Products : The basis of a partnership to support the functions and work programme of IPBES'. Gland, Switzerland : IUCN. 68pp; IUCN (2014). 'Biodiversity for Business: A guide to using knowledge products delivered through IUCN'. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. 48pp.

[31] IUCN. (2012c). The IUCN Programme 2013-2016. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN, p.5.

[32] See Integration of IUCN's 'flagship knowledge products' Version 2_10 October 2013. The four programme priorities of IUCN are: Providing Knowledge Products, Delivering Results on the Ground, Strengthening Policy and Governance, and Engaging and Leveraging the Union.

[33] IUCN Council Decision C/82/13, p.7. http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/decisions_of_the_82nd_meeting_of_the_iucn_council__november_2013_.pdf (Consulted 17 January 2016).

[34] They were selected to include Flagship and programme-based knowledge products, well-established and recently developed knowledge products, and to include a diversity of Commissions and programmes. Doing so

allowed the Review Team to gain both a breadth and wealth of knowledge and insights into IUCN knowledge products and practices.

[35] The survey statistics on this are unanimously convincing : 97.5% of IUCN Commission Member survey respondents consider the RLTS relevant to the mission of IUCN and 90.7% consider it relevant to the work of their Commission; 96.2% of IUCN Institutional Member respondents consider the RLTS relevant to the mission of IUCN, and 84% consider it relevant to the work of their organisation; 97.1% of IUCN Secretariat staff member respondents consider the RLTS relevant to the mission of IUCN, and 90.1% consider it relevant to the mandate of the Secretariat.

[36] The WCS stated the following: '1. Development and conservation operate in the same global context, and the underlying problems that must be overcome if either is to be successful are identical…' and '5. …Accordingly it is strongly recommended that the objectives of the World Conservation Strategy – the maintenance of essential ecological processes and life-support systems, the preservation of genetic diversity, and the sustainable utilization of species and ecosystems – be included in the new International Development Strategy.' *The World Conservation Strategy is available at:* https://portals.iucn.org/library/efiles/edocs/WCS-004.pdf *(Consulted 15 January 2016).*

[37] It must also be noted that the survey points to a high incidence of respondents not able to judge relevance, for the WANI Toolkits and NRGF, as well as Protected Planet to a lesser extent. Nonetheless, comparatively speaking, the conclusion remains the same if tempered by this uncertainty.

[38] These are illustrative and not comprehensive. Documents consulted include: Protected Planet Report 2014, IUCN Programme 2013-2016, IUCN Annual Report 2014, 2014 Annual Report to Framework Partners.

[39] The full methodological discussion is available in Volume II, Appendix II.

[40] IUCN. (2012a). 'IUCN Knowledge Products: The basis for a partnership to support the functions and work programme of IPBES'. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. p.6.

[41] Red List of Threatened Species (RLTS), Red List of Ecosystems (RLE), Protected Planet/World Database of Protected Areas (WDPA), Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA), Index of Human Dependency on Nature (HDN), Natural Resources Governance Framework (NRGF).

[42] Coordination of the 'flagship knowledge products' mobilised through IUCN, Draft, 24 September 2015.

[43] This is the standard for the RLTS, approved by IUCN Council in C/40/22 in 1994 and again in C/51/35 in 2001.

[44] Endorsed by WCC-2012-Res-040.

[45] Approved by IUCN Council in C/83/17 in 2014.

[46] The issue of 'knowledge nomenclature' is discussed below, in Section 4.4.

[47] As the NRGF is in development, the survey asked if the NRGF is being informed by a diversity of authoritative sources. Understandably, a high proportion of respondents were not able to judge.

[48] RLTS Assessment Process information is available at: http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/assessment-process (Consulted 15 January 2016).

[49] Available at: http://www.unep-wcmc.org/system/dataset_file_fields/files/000/000/328/original/WDPA_Manual_1_1_FINAL_30092015.pdf?1443609695 (Consulted 15 January 2016).

[50] As articulated by one key Commission Member, reflecting a widespread sentiment across the Union: 'Frankly, the core investment of IUCN into either the standards or the knowledge products is almost zero. Certainly this is the case for the RLTS. Were it not for the huge voluntary effort of the Species Survival Commission, effective (but increasingly difficult) project funding by the Secretariat, and the great contributions of the Red List Partner organisations, all held together under a governance mechanism (The Red List Committee), the RLTS would be finished. But the lack of any core investment shows, for example in the

decrepit and dysfunctional underlying software, and the website which is outdated and close to collapse…
IUCN spends virtually nothing on the product that gives it most good reputation in the world, to the point that
its website could keel over at any moment.'

[51] Key informant interview, Secretariat.

[52] See p.4: http://www.iucnredlist.org/documents/red_list_strategic_plan_2013_2020.pdf (Consulted on 28
October 2015).

[53] See http://www.issg.org/database/welcome/aboutGISD.asp (Consulted 14 December 2015).

[54] RLTS Focus Group

[55] Key informant interviews, Commission Member, Secretariat, Institutional Member. Also, Protected Planet
Focus Group.

[56] This matter is being considered and is discussed in Section 6.6.

[57] Creech, H. (2004) Mobilizing IUCN's knowledge to secure a sustainable future: The IUCN Knowledge
Management Study. International Institute for Sustainable Development, pp.33-34.
http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/km_study_full_report.pdf (Consulted 14 November 2015).

[58] Creech, H. (2004) Mobilizing IUCN's knowledge to secure a sustainable future: The IUCN Knowledge
Management Study. International Institute for Sustainable Development, pp.33-34.
http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/km_study_full_report.pdf (Consulted 14 November 2015). See also:
http://www.iucn.org/knowledge/focus/respecting_indigenous_and_traditional_knowledge/
(Consulted 15 January 2016).

[59] RLTS Focus Group

[60] Given that only four knowledge chains were examined for this External Review, IUCN is encouraged to
pursue a knowledge chain analysis for each of its Flagship and programme-based knowledge products, intent
on making visible each of their individual and complementary outcome pathways. It must also be noted that
not all outcome pathways can be anticipated, such that some negative ones also exist as a result of IUCN's
work. The RLTS focus group identified an important and unexpected effect of the Red List, in terms of
increasing the commercial value of species as they become increasingly threatened and endangered. In other
words, while RLTS data may inform action, such action may produce negative conservation outcomes. While
flagging this concern, IUCN does not yet a strategy in place to respond to this matter.

[61] This has included listing in relation to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance;
listing in relation to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES); use for the Aichi
Biodiversity Targets and the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) stemming from
commitments to the CBD; Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) indicators; informs Performance Standard 6
of the International Finance Corporation (IFC); processes deriving from the Convention on Migratory Species,
Natura 2000 of the European Union, and others.

[62] This has included informing UN-CBD Aichi targets as well as the NBSAPs; monitoring of MDGs; global
Reporting through the Global Environment Outlook and Global Biodiversity Outlook; monitoring and
reporting on Ramsar Convention on Wetlands as well as World Heritage Convention commitments; and
informing the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)
programme of work, among others.

[63] Key informant interview, Secretariat.

[64] Smith, M., and Cartin M. (2011). 'Water Vision to Action: Catalysing Change through the IUCN Water and
Nature Initiative'. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. viii plus 55pp, especially p.7 and 45-50. Available at:
https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/final_wani_results_report_lr.pdf (Consulted 29 October 2015).

[65] 2014 IUCN Annual Report to Framework Partners.

[66] https://www.thegef.org/gef/RAF (Consulted 15 January 2016).

[67] See https://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/RAF%20Midterm%20Reallocation.pdf, notably p.3. (Consulted 16 January 2016).

[68] https://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/C.27.Inf_.8.Rev_.1%20RAF.pdf (Consulted 15 January 2016)

[69] Key informant comment, Commission Member. See https://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/publication/GEF_STAR_A4_april11_CRA.pdf (Consulted 16 January 2016).

[70] https://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/publication/GEF_STAR_A4_april11_CRA.pdf, especially p.2. (Consulted 16 January 2016)

[71] https://www.iucn.org/about/union/secretariat/offices/oceania/cepfeastmelanesia/ (Consulted 16 January 2016).

[72] http://www.cepf.net/SiteCollectionDocuments/east_melanesian_islands/EMI_ecosystem_profile.pdf (Consulted 16 January 2016).

[73] See http://www.speciesconservation.org/ (Consulted 16 January 2016).

[74] IUCN Annual Report 2014, p.3.

[75] Council document C/85/5.2.2.2., Appendix II. 13 April 2015. http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/decisions_of_the_85th_meeting_of_the_iucn_council__may_2015__with_16_annexes.pdf (Consulted 17 January 2016).

[76] Role of IBAT with respect to overall integration of the flagship knowledge products mobilised through IUCN, Draft 27 September 2015, p.2.

[77] Key informant interview, Secretariat. See also applications of the Global Invasive Species Database (GISD), for another example.

[78] www.iucn.org

[79] IUCN Annual Report 2014, p.11.

[80] IUCN Annual Report 2014, p.15.

[81] Protected Planet, IUCN-WCPA and UNEP-WCMC (March 2014) 'Protected Planet: Strategic Plan 2015-2020', p.7.

[82] Both of the queries below were undertaken and provided by a key Secretariat informant.

[83] According to a key Secretariat informant, '[t]he Key Biodiversity Areas knowledge product encompasses and builds from Important Bird Areas, as a consolidated approach to identification of important sites for all elements of biodiversity.'

[84] Mindful also of the fact that there are overlaps between the databases and projects of IUCN, its Institutional Members and partners.

[85] A RLTS Focus Group participant comment is telling in this regard: 'I work in this field and have a PhD but I struggle to use it. It's very difficult to generate a list of CR (Critically Endangered) species in certain taxa within a certain geographic region. The searchable database is difficult to search.'

[86] http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/red-list-training/translations (Consulted 14 December 2015).

[87] http://www.iucnredlist.org/amazing-species (Consulted 19 January 2016).

[88] http://www.cectalksnature.org/members-in-action-articles/open-call-young-peoples-protected-areas-challenge (Consulted 14 December 2015).

[89] See http://pushingboundaries.coalitionwild.org (Consulted 14 December 2015).

90 This section may be understood as a high-level framing for a typology of outcome pathways that developers, managers and evaluators of knowledge products can use to define and refine their uptake, outcome and impact strategies.

91 Based on extensive interview responses across Commissions and the Secretariat, knowledge products under consideration included ECOLEX, EGI: Environment and Gender Index, and GISD: Global Invasive Species Database.

92 Draft Document, 'Coordination of the 'flagship knowledge products' mobilized through IUCN', version 24 September 2015.

93 Key informant comment, Commission Member.

94 As per IUCN 2015 Work Plan and Budget, Approved by decision C/84/11 of the 84th Meeting of the IUCN Council on 10 November 2014. See Annex 3, p.10. http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/decisions_of_the_84th_meeting_of_the_iucn_council__november_2014__with_attachments.pdf (Consulted 17 January 2016).

95 Key informant interviews from across Secretariat and Commissions.

96 http://www.biopama.org/about/ (Consulted on 14 December 2015).

97 http://panorama.solutions (Consulted on 14 December 2015).

98 https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/final_wani_results_report_lr.pdf (Consulted on 28 October 2015).

99 Details of the development process are available through a number of reports, including: IUCN NRGF Inception Report available at: https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/nrgf_inception_workshop_report_july_2013.pdf (Consulted 30 October 2015); Addis Ababa Technical Workshop Meeting Report available at: http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/nrgf_technical_meeting_addis_ababa.pdf (Consulted 30 October 2015).

100 Extensive interviewing across different components of the Union, with little dissonant opinion on this matter.

101 For example, with the Protected Areas Programme, the Water Programme, and others – including Institutional Members – where there are obvious potential synergies.

102 The following comments are telling in this respect : 'There is little institutional buy-in to the NRGF. A quite heavy exclusionary approach has seen a reluctance in allowing 'too much' Secretariat influence to 'capture the discourse'. Secretariat Headquarters; 'We were not involved [in scoping process] as much as we would have liked… The NRGF is not integrated into regional work on the ground'. Distributed Secretariat; 'No consultation has been undertaken with IUCN Membership in developing the NRGF despite lots of governance happening with partner and others within and outside IUCN'. Secretariat Headquarters; 'The challenge of the NRGF is about implementing the One Programme Approach'. NRGF Working Group.

103 Interview with Framework Partner.

104 This sentiment was frequently expressed by Secretariat and Commission Members throughout the data collection process.

105 http://www.lawforsustainability.org (Consulted 29 October 2015).

106 Natural Resource Governance Framework: Progress Update to the Programme and Policy Committee, IUCN Council. October 2015.

107 Natural Resource Governance Framework: Progress Update to the Programme and Policy Committee, IUCN Council. October 2015, pp.2-4.

108 NRGF Working Group key informant.

109 During the revision stage of the External Review's first draft submission, the IUCN Council (C/87/20) 'Notes the significant progress that has been made in developing the Natural Resource Governance

Framework (NRGF) over a relatively short period of time and <u>commends</u> the methods and processes used; <u>Encourages</u> early and proactive engagement among the different parts of the Union following the One Programme approach and principles; <u>Recognises</u> that further institutional support and dedicated fundraising is required; and <u>Recommends</u> that the on-going development of the NRGF remains a high institutional priority in the lead up to the 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress and over the 2017-2020 Programme period.'

[110] https://www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/ (Consulted 26 October 2015).

[111] Many IUCN documents variably speak of 10,000-11,000 Commission Members but numbers provided by individual Commission Chairs and a statement by Secretariat staff put the figure at about 15,000.

[112] IUCN. (2012). 'Statutes, including Rules of Procedure of the World Conservation Congress, and Regulations'. Last amended on 13 October 2015. International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. p. 21.

[113] 'The functions of the Commissions shall be to fulfil their missions as defined in their mandates, including: (a) to analyse issues and prepare assessments, reports, action plans, criteria and methodology and undertake research and other scientific and technical work; (b) to undertake tasks assigned to them within the integrated programme of IUCN; (c) to provide advice on any matter within their fields of competence; (d) to broaden knowledge and competence on matters relating to their mandates; (e) to work with Members and the Secretariat to develop activities within the various Regions, and to support Members and components of IUCN with necessary expertise; and (f) to undertake such other responsibilities as may be assigned to them by the World Congress and the Council.' Statute 75 (Ibid., p.22)

[114] http://www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/ (Consulted 6 November 2015).

[115] Working as a Union to Deliver IUCN's One Programme (Endorsed by the IUCN Council (76th Meeting, May 2011) and the 2012 World Conservation Congress (decision 19)). Summary Statement, p. 1.

[116] Available at https://portals.iucn.org/library/efiles/documents/EPLP-086.pdf (Consulted 12 January 2016).

[117] However, this should not be taken as a rule into the future, given Commissions' ability to innovate.

[118] CEC has a very active Facebook public group with 11,494 members who post, comment, like and share many times a day. CEESP's closed group has 987 members. WCPA has a fairly active Facebook personal page liked by 3,370 people to which it posts and receives 'likes' several times a day. The WCEL personal page, which is liked by 489 people, has relatively little activity with about one post a day. SSC does not have its own page but is present on Facebook through a multitude of sub-groups, the most important one being the fairly active RLTS personal page, which is liked by 133,961 people. Similarly, CEM is present through associated pages, including the fairly active Red List of Ecosystems (RLE) page liked by 4,914 people. Many Specialist Groups and other sub-groups or initiatives also have their own pages.

[119] 'The mandate of the Task Force on Systemic Pesticides (TFSP) has been set by IUCN Resolution WCC-2012-Res-137: Support for a comprehensive scientific review of the impact on global biodiversity of systemic pesticides by the joint task force of the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) and the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), adopted by the Members' Assembly of the IUCN in Jeju, Korea, in September 2012: *to carry out a comprehensive, objective, scientific review and assessment of the impact of systemic pesticides on biodiversity, and on the basis of the results of this review to make any recommendations that might be needed with regard to risk management procedures, governmental approval of new pesticides, and any other relevant issues that should be brought to the attention of decision makers, policy developers and society in general.'* (www.tfsp.info/about-us/)

[120] One informed Commission Member described how opportunities for influencing global policy had shifted away from legal mechanisms and toward mobilisation at many levels, and that IUCN had yet to seize some important opportunities to mobilise its Membership.

[121] A number of them participated in IUCN's Programme Writing Week in January 2015, a collaborative process to begin drafting the Global Programme for 2017-2020. Some Commission Members have volunteered to write certain sections of the forthcoming Programme.

[122] They reported jointly on their work in their 2014 Annual Report and for many years before that.

[123] IUCN's Save Our Species (SOS) funding mechanism (a partnership with GEF and the World Bank) selects projects based on scientific information provided by SSC and the Global Species Programme.

[124] A small minority of respondents disagreed that Commissions represent a vehicle for innovation. One staff member of a partner organisation commented, 'The general perception of Commissions seems to be long-lived, consensus-based, not a crucible for new ideas.'

[125] Some respondents said they were uncertain about CEC because they saw communication and education as more of a function than a theme or as something cross-cutting that should be incorporated into every Commission. Nonetheless, the majority expressed the sentiment that communication and engagement are crucial to IUCN and it is important to maintain this focus.

[126] It was suggested by some interview and survey respondents that there may be a need for review and renewal of the range of sub-groups.

[127] With regard to new areas of concern, climate change was mentioned most often. Most respondents believe this cross-cutting issue is being incorporated into the work of all Commissions in some way. SSC has a Climate Change Specialist Group that looks at issues of species vulnerability and adaptation. CEM has a Climate Change Adaptation Thematic Group that promotes ecosystem-based adaptation. WCPA has a Climate Change Specialist Group promoting Protected Areas as nature-based solutions to global climate challenges, including planning for change in managing protected areas. WCEL has an Energy Law and Climate Change Specialist Group. CEESP looks at the effects of climate change on local communities and indigenous peoples. CEC's *Love, Not Loss* initiatives confront the problem of fear and denial impeding positive action, which has become more pervasive in the face of climate change. Commissions have also effectively addressed emerging issues and increased integration by developing joint initiatives involving more than one Commission. For example, the Sustainable Use and Livelihoods (SULi), a joint CEESP-SSC Specialist Group, has 300 members and plays an important role in keeping them informed of issues concerning sustainable use, relating particularly to management, governance and economic benefits. The integration within the two Commissions ensures that the wider membership of these Commissions is exposed to perspectives that may be outside their usual purview. All members of SULi are Members of both CEESP and SSC.

[128] Key informant interview, Secretariat.

[129] While the knowledge-based functions are essential, and being part of a network of people recognised as experts is an important motivator for Commission Members, they can and want to do more.

[130] Price, S., Mark R. (2001, July). 'Voluntarism in the Species Survival Commission of IUCN', Final Report, July 2001.

[131] Whyte, A., & Ofir, Z. (2004, May). External Review of IUCN Commissions - Final Report. International Union for Conservation of Nature, p.3.

[132] IUCN. (2012, September). The IUCN Programme 2013–2016 Adopted by the IUCN World Conservation Congress. International Union for Conservation of Nature. p. 1; Also, this continues to be present in the draft IUCN 2017-2020 Programme. See IUCN 2017-2020 Programme (Draft for consultation, 4 June 2015, p. 3), provided by the IUCN Secretariat.

[133] Valuing and conserving nature; effective and equitable governance of nature's use; and deploying nature based solutions to climate, food and development.

[134] The Business Model is linked to the IUCN Programme and focuses on (1) providing knowledge products; (2) delivering results on the ground; (3) strengthening policy and governance; and (4) leveraging and engaging the Union.

[135] The One Programme Charter refers to all of the parts of the Union working together.

[136] In addition to adhering to the IUCN Statutes and the One Programme Charter, there are advantages to requiring Commissions to align with a more loosely defined programme, which allows them to play to their strengths, and does not limit the potential for diverse pathways to achieving IUCN goals (as discussed in Chapter 4). It must be recalled that the Commissions are networks of individuals doing many different things that can align with the IUCN Programme in a variety of ways. As one Commission Member commented, '*articulation of the high level three areas [the three programme areas in the IUCN Programme Framework] is helpful. I have no idea about the details*.'

[137] According to one key informant from Secretariat, 'The official thinking, "big is better" regarding Commissions should be replaced by a criterion of effectiveness and efficiency. Today, we need smaller bodies with focused functions, not big groups where 90% of the membership is a burden.'

[138] If IUCN wishes to strengthen the capacity of a sector that will have responsibility to further develop and implement conservation policy, this is a potentially very important function.

[139] See IUCN's Gender Policy: https://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/gender/gender_about_us/ (Consulted 17 January 2016).

[140] Stanley Price, Mark R., Voluntarism in the Species Survival Commission of IUCN, Final Report, July 2001.
[141] WCEL Member comments about Membership are as follows: 'After a long delay in getting accepted to the WCEL I was told I was now a Member and then had no subsequent communication.'; 'I never hear much from WCEL, nor have I ever been approached to offer advice, input etc. I guess this is true for most other Members.'; 'Involve the Members. I've never been involved or contacted. Or let them know that they won't be contacted.'

[142] Survey respondent comment, Secretariat.

[143] Chairs may act in the name of their Commission; they lead its activities; and delegate responsibilities to other Members. The Chair is responsible for the appointment or reappointment of the Members of the Commission. They are responsible for nominating a Deputy Chair and Members of their Steering Committee, which are then appointed by the IUCN Council (of which they themselves are Members). They can similarly propose to change Steering Committee Members before the end of the second full calendar year following the World Conservation Congress, which the Council must then confirm.

The Chairs themselves are elected by the Congress after being proposed by Members in Categories A and B or by an ad hoc committee of Steering Committee Members who solicit nominations from the Member of their Commissions and submit 'a list of up to two prioritised candidates determined through qualification criteria established by the Steering Committee.' (Statute 30bis, p. 57)

[144] 'IUCN Commission Chairs Election, Role and Function'
https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/iucn_commission_chairs_election__role_and_function_en.pdf

[145] They must possess, among other things, the qualities to occupy positions on Council. They must be 'an outstanding widely respected expert within the work of the Commission', have leadership qualities and global networks. They must have strategic planning and organisational management skills and be able to effectively chair meetings. They must be good communicators, are able to work across cultures and disciplines. Commission Chairs must also be able to devote a considerable amount of time (often equivalent to a full-time job).

[146] Two Commission Chairs however felt very strongly that the role of Chair should remain a voluntary position to avoid undermining the volunteerism that they feel is at the heart of the Commissions. Co-chairing was suggested by some Commission Members as a potentially good approach.

[147] See www.lawforsustainability.org (Consulted 11 January 2016). The ELC has also provided support to WCEL on the 2014 World Parks Congress and ahead of the forthcoming 2016 World Conservation Congress. The relationship between them appears also to have improved, which has been attributed in no small measure to the new Director General's leadership on this matter.

[148] In one important and telling case, CEC was told that its work was not a priority for IUCN.

[149] The wider issue of IUCN funding strategies and practices is addressed in Chapter 6.

[150] Interviews with key stakeholders, Commissions.

[151] Interviewing across the Union consistently revealed this perspective.

[152] Oviedo, Gonzalo (2008, December) with contributions from Annelie Fincke: 'Civil society and the importance of volunteerism for environmental conservation' (document discussing volunteerism in the context of IUCN and beyond at the Taean International Environment Forum), p. 2. https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/civil_society_and_the_importance_of_volunteerism_for_environmental_conservation.pdf

[153] A process for contracting Commission Members is in place as per the *IUCN Policy and Procedure on Procurement of Goods and Services* (November 2013: Version 1.1, Section 12.(e), p. 23) There appears to be very little knowledge of this policy within the Union.

[154] Oviedo, Gonzalo (2008, December) with contributions from Annelie Fincke: 'Civil society and the importance of volunteerism for environmental conservation' (document discussing volunteerism in the context of IUCN and beyond at the Taean International Environment Forum), p. 2. https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/civil_society_and_the_importance_of_volunteerism_for_environmental_conservation.pdf

[155] Commission commitments regarding accountability are further detailed in the One Programme Charter as follows: We develop jointly with the Secretariat mechanisms and agreements to enable us to play our vital role in ensuring IUCN's work and policy advocacy are based on robust, evidence-based scientific knowledge; we adhere to agreed accountability and transparency standards for our participation in the Programme; we work with the Secretariat to put in place agreements for our participation in the Programme and report on our activities which contribute to IUCN results. Ibid., p.4.

[156] As some Commission Steering Committee Members described it: 'The demand [requirements] must come from the Union [via the Council] but it should be translated by the Secretariat.' 'The Secretariat needs to be clearer about the demand [requirements] and then resource the work of the Commission and not simply complain it's not meeting expectations.'

[157] For example, the Chair of WCEL stated that his Commission did not have the time or the 'expertise' to be able to report against its plan. WCEL has reported to Council in a 'Year in Review' format. The presentation for 2014 lists priorities (which are not those laid out in WCEL's 2013-2016 Mandate), partners, activities and increases in number of Members with 14 of the 24 slides featuring photographs of people at meetings. This is inadequate for understanding the results of WCEL's work and demonstrates the need for appropriate reporting formats and a process through which the Council can effectively appraise to work of each Commission.

[158] Available at: http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/1_introduction_to_the_project_guidelines_and_standards_final29_07_14_1.pdf (Consulted 21 January 2016).

[159] Ibid., p.3.

[160] Ibid., p.3.

[161] See: http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/1415_1515_1_2017_2020_programme_merged_ppt_09_08_1.pdf (Consulted 21 January 2016)

[162] The following questions allow one to appreciate the challenges involved in valuing volunteering at IUCN: How many of the functions of a multi-functional membership network should be counted? How much are certain kinds of expertise or certain networks worth? By volunteering to contribute one's knowledge to a larger pool, how much should be counted of the process of developing it? Is time spent sharing information that enhances capacity, which can be applied to conservation activities, worth the same as information shared that enhances IUCN's reputation and attracts support?

[163] Commissions are the only entry point for individuals into the work of IUCN.

[164] This was discussed in Chapter 3.

[165] The Secretariat, Commissions, National and Regional Committees, and Institutional Members.

[166] Only the Commissions, as a part of the Union, are not specifically addressed here but rather in the chapter on Commissions.

[167] IUCN, 'Review of Roles and Responsibilities within the Union'. The Framework of Action to Strengthen the Union, 18 October 2013.

[168] IUCN, *The Voice of Nature and Sustainability: IUCN's Key Messages and Policy Influencing Strategies,* 18 October 2013.

[169] IUCN Secretariat, 'Governance of Nature's Use – a Niche for IUCN?' Consultation Note for the Framework of Action to Strengthen the Union, April 2014 Draft.

[170] The final section of the report on the 'involvement and ownership by all Union components and groups of Members' was, as of this External Review, still pending the results of the FASU consultations. Data are not available to ascertain how illuminating the results were, however, from the survey data with Institutional Members for this External Review, evidence indicates a need for clarifying their roles in the Union.

[171] Content for the analysis derived mainly from the Secretariat, as well as existing Programme and communication documents. The document includes a review of the brainstorming session on improving IUCN's branding in early 2013.

[172] Key informant interview, Secretariat.

[173] n=235.

[174] In addition, 11% of respondents made comments to the effect that IUCN needs to improve the alignment between its various components (Secretariat, Commissions, Institutional Members, Committees) and should not allow the organisation to compete with its Members. Rather, the different parts of the Union should align with a common vision in order to remain relevant.

[175] 2013 data was used as it was the most recent available at the time of writing. It also serves as a benchmark for future analysis, as noted.

[176] The matter of personal relationships has already been discussed in the Commissions section of this report.

[177] In relating resource issues to fit-for-purpose, it deserves reiterating that: Secretariat staff is expected to contribute knowledge and evidence to the One Programme focus areas, in delivering results on the ground; Other parts of the Union – Commissions, Regional and National Committees and Institutional Members – are expected to be actively involved in the One Programme, i.e., in the design and implementation of programmes reflecting IUCN's three focus areas; As per the One Programme, it is assumed that teams 'best fit' for delivering the Programme will be constructed.

[178] Formally, there are eleven Regional Offices – Central and West Africa (PACO); South America; Asia (ARO); East and Southern Africa (ESARO); Europe; European Union Office; Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation; Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA); Oceania; Washington, DC Office; and Regional Office for Mexico, Mesoamerica and Caribbean (ORMACC).

[179] Staff costs for Corporate Services located in Gland, as a percentage of its total expenditures, is 51%, according to 2014 figures.

[180] The US Office, which does not implement programmes in the US, covers 50% of its costs with project funding, whereas the Mediterranean Office covers almost all its costs from project funds.

[181] Similar comments were made in interviews with Councillors, global conservation NGOs, and Secretariat staff.

[182] The Global Protected Areas Programme, for example, has intentionally sought to cobble together pieces of work which different donors are willing to fund so that each contributes to the bigger picture, but it also requires a dialogue or partnership with donors to understand IUCN's broader purpose.

[183] The Global Water Programme has a particularly good relationship with IUCN's many Regional Offices, as discussed in Chapter 4 (with specific reference to ROWA).

[184] Communication issues between Regional Offices, Institutional Members, Commission Members and Headquarters have also been raised in interviews and in the survey data for this Review. Commission Members sometimes feel their knowledge and expertise are not consistently leveraged effectively. The tensions that exist between Headquarters and Regional Offices – not across the board but in some quarters – suggest that Regional Offices are not always trusted to make their own decisions and at the same time, Regional Offices may feel excluded from decision making processes in Headquarters (according to comments from the qualitative data in the surveys with key informants from Commissions, Secretariat Headquarter staff and Regional Office staff). The lack of trust spills over into issues of resource allocation, with different expectations of what is a fair distribution of resources between Regional Offices and Headquarters staff. Questions were raised over Membership fees that go to Headquarters, even though costs are often borne by Regional Offices to do the outreach and Member support. There are also cases, according to some respondents, where programmes in a particular region are managed by Headquarters' staff who fail to communicate or engage with the Regional Office on the programme. Such claims point to the need for relations of trust and communication to improve between IUCN's Headquarters and Regional Offices.

[185] 2013 data show that there are 57 National Committees (the last new Member being Brazil) and 7 Regional Committees.

[186] IUCN, 'Review of Roles and Responsibilities within the Union'. The Framework of Action to Strengthen the Union, 18 October 2013.

[187] 'Operational Guide for IUCN National and Regional Committees', available at: https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/operational_guide_for_iucn_national_and_regional_committees_en.pdf (Consulted 19 January 2016).

[188] IUCN Secretariat, 'Programme Delivery Options for IUCN: Recommendations on Strengthened Programme Delivery'. Paper prepared for the IUCN Council (C83/10.5/2), April, 2014. Also, the European region recently published a toolkit for Creating and Managing an IUCN National Committee in Europe, providing guidance on establishing a national committee, using it as a mechanism for implementing projects, working with Commissions, and developing communication tools and strategies.

[189] By way of example, the IUCN Netherlands Committee, which exists as a separate legal entity, is known to have competed with IUCN for funding from the Dutch government, operating like an NGO with projects being implemented in the South. Interviews with Secretariat staff have provided a couple examples. Data are not otherwise sufficient to ascertain the frequency of Committees competing for funds.

[190] National and Regional Committees perceive themselves to be under-supported, financially and technically, to enable them to participate more fully in the work of IUCN and to play a stronger advocacy role vis-à-vis their respective governments. Individuals who serve on Regional and National Committees contribute time on their own account without financial compensation from IUCN. They are also expected to do their own fundraising. Thus, for example, in West Africa, climate change adaptation is an important area of work, but the engagement of National Committees appears to be limited by resource and information constraints.

[191] From the IUCN Statutes.

[192] For instance, this results in valuable knowledge products sometimes reaching National and Regional Committees at a late stage (e.g. once the product is finalised, rather than when it is being designed; once campaigns are well underway rather than when strategies are being developed and deployed).

[193] For example, the Caribbean Regional Committee is a case in point; it has been trying to participate in the planning, design and implementation of 'Conservation of Biodiversity Projects for the Caribbean', with little success. The critique is revealing, but not at all exceptional: 'The lack of respect of local expertise and the inclusion of Caribbean IUCN Members from the beginning of conservation efforts is a tragedy as the Regional Members are highly knowledgeable, clearly dedicated to the cause and extremely hard working to protect and effectively manage their natural resources within their countries and regions. I recommend that larger NGOs

and IUCN Secretariat ensure all local IUCN Members around the planet are included as equal partners in conservation efforts occurring within their regions.' From the survey data with Institutional Members, one respondent involved in a National Committee places a share of responsibility on the Committees and thus Members themselves: 'I am of the opinion that the local National Committees should be encouraged to seek common ground at the outset as to how the global/regional/national/local issues or relevant issues could be supported or contributed to feed into the collective global targets and mission and objectives of the IUCN as the mother body.'

[194] In 2013, IUCN had a net loss of six state Members for reasons not explainable here. State membership rose again since then and now stands at 89 in 2015.

[195] The data on their participation comes by way of examples embedded in various documents or websites.

[196] Examples of membership engagement can be found in the 'Working with members: Stories from around the world' that provides case studies of strategic programmatic engagement with state and NGO Members (available on their website). The 2014 annual report is punctuated with examples of engagement monitoring data, such as, 'In 2014, SOS increased its portfolio from 54 to 87 projects, implemented by more than 60 NGOs, two-thirds of which are IUCN Members, in more than 50 countries' (2014 Annual Report, p. 17).

[197] A key informant suggested that establishing selection criteria and quantifying the different categories of Members and their regional distribution could enhance the selection of new Members.

[198] IUCN leadership across the Union are favourable to engaging with them.

[199] Among other things, in Chapter 3.

[200] The survey was completed by 137 Institutional Members out of a total of 1311 organisations listed in the membership database on 6 November 2015. A total of 109 Members are categorised as International non-governmental organisations and 939 as national non-governmental organisations. https://www.iucn.org/about/union/members/who_members/members_database/

[201] But the data in this Review are limited in telling us about the types of networking that forms informally or formally amongst Members, as a result of their participation in IUCN, at local or other levels.

[202] The presence of government agencies within IUCN's membership was identified as another important strength (eight interviewees), specifically due to the resulting potential for policy influence. Secretariat staff perceived IUCN's positioning in the sector to be different than that of non-governmental interest groups, because of their closer relationship with national governments.

[203] IUCN, 'Review of Roles and Responsibilities within the Union'. The Framework of Action to Strengthen the Union, 18 October 2013.

[204] In the view of one global NGO, IUCN, with its convening capacity, has the potential to seed global movements, such as the C40 Cities initiated by Mayor Michael Bloomberg, to address climate change. See: http://www.c40.org (Consulted 17 January 2016).

[205] See Agenda Item 6.2.5.1 and 6.2.6.1, for instance. http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/decisions_of_the_87th_meeting_of_the_iucn_council__china__october_2015__with_annex_1_.pdf (Consulted 19 January 2016).

[206] As discussed earlier in the report, IUCN has an issue with in-house siloing, a matter demanding attention so that work undertaken at IUCN reflects an integrated, multi-disciplinary approach to the issues at hand, and also to favour One Programme type cooperation across the Union. As one RLTS focus group participant remarked, 'People at IUCN do not know much beyond their narrow focus.'

[207] The imperative for IUCN is to operate in a joined-up fashion internally so that it is able to communicate and demonstrate why a holistic approach is so fundamental to tackling global challenges (of humanity *and* the planet). While this does not mean that IUCN then needs to tackle all issues equally, a holistic understanding and approach will lead to a more clear articulation of what the priority areas of work are.

[208] See http://www.waterandnature.org/blog/embracing-new-era-communications (Consulted 19 November 2015). A key informant indicated that efforts were underway to address this.

[209] For instance, providing the regions with a media package or with standardised business cards.

[210] Key informant interview, Science and Knowledge, Secretariat.

[211] This is largely due to funding constraints and priorities.

[212] There are exceptions including work it did with the Secretariat Communications Unit on the communication campaign for Nature-Based Solutions to Global Challenges.

[213] For instance, Brookings' communication budget is 6.6% of its program services expenses, but that includes the costs of funding the Brookings Press for publications which is an important part of what Brookings delivers. Brookings also has six research programs and each one has a full fleet of communications staff. This is in addition to general communications, such as general media, press book inquiries, and staff that provides weekly updates. Brookings Institute, Annual Report 2015. See the Brookings Institute website: http://www.brookings.edu/ (Consulted 20 January 2016)

[214] From various types of printed matter, various forms of digital and non-digital media, logistics suited to different kinds of events and fora, and a diversity of specialists (graphic designers, publication managers, web operations, etc.

[215] See: http://gettingattention.org/articles/195/planning-budgets/nonprofit-marketing-budget.html (Consulted 20 January 2016).

[216] On the matter of brand, one knowledge product partner remarked that it is as much about partnership (or relationship building) as it is about the messaging: 'Knowledge products are important but governance is what makes this work. IUCN must demonstrate good partnership and governance... Brand is more than a logo, it is partnership, reliability and trust. This is the key brand issue. IUCN needs to consider these more strategically and effectively. We are prepared to be led by IUCN but not because we have to.' Quote from a knowledge product partner.

[217] From the Secretariat survey, staff comments referred first and foremost to the problems of internal and external communications, including branding. Twenty-six percent of the 176 staff respondents recommended that IUCN should focus more resources on communication within the Union, between various components, on providing external communications and on better branding.

[218] According to one U.S. foundation interviewed, IUCN does not have brand name recognition in the U.S. 'When I tell people I am on the board of IUCN, no one has any idea what it is,' in his words and especially when compared to global conservation NGOs in the US. An IUCN communications and marketing staff person in the US explained how difficult it was to sell IUCN to potential new private sector donors or foundations in the US, saying it is much easier to sell projects than the organisation. A Councillor in Europe remarked that, in their experience, 'IUCN does not have name recognition in the general population.'

219 IUCN has also been addressing the issue of the 'naming and branding of flagship products' with Council approval (85th Meeting, Switzerland, May 2015), on the recommendation of the Programme and Policy Committee to move ahead with a report on the subject (as well as one on governance). By this process, IUCN seeks to undo the confusion being created by multiple names and brands for some knowledge products and develop consistency in the naming and branding for knowledge products, standards, and baskets. It also recognises that brand recognition takes considerable time.

[220] ITAD, 2011, External Review, p. 91.

[221] This was suggested to, but not verified by the External Review Team.

[222] The reason for this is not apparent in the data.

[223] https://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/how-are-china-saudi-arabia-and-other-non-traditional-donors-doing-on-aid/ (Consulted 21 January 2016)

[224] IUCN reports that Germany, the United Kingdom and Australia are not open to framework funding. (Gillian Holmes, 'Update on Fundraising', presentation to the Finance and Audit Committee, 20 May 2014, slide 6.)

[225] A key informant argued the merits of moving forward in this way. Further, the Strategic Partnerships Unit has included foundations in its overarching strategy for IUCN.

[226] IUCN, *Strategy for Engaging US Foundations*, October, 2015.

[227] Giving USA Foundation, *Giving USA 2015*. http://www.nptrust.org/philanthropist/entries/news_for_donors/good-news-for-giving-record-high-numbers-in-giving-usas-2015-report (Consulted 6 November 2015).

[228] Foundations do not typically fund convening, unless perhaps reframed to speak to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development outcomes and not just outputs. In other words, engagement with foundations must be premised on a clear theory of change.

[229] http://www.unep.org/geo/pdfs/geo5/GEO5_report_C17.pdf

[230] Of note, it includes an Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS). IUCN's GEF Unit has a staff of three. As a result of these changes, IUCN has an updated and transparent procurement policy and procedures, for example.

[231] World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Conservation International (CI) who are both IUCN Members have also acquired accreditation. With regard to diverse opinions on the GEF, a narrow majority of consulted stakeholders viewed it favourably. For instance, it was stated that GEF could be a growth area for IUCN if its implementation work were to shrink. Adverse opinions mentioned the disruptive process and massive investment to get to the current stage, and the elevated bureaucratic demands on the Union that are anticipated.

[232] Indeed, priority actions for GEF investments have been identified within seven thematic areas of IUCN, including, for example, international waters and sustainable forest management. According to the document, 'IUCN Strategic Priorities for GEF Investments in 2015-2016,' the seven GEF focal areas are biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, chemicals and waste, climate change adaptation, and sustainable forest management. Focus areas had to also link to the strategic directions given for GEF-6 (2014-2018) and efforts were made to take account of the intercessional global priorities agreed by the Congress in Sep. 2012; with the budgeting process produced for 2013, 2014, and 2015; and with priorities identified by the 2014 WPC.

Several other principles governing which funding requests to consider further reinforce the attention to achieving IUCN's three global results. Two of these principles are (a) that they cover several focal areas at the same time to enhance 'biodiversity conservation through nature-based solutions' and (b) that they focus on 'activities that enhance awareness of ecosystem management and restoration amongst stakeholders and promote sustainable nature-based governance and management solutions.' See: 'IUCN Strategic Priorities for GEF Investments in 2015-2016.'

[233] One consequence of the GEF Status is that it incentivizes IUCN to invest in larger-scale projects (of over USD 2 million), rather than many small projects, because of the transaction costs of managing the GEF project cycle. The GEF portfolio has a ceiling of USD 75 million (20% of the Project Agency's overall portfolio) and the largest grant request cannot exceed the size of the largest project it has managed to date (therefore, USD 20 million).

[234] Of interest, The Rockefeller Foundation is one of the sponsors of the Global Innovation Lab for Climate Finance (see http://climatefinancelab.org), which aims to draw on experience and expertise from around the world to identify, design, and pilot the next generation of climate finance instruments. According to its public documents, these instruments will provide concrete solutions to financing challenges faced in real projects. They hope to build new markets, attract new investors, and unlock billions of dollars in new climate-friendly investments in developing countries. The Lab is part of broader government and private sector efforts to scale up climate finance. Recognising the urgency of the climate challenge, it responds by accelerating promising climate finance proposals so that they are ready to implement.

[235] http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/ffd3/press-release/unga-endorses-addis-agenda.html

[236] http://www.rona.unep.org/node/111

[237] Refers to investments that generate both a financial return and a social or environmental impact. For more information, please see: https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/our-work/initiatives/innovative-finance/

[238] http://worldparkscongress.org/programme/pavilions.html (Consulted 19 January 2016).

[239] http://www.naturalcapitalcoalition.org/ (Consulted 19 February 2016).

[240] IUCN Global Strategic Partnerships, *Fundraising Update to the Finance and Audit Committee*, 9 November 2014, p. 1.

[241] IUCN, 'IUCN Business Engagement Strategy', April 2012. And IUCN, 'IUCN Operational Guidelines for Business Engagement', Version 3, October 2015, summary consulted at: http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/a_summary_of_iucn_s_operational_guidelines.pdf (Consulted 19 January 2016).

[242]See: https://www.globalgiving.org

[243] As discussed in Chapter 4.

[244] IUCN Council Decision C/82/13 on 'Flagship knowledge products mobilized through IUCN'.

[245] A few points are noteworthy. IUCN expends a lot of energy on programme work (implementation) when it should be building up the policy framework that will encourage countries to adopt national policies (e.g. on natural infrastructure solutions) that can then scale up the impact. Also, place-based knowledge is what interests some donors, as it will help them to make the right investment decisions (e.g. locations for biodiversity conservation). Some of IUCN's work could be expanded, as 'nature-based solutions,' to meet the needs of a particular client (e.g. a company). Finally, IUCN can have greater impact by integrating its different knowledge products and making platforms available for specific users or user groups. The example upheld for knowledge product integration is IBAT.

[246] IUCN (April 2015g) The IUCN Monitoring and Evaluation Policy.

[247] Source: IUCN. (n.d.). IUCN – Monitoring our Work. http://www.iucn.org/knowledge/monitoring_evaluation/pme_monitoring/ (Consulted 26 October 2015).

[248] Key informant interview.

[249] Of which the NRGF would qualify. The so-called 'rule of thumb' is often pegged even high, as follows: 'Some organisations have a policy of setting aside a certain percentage of the total program budget for evaluation. Organisations often use a 'rule of thumb' to specify considerations in making a budget estimate. Common budget estimates range between 5 – 20% of program costs.' http://betterevaluation.org/plan/manage_evaluation/determine_resources (Consulted 30 October 2015).

[250]http://www.hewlett.org/sites/default/files/Benchmarks%20for%20Spending%20on%20Evaluation_2014.pdf (Consulted 30 October 2015). See also: http://www.stoptb.org/assets/documents/countries/acsm/me_planning_crs.pdf (Consulted 15 January 2016).

[251] See https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/oxfam-program-evaluation-policy-dec10.pdf, on page 1. (Consulted 30 October 2015).

[252] Universalia. *Shaping International Evaluation: A 30-Year Journey*, ed. Gary Anderson, 2010, p. 47.

[253] While it is worth revisiting this report, a short list of options that seem to be more actionable than others is presented here as ways that IUCN could narrow the potentially wide range of knowledge sharing possibilities for Members: Providing links to Member websites (which an integrated project portal would allow); Hosting regional knowledge platforms on a regular basis for Members, donors, and partners; Developing regional and

global working groups in cutting-edge areas of conservation and emerging issues, and inviting Commissions, Secretariat, and Members to participate (this could also be adapted to virtual communication); and Facilitating the networking of Members, their direct access to other Members and their expertise (the integrated portal) would also enable Members to initiate their own forums or listservs, without any management from IUCN. However, IUCN could play a role by recognising or rewarding these types of initiatives that lead to collective action and innovative work. See IUCN Office of Performance Assessment and Vital Research LLC, *The Voices of Members: Global Survey of IUCN Members*, for the IUCN Constituency Support Unit, November 2007.

[254] Based on interviews and focus group discussion. Throughout the lifespan of this initiative, the Global Water Programme would host an annual meeting of Technical Water Coordinators from the different Regions. This ensured that the Secretariat and different Regional Offices were learning together, creating collective knowledge that would feed back into their Regional work.

[255] IUCN, 'Working Together to Maximise Programme Results,' IUCN One Programme Charter, 2011.

[256] http://www.wetlands.org/Portals/0/publications/Strategy%20paper/WI-SI2011_2020-web.pdf (Consulted 6 January 2016).