



Creating and managing an IUCN National Committee in Europe

Toolkit

European Coordination Unit, June 2014



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IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges. IUCN's work focuses on valuing and conserving nature, ensuring effective and equitable governance of its use, and deploying nature-based solutions to global challenges in climate, food and development. IUCN supports scientific research, manages field projects all over the world, and brings governments, NGOs, the UN and companies together to develop policy, laws and best practice.










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*Creating and managing
an IUCN National Committee in Europe*

Toolkit



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National Committees

WHAT FOR?



National Committees What for?!...

National Committees (or similar structures) have been established in a bit more than 15 countries in Europe. They are, first and foremost, a way for IUCN Members in one or several countries to come together to coordinate and strengthen their actions at national level, as well as to be better prepared and organised to participate in and influence broader IUCN processes such as the World Conservation Congress and its Motions process, the development of the IUCN Programme, global or regional institutional reform processes, etc.

Although the name might sound a bit bureaucratic, National Committees are, in fact, very flexible, diverse, and use modular approaches to strengthen IUCN's presence at national level. As expressed by the existing National Committees themselves, the benefits of such structures are diverse:



Coordination & Influencing Mechanism

National Committees are an opportunity for Government and NGO Members of IUCN to meet and discuss conservation issues, agree and work together on a common agenda, including for policy influencing, at national level. IUCN Commission experts in each country can bring a scientific ground to these discussions.



Communication Platforms

National Committees are a key channel for communication between Members, Commissions and the Secretariat (and vice-versa). They are also an important outreach channel to promote IUCN products and activities at national level.



Discussion Forum

National Committees are an opportunity for IUCN Members to bring together a variety of stakeholders to meet and discuss national topics related to the IUCN Programme and keep abreast with IUCN activities and processes.



Implementation mechanism

In some cases, and depending on their capacities, National Committees can lead the implementation of the IUCN Programme at national level, with support from the Secretariat and the Commissions.

"A National Committee helps us addressing issues of biodiversity in France through a discussion Forum that can advise the national Government."

*Sébastien Moncorps
Director, IUCN French National Committee*



European National Committees Facts & figures

14 officially recognised National Committees exist in Europe, and three more countries have established similar models

- Denmark
- Finland
- France
- Hungary
- Israel
- Italy
- Netherlands
- Poland
- Russia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Turkey
- United Kingdom

The European Region is, by far, the **largest** both in size and in number of Members, of all IUCN regions

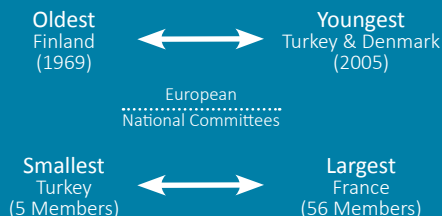
70% of European National Committees are located in **Western Europe**

6 European National Committees have full-time paid staff

4 European National Committees are funded through a membership fee

4 European National Committees have a legal status

European Members represent **32%** of the global membership of **IUCN**



half of the European National Committees implement projects





National Committees

WHERE TO START?



National Committees Where to start?

Establishing a National Committee might look cumbersome but the truth is that such a Committee is, *de facto*, created when a majority of IUCN Members decide to regularly get together and coordinate their actions in a country.

From there on, all possible options are available and Members can choose and decide how they want to manage their Committee, if they want to create a legal entity for it (association or other) or not, if they want to give it an operational budget or not, etc.

Some of the existing National Committees have dedicated full-time staff. Others rely on the good will of one of their Members or on the time and efforts invested, on a voluntary basis, by their Chair.

All options are possible, and each will have benefits and disadvantages. It all depends on the capacity of IUCN Members in the country and on what they want to do with and get from their National Committee.

Going legal...

Several existing National Committees have chosen to legally establish themselves in their country. For this, they have registered a nonprofit organisation, an unincorporated association, a foundation, or any other legal entity contemplated in their national legislation. This is called a “legal status”.

The reasons for seeking a legal status can be multiple, from the need to be properly registered to be able to participate in public consultations and processes regarding environmental national planning, programmes or laws- like it is the case in Spain- to the requirement, by national legislation, to be legally established in order to be able to manage funds, have an operational budget as well as accounting and fiscal obligations.

Switzerland offers an alternative to this debate, through a “softer” coordination model in which the National Committee is hosted by an IUCN Member in the country, from which it “borrows” the legal status for all administrative matters.

In some countries, getting a legal status might have a cost, in others, it is totally free. In some cases, national legislation might not allow for a Committee to be legally established. Here again, all options are possible and Members need to determine what suits them better according to the situation in each country.



Going legal...

Case study



Dealing with national legislation

With or without a legal status, a successful National Committee is mainly based on one important aspect: the will of IUCN Members in a country. If Members cannot see an added value in it, the National Committee will most certainly fail. In addition, National Committees need to comply with IUCN's policies and regulations, but also with national legislations.

IUCN Members in Sweden include the Government itself as a State Member, as well as several Government Agencies, together with national and international NGOs. This brought a slight complication when the National Committee looked at the possibility to acquire a legal status in the country, as the national legislation in Sweden doesn't allow Government Agencies to take part in any other legal entity without prior consent by the Government.

While this could be seen as an obstacle, it has actually proven to be a strength for the Swedish Committee as, without a legal status, the only way for the Committee to legitimise its decisions and actions is through thorough discussion and agreement among all IUCN Members in the country. Additionally, this more informal setup of the Committee eliminates the risk of competition between the Committee and individual Members, as the Committee doesn't have the legal capacity to implement projects itself. In the Swedish Committee, the decision-making process is built on consensus, and all decisions and subsequent actions will be implemented by individual members, on behalf of the Committee. In this regard, the National Committee itself becomes more of a coordinating platform, with an emphasis on sharing of information.





National Committees

**GOVERNANCE
& MEMBERSHIP**



National Committees Governance & Membership

The IUCN Statutes only define two minimum requirements for a National Committee to be officially recognized by the IUCN Council:

- a constitution act and corresponding by-laws and internal procedures;
- a Chair (or equivalent), elected by all members of the Committee.

Additional governance elements might be required by the legal status (see previous chapter) of the Committee in the country. A nonprofit organisation, for example, will generally require a Board to be established, as well as a President and a Treasurer to be elected.

There is no minimum number of IUCN Members required to establish a National Committee (although it seems logical to think that a Committee might not be needed below three Members), but all IUCN Members in the country should be invited to be part of a National Committee. It is also highly recommended to also invite Commission members in the country.

[Click here to find out more about who are IUCN's Members and how to join the Union.](#)

How many meetings is enough?...

Regular meetings are part of the daily life of National Committees. The number and content of these meetings vary greatly among Committees and is usually proportional to the level of activity of the Committee and of its individual Members. It is important to remember that calling for and managing such meetings represents a considerable amount of time and efforts, but this is one of the most important elements in the life of a National Committee. Dormant Committees tend to meet less regularly, give up on coordination and plan fewer and fewer activities, before fading out completely. In today's world, and according to each country's specifics, many meetings can be held via conference calls / video conferences.





Governance and Membership...

Going a bit further



Being officially recognised...

National and Regional Committees can ask to be officially recognised by the IUCN Council. The IUCN Statutes define a list of conditions for this recognition to be accepted, including: the membership of the Committee to be open to all IUCN Members in the country, the Committee to comprise the majority of Members in the country, the Committee to have established internal procedures and by-laws, and a Chair to be elected by the member of the Committee (see IUCN Statutes & Regulations- Part VI · p.59 - for more information). The process is quite straightforward. Just contact your Regional Membership Support Officer to get the forms you will need to fill in to start the process.

Seeking official recognition by the IUCN Council has several advantages:

- be entitled to use the IUCN name and logo in conjunction with the respective name of the Committee/Country (as prescribed by Council);
- be authorised by the Council to undertake activities in the name of IUCN;
- adopt and pursue their own policies consistent with the policies and objectives of IUCN;
- participate in the formulation of the IUCN Programme for their respective country and region;
- issue statements relevant to the objectives of IUCN, provided that such statements, or actions taken pursuant to them, be solely on behalf of the Committee and do not commit IUCN to any financial, legal or policy obligations.

For more information, see the [IUCN Statutes and Regulations](#)



Governance and Membership... Going a bit further



Going beyond borders ...

IUCN Members have traditionally chosen to organise themselves in Committees at national or regional level. In Europe, and while other regions have already adopted the model, the issue of a Regional Committee has been raised several times and discussions have always reached the conclusion that such a regional structure would not add enough benefits for Members in the region.

Nevertheless, it does not make sense for IUCN Members to limit themselves to their national boundaries. In some part of the region, for example, a trans-boundary approach to conservation provides a much more effective perspective than a purely national one. While this has not been officially implemented yet, the option for several countries to collaborate within an IUCN Sub-Regional Committee exists and is stipulated in the IUCN Statutes. This option could also allow several neighbour countries with few IUCN Members to get a stronger voice by working together. The closest existing example to this is the current collaboration existing across the four Scandinavian countries, where three National Committees (Denmark, Finland, and Sweden) and one additional country (Norway, where no National Committee has been established so far) regularly meet to exchange on common conservation issues.





National Committees

**IMPLEMENTING
PROJECTS**



National Committees Implementing projects

Although National Committees are primarily a mechanism for coordination and exchange of information at national level, several of the Western European National Committees also play a role as project implementors, in the framework of the IUCN Programme.

Implementing projects and influencing national policies can be an interesting option for National Committees wanting to have a more active role in their country and diversify their sources of funding. Nevertheless, moving from coordination and information exchange to project implementation also comes with challenges that need to be taken into account.

These include:

- the capacity (human, technical and financial) of the Committee and its consequences on accountability;
- the perceived or real competition between the Committee and its own members, the Committee and the IUCN Secretariat or the Commissions in the country, for funding and activities;
- the vital need to coordinate activities and fundraising with other IUCN components, at national, regional and global level, to avoid competition and mixed messages;
- the fact that project implementation requires full staff dedication, which might have implications on the proper delivery of other basic roles of the Committee (national coordination, communication, etc.).

It is also important to note that only National Committees officially recognised by the IUCN Council are entitled to implement projects on behalf of IUCN (more information on the official recognition of National Committees on the previous page).

Individual histories...

An analysis of the existing National Committees in Europe shows that project implementation heavily depends on individual cases and opportunities. In some cases, a funding opportunity was the trigger for a Committee to implement projects, progressively grow, and take on additional role (including outside their own country). In other cases, the rationale behind the selection of activities being implemented by a Committee is not that clear and generate tensions between IUCN Members or Commission members in the country and the Committee itself, as well as a perceived feeling of competition for funding.

In the Netherlands or in France, National Committees have developed into rather large and well established entities, implementing several projects (including outside the country) and offering a strong platform for dialogue between national NGOs and the Government, on national conservation issues. These two Committees benefit from considerable staff teams (up to 35 people in the Netherlands) and operational budgets.

On the other hand, in the United Kingdom, in Italy, or in Spain, only a couple of people are employed by the Committee which also implement projects, either itself, or through its Members in the country. In the case of Switzerland, the Committee defines roles and responsibilities even more clearly. It benefits from a part-time funded President and Secretary, but no project is implemented by the Committee itself and those can only be implemented through its members.



Implementing projects...

Case study



UK Peatland Programme

The IUCN UK Peatland Programme was fully developed by the IUCN National Committee in the UK, and is now working in collaboration with the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management. Set up in 2009 to promote peatland restoration in the UK, the Programme advocates the multiple benefits of peatlands to society through a programme of work developed to provide a “conservation quartet” consisting of partnerships, strong science, sound policy and effective practice.

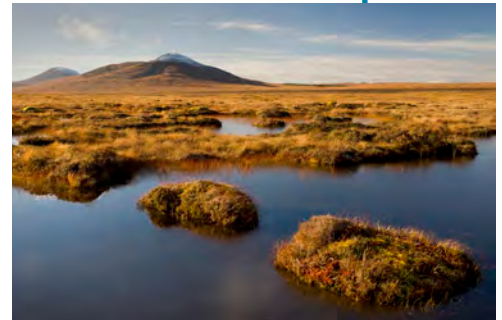
The work of the Peatland Programme is overseen by a coalition of environmental bodies including the John Muir Trust, Scottish Wildlife Trust, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, RSPB, North Pennines AONB Partnership, Moors for the Future, Natural England, Scottish Natural Heritage, Natural Resources Wales and the University of East London.

Through its work, the UK Peatland Programme:

- Provides a focus for peatland research and management
- Offers credible messages for decision makers
- Facilitates consensus building and knowledge exchange
- Highlights the benefits and values of peatland ecosystem services

Some key achievements of the UK Peatland Programme include the publication of an 18 month Commission of Inquiry on peatlands, the launch of a Peatland Code to support private funding of peatland work and a series of annual conferences bringing peatland interests together.

The UK Peatland Programme is funded by the Peter De Haan Charitable Trust. More information available at: www.iucn-uk-peatlandprogramme.org





Implementing projects...

Case study



Leaders for Nature Initiative - The Netherlands

Leaders for Nature is the IUCN Netherlands National Committee's business engagement network of twenty multinationals and major Dutch enterprises working together on greening the economy. By offering knowledge and training, hands-on project support and inspiration, Leaders for Nature stimulates and facilitates companies to take the lead in this transition and incorporate natural capital in their core business.

Since its foundation in 2005, the Leaders for Nature network has connected more than 1,200 professionals from various management levels with other member companies, NGOs, governments and academic institutions, resulting in corporate action plans and joint programs. In 2012, Leaders for Nature launched its second network in India.

The Leaders for Nature initiative offers its members services like:

- Knowledge and training: Through in-company sessions, trainings and master classes.
- Hands-on project support: Leaders for Nature supports the companies's teams of dedicated employees to execute these plans step by step.
- Inspiration: Sharing best practices, listening to expert speakers and connecting to like-minded companies and thought leaders in the field, to be propelled to take action.

Through its Natural Capital Roadmap, the Leaders for Nature initiative helps businesses being more aware of their dependency on natural resources and the fact that understanding natural capital as part of their business brings new opportunities. The roadmap helps businesses to identify and capture these opportunities and:

- safeguard their future supply of essential resources;
- secure their license to operate;
- improve their access to finance;
- enhance resource efficiency;
- create opportunities for new products and markets.

For more information: www.leadersfornature.nl



Implementing projects...

Case study



Influencing national policies in France

With 56 members and more than 250 experts, the IUCN French National Committee has become a key platform for biodiversity conservation in France. The National Committee facilitates the dialogue between the Government, public agencies and NGOs (all of them Members of IUCN). Local authorities and the private sector are also associated to this work.

For example, the French National Committee regularly organizes the French Conservation Congress (Congrès Français de la Nature). Since 2000, eleven sessions of the Congress have been organised and 74 recommendations have been adopted to improve biodiversity policies in France. In accordance with IUCN's mission to influence societies, the IUCN French National Committee has also been engaged in:

- contributing to the adoption of national strategies: French Strategy for biodiversity, national strategies on terrestrial and marine protected areas, invasive alien species, sea and coastal zones, etc;
- providing inputs and recommendations to national legislation : French laws on biodiversity, mountains, coastal zones, sea, national parks, threatened species and others biodiversity-related texts (landscape management, agriculture and forestry, mining, etc.);
- increasing commitment from regional and local authorities to biodiversity conservation especially through regional biodiversity strategies;
- developing partnerships with major private companies to improve integration of biodiversity concerns in their business strategies;
- supporting and advising on the implementation of international conventions (CBD, World Heritage Convention, CITES, Ramsar) and European legislation in France;
- increasing political commitment for biodiversity conservation in French Overseas Territories, and for a European policy for biodiversity conservation in overseas territories (BEST);
- creating a Small-Scale Initiatives Programme under the French GEF, aiming at supporting biodiversity and climate change-related projects developed by civil society in Africa.





National Committees

**MONEY
MATTERS**



National Committees

Money matters

The budget needed to run a National Committee is directly related to the activities and services provided by or required from the Committee.

Whether it is the costs associated to the organisation or hosting of a meeting, or the salary costs of having a team of experts working full-time for the Committee, there will always be some costs associated to a National Committee. However, in most of the cases, these costs are fairly limited and can easily be handled without a specific accounting or budgeting system.

Most of the National Committee currently established in Europe do not have an operation budget. They simply rely on their members to voluntarily provide a meeting space and some staff time to run the Committee. In some other cases, and in order to ensure the minimum management of the Committee, IUCN Members agree to contribute financially to a specific budget for their Committee. All options are possible, but there is a common baseline: National Committees cannot incur any financial or legal obligation for IUCN.

Funding sources...

Several National Committees in Europe have established a membership fee to cover their basic functions. In some case, like in Spain, this fee is calculated in a way so it covers the positions of Technical Coordinator (full-time) and Communications Officer (part-time). In some other countries, the fee is lower and only aimed at covering the costs of organising regular meetings, and other administrative costs (telephone, electricity, etc.) associated to the normal running of the Committee. It is important to note that the fees paid to National Committees are totally different from, and cannot substitute, the Membership fee paid by all IUCN Members to IUCN.

A few National Committees also use projects as a way to generate more income. This can be done through direct fundraising and implementation of projects, or through a “management fee” taken from any project developed through the National Committee and implemented by its members.

Finally, in some countries, support from Governments, public institutions, or local authorities might be available for legally established NGOs in the country. This kind of subsidies can be of great help as they provide core (unrestricted) funding for the Committees.



Money matters... Case studies



Fundraising success story...

The IUCN National Committee of The Netherlands has become famous for its extremely successful fundraising track-record. Beside the money raised for specific projects or initiatives, the national committee of IUCN in The Netherlands has also successfully secured donations from important donors in the country.

The Dutch committee is highly engaged with three different Ministries in The Netherlands: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Infrastructures and the Environment. The Committee is mainly funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from its program for Official Development Assistance. With this funding, the Dutch committee is running green development projects in 16 countries. The committee also secured funding for the Platform Biodiversity, Ecosystems & Economy, which it is running with the main Dutch industry confederation and which is paid for by the Dutch Ministry for Economic Affairs.

The Dutch Postcode Lottery has been raising funds for organizations that work for a greener and fairer world since 1989. Fifty percent of the proceeds from the lottery tickets are distributed to charitable organizations. The IUCN National Committee of The Netherlands has been beneficiary of the Dutch Postcode Lottery since 2001.

The Turing Foundation is a Dutch fund that through donations to charities aims to provide children and young people with education, let people in The Netherlands enjoy art, help protect nature, and contribute to the elimination of leprosy. The IUCN National Committee of The Netherlands is running a number of development projects in Africa with support from the Turing Foundation.



Money matters... Case studies



Money is not everything...

Several National Committees in Europe also work with no money at all. This is the case, for example, of the IUCN Danish National Committee who does not charge any membership fee to its members or use any operational budget. The Committee is purely voluntary.

The member chairing the Committee will cover the costs associated with the coordination and administration of the Committee (telephone, electricity, etc.). The host of the Committee meetings will cover the meeting cost. As the chairmanship of the Committee is a rotating function, over time, each member will contribute in the same way to the management of the Committee.

This model doesn't prevent the Danish Committee to work on important issues like influencing national policies, but the contribution of each organisation to the life of the National Committee is simply seen as part of the aspects of being an IUCN Member in Denmark.





National Committees
COMMUNICATIONS



National Committees Communications

One of the basic functions of National Committees is to ensure a proper flow of information between the Committees and its members at national level, and between the national and international levels of IUCN. In this sense, National Committees are an important gateway between IUCN Members and the Secretariat, and a vital link between individual Members and the broader institution.

Each National Committee has developed its own tools and strategy for improving communications but some common features emerge across the region:

- Newsletter (usually sent electronically)
- Website
- Social media (Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Google+, etc.)
- Direct mailing (to IUCN Members and contacts in the country)

What are the tools available?



Newsletters

IUCN is producing a great amount of newsletters every month. Their templates and design files already incorporate all the graphic and text elements a newsletter should have and National Committees can easily use and adapt them to their specific needs.



Websites

IUCN can support National Committees with the graphic design of their websites. With the deployment of its new platform (end 2014), IUCN will also be able to support and advise National Committees with the hosting and content management of their websites.



Mailings

The Union Portal, available to all IUCN Members and National Committees, gathers the most up to date information about any IUCN-related contact, whether in IUCN Members, Commissions, Secretariat, Council, partners, etc., country by country.



Logo & visual identity

Officially recognised National Committees are entitled to use the IUCN logo followed by the name of the Committee, and encouraged to follow IUCN's visual identity in their publications and communications tools. Guidelines and support documents are available to support the Committees on this.



European National Committees Communicating conservation



One Union - One Portal...

The Union Portal is a web-based, password protected system, which allows for networking, interaction and the sharing of information across the entire Union: Councillors, Members, National and Regional Committees, Commission members and the Secretariat. It is both a working area and an important communication and networking tool for all IUCN constituents.

The Union Portal is the growing repository of all IUCN documents and information, and also an important mechanism for consulting Members and constituents on any issue related to the Union.

Any person working for an IUCN Member organisation or related to one of the IUCN Commissions has or can get access to the Union Portal by requesting a username and password (directly on the front page of the Portal).

Find out more about the Union Portal:
<http://portals.iucn.org/>

Many voices...

Most European National Committees maintain their own websites and publish their own newsletters, reports and other studies. You will find below some examples of these:

IUCN Global Website: www.iucn.org

IUCN National Committee- The Netherlands: www.iucn.nl

IUCN National Committee- Spain: www.uicn.es

IUCN National Committee- UK: www.iucn-uk.org

IUCN National Committee- Italy: www.iucn.it

IUCN National Committee- France: www.uicn.fr

IUCN National Committee- Switzerland: www.uicn.ch





Communications Case study



Regional networking...

Besides their national mandates, IUCN National Committees are also an effective tool for transboundary cooperation and exchange.

Their intrinsic nature makes them the perfect platform for bridging different constituents across border. An example of this is the meeting between IUCN Councillors and Chairs of the IUCN National Committees in Europe, organised by the IUCN National Committee of the Russian Federation.

In recent years, European National Committees have also been regularly in contact through the Ad-hoc Working Group on European National Committees established in January 2013. The group is open to all National Committees in the region, and through monthly teleconferences, discusses issues like:

- developing enabling processes which encourage and support the development of new National Committees and assist existing ones to develop further where applicable;
- proposing practical mechanisms to implement the One Programme Approach in Europe (among National Committees and Members);
- stimulating and coordinating input from National Committees into global processes;
- supporting the Secretariat in developing and implementing a framework for the joint definition and implementation of the European programme.





National Committees
COMMISSIONS



National Committees Commissions

IUCN Commissions are the scientific body of the Union and play an important role in the implementation of the IUCN Programme. There are six thematic Commissions and Commission experts in nearly all countries in the world.

Keeping a close link with Commission experts in their country can be very important for National Committees, especially in the development of projects or programmes. While Commission members in one country are not de facto members of the National Committee, it is strongly recommended to invite and involve them in the life of the National Committee, in the spirit of the One Programme Approach to the IUCN Programme.

The list of Commission experts in each country can be found on the Union Portal. This list should be consulted regularly as Commission membership changes frequently and is fully renewed after each World Conservation Congress.



The One Programme Approach...

Adopted by the IUCN Council in 2011 as an overall guiding principle for the Union, the One Programme Approach strengthens the delivery and impact of the IUCN Programme through more effectively leveraging the respective roles, capacities and unique features of the different parts of the Union (Members, Commissions, National and Regional Committees and Secretariat).

In the spirit of the One Programme Approach, existing National Committees have actively engaged with Commission experts in their country to develop joint projects or jointly work on and input to global processes. The IUCN UK National Committee, for example, is actively engaging members of the World Commission on Protected Areas through the UK Protected Area Assessment Panel to coordinate national inputs to the World Database on Protected Areas. Through this, the Committee has raised awareness on the importance of Protected Areas, engaged new stakeholders in the designation of possible new sites, and influenced the review of the management effectiveness of existing protected areas in the country.

Some National Committees, like in France, have even developed their own system of national Commissions, based on the global model, in order to make sure the activities of the Committee are solidly backed-up by scientists and experts in the country.



[Click here more information on IUCN's Commissions](#)



Working with Commissions...

Case study

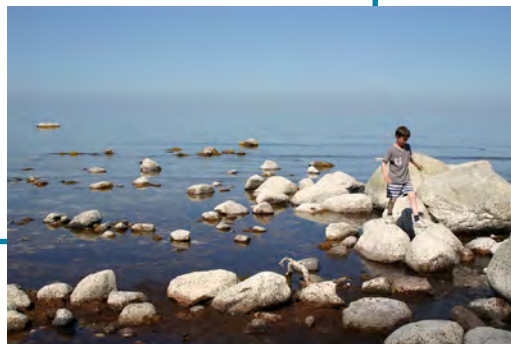


Contributing to global standards

IUCN is well known for its conservation standards and tools and, in many cases, National Committees are key elements in the definition and development of these.

The IUCN Green List of well-managed protected areas is a new global initiative that celebrates the success of effective protected areas, and encourages the sharing of that success so that other protected areas can also reach high standards.

The IUCN Italian National Committee is actively engaged in the development of the criteria that will be used for the development of the Green List of Protected Areas. Working in collaboration with national IUCN Members in Italy, the IUCN Secretariat and the World Commission on Protected Areas, the Italian Committee is contributing its knowledge and experience to the development of one of the global initiatives that will set the framework of future conservation.





National Committees
**FORUMS
& CONGRESSES**



National Committees

Regional Conservation Forums & World Conservation Congresses

National Committees are important actors in preparing Members for the World Conservation Congress or for the Regional Forums.

In particular, National Committees are ideal platforms to discuss and prepare possible motions to be submitted to the Congress, or agree on a common position, at national level, in relation to specific issues to be decided at the Congress. National Committees can also coordinate national presence at the Congress, make sure that individual submissions for events or registration are duly processed, and even represent Members through a proxy for the different votes and elections.

Through the work of National Committees, individual Members are better prepared and can more effectively take part in the debates and benefit from their presence at the Congress. The same apply, although to a lesser extent, to the Regional Conservation Forum.

National Committees can also be key players in the hosting of the Regional Forums, or even of the Congress, by supporting national authorities in their bids and catalysing Members' involvement in the preparation and hosting of these events.





Catalysing involvement Case study



Preparing for the Congress in Spain

The IUCN Spanish National Committee has a long tradition and experience in preparing Members for the World Conservation Congress.

Through regular consultations or specific face-to-face events, the Spanish National Committee maintains a high level of interaction with individual Members and Commission members in the country. This interaction is even higher before each World Conservation Congress, when the National Committee becomes a national platform to discuss and jointly prepare the motions to be submitted, from the country, to the Congress. By coordinating this process, the Spanish Committee is then able to liaise with other National Committees or IUCN Members in other countries to rally support and sponsorship for these motions.

At the same time, through a dedicated meeting, a few months before the Congress, the Spanish Committee makes sure that all Spanish Members are properly informed about all processes related to the Congress (registration, call for contributions, etc.) and that the country's presence at the Congress is optimised through the different events and networking opportunities. These meetings are also an occasion for Members (including the Spanish Government) to discuss their position towards specific motions or issues and, in some cases, get to the Congress with a common position. Similarly Spanish Members can discuss their support to the different positions to be elected during the Congress (Councillors, President, etc.)

In order to reach out to other IUCN constituents, the IUCN Regional Committees for South America and Mesoamerica are traditionally invited to attend these meetings.





Catalysing involvement Case study



National Committee
Switzerland

Strengthening the Motions Process

National Committees can sometimes be the driving force behind institutional reforms in IUCN. After the 2012 World Conservation Congress, for example, the Chair of the IUCN Swiss National Committee took the lead of an Advisory Group established by the IUCN Congress to review and strengthen the motions process of the Union.

The motions process is a central element of IUCN's governance system and an important means by which Members can influence future directions in the conservation community and seek international support for conservation issues. An increasing number of motions have been tabled at each IUCN World Conservation Congresses for voting. In 2012, the current process for managing motions in plenary proved particularly unsatisfactory. There was little time for substantive discussion of the motions, let alone for debate on the IUCN Programme or on the most pressing global biodiversity issues. Uncertain progress was made regarding the implementation and impact of Resolutions and Recommendations adopted at previous Congresses.

The Advisory Group was established with the objective to formulate proposals to strengthen the motions process and enhance the implementation of Resolutions and Recommendations. These proposals include the revision of the time allocated to discuss important conservation issues and internal IUCN processes at the Congress, the voting of part of the motions electronically prior to the Congress, and a more active role for Regional Conservation Forums and National and Regional Committees in coordinating and improving the quality and relevance of motions, without formally acting as a filter for Member motions.

These recommendations will be consulted with and e-voted by all Members, before being implemented across the Union.





National Committees

**CONTACTS
& RESOURCES**



National Committees Contacts & Resources

The Union works best when all its components mutually support each other. In this spirit, existing National Committees in Europe and the European Coordination Unit have setup a “Buddy System” to support any country in Europe wanting to establish or strengthen a National Committee.

This “Buddy System” is based on the idea that the experience and knowledge of “older” National Committees can greatly help “newcomers” with their first steps.

Fully based on goodwill and voluntary contributions, the “buddy system” will be implemented within the limits of what each existing National Committee is able to give to support countries wanting to establish or strengthen their own National Committee.

This support can entail information and knowledge exchange, advice and guidance, experience sharing, etc. Regular exchange of information will also allow existing National Committee to strengthen their standards and activities.

The contacts of participating National Committees can be found on the next page. Don’t hesitate to contact any of them!

You can also find more information about National Committees on:

- the IUCN website
www.iucn.org
- the Union Portal
portals.iucn.org
- the IUCN Statutes & Regulations
www.iucn.org/knowledge/statutory/
- the IUCN Membership web page
www.iucn.org/members/





European National Committees Find your Buddy!



All the Committees listed below are part of the European National Committees' Buddy System and can help you with any specific aspect of creating or managing your National Committee in Europe. If you don't know where to start, the European Coordination Unit can help you find the best "Buddy" for you.

European Coordination Unit

Contact person: Sebastia Semene Guitart (Senior Coordinator)
Email: semene@iucn.org

IUCN National Committee - Denmark

Contact person: Ann-Katrine Garn Blom (Chair)
Email: akg@zoo.dk

IUCN National Committee - France

Contact person: Sébastien Moncorps (Director)
Email: uicn@uicn.fr

IUCN National Committee - Italy

Contact person: Corrado Teofili (Chair)
Email: iucn.federparchi@parks.it

IUCN National Committee - The Netherlands

Contact person: Marijn van der Pas
(Unit Manager Communications & Policy Advice)
Email: marijn.vanderpas@iucn.nl

IUCN National Committee - Spain

Contact person: Ana Correa (Technical Coordinator)
Email: comite@uicn.es

IUCN National Committee - Sweden

Contact person: Jan-Olov Westerberg (Chair)
Email: jan-olov.westerberg@nrm.se

IUCN National Committee - Switzerland

Contact person: Bertrand de Montmollin (Chair)
Email: bertrand@montmollin.me

IUCN National Committee - United Kingdom

Contact person: Chris Mahon (Chief Executive)
Email: mahon276@btinternet.com

