



The IUCN Council's Policy on Transparency

Approved by the IUCN Council at its 73rd meeting (decision C/73/15¹, November 2009), modified at its 83rd meeting (C/83/9, May 2014) and at its 88th meeting (C/88/7, April 2016)

1. The work of the Council shall be conducted with transparency, where information is made freely and proactively available to IUCN Members, and to its stakeholders and the public, with specific exceptions clearly articulated below. Supported by relevant Resolutions of the IUCN World Conservation Congress², the IUCN Council recognizes that **transparency and accountability** are of fundamental importance to achieving IUCN's mission which is "to 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", and are critical for enhancing good governance.

At the same time, the IUCN Council endeavors to strike an appropriate balance between, on the one hand, the need to ensure transparency and, on the other hand, the need to preserve the integrity of its own deliberative processes by facilitating and safeguarding the free and candid exchange of ideas among its members, and to protect the confidentiality of certain information.

2. In accordance with this necessary balance, the IUCN Council's Transparency policy is based on the following **Principles**:

- Maximizing access to information
- Setting out a clear list of exceptions to safeguard the deliberative process and protect certain confidential information
- Providing clear procedures for making information available.

3. The **Policy**

The IUCN Council allows access to all information pertaining to its work or that of its Bureau, provided it does not fall under the list of exceptions (Hereafter in Point 4).

4. The **Exceptions**

- (a) Deliberative information: the IUCN Council, like any board, needs space to consider and debate, away from public scrutiny. It generally operates by consensus, and it needs room to develop that consensus. During the process it seeks, and takes into account, the input of many stakeholders; but it must preserve the integrity of its own deliberative processes by facilitating and safeguarding the free and candid exchange of ideas among its members.

Therefore, the IUCN Council does not provide access to:

- Information including emails, notes, letters, draft reports, or other documents exchanged during the course of its deliberations and that of its Bureau,

¹ Follow-up to paragraph 1 (b) of [Resolution 4.009](#) of the 2008 IUCN World Conservation Congress.

² [Resolution 3.002](#) of the 2004 IUCN World Conservation Congress; [Resolution 4.009](#) of the 2008 IUCN World Conservation Congress.

committees, working groups and task forces to the extent this information is not included in official Council/Bureau documents bearing the IUCN Council/Bureau document code;

- Financial information and other corporate administrative matters prepared for, or exchanged during the course of the deliberations of the IUCN Council's Finance and Audit Committee to the extent this information is not included in official Council documents;
- Information subject to attorney-client privilege such as the reports and legal opinions of the IUCN Legal Adviser and the reports of the Head of Oversight.

(b) The IUCN Council does not allow access to information whose disclosure could cause harm to specific parties of interests such as: personal information including staff records, appointment, selection and evaluation processes, the proceedings of the Ethics Committee of Council, or information provided in confidence.

5. Implementation aspects of the Policy

The **decisions** of the Council and its Bureau, adopted during meetings or by electronic means between meetings, as well as **all documents approved, annexed to or referred to in these decisions** are posted on IUCN's public website within six weeks from the date they were taken. IUCN Members will receive proactive notice by electronic communication.

Summary minutes of the Council meetings are posted on IUCN's public website following their approval in accordance with Regulation 52. The summary minutes of the Council and the decisions of Council/Bureau meetings will record the individual voting results whenever a vote by roll call is required for a decision or when a member of the Council or the Bureau requests their vote to be recorded.

To keep the financial cost of translation reasonable, only the text of the decisions will be posted in the three official languages of IUCN. Summary minutes and documents approved, annexed to or referred to in Council/Bureau decisions will only be available in the language in which they have been submitted to the Council/Bureau.

6. **Official Council documents** distributed for discussion or consideration (decision) by the IUCN Council or its Bureau, bearing the IUCN Council/Bureau document code, are publicly **available after the end of the Council/Bureau meeting** concerned, once they have been finalized. They are normally posted on IUCN's public website, in the language in which they have been submitted, at the time of publication of the Council/Bureau's decisions resulting from the Council/Bureau meeting concerned.

7. The following official Council documents are **posted in the Union Portal accessible to all IUCN Members before the Council meeting** in order to enable Council members to consult with relevant internal/external stakeholders in advance of the Council meeting:

- The Draft Agenda of the forthcoming Council meeting
- The Draft IUCN Programme for the next term
- The draft IUCN Work Plan and Budget for the following year
- Draft policies or policy guidance prepared for Council's decision.

The IUCN membership will receive proactive notice of the availability of these documents.

The Draft Agendas of Council meetings will be made available in the three official languages of IUCN. The other documents listed above will be made available in the language in which they have been submitted to the Council.

8. Information that is publicly available under this Policy and is not on IUCN's public website will be made available upon request. Requests must be made by email to the IUCN Secretariat (membership@iucn.org) and specify the titles or document codes of the document(s) concerned. Documents (in pdf format) will only be communicated by email.