Dear Razan, dear Bruno,

Several IUCN Members have brought to our attention the vacancy announcement for the Head of knowledge management and publishing house in IUCN. While the vacancy announcement does refer to establishing IUCN as a leader in open access publishing, the primary focus of the announcement seems to be on generating revenues. This apparent shift in emphasis raises serious concerns among Members and Councillors.

IUCN publications, especially since the decline of printed copies, have been largely free of charge and easy to access on-line, which is a key factor to their success, uptake and use across the globe. This is particularly important in developing countries where access to scientific journals and commercial publications is limited.

As the scientific world moves towards free and open-access, thereby facilitating the delivery of science and research results to influence management, government and private sector decision-making, we see the move towards revenue-generating IUCN publications to be of serious concern and contrary to the mission and the spirit of the Union.

This trend of monetizing IUCN knowledge products potentially undermines the very nature of IUCN, and threatens the support of donors and Members. Although we understand the need to improve IUCN's financial sustainability, in our opinion, these monetization strategies should be discussed by Council. Several Council members have shared this same concern with regards to the new IUCN Academy and the high fees of the training offered there.

As per Article 51 of the IUCN Statutes, we hereby request that a special meeting of Council be convened to discuss the monetization of IUCN knowledge products and publications, preferably in late September.

Kind regards,

Angela Andrade
Ramiro Batzin
Sonia Castañeda
Said Damhoureyeh
Ana Di Pangracio
Hilde Eggermont
Sixto Inchaustegui
Susan Lieberman

Imèn Meliane

Ramón Perez Gil

Madhu Rao

Jon Paul Rodríguez

John Smaranda

Bibiana Sucre

Christina Voigt

Kristen Walker

Extraordinary meeting of the IUCN Council regarding the "Monetization of IUCN Knowledge Products"

28 September 2022

This note is largely based on the notes from the group of Council members requesting an extraordinary meeting of the Council on "Monetization of IUCN Knowledge Products". It is an attempt to group the issues and questions raised by the group in view of adding a structure and agenda for the meeting.

PURPOSE:

- Seek information and clarification from the DG to enable Council to exercise its oversight and strategic direction roles in a constructive fashion with regard to IUCN knowledge management and in particular its revenue generation aspects;

- Opportunity for IUCN Council, Commissions and Secretariat to discuss and clarify issues regarding the governance of IUCN knowledge Products.

EXPECTED OUTCOME:

- Council to take a decision on what course of action, if appropriate.

BACKGROUND:

IUCN members have adopted recommendations and resolutions on knowledge management including the principle of free and open access[1], with a certain understanding of the role of the Union and the interaction between its various components, especially Secretariat and Commissions. In addition, there are several Council decisions on knowledge management and knowledge products that set some IUCN policies on the issue[2].

Having learned recently about various developments on knowledge products with a trend towards monetizing them, and with a deviation from common practices and principles, especially with regard to the role of the Commissions (who in most cases have developed these knowledge products, often as volunteers, and sometimes in partnership with multiple other organizations, and now seem to be excluded from their usage or with their role in governance being limited),a group of Council members representing more than 1/3 of the Council members wrote to the IUCN President on 12 July 2022 requesting her to convene a special meeting of the IUCN Council in accordance with Article 51 of the Statutes, in order to seek answers to their questions and clarification from the IUCN Director General (DG).

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[1] REC 3.085 Principles of knowledge sharing of the Conservation Commons

[2] These include: IUCN Council Decision C/78/23 (Jan 2012) and Annex 14 "A Framework of Principles for Managing Biodiversity Conservation Data and Information", IUCN Council Decision C/78/24 and Annex 15 "Policy for Commercial Use of IUCN Biodiversity Data", IUCN Council Decision C/82/13

The group requesting an extraordinary meeting of the Council is of the view that it is the role of Council to provide the strategic direction on such new developments, and expects the DG to consult with Council on such directions before they are implemented.

In a further message on 18 August 2022, the group requested the DG to provide, in writing at least a few days in advance of the Council meeting, an outline of the strategy on **knowledge management**, addressing the the following questions:

1. What is being proposed or planned in terms of monetizing knowledge products and what are the Knowledge Products concerned by this approach?
2. Why is there a need, from an IUCN Secretariat Perspective, to "monetize" some IUCN Knowledge Products?
3. What is the rationale and strategic move toward monetization?
4. How does this contribute to building the capacity of IUCN members?
5. Are there any specific considerations for the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge?
6. What are the benefits and added values of such a model, and what are the risks (reputational, legal, mobilization of voluntary efforts etc.)?
7. Who was consulted on monetization of knowledge products: Donors, Members, Commissions/knowledge providers? And what are the results of such consultation?
8. What are the roles for the components of the Union, particularly: Commissions, Members, Secretariat and Council
9. What is the existing business model for Knowledge Products and what are its limitations? How would the new Business model improve on the existing situation?
10. What are the links with the IUCN financial strategy and budget?
11. What revenues/costs are anticipated over time and what is the intended use of revenues (would revenues be share with the Commissions)? What are the anticipated risks in loss of funding (from donors)?
12. What is the legal basis for monetization? How are intellectual property rights dealt with?

In addition, the group raised a number of concerns with regard to the **IUCN Academy**, especially as the information on the website is very limited and many questions asked to the DG, particularly by Commission Chairs, remain unanswered. Some Commissions (e.g. CEM) have discussed concerns regarding the IUCN Academy, and documents outlining these concerns are shared separately. (Annex: CEM Steering Committee document on the Academy)

The group therefore requests that the written document provided by the DG also outlines the strategy for development of the IUCN academy and its business plan and that it be shared with the Council for discussion and approval. The document should provide answers to the following concerns or issues:

1. Rationale / approval for the Academy?
- Is there an established need or request from the IUCN constituency and partners?
- How was the IUCN Academy established?
- What consultations were undertaken before the establishment of the Academy, especially with the Commissions, Volunteers contributing to Knowledge Products and Donors to Knowledge Products?
- What is the financial model for the IUCN Academy and the business plan; what will profits be directed toward?

2. Using voluntary contributions (ownership issues; impact on willingness)
- What legal advice was received on ownership of the content and its use in forms other than its original intent? Were the donor agreements that led to development of historical content consulted before content was used and monetized?
- What are the plans to secure approval for use of the Academy content?
- Why are IUCN Commissions neither mentioned nor involved in the trainings ?
- A number of institutions – including some universities – are listed as "academic partners". What is the role of these "partners", and agreements did the Secretariat sign with them?

3. Certification / accreditation
- Does IUCN have the authority and accreditation to offer professional certificates? Is there a professional body that will recognize the certificates?
- It is not usual to have a qualification for a limited period of validity. Is there a professional body that decides/decided on this period of validity? And will extension/re-validation incur costs to the professional?
- How are people selected to be a trainee? And what qualifications are required for a trainee?

4. Fees / pricing
- How were the fees calculated?
- What comparison against similar initiatives (e.g. UN SDG Academy - where all courses are for free and provided by faculty in universities or professionals) were undertaken to determine the fees?
- What considerations were given to the target audience (especially small NGOs, IUCN members and young professionals) in developing countries?
- What considerations were given to specific waivers for IUCN members (current 10% discount is low)?

PROPOSED STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

1. **Specific risks/issues regarding monetizing knowledge products**
- In addition to the clarification required from the DG on the strategy for knowledge management (questions 1 to 12 above), also the following issues/risks could be discussed:
- Who from a legal point of view has the authority to propose and decide on charging for some IUCN services / products, and the respective mandate and role of DG and Council.
- Many knowledge products are funded through projects from public funding (governments, Members, others). Since donors in part fund these, and given IUCN outreach, if Knowledge Products are monetized, how would that affect donors' interest in supporting future work on Knowledge Projects? We note that some donor agreements expect publications / outcomes of projects to be freely distributed through open access.
- Impact on voluntary networks: most Knowledge Products are developed by the volunteers of the Commissions- if these are monetized, there could be expectation that some individuals contributing to these products get paid; furthermore, would those who developed and authored Knowledge Products, as volunteers, be charged for those products?

- Issues around ownership of the content and its use in forms other than its original intent.
- Issues around accreditation/certification (also specified under point 3 below).

2. The governance of knowledge products
- The legal situation must be clarified as to who owns the IUCN Knowledge Products and who has what authority with regard to knowledge products? (IUCN, the Secretariat, Commissions, Volunteers, Donors?)
- There are some specific concerns raised by Council members, in particular on the Red List and Green List, with the center of action moving away from the Commissions/experts to the Secretariat (some of these may warrant a separate discussion with the DG, as the issues are case specific- but it is important for Council to know the governance structure of the key knowledge products and the roles of the various components of the Union).

3. The IUCN Academy
- In addition to the questions above on the IUCN Academy, the following question could be discussed:
- What is the governance structure of the IUCN Academy? Who takes what decision (content, fundraising, pricing, etc.)?

PROPOSED AGENDA OF THE COUNCIL MEETING (3 hour meeting)

1. Introduction - by the President (5')
2. Presentation of the concerns leading to requesting an extraordinary meeting – by a member of the group of Council members requesting the meeting (20')
3. Presentation of the strategy for knowledge management - by the Director General (highlights from the DG's written response to the issues and questions raised) (20')
4. Discussion, and Council decision(s) on the way forward (2 hours and 10 min):
   6.1 Specific risks/issues regarding monetizing knowledge products (60')
   6.2 The governance of knowledge products (30')
   6.3 The IUCN Academy (40')
5. Closing by the President (5')

The IUCN Academy

General Comments:

1. The idea of an IUCN Academy would be welcome – especially if it meets an established need from the IUCN constituency and partners.
2. To be able to train and offer certificates, the Academy would need to accredited as a training institution.
3. The trainers and assessors would also need to be accredited.
4. Without 2 & 3, the certificate(s) offered by the Academy would not be recognized as "authentic qualifications".
5. Universities world-wide are going through this accreditation process which has, partly, stemmed from the proliferation of universities and training institutions that may be viewed as "bogus" offering dubious qualifications.
6. IUCN should not find itself in such an embarrassing situation.

Specific Comments – embedded in what is posted on the IUCN website

IUCN Academy

Launched in September 2021, the IUCN Academy harnesses IUCN expertise to propose learning journeys to those seeking to make a meaningful contribution to the dynamic world of conservation. **Was this with approval of ALL constituencies of IUCN – Members (or at least Council), Commissions and Secretariat?**

The purpose of the IUCN Academy is to put nature conservation at the heart of the green transition and to build the capacities of citizens of the world -professionals and postgraduate students alike- eager to make their contribution in the field of nature conservation more efficient and meaningful.

The IUCN Academy is developing its activities around three main priorities:

Sharing IUCN knowledge and expertise

Through its online platform, the IUCN Academy brings together the wealth of IUCN capacity **(much of this wealth is in the Members and Commissions)** development activities, and offers a catalogue of original courses, including Professional Certificates. **(Will this be an accredited certificate for it to be "'recognized" as a qualification?)**

Supporting mutual and inclusive learning

IUCN Academy aims at offering its courses globally to all communities and to accelerate the dissemination of knowledge and skills on nature conservation. It will rely on the 60+ IUCN offices (**No mention of Members and Commissions)**

around the globe to deliver high quality learning experiences, which cater for local needs, and will encourage the participation of all communities in its programmes to foster mutual learning.

Proposing solutions adapted to the future of work in conservation

IUCN Academy is launching a portfolio of *Professional Certificates* to tackle the ongoing shift in conservation employment. Those certificates will provide participants with the right knowledge and skills to drive the green transition our societies are calling for. They represent *IUCN-certified credentials* awarded to those who have successfully completed all course requirements, including individual and group assignments. (**Does IUCN have the "authority" to offer "professional certificates? Is there a Professional body that will recognize the certificates?**)

Nature-based Solutions - PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE on IUCN Global Standard™ - NbS #4 (October 2022)

Nature-based Solutions - PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE on IUCN Global Standard™ - NbS #4 (October 2022)

last update on: 06/21/2022

The concept of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) is gaining momentum around the world and NbS are increasingly accepted and implemented to address our societal challenges. They can provide over a third of our climate mitigation needs while benefiting people and nature.

As the *author of the Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions™, IUCN* (**This was a joint effort involving the CEM and some Secretariat staff. But the CEM is not being involved in the training.**) is proposing a *Professional Certificate* to train individuals from all sectors interested in gaining expertise in the field.

The next edition of the Professional Certificate takes place from October to November 2022. APPLY FOR THE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE

What will you get from this course?

· The understanding of what Nature-based Solutions are, and the capacity to recognise examples of NbS

· The capacity to highlight the gaps in evidence-based data on Nature-based Solutions

· Methods to identify the starting point for integrating Nature-based Solutions into your work

· Improved critical thinking on the opportunities and challenges for Nature-based Solutions

· The ability to better reach, communicate and cooperate with other similar or complementary projects and initiatives

· An expanded ability to use systems thinking to assess and design Nature-based Solutions

Why should you take this course?

· Pave the way towards positive change as you gain expertise in using the assessment tool to evaluate NbS interventions

· *Explore new career paths as you become an IUCN-certified professional on the IUCN Global Standard for NbS™*. (**This implies that the certificate will be recognizable qualification**)

· Participate in the development of the Standard as you contribute to increasing the collective knowledge and share your experiences

· Join a network of peers for *continuous learning*, building collaborations and developing alliances on NbS. (**This implies there will/should be some continuous learning. Will this "promise" be honored?**)(**At what price?**)

Professional Certificate

Candidates who successfully complete the programme will be awarded an *IUCN Professional Certificate on the IUCN Global Standard on Nature-based Solutions™. Through this Professional Certificate, IUCN recognizes your capacity in providing advice and technical input for the design and assessment of potential NbS initiatives.* (**Will these "professionals be recognized by IUCN"- Members, Commissions and Secretariat, to "advise IUCN or provide technical input to IUCN ….....? Who has**

expressed a need for this "expertise"?) (Can someone be certified after only a Master with no work experience…?)

As the IUCN Standard is constantly evolving, the *Professional Certificate will be valid for a period of 4 years*. (**This is not usual to have a "qualification" to have a limited period of validity! Is there "Professional Body" that decides/decided on this period of validity**) IUCN will provide candidates with the means to extend its validity beyond that period through subsequent training opportunities. (**Will this extension/re-validation incur costs to the "professional"? This may give the impression that this is a revenue-generating venture for IUCN**)

Fees

· Partial scholarships available for low income countries

· Not-for-profit organizations: **2950 CHF**

· IUCN Members: 10% discount on Not-for-profit rate

· For-profit organizations: **3950 CHF**

These fees are extremely high for a 6-week non-accredited course. This amount could be enough for a full-time Master's degree in many universities. The fees may thus be inhibitive and is likely to exclude many IUCN Members. Young professionals of IUCN will certainly find this beyond their reach.

Intensity

· 3-5 hours per week self-paced courses.

· 2 hours live meeting every 2 weeks.

📅 EDITION #4 STARTS OCTOBER 11, 2022

Registration is now open. APPLY FOR THE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE

Duration

Category

Modules

6 weeks

Nature-based Solutions

1 Create an account and subscribe

Trainers **(University academic staff are currently needing to be accredited as trainers and assessors.)**

Academic Partners

A number of institutions – including some universities – are listed as "academic partners. What is the role of these "partners"?

Conclusions

1. While the idea of an IUCN Academy may be good, it is necessary to consult fully with the IUCN constituency to establish the need and justification for the Academy.
2. As long as IUCN is not accredited as training institution and the trainers are not accredited as such, the "Professional Certificate" may be viewed as bogus. This can cause serious damage to the image of IUCN.
3. IUCN should consider partnering with accredited institutions (universities) who may host the training and issue the qualification/certificate.
4. The fees being charged are prohibitive, especially for a 6-week online course leading to a certificate that is valid for 4 years!

Additional ideas:

IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (also known as International Union for Conservation of Nature) is constituted in accordance with Article 60 of the Swiss Civil Code as an international association of governmental and non-governmental members. Therefore, it has legal personality and may perform any act in conformity with its objectives: "Article 60 Associations with a political, religious, scientific, cultural, charitable, social or other non-commercial purpose acquire legal personality as soon as their intention to exist as a corporate body is apparent from their articles of association" **(Does IUCN by charging fees infringe the law?).**

The objectives of IUCN shall be 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. (There is no mention of training or certification in any actions)

Price and how people can be selected to be trainees: what are the criteria?

As IUCN is an international NGO with knowledge that according to its statutes should be shared and disseminated to all, the new UNESCO Recommendations on Open Science, on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education, on Open Educational Resources, concerning technical and vocational education and training (TVET), and on Science and Scientific Researchers can impact the idea of the IUCN Academy. Considering the vast range of levels of income of the people and organizations, high fees discriminate against young professionals, small NGOs, and low income countries and run against the idea of a Union composed of countries and NGOs with commissions founded on volunteer members including young professionals who inspire to acquire expertise through their involvement in IUCN.

IUCN may want to do an analysis of what the **UN SDG Academy**: all courses are free and provided by faculty in universities or professionals (e.g., UNEP). It is possible to acquire a certificate or buy for a company depending on courses:

Blue Planet: It is possible to get a certificate: "**CERTIFICATES:** Students who successfully complete the course will be eligible to purchase a verified certificate signed by the course instructors". (It is not a credit/ degree)

Nature-based Solutions for Disaster and Climate Resilience**: "CERTIFICATES - UNEP Certificate of Completion:** All learners have the opportunity to earn a free Certificate of Completion, awarded by UNEP, upon completing the course. If you would like to receive the UNEP Certificate, be sure to complete the post-course survey and follow the instructions carefully. Please note that these certificates will be generated manually by the UNEP team and sent to the email address you provide, so you may not receive your certificate right away. Your patience is appreciated".

Director General's response to Council's questions on IUCN Knowledge Products[1]

Purpose of document

The purpose of this document is to respond to questions raised by Council on the topic of knowledge products. It begins with answering questions related to knowledge products (Chapter I), followed by responses on the IUCN Academy (Chapter II).

I take this opportunity to thank Council members for raising these important questions.

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[1] The use of the term "knowledge product" seems to have begun in earnest in around 2004, when it was used throughout a "knowledge management study" (full study available here and executive summary here) commissioned by IUCN in response to external reviews of IUCN from 1999 and 2003 and the interactive sessions at the World Conservation Congress in Amman (2000) and the 2003 Consultative Group on Commissions.
It is believed that the first time the concept of knowledge products based on IUCN standards is put into the formal scientific record is in: *Thomas M. Brooks, Stuart H.M. Butchart, Neil A. Cox, Melanie Heath, Craig Hilton-Taylor, Michael Hoffmann, Naomi Kingston, Jon Paul Rodríguez, Simon N. Stuart & Jane Smart (2015) Harnessing biodiversity and conservation knowledge products to track the Aichi Targets and Sustainable Development Goals, Biodiversity, 16:2-3, 157-174, DOI: 10.1080/14888386.2015.1075903*

Chapter I: Responses to Council Questions on Knowledge Products

1. *What is being proposed or planned in terms of monetizing[2] knowledge products and what are the Knowledge Products concerned by this approach?*

Response: There is currently no proposal to monetise our knowledge products.

There remains a need to ensure that IUCN knowledge products are supported by sound business plans to make sure that they remain fit for purpose and are sustainable.

2. *Why is there a need, from an IUCN Secretariat Perspective, to monetize some IUCN Knowledge Products?*

Response: Not applicable. Please see response to question 1 above.

3. *What is the rationale and strategic move toward monetization?*

Response: Not applicable. Please see response to question 1 above.

4. *How does this contribute to building the capacity of IUCN members?*

Response: Not applicable. Please see response to question 1 above.

5. *Are there any specific considerations for the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge?*

Response: Not applicable. Please see response to question 1 above.

6. *What are the benefits and added values of such a model, and what are the risks (reputational, legal, mobilization of voluntary efforts etc.)?*

Response: Not applicable. Please see response to question 1 above.

7. *Who was consulted on monetization of knowledge products: Donors, Members, Commissions/knowledge providers? And what are the results of such consultation?*

Response: Not applicable. Please see response to question 1 above.

8. *What are the roles for the components of the Union, particularly: Commissions, Members, Secretariat and Council*

Response: Not applicable. Please see response to question 1 above[3].

9. *What is the existing business model for Knowledge Products and what are its limitations? How would the new Business model improve on the existing situation?*

Response: None of IUCN's knowledge products currently have a specific business model[4]. They have been developed and offered to the public without a business model in mind. The only exception is IBAT (Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool, see below).

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[2] "Monetisation is a) the conversion of an asset, debt, etc. into cash or a form easily converted into cash; b) the action or process of earning revenue from an asset. Source: Oxford English dictionary (online)

[3] The roles of the different components of the Union are found in the IUCN Statutes and Regulations, namely: Articles 73-75 for the Commissions; Articles 18-20 for Members; Articles 37-38 for Council; and Articles 78-80 for the Director General and the Secretariat.

[4] "Business plan" is a plan for the successful operation of a business, identifying sources of revenue, the intended customer base, products, and details of financing. Oxford English dictionary (online)

a) The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ (herein "Red List") is the world's most comprehensive inventory of the conservation status of biological species. It uses a set of precise criteria to evaluate the extinction risk of thousands of species. These criteria are relevant to all species and all regions of the world.

The aim of the Red List is to convey the urgency of conservation issues to the public and policy makers, as well as help the international community to reduce species extinction. The formally stated goals of the Red List are to provide scientifically based information on the status of species and subspecies at a global level, to draw attention to the magnitude and importance of threatened biodiversity, to influence national and international policy and decision-making, and to provide information to guide actions to conserve biological diversity.

The annual cost to maintain the Red List system at the current low technical level is assessed at CHF2.5mil for the Secretariat only[5] [6] [7]. To upgrade the maintenance at an up-to-day level would require roughly CHF5mil. To develop the Red List process itself (new taxon, new technologies, new types of data) we estimate a yearly investment of CHF10mil.

CHF20mil per year would be required to update and integrate all IUCN knowledge products and to make them accessible through a central IT backbone[8].

There is no income generated by the Red List.

b) KBA (Key Biodiversity Areas) helps to identify and designate areas of international importance in terms of biodiversity conservation using globally standardised criteria. KBAs extend the Important Bird Area (IBA) concept to other taxonomic groups and are now being identified in many parts of the world, by a range of organisations.

This knowledge product has several owners, one of which is IUCN. The custodianship lies with Birdlife International, that is managing the data for all the partners.

There are no expenses related to KBA[9].

There is no revenue coming to IUCN from KBA.

c) The World Database on Protected Areas (Protected Planet) was jointly established by UNEP-WCMC and IUCN. The product is housed and managed by WCMC. The data belong to the reporting authorities in countries.

WCMC does not charge for the use of the knowledge product[10], however, it does charge for services rendered to serve up these data, or to analyse and present them, and especially for commercial purposes.

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[5] This covers only the contribution of the Secretariat to the Red List process: a) maintenance of the IUCN Species Information System and Service; b) delivery of 1/3 of the extinction risk assessments; c) quality control of all assessments; d) maintenance of the IUCN Red List website as well as e) fundraising including for part of the assessment work done by the Species Survival Commission (SSC) experts.

[6] The partners of IUCN fund, generally in-kind, other elements of the Red List system, in particular 1/3 of the extinction risk assessments. Members of SSC offer the rest of the extinction risk assessments.

[7] Note that the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) of the data that are at the basis of the Red List system are not owned by IUCN. They rest with the original owner. IUCN and the Red List Partners are allowed to use them.

[8] This is a very rough figure. We are currently absorbed in covering the urgent needs.

[9] It can be assumed that there are some costs related to the governance, and that funds are being spent on KBA assessments through the project portfolio. We did not have sufficient time to derive the data for this report.

[10] Nor does IUCN.

There are no expenses related to the World Database on Protected Areas, although funds have been and are being directed by IUCN to UNEP-WCMC though its project portfolio (e.g. BIOPAMA) that support the update of data in the WDPA, capacity development to provide data, and for the preparation of reports.

There is no revenue coming to IUCN from the World Database on Protected Areas.

d) IBAT, established in 2007, is a tool to "monetise" the above-mentioned products. IBAT is a web-based map and reporting tool that provides access for customers to the following datasets: IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, World Database on Protected Areas, and World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas.

IBAT is developed and maintained by the IBAT Alliance: BirdLife International, Conservation International, UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), and IUCN.

The success in the market is very limited and the income generated – low, if compared with the size of the databases and the potential market. The 2021 income covered the IUCN system costs of CHF200k and generated an additional return of CHF150k, that was used to support the Red List of Threatened Species.

e) The Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas is a standard for the evaluation of Protected Areas. The Green List represents a management approach and certification programme for protected areas in order to enhance the effective and efficient management of natural capital.

The uptake to date has been limited: 60 Protected Areas (PAs) have been certified (and 60 countries engaged in commitments to assess in future additional 600 sites), out of the approximately 270,000 areas listed in the World Database on Protected Areas globally.

The Green List doesn't have a particular business model. The work relies on support by public and private donors so far, however, the Green List Development Plan identifies the need to seek investment to cover the costs incurred by sites and IUCN to support achievement of the Standard.

There are low expenses related to the maintenance of the Green List Standard.

There is no revenue coming from the Green List Standard.

f) The term Nature-based solutions (NBS) refers to the sustainable management and use of natural features and processes to tackle socio-environmental challenges. These challenges include issues such as climate change, water security, water pollution, food security, human health, biodiversity loss, and disaster risk management. The NbS Standard aims to equip users with a robust framework for designing and verifying that NbS yield the outcomes desired, in solving one or several societal challenges.

The IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions is a self-assessment tool that consists of eight criteria and associated indicators, which address the pillars of sustainable development (biodiversity, economy and society) and resilient project management. The document itself is made up of the Standard and the associated guidance which will instruct users how to perform a self-assessment.

The knowledge product does not have a business plan.

There is no income generated by this knowledge product.

The concept of NbS is gaining a lot of traction, including by its inclusion in the UNEA text earlier in 2022. The Nature-based Solution Standard itself has had little uptake, at scale, to date. The potential is big. We are reflecting how to accelerate the uptake of the Standard and how to position IUCN in the markets that will arise by such a global uptake. This could lead to the formulation of a business model to be discussed with Council.

g) The Red list of Ecosystems (RLE) is a global framework to monitor and document the status of ecosystems. The RLE is a risk assessment tool and is ideally suited for conservation agencies to engage at a national level, in terms of increasing knowledge on conservation status and subsequently assisting with the decision making and priority setting process for action at technical, political and financing levels.

The RLE has the potential to be an important and cost-effective tool to assist countries with environmental monitoring and their international reporting requirements (e.g. SDGs, Aichi Targets) in a manner that is comparable over time and repeatable; for example, being able to carry out repeat RLEs every 5 years.

By integrating different conservation tools (e.g. with the IUCN Red List, Biodiversity Areas, and World Database on Protected Areas), the RLE provides a basis to move to a more strategic conservation planning focus and brings conservation into macro-economic planning, national land/water use, and fiscal planning.

There is not a specific business plan related to the Red List of Ecosystems. It can be used by all kind of actors and is not generating revenue for IUCN.

10. What are the links with the IUCN financial strategy and budget?

Response:

IUCN is confronted with two sets of financial challenges. The first is related to the management and delivery of the large project portfolio of the Secretariat[11]; the second, with the growing requests of Members, which need to be implemented with very limited related income (Membership dues)[12].

IUCN portfolio of projects has been growing steadily for the past several years. The surplus[13] generated by this think-thank[14] part of the Secretariat is low, among other, because many of the projects are funded by national or multilateral Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) budgets, what limit the surplus rates. Consequently, IUCN is leveraging the already low own reserves more and more. This poses a critical risk to the Union. The IUCN Financial Plan adopbted by Members requires the DG to: a) constantly assess the relation between risks and reserves, b) increase the level of the reserves (what logically implies higher surplus rates from the portfolio), c) improve the

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[11] Implemented to large extend through IUCN Members

[12] See among other:
IUCN External Review 2017-2022, commissioned by the Framework Partners.
IUCN Financial Plan 2021-2024, adopted by Members by electronic vote in 2021
Presentation made by the Treasurer of IUCN at Council 107 Agenda Item 2bis: Annual Report and Financial Statements 2021

[13] Surplus is an amount of something left over when requirements have been met; an excess of production or supply.

[14] Think tank is "a group of experts who provide advice and ideas on political, social or economic issues" Oxford Language dictionary (online)

efficiency in delivering the portfolio, d) differentiate the set of donors that fund the portfolio and e) create new types of income, independent from ODA and with higher rate of return.

The part of the Secretariat that supports the different organs of the Union is confronted with growing requests from the Members (e.g., the long list of Resolutions that requires the Secretariat to act, Congresses, Regional Fora), the Council (reports, Committees, Task forces, working groups to be supported and accompanied) and the Commissions (funding, administrative support, content work, Congresses). Additionally, the IUCN Statutes ask the Secretariat to communicate the work of the Union, to coordinate the policy advocacy, to have a legal Counsellor and to represent the Union centrally and regionally, engaging with and coordinating the Members at the same time, amongst other activities. All these activities must be funded by the stable stream of unrestricted money coming from the membership dues. A rough estimate shows that we are spending in these services double the money we are receiving from the Members. This was possible to date by matching the own unrestricted funds by philanthropist support and by cross subsidising these costs with money from the portfolio. This is becoming more and more difficult.

The Members' approved IUCN Financial Plan requests that the financial situation of the organisation is improved – both through increasing the financial reserves and through income diversification.

To diversify the income, we need to explore new services, new markets and new audiences. In this search we must rely on the assets of the Union: a) broad membership and therefore representation and legitimacy; b) presence on the ground through Members and regional offices of the Secretariat and c) scientific, political and management knowledge.

I suggest not to focus on the negative and divisive word "monetisation" but on the concept of "generating value for nature, Members and the Union's finance". The Union as a non-for-profit organisation will not use the income generated by its asset to pay shareholders, but to recover the costs of the current work and to reinvest in ourselves and our work to adapt to the fast based 21st century world, and progress as a Union.

After the reorganisation of the Secretariat in 2021, we have started reflections on how to achieve this and we are still in the conceptual phase. We are not aiming to monetise knowledge products but to develop new services. As soon as we have the consolidated figures of what the potential implications are (financial, reputational, legal, etc), I will bring this discussion back to Council.

11. *What revenues/costs are anticipated over time and what is the intended use of revenues (would revenues be share with the Commissions)? What are the anticipated risks in loss of funding (from donors)?*

Response: See response to Question 10 above.

12. *What is the legal basis for monetization? How are intellectual property rights dealt with?*

Response: See response to Question 10 above.

Chapter II: Responses to Council Questions on IUCN Academy

1. What is the Academy?

Response

The IUCN Academy was created and officially launched in September 2021 during the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Marseille. The Academy aims to provide quality assurance and pedagogical support to the numerous capacity building activities across the IUCN Secretariat.

Its mission is to improve the quality, efficiency and impact of capacity building activities delivered by the IUCN Secretariat through its donor-funded portfolio of projects – including both implementing and executing activities.

Since its launch, it was decided to develop the concept of IUCN Academy in phases

Phase 1: Initiation Phase (2021-2)

The objectives of Phase 1 are the following:
1. Identify and pilot the domains of activities (Done)
2. Develop academic partnerships that support the activities (Done)
3. Develop the tools necessary to perform the activities (Done)

Phase 2: Experimental phase (2023)

Phase 2 will concentrate on developing further the domains of activity of the Academy, with a special focus on Category 3 activities (see below), support to enhance the quality and impact of the capacity building components of IUCN projects through the provision of: **pedagogical support and quality assurance services, tools and templates.**

Phase 2 will also concentrate on:
1. Improving further the IUCN Academy Learning Platform
2. Developing activities in partnership with IUCN Commissions (already underway, see below)
3. Operationalising further the academic partnerships

Phase 3: Scale up phase (2024)

Based on the results of the phases 2 and 3, a model of institutionalisation and expansion will be developed and tested.

Cooperation

Due to the mission of the Academy its main partners are internal to the Secretariat: Centres and Regions, that are in charge of parts of the project portfolio.

The need for a multi-disciplinary approach in training around nature conservation is considered essential by experts. Therefore, the initiative reached out to reputable academic institutions from all continents to support its work. Seven renowned academic institutions accepted the proposal to partner and signed MoUs with IUCN for this purpose. These include: University of California, Berkeley, University of Cambridge, Tsinghua University, The Australian National University, State University of Campinas – Unicamp, Stellenbosch University, ETH Zurich.

Several Commission members have been contacted or associated in the development of pilot courses, notably for the Red List of Ecosystems Specialised course for assessors and the Professional Certificate. The aim of the Academy is to expand further this collaboration as the number of courses grows.

With regard to IUCN Members. The Academy is currently working to develop a model whereby curses responding to specific Members' needs would be developed and offered for free.

The domains of activity of the Academy are the following

Figure 1: Identification and piloting of IUCN Academy domains of activity
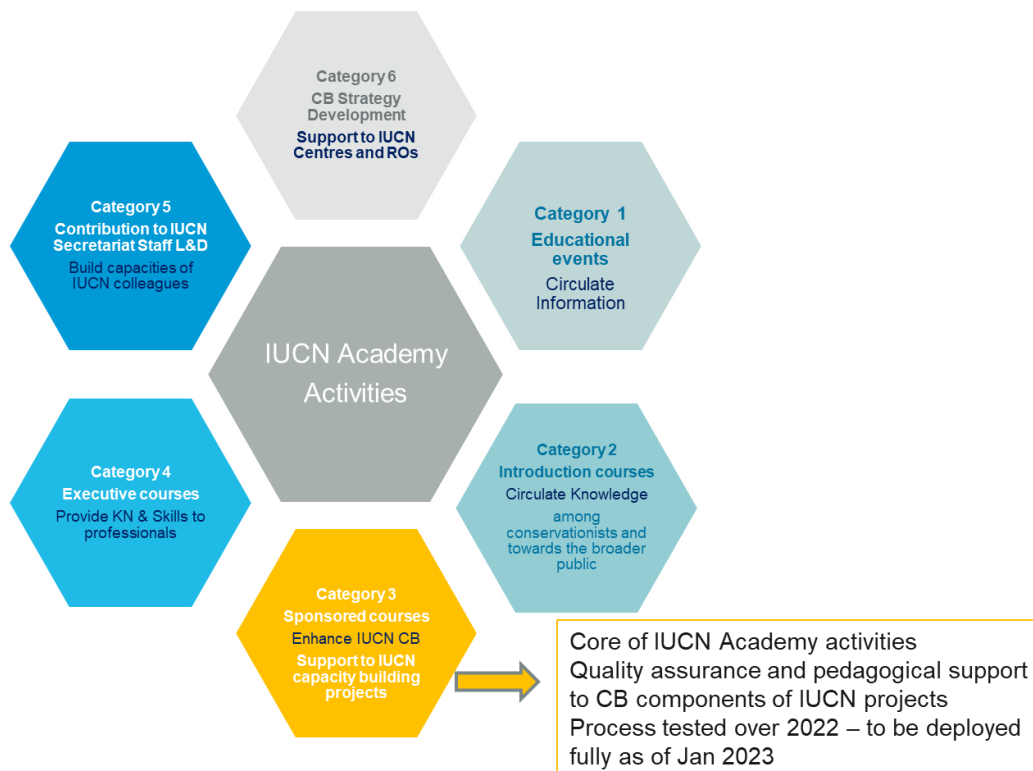
Category 1: Educational events

- ○ **Purpose**: Communicate about IUCN and latest developments in the conservation domain
- ○ **Audience**: Specialised and non-specialised audience depending on event
- ○ **Format**: Online or onsite
- ○ **IUCN Academy Learning Platform**: As a place to communicate about the event

Category 2: Introduction courses

- ○ **Purpose:** Provide an insight on IUCN main activities.
- ○ **Audience:** Both general (for those who wish to understand the basics of a topic), and specialised (for those eager to get an insight into another domain)
- ○ **Format:** 1 to 2-hour self-paced e-learning courses
- ○ **IUCN Academy Learning Platform:** Provide LMS for the courses
- ○ **Pilots to be published before end of 2022** – e.g. IUCN – Who we are, World Heritage and Conservation, Gender and Conservation

Category 3: Sponsored courses

- ○ **Purpose:** Increase quality efficiency and impact of the capacity building components of IUCN projects
- ○ **Audience:** Course beneficiaries as determined by donor

- o **Format:** Potentially all delivery formats, determined by project (Online, onsite, synchronous, asynchronous, hybrid)
- o **IUCN Academy Learning Platform:** Provide hosting and tools for all course formats
- o **Pilots: all sponsored and available for free**
    - Red List of Ecosystems: Specialised Course for Assessors
    - IUCN Med Courses for Small NGOs of the Maghreb region (in French and Arabic, including a Communication course and a Fundraising course
    - Cours pour l'AFD sur le Standard mondial de l'UICN pour les solutions fondées sur la nature

Category 4: Executive courses

- o **Purpose:** Enhance knowledge and skills of professionals
- o **Audience**: General and specialised, insisting on the primary role of nature in tackling today's environmental challenges
- o **Format**: Subject to course objective (online, onsite, synchronous, asynchronous, hybrid)
- o **IUCN Academy Learning Platform:** Provide hosting and tools for all course formats
- o **Pilot**: Professional Certificate on the IUCN Global Standard for NbS

Category 5: Contribution to IUCN staff L&D (learning and development)

- o **Purpose:** Enhance knowledge and skills of IUCN staff
- o **Audience**: IUCN staff
- o **Format**: Depending on course objective
- o **IUCN Academy Learning Platform:** Provide hosting and tools for all course formats
- o **Pilot planned for 2023**: The IUCN Global Standard for NbS

Category 6: Capacity building strategy development

- o **Purpose:** Support IUCN Centres and Regional Offices in their strategic thinking over capacity building
- o **Audience**: IUCN staff
- o **Format**: Facilitation of strategic thinking sessions around the role of CB in our work
- o **Pilot**: Facilitation of the development of a strategy for IUCN Med capacity building activities

2. Rationale/ approval for the Academy?

Responses to questions under this section:

Donors and partners have warmly welcomed the idea of IUCN strengthening its capacity building tools and becoming more efficient in delivering this important service. The Academy is one of the 95 Units in the Secretariat (95 includes all regional and country offices), that specialises in making our donor-funded work better. The activities of this learning platform are therefore regulated by strict donor contracts and legal agreements. The objective is for this Unit to be self-sufficient and to deliver a reasonable amount of overhead, like all relevant Units inside the Secretariat.

The Academy has been and continues to use only published papers and publicly available information, at the disposal of any academic institution or company. Since its establishment, the IUCN Academy has reinvested some of the revenue generated into important free courses for IUCN constituencies and beyond, for example, the Red List of Ecosystems course for assessors, where the

Academy invested the equivalent of CHF15000 in work hours and tool development; as well as introductory courses under preparation (World Heritage and conservation, Gender and Conservation, IUCN – Who we are?).

3. *Using voluntary contributions (ownership issues; impact on willingness)*

Responses to questions under this section:

Members, Commission members and Secretariat staff are meant to benefit from the activities of the IUCN Academy in different ways – by having access to the courses; as well as contributing to the development of courses. The Academy is already offering Member discounts on its programmes and, through its scholarship scheme, it is also supporting the development of the capacities of IUCN Members. With the growing requirements from donors and financiers, through the IUCN Academy we have the opportunity to support Members in strengthening their internal capacities to enable access to grants and funding.

A number of Members from the Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM) have expressed support to working with the Academy[15]. The Academy is receiving and will continue to seek inputs from Commission members for its courses, and it will a) remunerate them for that work; and b) give recognition on its online platform.

4. *Certification / accreditation*

Responses to questions under this section:

There is no regulation preventing the Academy to offer "Professional Certificates", because these are not academic credentials and they have not been presented as such.

We have put in place quality assurance processes to guarantee the quality of the programme, among others: study regulations and programme requirements, listing all requirements to obtain the certificate, including individual and group assignments.

Experts in training and capacity building say that many professional qualifications require continuous education to remain valid. This is also a guarantee of quality as we make sure people remain up to date with the NbS Standard development to keep the certificate. The professional body is IUCN, through its staff who co-authored the Standard, and through CEM, should the Commission agree to participate in this project.

Participants are selected to be a trainee by filling an application with information about qualifications, degree, place of study, et al. This is the standard in academic world. CEM for example is supporting a NbS course of the Oxford University, which accepts people in the same manner and is based on the same literature.

The fact that the development of a knowledge product is donor funded does not prevent people to develop a training on the subject and to use the published insights.

This is a separate service which requires an additional level of effort. Our Commission members, IUCN Members and academic partners regularly "monetise" their expertise on these knowledge products through consultancies or through offering courses (e.g. Oxford University NbS course; Hull University NbS course)

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[15] In addition, following conversations on the back of C107, the Chair of Commission on Education and Communication (CEC) was invited to sit on the Advisory Board of the Academy, and was approached with concrete suggestions on how to collaborate together. We are still awaiting a response.

5. Fees/pricing

Responses to questions under this section:
Fees are aligned with market price for equivalent executive courses, such as GBP3200 private sector, GBP2500 public sector for Oxford course on NbS vs CHF3950 for-profit sector, CHF2950 non-profit sector. At this stage, there is a 10% supplementary discount for IUCN Members for the Academy. The Academy is still at the early stage of its development, and is actively looking into sponsorship opportunities to wave fees for Members in the long run. This would indeed contribute to IUCN's value proposition to its Members.

The Academy is developing a portfolio of free courses, financed by donors. The first one was the RLE course for assessors within which the Academy, as mentioned above, added another CHF15000 for pedagogical support to staff and development of the course on the learning platform.

There are also supplementary discounts on the non-profit fee for Members and the Academy put in place a scholarship scheme through which it subsidizes seats for participants from developing countries. Around 25 to 30% of the participants joined the course with a scholarship and more than 85% of the scholarship requests have been accepted – those refused were due to the quality of the application. The Academy is currently looking for sponsorship to increase the number of seats offered at a minimal cost to these constituencies.

Dear Razan and fellow Councilors,

In preparation of the upcoming extraordinary Council meeting on monetizing knowledge products, please find attached a background document that compiles IUCN Resolutions and Recommendations, IUCN Council Decisions and publication of relevance to knowledge management and knowledge products. Collectively this forms a basis of IUCN policy which we may need to keep in mind during our discussions.

We would of course be looking at secretariats responses to the questions raises by council which I hope will be circulated soon but I though these might help us think a little before the meeting

Warm regards

VIvek

Vivek Menon
Chair GCC, IUCN Council

Wildlife Trust of India
F- 13 , Sector - 8, NOIDA-
(National Capital Region) 201301
Twitter/Instagram :@vivek4wild

IUCN Resolutions and Recommendation, Council Decisions and publications of relevance to knowledge management and knowledge products

1. Resolutions

WCC Resolution 2.23 Improving IUCN capacity for strategic information management/information technology

1. CONFIRMS that **IUCN must make a serious and sustained commitment to build an information technology and information management infrastructure which is commensurate to its size and international mission**;

2. REQUESTS the Director General, in consultation with members and Commissions, **to identify resources to develop and implement a strategic plan for information technology which is adapted to the organization's international mission** and the Secretariat's Component Programmes, and which supports implementation of IUCN's Overall Programme;

WCC Resolution 3.085 Principles of knowledge sharing of the Conservation Commons

ACKNOWLEDGING that open access to sharing and use of conservation data, information, and knowledge resources by all sectors of society is essential both to enable effective decision-making and to empower those concerned with the conservation of biodiversity and the natural world;

RECOGNIZING that **global inequities** directly restrict access to data, information and knowledge for many of the world's people, **with adverse impacts on the conservation of biodiversity and the natural world**; …;

The World Conservation Congress at its 3rd Session in Bangkok, Thailand, 17–25 November 2004: 1. **CALLS UPON IUCN members, and all sectors of the international community, to endorse the Principles of the *Conservation Commons* annexed to this Recommendation;**

Principle 1 - **Open Access: The Conservation Commons promotes free and open access to data, information and knowledge for conservation purposes.**

WCC Resolution 4.012 IUCN policy and strategy for the management of biodiversity data and information

RECALLING that **IUCN is a signatory to the *Principles of the Conservation Commons*, supporting open access and fair use of biodiversity data, information and knowledge**;

1. **URGES the Director General to develop a clear policy and strategy for the management of biodiversity data, information and expert analysis generated through the work of the IUCN Secretariat and Commissions;**

2. REQUESTS that this policy and strategy, including clear access and use guidelines, **support the fundamental principle of open access to these assets** as called for in the *Principles of the Conservation Commons*; and

3. CALLS FOR IUCN to play an active leadership role in the work of global, regional and national-level biodiversity data-sharing initiatives, **and to ensure that all non-sensitive biodiversity data generated by the Secretariat and Commissions be made freely and openly available through these processes.**

WCC Resolution 4.102 *Advancing knowledge management in conservation.*

AWARE that the subsequent IUCN Knowledge Management Study in 2004 *(Mobilizing IUCN's Knowledge to secure a sustainable future)* recommended moving beyond producing knowledge to:

(a) **influencing change**;

(b) making better use of IUCN's intellectual capital by strengthening relationships **and sharing knowledge**;

(c) strengthening both external and internal aspects of managing IUCN's knowledge; and

(d) creating an enabling information and communication technology environment;

2. REQUESTS **IUCN's Council to give urgent consideration to knowledge management** within the Union's overall Programme before the 5th Session of the World Conservation Congress;

3. **REQUESTS the Director General, with the assistance of IUCN's Commissions, to formulate standards and guidelines for better knowledge management across the Union**.

Note: This resolution does not seem to be fully implemented. IUCN Council only developed standards/guidelines for use of IUCN data.

2. Council Decisions

C/74/19

On the recommendation of the Programme and Policy Committee, the IUCN Council:

a) ENDORSES the proposed IUCN Framework of Principles for Managing Biodiversity Conservation Data and Information for implementation (Annex 6); and b) REQUESTS a report on the use of the framework for the second

Council meeting of 2011.

Note: this Framework is superseded by the one adopted in Decision C78/23

C77/14

Council, on the recommendation of the Programme and Policy Committee,
ADOPTS on an interim basis the Policy for Commercial Use of IUCN Biodiversity Data;
REQUESTS the Chair of the Species Survival Commission and the Director General to test the interim policy with corporations, seek further input from key IUCN constituents, and present a final draft of the policy at the 78th meeting of Council.

C78/23 + Annex 14 (A Framework of Principles for Managing Biodiversity Conservation Data and Information January 2012)

Council, on the recommendation of the Programme and Policy Committee,
APPROVES the IUCN framework of Principles for Managing Biodiversity Conservation Data and Information. (Annex 14)

Note: Annex 14 to Decision C/78/23 mentions "*IUCN has knowledge management needs beyond biodiversity data, and an overarching knowledge management policy and strategy is needed and is in development. This Framework will form part of the overall approach towards IUCN's relationship with knowledge. It is expected that such policy and strategy, when completed, will incorporate/supersede this Framework."*

Note: it is not clear if such policy/strategy have been developed?

C78/24 + Annex 15 (Policy for Commercial Use of IUCN Biodiversity Data)

Council, on the recommendation of the Programme and Policy Committee,
APPROVES the Policy for Commercial Use of IUCN Biodiversity Data (Annex 15) which includes the Framework of Principles for Managing Biodiversity Conservation Data and Information which is presented as Annex 3 to the policy;
PERMITS for further minor adjustments and detailed modifications on Annexes 1, 2 and 4 to the policy, if required, so long as these remain within the intent and spirit of the overall policy.

C/82/13 - Flagship knowledge products mobilized through IUCN

The IUCN Council, *On the recommendation of* its Programme and Policy Committee, **Recognizes the data underlying the flagship knowledge products mobilized through the Union as global public goods,** consistent with the Preamble to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and

Requests the Director General to engage in discussion with the World Bank, other International Financial Institutions and interested governments, to **seek sustained investment in the development and maintenance of the knowledge products and their underlying data**. **This shall take place in full consultation with those IUCN Commissions, IUCN Member organizations, and collaborating partners,** which are involved in development and maintenance of the knowledge products. These knowledge

products are supported by standards, processes, relationships, capacity-building, and tools, in "baskets of knowledge" mobilized through IUCN.

C/83/21 - The naming and governance of IUCN Knowledge Products (Agenda Item 10.2.2)

Council, o*n the recommendation of* its Programme and Policy Committee, Requests that the Director General conducts:

• A review of the naming and relevant branding issues of the IUCN Knowledge Products, through the Global Director, Biodiversity Conservation Group, working with the Head of Communications;

• A review of the governance of the IUCN Knowledge Products through the Global Director, Biodiversity Conservation Group, working with the Head, Science and Knowledge; and

Ensures both reviews engage with all relevant stakeholders in the Commissions, Members, Partners and Secretariat, with a view to providing two reports, one on naming and one on governance, both with recommended strategies on these aspects, to the first Council meeting in 2015.

Follow up:

*The document presented to PPC during C87, on which **no Council decision was adopted**. The Minutes of C87 state the following: The Chair of PPC informed Council that the paper initially prepared about "Branding and naming of IUCN knowledge products and the coordination between them" had been withdrawn at the request of the Chair of SSC who considered it premature to develop this topic while the (complex) development of the Key Biodiversity Areas standard was still under consultation. He suggested bringing back this issue to PPC at a later stage.*

Note: This topic was not tabled again before the end of the Council term in 2016, and it's uncertain whether it came back during the next Council 2016-21. Can the secretariat confirm?

C/85/29 - Naming and governance of IUCN knowledge products (Background document Agenda Item 5.2.2.2)

The IUCN Council, *on the recommendation of* the Programme and Policy Committee, requests the Director General to undertake a review of the branding and naming of IUCN flagship knowledge products and the coordination between them, ensuring continued engagement with all constituent parts of the Union during this process.

Note: Can the secretariat please provide an update on the advancement of this Council decision?

C/87/20 - Development of the Natural Resource Governance Framework (NRGF) (Agenda Item 6.2.3.2)

The IUCN Council, on the recommendation of the Programme and Policy Committee, Notes the significant progress that has been made in developing the Natural Resource Governance Framework (NRGF) over a relatively short period of time and commends the methods and processes used; Encourages early and proactive engagement among the different parts of the Union following the One Programme approach and principles; Recognises that further institutional support and dedicated fundraising is required; and Recommends 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.

C/87/21 - Development of the People in Nature (Agenda Item 6.2.3.2)

The IUCN Council, *On the recommendation of* the Programme and Policy Committee, Recognises the necessity for IUCN and the broader conservation community to be equipped to effectively address the knowledge gap on the role that species and ecosystems play in natural resource dependent people's livelihoods; Notes the significant progress over a relatively short period of time in framing the various components of People in Nature and commends and encourages the early and proactive engagement with IUCN's other flagship knowledge products, thematic and regional programmes;

3. Relevant publications

Mobilizing IUCN's Knowledge to secure a sustainable future

IUCN Knowledge Products The basis for a partnership to support the functions and work programme of IPBES

Biodiversity for Business - A guide to using knowledge products delivered through IUCN

IUCN Director General's statement at Eye On Earth Summit, Abu Dhabi: Creating the enabling environment

Key points and concerns related to monetization of IUCN knowledge products

Areas of Concerns

1. Ensuring that Council is fulfilling its **statutory responsibilities of strategic direction and oversight**

   - Ensuring that issues that the Council must review and decide on, are fully provided to Council

2. General concerns related to **overall trends of monetization** (that is, revenue generation) of Knowledge Products

3. Specific concerns related to the **IUCN academy**

4. **Transparency**

Responsibility and Role of IUCN Council - Art 37. Statutes

Subject to the authority, direction and policy of the World Congress:

(a) the Council shall have responsibility **for the oversight and general control of all the affairs of IUCN**; and

(b) the roles of the Council, with specific functions elaborated in Article 46 and other relevant provisions of these Statutes, shall be to:

  (i) **set strategic direction and policy guidance for the work of the Union**;

  (ii) p**rovide oversight and guidance on the performance of the components of the Union** as a whole and of the Director General in particular, encouraging coherence among its component parts;

  (iii) **fulfil its fiduciary responsibilities to the Members of the Union and render account to them on the achievement of the Union's objectives**; and

  (iv) support the Director General in communicating IUCN objectives and policy, and IUCN Programme to the world community.

Importance of knowledge management in delivering IUCN programme and achieving its objectives

- IUCN is a science and knowledge-based organization and knowledge management is at the heart of its Mission which is to "influence" societies

- <mark>IUCN has embedded knowledge as an anchor for its programmatic framework</mark>

  - Nature 2030: "*The Union provides **credible, trusted knowledge**; …; it sets and influences standards, practices and global policies impartially; and it draws on a vast network of volunteer scientists and expert practitioners worldwide.*"

  - "*IUCN's One Programme approach underpins and strengthens the delivery and impact of the IUCN Programme, **effectively leveraging the respective roles, capacities and unique features of the constituent parts of the Union***"

Principles of Knowledge management in IUCN Policy and Resolutions

- Document shared by the GCC Chair has important elements that form the backbone of IUCN policy on KM

- IUCN **has acknowledged that** *"open access to sharing and use of conservation data, information, and knowledge resources by all sectors of society is essential both to enable effective decision-making and to empower those concerned with the conservation of biodiversity and the natural world*";

- IUCN put this forward in the Principles of Conservation Commons that IUCN called on all sectors of the international community, to endorse; *Principle 1 - Open Access: The Conservation Commons promotes free and open access to data, information and knowledge for conservation purposes.*

- This principle was reinforced in subsequent Council decisions

Our understanding of "monetizing" knowledge products

- The establishment of operational models which generate revenues through payment of fees or other forms; concerned this may limit access (including by IUCN Members, Commission members, and the public) to information, publications, etc. produced under the umbrella of IUCN .

- This includes developing "new services" that are based on IUCN knowledge products. Concerns on managing issues around ownership of data, voluntary contributions, governance etc. are equally applicable.

Concerns and potential risks on monetizing KP

Donor interest: **Many KPs are funded through projects from private or public funding based on a free and open access policy.** Monetizing KPs could affect donors' interest in supporting future work on KP development and maintenance.

Impact on voluntary networks: most KPs are developed by the volunteers of the Commissions- if these are monetized, there could be expectation that some individuals contributing to these products get paid; and if not they could lose their motivation to contribute to IUCN

Issues around ownership of the content and its use in forms other than its original intent

Observed Trends towards monetization

- Vacancy- Head, IUCN Knowledge Management and IUCN Publishing House – "*2. S/he is also responsible for developing, establishing and marketing of a viable revenue-generating business model for IUCN publications in order to establish an IUCN Publishing House that will provide a sustainable revenue stream, implemented according to a credible business plan and staffed with qualified staff.*"

- The IUCN Academy

Concerns around the Governance of KPs

- Specific concerns that the governance and management models of knowledge products are changing– ***This needs careful attention and decisions from Council to ensure that the roles of the components of the Union are well respected, and that any changes are based on Council decisions.***

- **Council must have detailed information on the governance structure of the key knowledge products and the roles of the various components of the Union, and that any proposed changes are brought to Council for discussion and approval**.

- Clarity on the governance structure of the IUCN Academy - Who takes what decisions (content, fundraising, pricing, etc), the role of Council, etc. We note that this question was not answered in the DG document.

Concerns on the IUCN Academy

- Limited consultations with IUCN constituencies on the model for the academy

- Limited consultations with those who developed the content being considered for use in the Academy

- Implementation of the Academy started before approval by Council on the details of its structure, purpose, governance.

- Governance of the Academy is unclear

- **A specific document outlining the strategy for development of the IUCN academy and its business plan should be provided to the Council for discussion and approval**.

Concerns on the IUCN Academy – Cont.

- Whether monetizing historical content would affect the decisions of volunteers to contribute and provide content to future IUCN projects

- Clarity on legal advice received on ownership of the content and its use in forms other than its original intent

- Lack of accreditation to issue professional certificate represents a high reputational risk to IUCN

- Proposed fees are prohibitive for many IUCN Members and Commission members, including from developed countries.

Further Concerns raised by the DG response

- Lack of recognition of the role of the Commissions (estimation of costs of KP does not recognize the enormous voluntary contributions; Commissions are not recognized as part of the "assets of the Union")

- Use of language raising questions: "*The part of the Secretariat that supports the different organs of the Union*"; "*the think-tank part of the Secretariat*"

Conclusion

- The concerns raised on monetizing knowledge products raise questions of how Council is consulted on new initiatives and activities being implemented by the Secretariat, and how Council is empowered and enabled to fulfill its obligations and decide on these issues

- Recognize the shared responsibilities of the Secretariat, Council, and the Commissions and the need to ensure the sustainability of IUCN KPs

- Look forward to discussion; consider requesting the DG to develop, for Council approval, a clear strategy on knowledge products within IUCN in support of the implementation of the approved IUCN Work Programme.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS (revised 11:15 UTC)

	Last Name	First Name	Proxy to
1	AL DHAHERI	Shaikha	
2	AL MUBARAK	Razan	
3	AMIRGULASHVILI	Carl	John Smaranda
4	ANDRADE	Angela	
5	BAERLOCHER	Norbert	Marco Cerezo
6	BATES	Rick	
7	BATZIN	Ramiro	
8	CASTANEDA RIAL	Sonia	Cristina Voigt (if needs to leave)
9	CEREZO	Marco	
10	CHILD	Brian	Gloria Ujor (for part of the meeting)
11	COCHRANE	Peter	
12	DAMHOUREYEH	Said	Imèn Meliane
13	DI PANGRACIO	Ana	Bibiana Sucre
14	EGGERMONT	Hilde	Imèn Meliane (for part of the meeting)
15	GIBBONS-DECHERONG	Lolita	
16	HOSHINO	Kazuaki	
17	INCHAUSTEGUI	Sixto	
18	IORNS	Catherine	
19	KAKA	Ali	Nihal Welikala
20	KISZEL	Vilmos	
21	LELIEVRE	Maud	
22	LIEBERMAN	Susan	
23	MA	Keping	
24	MELIANE	Imen	
25	MENON	Vivek	Bibiana Sucre (if disconnected)
26	MOUDUD	Hasna	
27	PEREZGIL	Ramon	
28	RABI	Ayman	
29	RAO	Madhu	Sue Lieberman (if connectivity problems)
30	RODRIGUEZ	Jon Paul	Kristen Walker (for part of the meeting)
31	SMARANDA	Samad-John	
32	SOUTHEY	Sean	
33	SUCRE	Bibiana	
34	UJOR	Gloria	
35	VOIGT	Christina	
36	WALKER	Kristen	
37	WELIKALA	Nihal	
38	YOON	Jong Soo	Kazuaki Hoshino

Total: 37 of 38 present or represented by proxy

Bruno Oberle, Director General Sandrine Friedli Cela, Legal Adviser	Deputy Commission Chairs: - Andrew Rhodes, WCPA - Ameyali Ramos, CEESP - Liette Vasseur, CEM

Present	Apologies