

# Mountain Protected Areas

## UPDATE

December 2019 # 104

*We want governments to act on the science and the information presented by climate scientists.*

*We are seeking climate justice so that those who are most affected will be looked after.*

*We would like the people largely responsible to face the consequences of their actions.*

*Red Rebels  
Cradle Mountain NP, Australia*



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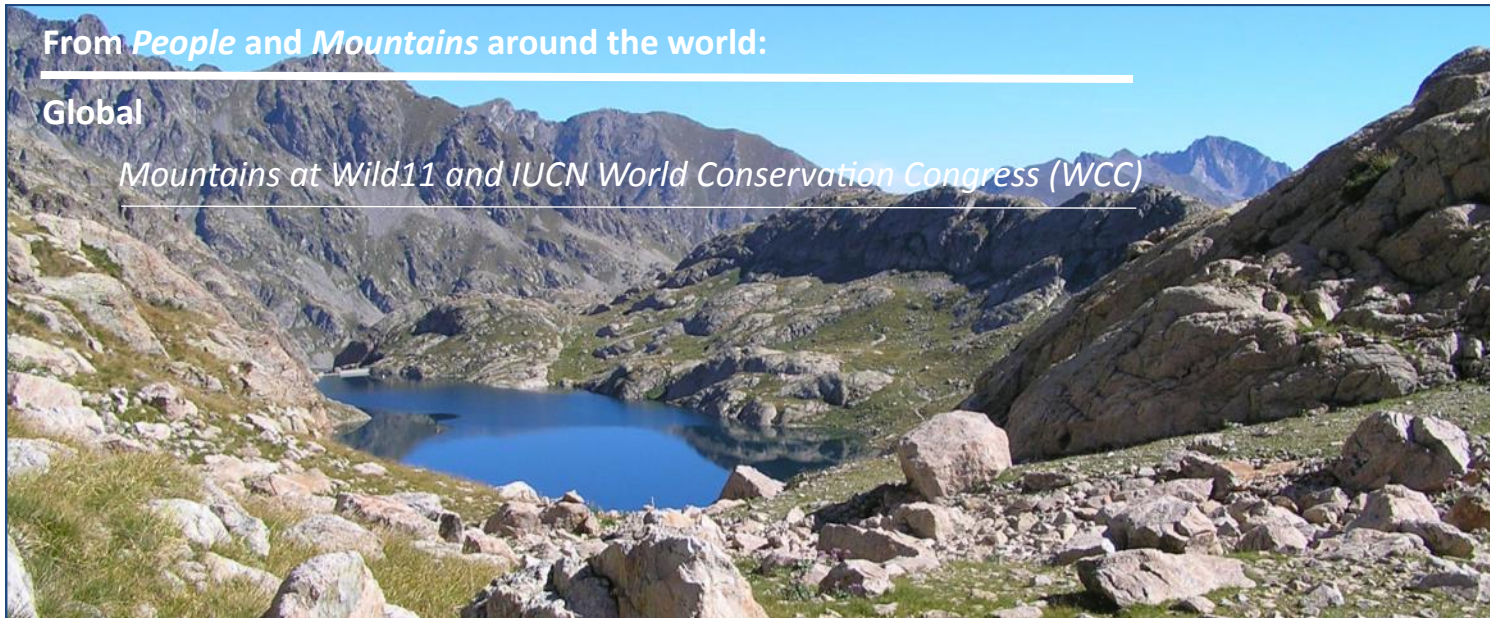
### A note from the editor

International Mountains Day has swept around again after a big year of climate crisis protests and awareness raising—thanks to our young people leading the way and shaming us all into action...if as they say *hope is power* surely there is some chance to slow the impacts of warming and extreme weather events on our mountain environments. Push on...there are a few good news and “feel good” stories plus plenty of effort going into bringing mountain communities, policy, governance and science together! Happy reading...and celebrations for 11th December—*mountains matter for youth!*

From *People and Mountains* around the world:

Global

*Mountains at Wild11 and IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC)*



News from *Peter Jacobs*, Chair IUCN WCPA Mountain Specialist Group

Mercantour NP France photo: *peopleinnature*

The Mountains Specialist Group has been offered a place at two very exciting conferences in 2020—*Wild11* (Jaipur, India in late March) plus the next *IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC- Marseille, France June)* to present a session titled: **Protecting Mountains: Where will the next Mountain Protected Areas come from?** This will be based on the paper that the Mountain Specialist Group Committee have been developing for some time following the workshop at the last WCC in Hawaii.

It presents a decision support tool for identification of global priorities for new mountain protected and conserved areas. It is very exciting to be able to present this to a global as well as high level, conservation stage. A place at both Wild11 and the WCC is very competitive and this highlights the recognition of the importance of mountain conservation.

We will also take the opportunity to arrange meetings of the WCPA Mountain Specialist Group where we can workshop this more and discuss implementation and the group's priorities. The (famous) Mountains Dinner will also be on the agenda at both occasions.

This is a great chance for our members to meet and collaborate at both Wild11 and the WCC. Please let me know...via my email [buffalo\\_springs@bigpond.com](mailto:buffalo_springs@bigpond.com) if you are planning to attend either or both of these conferences!

In the meantime; happy International Mountains Day on the 11 December; hopefully you will be in the mountains somewhere!

*Identification of Global Priorities for New Mountain Protected and Conserved Areas*

*(taken from draft summary)*

The paper presents a decision support tool that assists in identifying priority areas to advocate for area based protection or conservation based initially on KBA's. This work and the framework utilises and supports a number of IUCN and other global initiatives such as Sustainable Development Goal 15, the IUCN 2017-2020 Program targets 10, 15 & 30, Biodiversity Hotspots, Red Lists, GEF priorities and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. The Framework considers of a range of governance options within IUCN Protected Area categories and governance approaches including OECM's and ICCA's: Territories of Life.

The application of the tool begins at the strategic assessment level but critically relies on regional onground assessments facilitated by WCPA Mountains Specialist Group regional representatives to ensure accurate ground-truthing.

The result of application of the decision support tool is that all of the more than 4000 Mountain KBA's will be allocated into one of nine categories: Four for follow up action, two for no further action unless circumstances change and three not requiring further action.

# America-north

## Tongass National Forest at a crossroads

Adapted from MNN Russell McLendon October 2019

The Tongass National Forest (Southeast Alaska) is known as the "crown jewel" of U.S. national forests.

**It's ancient, enormous and no ordinary forest** - 69,000 square km of Southeast Alaska. Established by President Roosevelt in 1907, the Tongass is the largest of 154 national forests across the USA.

It includes the largest temperate rainforest left in North America, and holds nearly a third of all the old-growth temperate rainforest left on Earth. Tongass also has wetlands, alpine tundra, mountains, fjords, 128 glaciers and 19 designated wilderness areas.

**It's teeming with life**—deep forests of old-growth cedar, spruce and hemlock some of which are more than 1,000 years old. It's home to a wide range of native animals, too, including all five species of Pacific salmon, trout, brown and black bears, wolves, deer, mountain goats, flying squirrels, and many more...

**People live there**—it has been continuously inhabited by Alaska Native people for thousands of years, including the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian.

**It sequesters a lot of carbon**— it alone holds about 8% of all carbon stored in national forests across the country, and is recognized as a "globally significant carbon-storage reserve."

### **President Trump and the Roadless Rule**

While it may still be huge and healthy, conservationists worry about the toll industrial logging has taken on the Tongass — and the toll it could still take in years to come.

**This old growth has been more protected in recent years, thanks to a 2001 regulation known as the *Roadless Rule*, which bans new roads in national forests that are already road-free, according to the Sierra Club, including about 22 million acres in Alaska.**

Now, however, the Trump administration has proposed exempting the Tongass from this rule, declaring its preference for a plan that would "remove all 9.2 million acres of inventoried roadless acres and would convert 165,000 old-growth acres and 20,000 young-growth acres previously identified as unsuitable timber lands to suitable timber lands."

Enacting this proposal could not only unravel ecosystems and worsen climate change, but it would also needlessly risk the region's tourism industry.

The timber industry now accounts for less than 1% of the jobs in Southeast Alaska, the Sierra Club reports, while some 10,000 people in the region work in tourism.

**If the Tongass is exempted from the roadless rule, the environmental effects could be "horrifying" and "far worse than you can imagine," - new roads and logging could trigger domino effects that tear apart the forest's ancient ecological relationships.**

As Audubon Alaska puts it, "the Tongass National Forest provides us with the greatest opportunity in the nation, if not the world, for protecting temperate rainforest at the ecosystem scale."



Mendenhall Glacier Photo: Dee Browning/Shutterstock



Black bear and bald eagle Photo: U.S. Forest Service Alaska Region [CC BY 2.0]/Flickr)



Photo: CSNafzger/Shutterstock

The U.S. Forest Service will hold a series of public meetings about its Tongass proposal, with locations to be posted on the Alaska Roadless Rule [project website](#). Members of the public can also [submit online comments about the proposal](#), until Dec. 17. A final decision is expected by June 2020.



# Oceania—Australia & New Zealand

## *bad news and good news—from the Australian Alps*

From *Peter Jacobs Chair WCPA Mountain SG*

The **Australian Alps national parks** cover 1.6 million hectares of national parks and reserves across the States of Victoria and New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT).

### The bad news...

**Feral horse numbers** and impacts on the sensitive alpine biodiversity continues to increase largely uncontrolled, as the environmental impact verses cultural heritage value of feral horses debate goes on in the alps.

The draft Wild Horse Control Plan for **Kosciuszko National Park**, released by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service in 2016 after significant community consultation, recognized that impacts are significant and increasing, current live trapping control programs were ineffective and proposed a significant reduction in feral horse numbers over a 20 year period. In response, conservative elements within the New South Wales State Government put forward the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Bill to Parliament. This is now enacted in law, to protect the heritage status of feral horses (wild horses, often colloquially called brumbies in the Alps). As a result, the draft plan has been shelved and feral horse removal in Kosciuszko National Park ceased for 2 years. It has recently restarted, but limited until the implications of the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act are known.

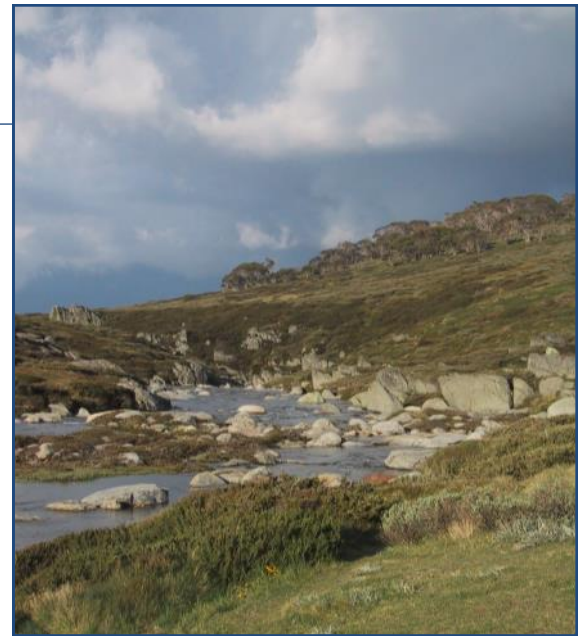
In Victoria, in response to the new **Alpine National Park Feral Horse Control Plan**, the Australian Brumby Alliance has sought an injunction on Parks Victoria to cease implementation of the plan on the basis that feral horse removal impacts on the legislated National Heritage values of the Australian Alps. The court case was heard in August 2019 but the outcome is unknown to date. In the meantime feral horse removal in Victoria has also been severely limited. The ACT continues to exclude feral horses from **Namadgi National Park**.

**While the debate and indecision continues; threatened species and ecological vegetation communities in the mountains are being severely affected.**

### The good news...

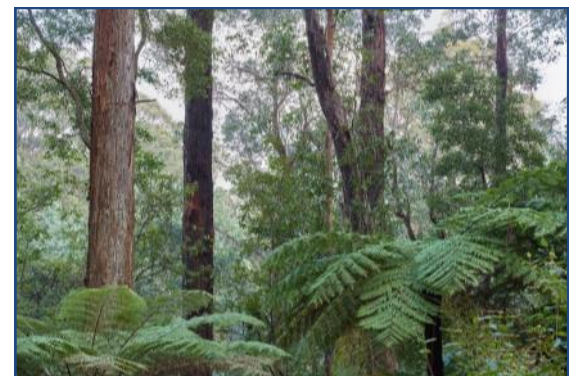
The Victorian State Government announced recently that **native forest logging will be phased out by 2030** with an immediate ban on old growth forest logging. While this doesn't impact on the mountain protected areas, it is great news for the broad mountain landscape and threatened species in this part of the Australian Alps. Hopefully in time this will provide the opportunity to expand mountain protected areas that have been previously limited by having forest set aside for logging to meet industry capacity needs.

The vast and diverse eucalypt forest dominated landscape from sea to summit has been put forward as potentially having world heritage values - but devalued by forestry. This decision will now greatly support that notion.



Kosciuszko NP, Australian Alps

An **aerial survey of feral horses** across the Australian Alps is carried out every five years. The last being in March 2019, but the results are yet to be released. It is expected however, that there has been a significant increase based on an expected 17-25% annual growth rate, meaning the population is likely to be well over 20,000; up from about 7500 in 2009.



Old Growth Forest Victoria, Australia photos: Goongerah Environment Centre

## Australia cont.

### *Dropped from the sky?!*

Adapted from ABC March & August 2019 and pers com

Months after it was found hiding and crying in a friend's garden, DNA testing has confirmed the small pup is **pure alpine dingo**. It is thought to have been dropped by an eagle! Maybe?

'Wandi' was discovered in August at Wandiligong, (near where I live in the foothills of Australian Alps). At the time they thought the pup may have been a fox or dog, but later took the animal to the Alpine Animal Hospital. After DNA testing to determine his breed Wandi was moved to the Australian Dingo Foundation's sanctuary.

One of the sanctuary's main focuses is on preserving and conserving the gene pool of the original dingo. "Whilst he is wild and always will be, he has become quite happy here." director of the Australian Dingo Foundation

#### Extinction fears

"This type, the alpine dingo, unfortunately shares the eastern seaboard areas ... where 80 per cent of the Australian population lives. So not only is the habitat of the alpine dingo dwindling to nothing, but our persecution of this animal — because it sadly looks like a wild dog — has pushed this beautiful alpine dingo very close to extinction."

Apparently there were three types of dingo in Australia — tropical dingoes from the Kimberley and Pilbara areas, inland dingoes which live in the deserts and central parts of the country, and Wandi's type being the alpine dingo.



Wandi was professionally appraised as "adorable" and "seriously cute" by the vet

Earlier this year researchers concluded that dingoes were a member of "an ancient 'dog' lineage, diverging some 5,000–10,000 years before the present, and prior to intense agriculture and the diversification of modern dogs".

Dingoes should be more protected because they are a separate species that cannot be "lumped in" with domestic or wild dogs, according to researchers who have been looking into how the animals should be classified.

In a paper published in animal taxonomy journal *Zootaxa*, the researchers analysed factors such as the shape of the animal, its skull structure, genetics, vocal communication and behaviour to conclude that dingoes are a distinct species.

## Africa

### *Last wolves in Africa—Ethiopia*



From *The Guardian* October 2019 Read the whole article: [Last Wolves in Africa](#)

Wildfires and an encroaching population are threatening grasslands that host some of the world's rarest species. Two fires broke out earlier this year in **Simien Mountains**, ravaging one of the oldest natural UNESCO world heritage sites, and destroying, at least temporarily, the habitat of some of the world's rarest species: the copper-coated Ethiopian wolf and the Walia ibex, a goat found nowhere else on earth.

Few doubt the blazes' cause. The park's wolf monitors saw, through binoculars, two men setting tussocks alight. The fire raged for several days, and it took thousands of people to bring the flames under control. Around the same time the **Bale Mountains**, in the country's south, were also affected by wildfires that lasted for more than 20 days and which experts attributed to human encroachment on the park.

Incidents like these shed light on the pressures threatening Ethiopia's fragile wildlife and delicate ecosystems: accelerating competition over resources as the human population swells, political instability, global heating and mass tourism.

Ethiopia was one of the first countries in Africa to establish national parks. The **Simien Mountains** were formally added to these in 1969, and today there are 20 national parks, and many more protected areas nationwide. For a country with few minerals or natural resources such as oil, assets like these are an important source of national income. According to the World Bank, "natural capital", including forests and agricultural land, accounts for 40% of Ethiopia's total wealth.

# Central Asia—Himalayas

## Connecting 2 great mountain ranges—Himalaya and Karakoram

From *Ashiq Ahmad Khan, Mountain S G South Asia (Pakistan) Regional Representative*

**Gilgit Baltistan** has unique geographical and ecological characters in the context of Geology and Biodiversity. The two great mountain ranges, the Himalaya and the Karakoram, are represented over most of the landscapes of the province, a part of each are under different categories of Protected Areas.

**However, this is the first time that a sizable area has been identified between the two protected areas, one in the Himalaya and other in the Karakoram that are connecting the two.**

The site has been demarcated and shall be used to investigate the influences of both mountain ranges in the connectivity zone. Initial studies of the ecology and geology of it shall determine if this area needs in a protected category.

### *Deosai National Park*

**Deosai plains are the second highest plateau in the world** with significant importance as a habitat of the biggest surviving population of the Himalayan Brown Bear. A part of the critical habitats of Deosai plains is being preserved in the form of **Deosai National Park (DNP)**. Apart from other planning activities, being carried out for the management of DNP, EvK2CNR, an Italian association with interest in glaciers, climate change and management planning of protected areas, is engaged in GPS based boundary demarcation of this high altitude Park that shall provide logical basis for the management of this park in its various management zones.

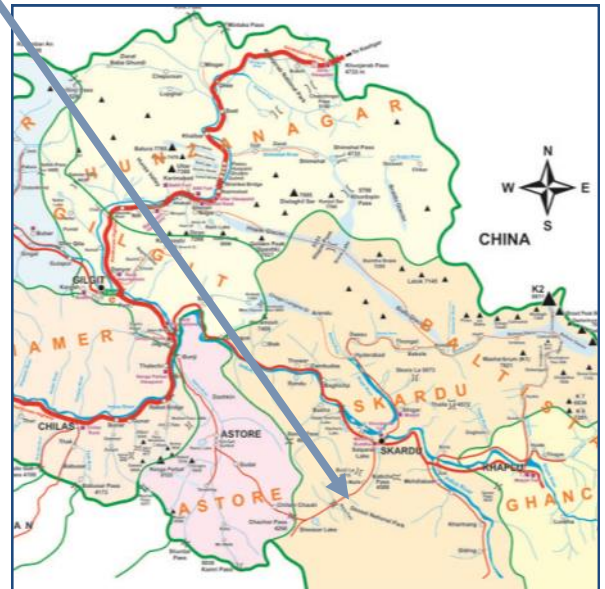
### *Karakoram - Pamir Biosphere Reserve*

EvK2CNR has been working for decades on the ecology and conservation of Karakoram. However, this is the first time that data has been collected and dossier framed to bring a bigger chunk of the mountains in Gilgit-Baltistan under a Biosphere Reserve. The data has been shared with the custodian Government Department and if notified, this shall be the biggest protected area, covering + 25000 km<sup>2</sup> of Karakoram and Hindukush mountain ranges.



Gilgit-Baltistan covers an area of over 72,971 km<sup>2</sup> and is highly mountainous. With a population of nearly 2 million its capital city is Gilgit. Gilgit-Baltistan is home to 5 of the "8,000ers" and more than 50 peaks above 7,000 m.

Three of the world's longest glaciers outside the polar regions are found in Gilgit-Baltistan. The main tourism activities are trekking and mountaineering, and this industry is growing in importance.



K2—2nd highest mountain in world



Deosai NP photo: courtesy TripAdvisor



Gilgit-Baltistan photo: Pakistan Today

## Central Asia—Himalayas

### *The Mystery of the Himalayas' Skeleton Lake*



Image: Atish Waghvase Roopkund Lake in the Indian Himalayas, at over 5,000m

*New York Times August 2019*

**Every summer, hundreds of ancient bones emerge from the ice. A new genetic study helps explain how they got there.**

Roopkund Lake is frozen for much of the year, a frosty pond in a lonely, snowbound valley. But on warmer days, it delivers a macabre performance, as hundreds of human skeletons, some with flesh still attached, emerge from what has become known as Skeleton Lake.

But a new genetic analysis carried out by scientists in India, America and Germany has upended the theory that they died simultaneously in a catastrophic event more than 1,000 years ago.

The study, which examined DNA from 38 remains, indicates that there wasn't just one mass dumping of the dead, but several, spread over a millennium. The report, in *Nature Communications*, has led to a "far richer view into the possible histories of this site" than previous efforts provided, said Jennifer Raff, a geneticist and anthropologist at the University of Kansas. Read the article: <https://www.nature.com>

### *Flagship species and ecological civilizations in Hindu Kush Himalaya*

*From ICIMOD 30 Sep 2019*

Flagship species are effective ambassadors for conservation, drawing much needed attention to a habitat, campaign or environmental cause. Highlighting the conservation of such species in the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) through a regional collaborative effort could support biodiversity conservation efforts across the region.

**A recent workshop in Chengdu aimed to provide scientific information and action recommendations for the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Flagship species and habitat conservation is a good entry point for solving biodiversity problems.**

Presenters from China highlighted the ongoing drive for ecological civilizations (for instance, the national park piloting for giant panda), institutional reforms, protected area system development, local legislation, biodiversity assessment, and database development.

A common theme across presentations was the need for greater cross-border, regional, and international collaboration. Such regional platforms could help regional experts share their research across wide networks, bolstering collaboration and cooperation for biodiversity conservation.



# Europe

## *The bear in the Alps: the true story of M49*

From **Patrizia Rossi Mountain SG Committee October 2019**

M49 is a male bear whose story was all over the newspapers last summer in Italy.

Here is how it actually went...

Everything began in 1999, when there were very few brown bears left in the Trento Province mountains: they were the last remaining of the alpine population, which belongs to the European species (*Ursus arctos*) and differs from the vital population in Abruzzo, central Italy (*Ursus arctos susp. marsicanus*). To connect them with the very healthy population in Slovenia, not very far away, a reintroduction project, Life Ursus, was financed by the EU. According to the feasibility study, 70% of the inhabitants were in favour, thus proving that in principle bears are not as terrifying as wolves!

**Between 1999 and 2002, 10 bears from Slovenia were released, and adapting very well. Today, scientists estimate a population of about 60.**

But here come the problems: outside the protected areas, the territory is intensely inhabited and cultivated, apple orchards are everywhere – a bear paradise! More and more of them are coming out of the parks in search of "easy" food, causing damage and scaring people. A number of years ago a mushroom collector had a close encounter with a female bear and her two cubs: the bear was more scared than him, and attacked, causing serious wounds.

Bears have now become as "bad" as wolves, their "Teddy Bear" reputation is long gone. The public opinion is demanding that the more problematic bears are captured and put behind fences, especially those recently released and radio-collared: one of those is M49, better known by his fans as *Libero (Free)* or *Papillon (the French hero of evasions!)*... and rightly so.

Last spring, M49 went close to the villages to find apples, and it was decided to capture him. The chase took many months, and he was found only thanks to the radio-collar: on July 14th, he was shot with an anaesthetic rifle and brought to an enclosed space on the hills near Trento.

But they made a big mistake: they removed the radio-collar. As soon as he woke up, he climbed the 4.5 meter high electrified fence, and disappeared into the night. Italians were immediately divided between those who wanted him captured or even killed, and those who became his fans, cheering for his new-found freedom. He was chased with dogs for two months, with no results. Every sighted bear was mistaken for him... Last sure signs of his presence were on **Lagorai mountains** one month ago, where he killed a calf and even left his droppings as a signature! He is clearly changing his diet of fruits, honey and berries to one rich in proteins (fresh meat, insects, carcasses), to be prepared for winter. His fans are hoping he finds a good shelter before he goes to sleep, safe until next spring.

**So, sleep tight M49!**

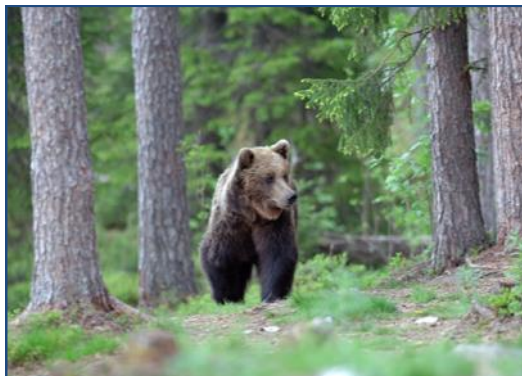


Photo: Life Urus



*Ursus arctos* once ranged throughout northern and central Europe, Asia, the Atlas mountains of Morocco and Algeria, and western North America as far south as Mexico.

They are now found in extremely small numbers from western Europe and Palestine to eastern Siberia and the Himalayan region, possibly the Atlas Mountains of northwest Africa, and Hokkaido.

Northern North American populations in Alaska and western Canada remain fairly



Photo: Lagorai Mountains, North East Italy

## Europe

### *Walking the Balkans—the High Scardus Trail*



From **Andrew Nixon Mountain Network member**

Trekking is well established as a vital tourism ingredient to the new economies of many mountains communities the world over. The Balkans provide one of Europe's most precious but until recently, seemingly forgotten high ranges. Over the last decade the Dinaric Alps communities, has shown how it can be done.

The Dinaric Alps offer three options to cross the Balkan countries on the 'Via Dinarica' from Slovenia in the North via Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, and Albania in the South. Now becoming very popular with trekkers, the **Peaks of the Balkans** takes walkers in a traverse of the high mountain borders of Montenegro, Albania and Kosovo. Each year the trail has become more popular.

Further opportunities for the trekker and new communities is occurring just to the south east. Close to the triangular border point of Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia passes the **High Scardus Trail**. The once highly guarded border of Albania -Macedonia is now freely accessed as the trail skirts the eastern border of Macedonia's **Mavrovo National Park**. The Scardus trail links long walked mountain pathways well known by the remote villagers, but now able to be explored by visitors.

The trail follows the border ridges and peaks, connecting remote valleys and a scattering of small villages and farms. The village of Caje is purported to be the highest year-round habitation in Albania. Like all the communities and mountain families participating in support to the visiting trekkers, a warm welcome is provided. A high-point of this trail, literally, is the presence of Mt Korab, Albania's highest peak. Climbable for the trekker its ominous presence commands the views for some days on the trail.

Evidence of the 40 year totalitarian communist state of Enver Hoxha is in constant view along the trail via the 'concrete mushrooms' (military gun bunkers) and remains of the 'no-mans land' ploughed line along the border ridges.

**Now with the open cross-border cooperation, the High Scardus Trail like the Peaks of the Balkans is providing new and (we hope) beneficial opportunities for the local communities and visiting trekkers.**

This is a truly raw area of outstanding beauty and cultural values, fortunately little influenced yet by grand tourism ventures. The trick will be balancing new opportunities without the negatives consequences of trade, consumerism, and environmental impacts.

In 2014 the Peaks of the Balkans received the World Travel and Tourism Councils 'Destination Stewardship Award'.

The award celebrates the trails holistic approach to sustainable tourism. Engagement with local communities through the provision of indigenous accommodation, hospitality, guiding, and cultural awareness has been the key.



Photos: *Andrew Nixon*



Australian Alps national park rangers Elaine Thomas, Mick Keenan, Andrew Nixon (& Lesley Nixon) were guided on the High Scardus trail in Spring 2018

## Europe cont.

### *Swiss Pizol Glacier... dead and buried*

**Research** European Wilderness Society October 2019

The famous Swiss Pizol Glacier melted completely and officially to death. Last month there was a funeral march, hundreds of climate activists and climbers paid their last respect to Pizol and shared their concerns about the future of his glacier friends around.

Because there is nothing left of the once proudly Pizol Glacier, just a few clumps of ice.

### **Okjökull Remembered**

After the 700-years old Okjökull glacier funeral, it is another terrifying burial of a glacier. The iconic Okjökull glacier in West Iceland, lost its glacier status in 2014 and is now simply "Ok", being stripped of its suffix "jökull", the Icelandic word for glacier.

In August 2019, scientists were among those who gathered for a memorial atop Ok volcano.

This was no longer a living glacier, it was only dead ice, it was not moving. According to scientists, all of Iceland's 400-plus glaciers are likely to disappear by 2200.

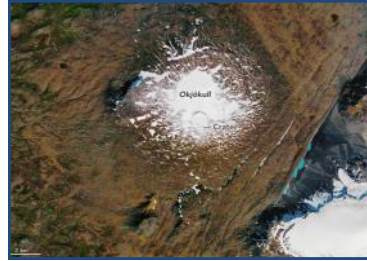


Photo: September 14, 1986



Photo: August 1, 2019

A strict criteria for glaciers is that they need to be thick enough to sink and move under their own weight.

### *Hohe Tauern wilderness news!*

On October 28 2019 **Hohe Tauern** (Austria) was awarded the *IUCN 1b Wilderness Status* making it not only a member of the European Wilderness Network but a best practice example for other members of the European Wilderness Network to apply for the IUCN 1b certification.

The 'Sulzbachtäler' area symbolises the Hohe Tauern Wilderness. Characterised by a high alpine mountain landscape and vast wastelands of rocks and scree. Further it includes unique conifer and mixed forests alongside distinctive plants. Shrubs like bilberry, cowberry and alpine rose invade the grasslands in the lowest parts of the alpine zone. The alpine meadows above the tree-line consist of mosses, lichens and algae but are comparatively patchy. Hohen Tauern Wilderness is home for many characteristic animals like chamois, ibex, bearded and griffon vultures and golden eagle. Furthermore, animals and plants are colonising new habitats in the Wilderness area as glaciers are continuously retreating.

This reward does not only justify the beautiful nature, but also the tremendous efforts of the park's management and all employees and rangers.

**Well done from all in the WCPA Mountain Specialist Group!**



Hohe Tauern NP photo: *peopleinnature*



Hohe Tauern NP photo: *peopleinnature*

## Scree and Talus

### European Wilderness Network: the Wildest Places in Europe!

In the past years, more than 41 Wilderness Areas from 17 countries joined the [European Wilderness Network](#). The European Wilderness Network is therefore Europe's and one of the world's largest Network of [Wilderness](#) areas.

The team of the European Wilderness Society visited each of these in the past years and meticulously researched, audited and certified each Wilderness on whether it complies with the [European Wilderness Quality Standard and Audit System](#) developed and updated by more than 230 Wilderness advocates.

### Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) ongoing notes... from [Alert](#) Sept 2019

The scale of China's BRI is astonishing, presently slated to span 130 nations across the planet. This includes extensive roads and railways, flanked by thousands of power and industrial projects. Many of these are being built along six massive economic corridors that alone will cut across 70 countries on several continents. The BRI is poised to transform transport and trade in the developing world. It will also have extraordinary impacts on the environment, as its corridors and other projects crisscross some of the most pristine and vulnerable ecosystems in the world.

Most controversial of all is a dam project in Indonesia that threatens the only habitat of the critically endangered Tapanuli orangutan, the world's rarest great ape.



Unrelenting opposition from scientists and environmentalists led the Bank of China, in a rare move, to announce re-evaluation of funding for the dam.

### Long-distance Trails Advisory Group From *Pedro da Cunha e Menezes*, Chair, part of IUCN WCPA Urban Conservation Strategies Specialist Group (also see page 16 for more information)

- The Long Distance Trails Advisory Group is part of the Urban Conservation Strategies SG– they hope to have close dialogue and to build on the common interests of the IUCN WCPA Specialist Groups on (1) Tourism and Protected Areas (2) **Mountain Protected Areas** (3) Connectivity Conservation and (4) Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas.
- They are also a member of the World Trails Network (WTN), an international trails association with a strong executive agenda focused on trails implementation and advocacy.

### And whilst we're on the topic...Canada's Great Trail From MNN November 2019

Comprised of more than 400 local trails on land and water, Canada's fully connected Great Trail stretches nearly 15,000 miles. Given that the recently opened trail is the longest recreational one in the world at a staggering 14,864 miles, the project is great indeed, a monumental achievement. The Great Trail isn't a single trail but a collection of small, community-based trails, all maintained and operated by local jurisdictions, linked together to form a single network.



### Gilgit-Baltistan GeoApp From *Ashiq Ahmad Khan*

Though several protected areas exist in **Gilgit-Baltistan** (Pakistan), most of these lack baseline data. In collaboration with the Provincial Government of Gilgit-Baltistan and Baltistan University, EvK2CNR is leading a broad-based research campaign, using the application of GBGeoApp to store data for various purposes including the development of maps of important mountain sites.



And further more...

The need for mountain research is being advocated in various universities, attracting PhD and MPhil scholars. We expect to see comprehensive research studies being carried out on the mountain ecology and conservation of critical ecosystems in Pakistan.

### **What is EvK2CNR**

The EvK2CNR is an autonomous, non-profit association, which promotes scientific and technological research in mountain areas. Particular emphasis is placed on the Hindu Kush – Karakorum – Himalaya region and on work in the countries of Nepal, Pakistan, China (Tibetan Autonomous Region) and India. EvK2CNR is best represented by its Pyramid Laboratory/Observatory located at 5,050 m. in Nepal at the base of Mount Everest. Today, EvK2CNR's work is mainly broad-scale multi-disciplinary programs aimed at helping resolve urgent environmental and development issues.

## Scree and Talus cont.

### Citizen Science – there is a lot of it about...

Recently I participated in a Climate Watch (an EarthWatch Institute initiative) citizen science survey of some significant sub alpine species at **Mount Buffalo NP** (Australian Alps). Climate change poses a threat to alpine ecosystems with many species vulnerable to an increase in temperature and fire frequency. In addition to raising awareness I guess every bit of citizen science monitoring helps! More information: <http://climatewatch.org.au>



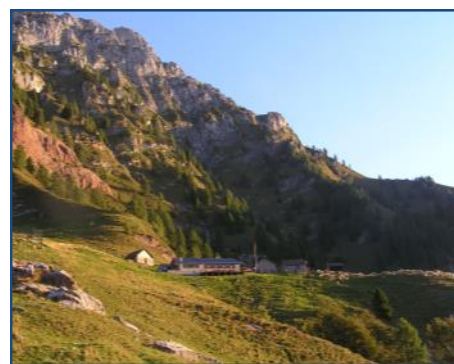
Recording *Hovea montana*

### Assessing the ecological footprint of ecotourism From IUCN News November 2019

Taking a standardized accounting developed by the [Global Footprint Network](#) as a starting point, [DestiMED](#) project partners have adapted the Ecological Footprint methodology for assessing the environmental impact of pilot ecotourism packages. The application of this methodology has enabled 13 Mediterranean protected areas to assess and take concrete steps to manage the Ecological Footprint of their ecotourism packages by considering specific components such as meals, accommodations, transport, and activities. Food has been found to be the highest contributor and primary component to adjust the ecological impact in the majority of packages.



DestiMED's Ecological Footprint methodology has helped both protected areas and ecotourism operators understand where their tours are excelling and where there is room for improvement. Moreover, new and alternative business opportunities have been identified towards a more sustainable local development.



### How to 'modernize' national parks – President Trump fashion Guardian November 2019

Parks are one of many government resources Trump has sought to privatize, including the US postal service, airports and freeways! A team of Trump administration advisers – consisting mostly of appointees from the private industry – are urging “modernization” of national park campgrounds, with a vision of food trucks, wifi and even Amazon deliveries. “Our recommendations would allow people to opt for additional costs if they want, for example, Amazon deliveries at a particular campsite,” Made in America Outdoor Recreation Advisory Committee, “We want to let Americans make their own decisions in the marketplace.”

**The White House wants to reduce spending on the National Park Service by 15%, or \$481m, even as the service has said it is facing a more than \$11bn maintenance backlog.**

### Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument wall

The only place in the United States where the organ pipe cactus grows is set to receive a section of President Trump's planned 30-foot-tall border wall. A federally protected wilderness area and UNESCO-recognized reserve, the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument also shares a border with the Mexican state of Sonora.



Wikimedia

### Austria Opens Hunt on Golden Jackals From EWS Wildlife October 2019

Just recently, a golden jackal appeared for the first time in the East Tyrolean Pustertal. Also in South Tyrol, Upper Austria, Carinthia and Styria, golden jackals have been appearing in the past. Another four golden jackal families have settled in Burgenland.

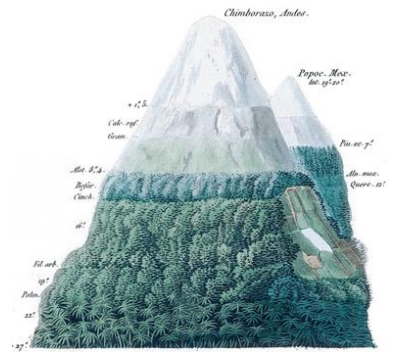
However, this is more than enough according to the provincial government of Burgenland. The province is now trying to approve legislation to allow hunters to kill golden jackals between October and March.



## Scree and Talus cont.

### Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment (GMBA) celebrates 20 years

Assessing, explaining, and caring for mountain biodiversity is the task of the GMBA, hosted by Switzerland, a network now celebrating its 20th anniversary. GMBA has assembled a global mountain region inventory, with a climate-based delineation of life zones linked to the 'Humboldtian' isotherms. GMBA's mountain portal combines this information with biodiversity data, and thus provides a scientific infrastructure for conservation planning and international mountain policy.



### The Danilo Re Memorial – what a great idea!

The Danilo Re Memorial is a sports competition for rangers from national parks stretching across the Alps. In January 2020, the 25th Danilo Re Memorial will take place in Mittersill in the [Hohe Tauern](#) National Park, Austria. Danilo Re was a well-known Italian park ranger and mountaineer who spent most of his working and private time in the wilderness of the Alps. He was particularly enthusiastic about botany and birds. He worked on the discovery of various important species as well as on awareness rising and environmental education. He died in 1995 due to an accident in his job.



**The memorial is dedicated to alpine protected area workers, and includes outdoor sport competitions as well as workshops for the rangers. In addition, the participants have a great opportunity meet with their colleagues.**

### Kids making the world a better place September 20 2019

Organisers of the Global Strike 4 Climate rallies are demanding government and business commit to a target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030. In Australia thousands of students, parents, workers (and retirees) came together to take part in the latest mass climate strike to demand urgent action on global warming. Friday's strike is the latest day of global action led by Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, who called on Australia, the Philippines, Japan and the Pacific islands to kick off the worldwide protests before the strikes moved across 120 countries. The strike was deliberately scheduled to start three days before the United Nations climate summit in New York, where Thunberg protested the White House's inaction on climate change.

### Earliest Ever Earth Overshoot Day: July 29 2019

This is calculated every year by the [Global Footprint Network](#). Less than 50 years ago, in 1970, the Earth Overshoot Day came on 23rd December. At this time the utilization of our natural resources was almost optimal.

### ETH Researchers Project Gloomy Forecast for the Aletsch Glacier (from MRI Newsletter October)

The largest glacier in the Alps is visibly suffering the effects of global warming. ETH researchers have now calculated how much of the **Aletsch Glacier** will still be visible by the end of the century. In the worst-case scenario, a couple patches of ice will be all that's left.



### How fast will seas rise? A dying Greenland glacier holds clues Science Oct 2019

Researchers aboard the *Adolf Jensen* spent this summer (June, July, August) setting up instruments along Helheim Glacier in Greenland and taking ocean samples from within its fjord. The data they gleaned from the expedition could help predict future changes in sea level, an elusive yet critical mission for climate scientists. [watch the video](#)

### International Mountain Day 2019 (mountain recipe contest)

This year's Mountain Partnership Secretariat (MPS) contest focuses on mountain products and on healthy, nutritious recipes that reflect the traditions of the mountains. Did you know that 6 of the 20 most important food crops originate in mountains, such as potatoes, maize, barley, apples, sorghum and tomatoes? It is difficult to imagine a nutritious diet without at least one of these foods.

The recipes and photos of 30 lucky finalists will be included in the **mountain recipes booklet. Watch out for it!**





### WMO High Mountain Summit—Call to Action

MRI (from Dr. Carolina Adler MRI Executive Director)

Bringing together over 150 stakeholders from all over the globe, this three-day summit followed on from the conclusions of the [IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate](#) to identify priority actions for policy, science, observations, and services that support sustainable development, disaster risk reduction, and climate change adaptation in both high mountain and downstream areas.

The summit concluded with the adoption of a [Call to Action](#), in which participants commit to ensuring the provision of relevant hydrological, meteorological, and climate information – such as improved access to mountain observation data or the implementation of early warning systems for mountain-specific and transboundary threats – that recognize the importance of mountain regions as a source of global freshwater and ecosystem services.

### Long term socio-ecological research – a workshop

From Dr Clinton Carbutt Mountain SG committee Southern African regional representative

“The contribution of long-term socio-ecological research (LTSER) programs in mountains to global policy agendas and UN conventions” workshop was co-hosted by the **GMBA** (University of Bern) and the University of Lausanne in Champex, October 2019. The objective of this workshop was to review how mountain LTSER data and information have so far been **supporting global policy agendas** and United Nations (UN) conventions pertaining to mountain ecosystems and how existing as well as newly-collected **data could be used in the future**. The format followed was firstly a series of country-based report backs by invited speakers, followed by focussed group work and feedback with a view to developing a research-policy framework to be published shortly.

**The workshop benefited from the fact that both policy makers and scientists were in attendance to help bridge the science-policy divide.**

We all tend to work in silos and there is not enough collaboration to enhance each other’s needs. Additional and accessible data sources may also provide for a more balanced and rounded approach and help to alleviate the reliance on KBAs. There is of course also the need to link policy, governance and science.

The workshop also provided the opportunity to briefly introduce the Mountain Specialist Group and extend an invitation to new members to continue promoting the value of mountain systems and mountain biodiversity in their respective spheres of influence.

### Making Connections at the International Mountain Conference 2019

In early September, over 500 mountain researchers came together at the heart of the Tyrolean Alps in Innsbruck, Austria in order to engage in in-depth, cross-disciplinary discussions. Their aim? To further develop global understanding of mountain systems, their responses, and resiliencies

### III Latin American and Caribbean Parks Congress CAPLAC (October 2019 Lima, Peru) From IUCN News

Caribbean and Latin American voices were raised and heard during CAPLAC III - by the close, these voices were distilled into the Lima Declaration, ready for the IUCN World Conservation Congress in June 2020 [CAPLAC Highlights](#)

### Long Distance Trails Advisory Group at CAPLAC

From Pedro Da Cunha E Menezes

During the event, one of the most debated topics was the growing fragmentation of protected areas. In this context, for the first time in Latin America, the use of long-distance trails as conservation tools, with direct implication for landscape connectivity, was widely discussed.

A Long Distance Trails meeting at CAPLAC prepared conceptual foundations for a South American Long Distance Trails Network built on three pillars: (1) connectivity and conservation; (2) recreation and environmental awareness; and (3) job and income generation. More information email Pedro Menezes: [cunhaemenezes@gmail.com](mailto:cunhaemenezes@gmail.com)

Also drafted was the “Lima Declaration on Long-Distance Trails”. Of particular interest is the emphasis on Long-Distance Trails being legally recognized as protected areas aimed at connecting protected areas and other fragments of natural areas.

## Tools, Publications and other Media

Short Courses 2020: Centre for Protected Area Management, Colorado State University <https://conservation.warnercnr>

**Mountains as vulnerable places: a global synthesis of changing mountain systems in the Anthropocene** Springer's Geo Journal. From *Abhik Chakraborty*, Faculty of Tourism, Wakayama University

The paper provides a global overview of changing mountain systems in recent times, noting their important geodiversity, biodiversity, and ecosystem service related aspects. The paper clarifies how, despite being the most matured form of the earth's crust and despite being construed as 'immovable' across cultures, mountains today face threats from a range of anthropogenic activities.



From ICIMOD

This **First HKH Assessment Report** consists of 16 chapters, which comprehensively assess the current state of knowledge of the HKH region, increase the understanding of various drivers of change and their impacts, address critical data gaps and develop a set of evidence-based and actionable policy solutions and recommendations. These are linked to nine mountain priorities for the mountains and people of the HKH consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals.



From Mountain Partnerships

*Europe's jewels: Mountains, islands, sparsely populated areas. Expert analysis on geographical specificities.* This European Commission publication is an expert analysis of Europe's mountains, islands and sparsely populated areas, called "Europe's jewels" ... [Read More](#)

IUCN Publication: [IUCN, Forest Conservation Programme](#)

Within a landscape of overlapping ecological, social and economic priorities, there exists a fundamental need to balance the land use dynamics of natural resource management with environmental and livelihood considerations. However, in striving to reach such a balance, people and local institutions are often excluded or forgotten.

**Tourism and Visitor Management in Protected Areas guide** is now released in Portuguese and German

From Trevor Sandwith [Meanings and more.... Policy Brief no.7 of the ICCA Consortium](#)

It defines ICCA's: Territories for Life, and discusses the relationship with protected areas, other effective area-based conservation measures and the concept of "conserved areas".

IUCN WCPA also announced this new technical series publication on OECMs [Guidelines for other effective area-based conservation measures](#)



From *Fausto Sarmiento* Mountain SG Committee

Journal Science produced a special issue on Mountain Life [Mountains Special Issue](#)

The PAGES magazine is preparing a special issue on Mountain Conservation, [here](#) mostly based on the work done by the VULPES Project presented in the International meeting held in Cuenca, Ecuador. [Past Plant Diversity](#)

There were a lot of scientific activities around the mountain theme presented at the International Mountain Conference in Innsbruck, Austria, whereby mountain protected areas figured prominently. <https://www.uibk.ac.at/congress/imc2019/index.html.en>

Released in Spanish at CAPLAC III—The Guidelines for Privately Protected Areas and Governance and Management of Protected Areas

### Why do you love parks and protected areas?

In celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), we are asking people worldwide: *Why do you love parks and protected areas?*

[Participate in the survey and you could win special #NatureForAll prizes!](#)





## Some events and meetings of interest

### 2019

- 26–28 November **Transboundary regions under Global change: current challenges and development trajectories** – conference devoted to the 70th anniversary of Gorno-Altai State University and the 55th anniversary of the Branch of the Russian Geographical Society in the Altai Republic, and organized under the Erasmus+ project “SUNRAISE: Sustainable Natural Resource Use in Arctic and High Mountainous Areas” Gorno-Altai, Russian Federation  
(ED Note: UPDATE missed this but sounds very interesting—we hope to hear from our Mountain Network member for next edition)
- **COP25**, Madrid, Spain, 2-13 December 2019
- 11 December International Mountain Day, Worldwide—2019 Theme: Mountains Matter for Youth



### 2020

- 9-15 February **Alpine Ecology Course** Alpine National Park, Victoria, Australia. An exciting opportunity to learn about the plants, animals, landforms and soils that make up alpine ecosystems, in the context of land use and conservation issues. [www.rcaae.org/ecology-course](http://www.rcaae.org/ecology-course) or [alpine.ecology@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:alpine.ecology@latrobe.edu.au)
- 23–28 February **World Biodiversity Forum**, Davos, Switzerland [Read more](#)
- 11-13 March **11th World Congress on Snow and Mountain Tourism** Canillo, Andorra
- 19-26 March **11<sup>th</sup> World Wilderness Congress (WILD11)** Jaipur, India
- 3-4 April **Climate Change, Mountains and Future of Humanity**, Kathmandu, Nepal
- 11-16 May **5th European Ranger Congress**, which will take place in the Bavarian Forest in Germany
- 1-6 June Sustainable Summits 2020, Kathmandu, Nepal [READ MORE](#)
- 11-19 June **The IUCN World Conservation Congress** Marseille, France [CONGRESS WEBSITE](#)
- 17–21 August **34th International Geographical Congress**, Istanbul University Turkey Call for abstracts for the International Symposium on Mountain Studies [SYMPOSIUM-OF-MOUNTAIN-STUDIES](#)
- 2–5 September **8th World Trails Conference**, Nepal



Registration is now open!

Registration is now open for the **IUCN World Conservation Congress 2020**. Come learn, share and network with IUCN’s 1300+ government, civil society and indigenous peoples’ Member organisations and top scientists, academics, influencers, educators, explorers and artists from all over the world.

A healthy natural world underpins all of our dreams and opportunities. It is essential to reach the Sustainable Development Goals and a powerful ally in the fight against climate change.

We are the generations to get this right.



## Important links

**IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas** for an outline of the role of Mountain Specialist Group [IUCN WCPA Mountains](#) and [Mountain UPDATE](#) and **IUCN World Conservation Congress** [IUCN World Congress Protected Area Governance and Management \(book\)](#) [Management Book ANU Press](#)  
**IUCN WCPA sustainable tourism in protected areas** [Sustainable Tourism Guidelines](#)  
**The Mountain Partnership is a United Nations voluntary alliance of partners** dedicated to improving the lives of mountain peoples and protecting mountain environments around the world. [Mountain Partnership Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment \(GMBA\)](#) [GMBA](#)

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While Mountain Network members can choose not to be WCPA members and still be involved and receive the Mountain UPDATE, the WCPA Chair Dr Kathy MacKinnon, and Mountain Specialist Group Executive and would like to encourage all to become WCPA members. This helps to secure good governance and management of the WCPA and the Mountains Group and enlightens all members to the wider activities of the WCPA.

To learn more about WCPA membership go to: <https://portals.iucn.org/commissions/home>  
 For any relevant mountain protected area news, please email me (Gill) on [peopleinnature@bigpond.com](mailto:peopleinnature@bigpond.com)

I look forward to hearing from you soon!