

# Mountain Protected Areas

## UPDATE

March 2019 # 101

### A note from the editor

Welcome to the 101st edition of the UPDATE. It has been a 'big' 3 months since our last UPDATE with devastating climate (change) driven fires in the Tasmanian World Heritage Area (Australia) contrasting with a 'polar vortex' gripping parts of the USA! We've heard about the demise of iconic wolf species, and the loss of a remarkable mountain conservationist. But please read on, it is not all bad news—there are often inspirational responses and important lessons to be learned from difficult stories. March 2019



*The Australian Snow Gum—the ultimate people tree, not too lofty, not too petit, a safe haven and at the end of the day, very huggable...*

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## From *People and Mountains* around the world:

### *A tribute to Bruno Messrli (1931 – 2019) a giant in the world of mountain conservation*

From *Linda Hamilton and Jack Ives*

There have been many tributes to Bruno Messrli over the past weeks, one of course from the Mountain Research Initiative (MRI) where he played a central role in it's foundation. Bruno also co-founded the International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

He was retired Professor of Geography at University of Bern Switzerland, and a true leader in the world of mountain conservation and research.

Among many early successes another occurred at Rio de Janeiro (1992) when Bruno spearheaded (by now with a growing international team, some jokingly labelled as the *mountain mafia*) the inclusion of Chapter 13 (Mountains) in the UNO's AGENDA 21. [Chapter 13 Agenda 21](#)

This led to the book "Mountains of the World" (1997), designation of 2002 as the International Year of Mountains, and 11<sup>th</sup> December as International Mountain Day.

Bruno is much appreciated for his solid, forward thinking work which opened doors for changing mountain land use and policy around the world. Bruno will be deeply missed as an energetic colleague with seemingly boundless enthusiasm for his work. Bruno was a strong man who did not shy away from difficult challenges, and who could temper tense debates with refreshing insight and leadership.

Whether facing formidable international political problems or a tight physical situation in rugged terrain, one could be assured of absolute support and a ready supply of emergency aid whenever needed. A lovely human being, whom many counted themselves honored to have as a dear friend.

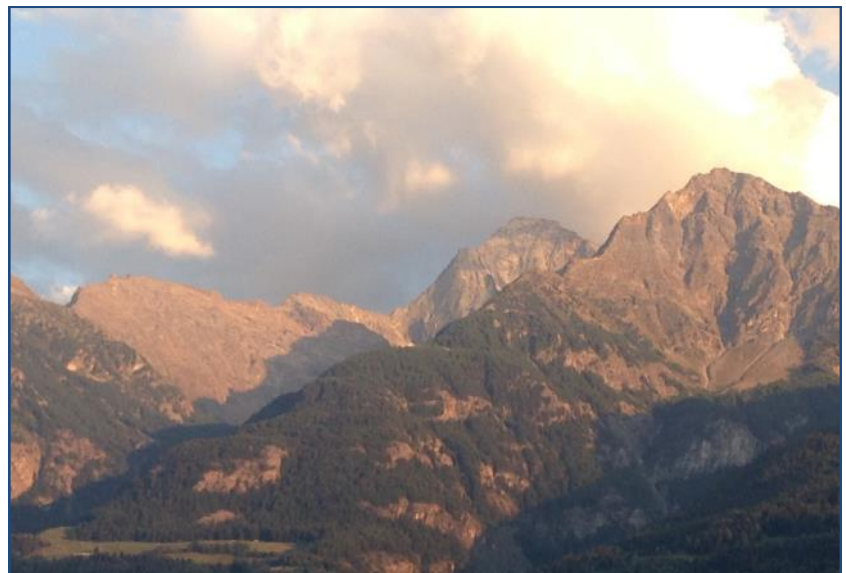


*Bruno Messrli and Jack Ives—"a toast to the mountains"*

#### **Agenda 21—in case you are wondering?**

... is a non-binding action plan of the United Nations with regard to sustainable development. It is a product of the Earth Summit (UN Conference on Environment and Development) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. It is an **action agenda** for the UN, other multilateral organizations, and individual governments around the world that can be executed at local, national, and global levels.

The "21" in Agenda 21 refers to the 21st century. It has been affirmed and had a few modifications at subsequent UN conferences. One major objective of the Agenda 21 is that every government should draw its own local Agenda 21. Since 2015, Sustainable Development Goals are included in the Agenda 2030.



Gran Paradiso National Park, Italy

## America-north

### *No buffer zone...no chance for wolves*

Adapted from Y2Y and The Narwhal (Sharon J Riley) February 2019

When wolves leave the protection of **Banff National Park** (Alberta, Canada), they are fair game for hunters and trappers — a practice scientists and advocates say is threatening the park's ability to protect the wide-ranging species that call it home.

Alberta has no restrictions on baiting wolves for trapping on public lands, including right next to national parks.

Three wolf packs travel in **Banff National Park** as part of their home territory. Wolves naturally recolonized the Bow Valley area in the 1980s, having been driven out of the park entirely 30 years earlier.

Marriott (wildlife photographer) says trapping these particular wolves has significantly depleted the population of wolves that roam through **Banff National Park**. The Red Deer pack consisted of eight wolves at last count in December; the Cascade-Panther pack had just one wolf remaining.

#### **No buffer zones, 'no chance'**

Marriott advocates for buffer zones to be established around the periphery of national parks, to limit the hunting and trapping of wide-ranging species.

**"Wolves, cougars, lynx, bobcat, wolverines — all of those animals are still either trapped or hunted if they step one foot out of a national park."**

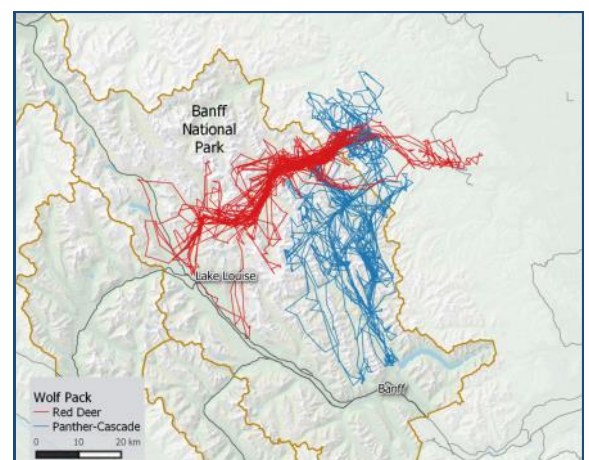
Buffer zones with reduced trapping quotas have been established outside other parks such as **Yellowstone and Glacier national parks** in Montana, USA. But no such buffer zone exists around Canada's **Rocky Mountain national parks**, and trappers and hunters can often collect financial rewards in the form of bounties for their kills.

"Parks Canada requires that parks are managed for ecological integrity," *Jodi Hilty*, (Y2Y) told The Narwhal. "Most national parks are too small to really sustain populations like wolves by themselves so parks really need to think about how adjacent lands and activities can inadvertently affect ecological integrity in parks."

At 6,641 square kilometres, **Banff National Park** encompasses a large portion of Alberta's Rockies —part of the **Yellowstone to Yukon wildlife corridor** and crucial habitat for wide-ranging species which require ample habitat to find food and mates. A study in Banff found wolves' average home range is 1,709 square kilometres.



Wildlife photographer John Marriott often captures images of wild wolves in Banff National Park, but recently found a "scene of carnage." **Photo: ©John Marriott, [wildernessprints.com](http://wildernessprints.com)**



## America-north

### USA shutdown

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From National Wildlife Federation January 2019



Rocky Mountains National Park, USA

Many of America's most beloved national parks paid a high price during this latest government shutdown. No maintenance, overflowing garbage cans, unplowed roads, no public education programs and shuttered visitors centers are the direct result of the political showdown, which began on December 22. Eighty-percent of National Park Service employees were furloughed, which meant almost all services at parks shut down and some parks completely closed.

Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado—the fourth most popular national park in the country—was forced to close its gates because roads have not been plowed.

### The Shutdown Is Over... Now Follow the Money From Sierra Club February

It was the longest government shutdown in US history, and work at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) nearly ground to a halt...the Interior Department stopped accepting most Freedom of Information Act requests.

But one sector of the Bureau kept working. Between December 28 and January 25, the BLM—the branch of the Interior tasked with making decisions on federal land use and natural resources—**approved 38 new permits for drilling and 15 new leases for oil and gas development.** It also accepted 260 applications for drilling, according to a watchdog group dedicated to public lands in the region.

On January 8, while national parks piled up with garbage, the president of the American Petroleum Institute, told the press that his industry was “not feeling the impacts” of the

## Africa

### Critical biodiversity sites identified - Uganda

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Adapted from Wildlife Conservation Society News February [Read Publication](#)

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and its partners have announced 45 sites identified to meet Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) status, global priority areas for conservation of biodiversity in Uganda. This is the first time in the world that there has been a national assessment of KBAs across several taxa.

“Uganda needs to know which sites they are responsible for as part of the global community, and the sites that are important to maintain all of their species under the Convention on Biological Diversity,” said *Andrew Plumptre*, the lead author of the paper. “Assessing KBAs as part of the process highlights which sites are globally important within a national planning process.”

Over the last decade, several sites have been heavily degraded and invaded by people due to the rapidly expanding human population, demand for agricultural land, mining and infrastructural development that are creating massive pressures on the remaining natural habitats, including protected areas in Uganda.

To prevent further degradation conservation actions will have to be adaptive and large-scale project developers have to avoid adversely impacting high biodiversity conservation sites. If such projects must proceed in ecological sensitive sites, they have to offset impacts.

Sites identified as a priority for conservation funding include many forest reserves (11) such as **Mount Moroto**.

**Mount Moroto** (3083m) is one of a chain of volcanoes along Uganda's international border with Kenya that begins with **Mount Elgon** in the south and includes Mount Kadam and **Mount Morungole**—also a poorly funded site.

**Editors Note: Mountain UPDATE often has articles about Virunga Volcanoes and Mt Elgon national parks—both of which have been identified as containing KBAs.**



Morungole: Wikipedia

# Oceania—Australia

## *the story of a moth and a possum*

Adapted from *The Australian Guardian* February 2019

Numbers of unique Australian moths that migrate in their billions to alpine areas have crashed, ecologists say, putting extra pressure on the endangered Mountain pygmy possum. Scientists believe the “astonishing” drop in Bogong moth numbers is linked to climate change and recent droughts in areas where the moths breed.

At the same time checks on the endangered Mountain pygmy possum, which exists only in Australia’s alpine regions, have revealed dead litters in the pouches of females. The moths are a key food source for the possums as they wake from hibernation.

The ecologist Dr Ken Green has been monitoring Bogong moths for 40 years. He said: “Last summer numbers were atrocious. It was not just really bad, it was the worst I had ever seen. Now this year it’s got even worse.”

“They haven’t just declined. They’ve gone,” he said. “We have done mountains from down to the Victorian border all the way to Canberra. We have checked every cave we know.”

Dean Heinze, an associate at Latrobe University, has been researching Mountain pygmy possums since the early 1990s.

“It’s a widespread event,” he said. “I inspect the reproductive system of the animal and I look in their pouch to see how many young there are. I have been opening pouches and discovering dead and decomposing young.”

Prof Lesley Hughes, an ecologist at Macquarie University and councillor at the Climate Council of Australia, said the potential role of climate change in the decline of the moths and possums were what ecologists and climate scientists had predicted.

**“Unfortunately the general predictions of the ecological risks of climate change are now turning into observations for particular species. And it should be no surprise we are seeing these impacts in the alpine zone, long recognised as one of the most vulnerable ecosystems to climate risks”.**

In 2016, a national recovery plan was agreed for the possum, outlining multiple threats including habitat degradation, predation by invasive cats and foxes and climate change.



The Mountain pygmy possum populations are spread across the **Australian Alps** in isolated populations where there is suitable habitat – rock / boulder scree with protective vegetation especially mountain plum pine. At some sites the possum habitat is fragmented by ski resorts.



Bogong moths & pygmy possums like boulder fields of the **Australian Alps national parks**



Bogong moths are the only known insect to use the earth’s magnetic field to help them navigate up to distances of 1,000km to the Alps! Around two billion moths are estimated to make the journey.

## Oceania—S.E. Asia

### Trans –Papua Threat to nature and indigenous societies



From William F. Laurance, Director of the Centre for Tropical Environmental and Sustainability Science (TESS)

An exhaustive analysis of road-expansion and development trends has just been completed for Indonesian New Guinea – the Provinces of Papua and West Papua - one of the largest surviving tracts of tropical rainforest in the world. [Read more](#)

Very expensive road-building schemes are being driven by the Indonesian government – but for questionable gains and with massive environmental and social risks. Alarming, it was concluded that three major new centres of deforestation will be created, as you can see encircled on the map.

The Trans-Papuan Highway – a 4,000-kilometer network of planned roads that will slice through many of the last intact forests of New Guinea – has an array of hidden environmental, social, and economic risks.

Here is a quick video summarizing the paper’s findings: [Trans-Papua Route](#)

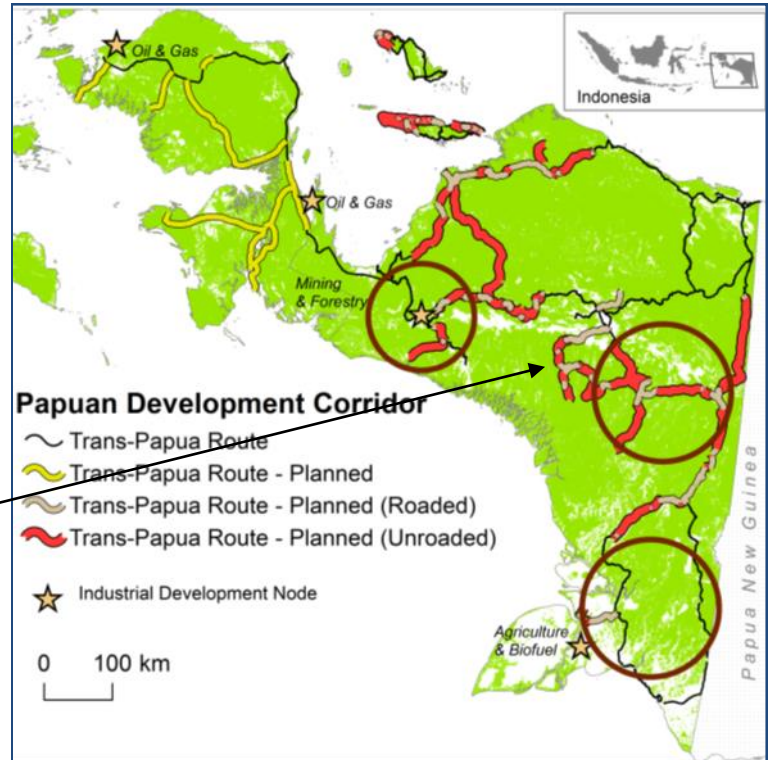
This really is one of the greatest current threats to nature and indigenous societies.

#### Lorentz National Park

##### UNESCO World Heritage Centre

**Lorentz National Park** (2.35 million ha) is the largest protected area in South-East Asia. It is the only protected area in the world to incorporate a continuous, intact transect from snowcap to tropical marine environment, including extensive lowland wetlands. Located at the meeting-point of two colliding continental plates, the area has a complex geology with ongoing mountain formation as well as major sculpting by glaciation. The area also contains fossil sites which provide evidence of the evolution of life on New Guinea, a high level of endemism and the highest level of biodiversity in the region.

**Lorentz National Park** is located in Indonesia’s Papua Province, along the ‘**Pegunungan Mandala**’ range, whose **Puncak Cartenz (4884 m)** is the highest peak in Southeast Asia.



Carstenz Pyramid (Puncak Jaya) at Lorentz National Park, Papua (Irian Jaya) Indonesia photo: allindonesiatravel

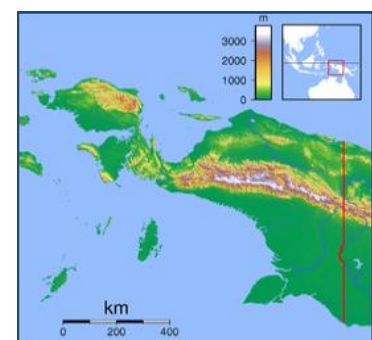


image: wikipedia

## Central Asia—Himalayas

### *Hindu Kush Himalaya glaciers to rocks in under 100 years!*

From International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) News and MRI February

A comprehensive new study of the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region, known as the world's "Third Pole" for its vast store of ice, and home to Mount Everest, K2 and other soaring peaks, finds that even the most ambitious Paris Agreement goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees by the end of the century would lead to a 2.1 spike in temperatures and the melting of one-third of the region's glaciers, a critical water source to some 250 million mountain dwellers and the 1.65 billion others living in the river valleys below.

#### **"This is the climate crisis you haven't heard of"**

"Global warming is on track to transform the frigid, glacier-covered mountain peaks of the HKH cutting across eight countries to bare rocks in a little less than a century. Impacts on people in the region, already one of the most fragile and hazard-prone mountain regions in the world, will range from an increase in extreme weather events, a reduction in agricultural yields and more frequent disasters. But it's the projected reductions in pre-monsoon river flows, due to decreased snow melt, and changes in the monsoon that will hit hardest, throwing urban water systems and food and energy production off kilter." said Philippus Wester (ICIMOD), who led the report.

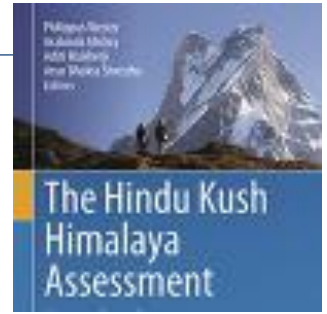
#### **"Rocky times ahead for the region"**

Despite the cultural and political diversity of the countries studied, they are united in the unique challenges facing mountain regions, which will only get worse with climate change and glacial melt, the report argues.

"Between now and 2080, the environmental economic and social conditions laid out in the report could go downhill. Because many of the disasters and sudden changes will play out across country borders, conflict among the region's countries could easily flare up.

**But the future doesn't have to be bleak if governments work together to turn the tide against melting glaciers and the myriad impacts they unleash."** Eklabya Sharma, deputy director general of ICIMOD

The report also calls for greater recognition of mountain areas and the HKH region in global climate efforts. "We need to start thinking of mountain regions as climate hotspots worthy of urgent attention, investments and solutions," Dasho Rinzin Dorji, ICIMOD Bhutan



[READ MORE](#)

[What will happen in HKH](#) (you tube video)



The HKH region covers 3,500 kilometers across Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan. Nestled in its record-breaking peaks, glaciers feed 10 of the world's most important river systems, including the Ganges, Indus, Yellow, Mekong and Irrawaddy, and directly or indirectly supply billions of people with food, energy, clean air and incomes. Additionally, the region contains four of the world's biodiversity hotspots.

## Europe

### Be Part of the Mountain

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#### From ALPARC News February

To support nature conservation and to reduce the disturbance of wildlife by winter sports, flyers, web pages, videos, events and meetings have been developed in several Alpine protected areas under the umbrella of the international initiative “Be Part of the Mountain”.

This winter, the **Vanoise National Park** (France) has launched an awareness campaign on this subject, disseminating awareness messages and information on the needs of wildlife. Several communication tools have been produced with the slogan “Be Part of the Mountain” and a specific graphic design as well as t-shirts, stickers and flyers. The initiative is also supported by different local ambassadors from the field of sport for a wider dissemination of the campaign throughout the country.

In the **Ecrins National Park** (France) the rangers organize meetings, events, animations on the theme of winter wildlife disturbance and especially on the topic "traces and clues" for the general public including youngsters. The Park has been involved in this topic for several years with the “Chuut!” campaign.

In Italy, the **Aree Protette dell’Ossola** initiatives involve several stakeholders of the tourism sector and aims at developing information paths for tourists, awareness-raising campaigns and training courses for local stakeholders on the impact of tourism on wildlife.

The “Be part of the Mountain” initiative was launched by ALPARC in 2018. It is an Alps-wide communication campaign that allies protected areas, nature protection organisations, public bodies, Alpine clubs and ambassadors – across the Alps, aiming at facilitating the exchange of good practices, developing common awareness-raising tools and implementing joint communication action to initiate behavioural change in outdoor participants. The video presenting the campaign is available [here](#). At present, 8 members have officially signed the charter and others have expressed their interest in joining the initiative.



Ecrins NP (summer)



Vanoise NP ski fields (summer)

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### **We are Alps Compact 2019: call open for journalists! Climate Change, Natural Hazard and Governance**

Excursions in and around Innsbruck (AT) will demonstrate how these three issues are approached, taking into account the particularities of the Alpine natural features. Participants will get the chance to converse with political representatives of the 8 Alpine Countries in the run-up to the XV Alpine Conference (taking place 4 April) and participate in the closing Press Conference.

**The call is open until Sunday, 10 March** for interested journalists from all types of media, particularly Alpine countries to apply for a place on the tour. Further information and the application documents: [on the Alpine Convention’s website](#).



### Global

#### *Talkfests of the affluent?*

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**Editor Note:** Although not directly related to mountains the following are some interesting perspectives on international conferences, timely as UNEP prepares to host the 4th UN Environment Assembly in Kenya. However I do recognise the hard work that many of our colleagues and members put into negotiating global agreements.

Taken from Oxfam, David Attenborough (Guardian January 2019) and PAPACO News Editorial

In January billionaires, business leaders and politicians converged on Davos, Switzerland, for the World Economic Forum (WEF) - a festival of wealth. And they have much to celebrate.

Oxfam's latest report "Public Good or Private Wealth" found that the world's billionaires increased their share of the pie by 12 percent or almost **\$3.5 billion AUD a day** last year and they're paying the lowest tax rates they have in decades.

When governments under-tax corporations and the wealthy and underfund public services they increase the pressure on the world's poorest communities (and their natural environments). The growing gap between the rich and poor is undermining the fight to end extreme poverty. It destroys economies and environments, fuels protest and disadvantages woman and girls.

**Sir David Attenborough** speaking at the start of the World Economic Forum, the 92-year-old naturalist and broadcaster warned that human activity has taken the world into a new era, threatening to undermine civilisation.

***"... The Garden of Eden is no more. We have changed the world so much that scientists say we are in a new geological age: the Anthropocene, the age of humans."***

Attenborough warned that the only conditions that humans have known are changing fast. "We need to move beyond guilt or blame, and get on with the practical tasks at hand."

A survey conducted before the WEF found that environmental threats are now the biggest danger to the global economy.

**And the last word goes to *Geoffroy Mauvais* PAPACO**

From the simple sentence: "the planet suffers because of us", which is the part we can't understand?



***How is it that the more we measure why and how we destroy our nature, the less able to act we seem?***

At the end of last year, the participants in COP 13 (RAMSAR - October) left the shops of Dubai to go to the COP 14 (biodiversity - November). They barely had time to get out of the pool in Sharm El-Sheikh before putting on their scarf at COP 24 (climate - December) in Poland. In order to do that, they had to skip the COP 8 of the Water Convention, the COP 2 of Minamata or the COP 8 of the World Health Organization, which were held at the same time, among others. Are you lost?

Yes, international conventions abound and each generates its reports, its commitments, its deadlines... Has action been replaced by procrastination?

If nothing meaningful is done, the indistinct murmur of conference rooms will be replaced by the potentially toxic hubbub of social networks, and the door will open widely to the selfishness of populisms of all kinds for which nature will never be a priority.

## 25 years on... From Jody Hilty Y2Y News February

When the idea of an interconnected system of wild lands and waters stretching the 2,000 miles (3,200 kms) between Yellowstone National Park and Canada's Yukon was proposed in 1993, some people were incredulous. The idea of a vision that big and a mission that bold seemed impossible: linking healthy landscapes, connecting wide-ranging wildlife and an idea that spans five American states, two Canadian provinces, two Canadian territories, and the traditional territories of at least 31 Indigenous groups. But together we continue to make an impact 25 years later. [Read More](#)

## And another...10th anniversary of Wilderness in Europe From EWS February

For many years, the word Wilderness was associated with far-flung, exotic locations like the Amazon or Yosemite and more specifically with the US Wilderness Act of 1964.

Fast-forward to 2009 and 230 wilderness advocates from 35 countries gathered in Prague, Czech Republic, for the Conference on Wilderness and Large Natural Habitat Areas. Their focus was to unite Europe with a common vision and strategy for Wilderness, and thus the European Wilderness Resolution was created exactly on February 3rd, 2009 by the European Parliament. Today there are more than 40 Wilderness (areas) meeting the European Wilderness Definition and the Network is growing.

## World Meteorological Organization (WMO) From Mountain Research Initiative (MRI) Executive Director

MRI High mountains were on the agenda at the WMO in Geneva (February) a meeting to develop WMO's High Mountains Strategy in collaboration with mountain research experts. This is a key input at the [WMO Congress](#) in June, and later as part of the [WMO High Mountains Summit](#) in October 2019, at which the MRI will be present as the event's Co-Chair.

Did you know? Established in 1950, WMO recognizes the need to continuously adapt to a rapidly changing world... regular reform is being driven by environmental degradation, resource constraints, increased competition, technological advances, and other forces.

## ProMONT-BLANC: still a lot of work to do! From Barbara Ehringhaus ProMONT-BLANC

Since the last UPDATE local politicians of the 40 communities in France, Italy and Switzerland who belong to "Espace Mont-Blanc" finally decided to go for the World Heritage category "cultural landscape" instead of natural or mixed site. So there will be a lot of work coming up for our umbrella NGO, since the politicians do not yet realise how and where to start!

## yartsa gunbu - threatened From ICIMOD News January

Although yartsa gunbu – the “caterpillar fungus” – is one of the most socioeconomically important species in the **Kailash Sacred Landscape**, the future viability of this high-value medicinal plant is being threatened by unsustainable practices. Accordingly, communities and local authorities in India and Nepal have recently signed a declaration to commit to sustainable yartsa gunbu harvesting and management.



“Caterpillar fungus” is mainly found in the meadows above 3,500 meters in the **Himalayan regions** of Nepal, Bhutan, India and Tibet. The fungus germinates in the living larvae of moths, kills and mummifies it, and then a dark brown stalk-like fruiting body which is a few centimetres long emerges from the corpse and stands upright.

## Cloudy with a chance of arachnophobia: raining spiders in Brazil The Guardian January

Summer in south-east Brazil has brought soaring temperatures and some disconcerting eight-legged visitors. Residents in a rural area of southern Minas Gerais state have reported skies “raining” spiders, a phenomenon which experts say is typical in the region during hot, humid weather.

Soaring temperatures bring tales of eight-legged invaders as huge numbers of communal species spin invisible webs in the sky.



### From Australian Academy of Science News January

Australian scientists are calling on NSW Premier (following NSW passing legislation to protect feral horses as culturally significant) to visit **Kosciuszko National Park** (Kosci) to see firsthand the damage inflicted by feral horses on the natural environment.

"Feral horses are impacting **Kosciuszko's** endangered alpine animals, its wetlands and streams and the headwater catchments of the Murray, Murrumbidgee and Snowy rivers. The Premier needs to see this for herself and take decisive action to halt the damage." Australian Academy of Science Secretary for Science Policy, Professor David Day

### [Traditional Water Healing ceremony – Australian Alps Healing Ceremony](#)

Young and old shared in this important heritage and cultural connection to land that Australians have had for thousands of years. The *healing* is to help rewrite the current destruction of water and country, because what are we without our rivers? Indigenous elders and families gathered at the birth place of the Murrumbidgee River in **Kosciuszko National Park** to conduct a traditional healing ceremony. At the Narjong ceremony, senior lore men from across New South Wales were joined by Major 'Moogy' Sumner, a Ngarrindjeri elder and songman from the Coorong at the mouth of the Murray River in South Australia.

***From our mountain springs through communities and to our river mouths the Murray-Darling Basin needs protection from introduced feral animals, greed, corruption, mismanagement and poor farming practices.***

### [European Safari?](#) The Guardian February 2019

You don't have to go to Africa to go on safari – the European Safari Company has options that range from wolf tracking to bear watching, with profits going to rewilding initiatives – so your holiday benefits the local area, too. Bison tracking in the southern Carpathians, Romania, is now possible thanks to a conservation project that reintroduced the animals to the area – trips run until mid-May.

### [Isolated Sierra Morena Wolf Population Officially Extinct](#) European Wilderness Society January 2019

The **Sierra Morena** used to be home to the most southern distribution of the Iberian wolf. The Iberian wolves, a subspecies of the European wolf, live in northern Portugal and north-western Spain. However, an isolated pack survived in the **Sierra Morena** for decades. The last update of the Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe, an IUCN/SCC Specialist Group, lists the Sierra Morena population as extinct. Please also read: [The future of the Iberian wolves](#)

Later this year, EWS will organise WILDart together with the management of **Majella National Park**, home to [Majella Wilderness](#).

**Population was once a taboo subject...** Taken from IUCN blog [IUCN Crossroads Blog](#) David Johnson, Chief Executive, Margaret Pyke Trust

With the global population set to rise to over 9.7 billion by 2050, population growth and the resulting pressure on the environment is now recognised as a key conservation issue. Removing barriers to family planning must be an integral part of conservation policy. On World Population Day in July 2019 we will be promoting the growing collective of visionary conservation organisations which are integrating family planning into their conservation activities by making appropriate partnerships, or supporting policy changes which will make this easier.

**WMF 2018** University Central Asia and the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic co-organised the fourth World Mountain Forum (WMF 2018) to share experiences and best practices, and develop integrated solutions to existing challenges of sustainable development in mountain regions. The final 'Call for Mountains' conference output document is now [available online](#).



The Sierra Morena is a low mountain range in the south of the Iberian Peninsula. For half of a century these mountains were home to a small Iberian wolf population. The last breeding pair was sighted in the area in 2013.



## Scree and Talus cont.

### Tasmanian Fires...this is what climate change looks like From Australian Guardian January

As I write this (Richard Flanagan author & conservationist), fire is 500 metres from the largest King Billy pine forest in the world on Mt Bobs, an ancient forest that dates back to the last Ice Age and has trees over 1,000 years old. Fire has breached the boundaries of **Mt Field National Park** with its glorious alpine vegetation, unlike anything on the planet. Fire laps at the edges of **Federation Peak**, Australia's grandest mountain, and around the base of **Mt Anne** with its exquisite rainforest and alpine gardens.

Fire laps at the border of the **Walls of Jerusalem National Park** with its labyrinthine landscapes of tarns and iconic stands of ancient pencil pine and its beautiful alpine landscape, ecosystems described by ecologist *Prof Jamie Kirkpatrick*, as "like the vision of a Japanese garden made more complex, and developed in paradise. ...You have plants that look like rocks – green rocks – and these plants have different colours in complicated mosaics: red-green, blue-green, yellow-green, altogether. It's an overwhelming sensual experience."

Fires have taken stands of king billy and pencil pine – the last remaining fragments of an ecosystem that once spread across the supercontinent of Gondwana. Unlike Australia's eucalyptus forests, which use fire to regenerate, if these plants burn, they die. To avoid this fate, they grow high up on the central plateau where it is too wet for the flames to take hold. But a scorching spring and summer has turned even the wettest rainforest dells and high-altitude bogs into tinder.



Giant cushion plants in an ancient pencil pine forest in the **Walls of Jerusalem NP**, Tasmania. Stands of these pines, which live up to 1,200 years and exist only in the island state, have been burned in the past week. Photo: Ashley Whitworth/Alamy



Fires burning (white diamonds) in Tasmania - 26 January. The world heritage area is shown in dark green in the south, west and central areas of the state. Photo: Tasmanian Fire Service

### Student call for action

A 16-year-old's lone protest last summer has morphed into a powerful global movement challenging politicians to act. The movement Greta Thunberg started has morphed and grown around the world, and, at times, linked up with older groups, including Extinction Rebellion, 350.org and Greenpeace.

In Australia the resources minister was hostile in response to the school protests, saying students "would be better off learning about mining and science...the best thing you'll learn about going to a protest is how to join the dole queue."

Students are calling for all to join them as they are preparing for the global demonstration on 15 March. In Switzerland students are calling for the government to immediately declare a climate state of emergency, implement policies to be zero-carbon by 2030 without geo-engineering, and if necessary move away from the current economic system. Surely we could all learn from this...

### And another inspiring effort! Kosciuszko National Park, Australia From Reclaim (Save) Kosci

After 36 days, 790,000 steps and 560 kilometres, five walkers protesting legislation that protects feral horses in **Kosciuszko National Park** were joined on the summit of **Mt Kosciuszko** by around 200 enthusiastic supporters.

The long-distance Save Kosci walkers, who started out from Sydney on Saturday 3 November, had put up with blisters, grazes and bad weather, finishing their walk on Saturday 8 December 2018

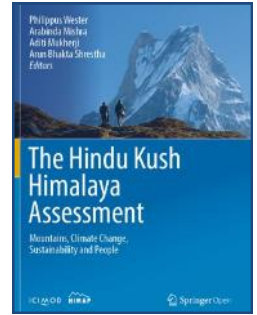
To reduce pressure on the alpine vegetation near the summit, the 200 walkers visited the actual summit area in groups.



## Tools, Publications and other Media

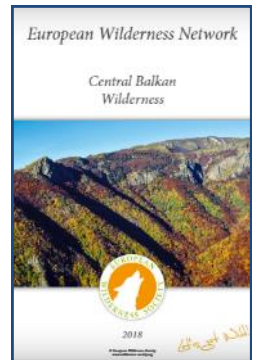
From *Nakul Chettri* ICIMOD is pleased to announce the release of the following knowledge products available [online](#) and accessed/downloaded from [HIMALDOC](#). ICIMOD hope that you find them useful and would be happy to receive your comments.

*HIMAP* Assessment Report - first comprehensive assessment made in the Hindu Kush Himalaya by more than 240 scientists, published by Springer nature. The book has open access: <https://link.springer.com/book>



From *GMBA News* – February 2019 New volume of *Mountain Research and Development: Food Security and Sustainable Development in Mountains*. Four papers present opportunities and challenges for sustainable food systems worldwide and in Nepal, Pakistan, and Ladakh. Others explore the contribution of caterpillar fungus to livelihoods in India, the economics of walnut forests in Kyrgyzstan, dwarf pine cover in Slovakia, bacteriological characteristics of drinking water in Nepal, the impact of changing glacier conditions on mountaineering in New Zealand and of ski tourism on wildlife in Poland, and land use dynamics in the Argentinian puna. [Read more...](#)

From *EWS*— Central Balkan Wilderness meets the platinum standard for Wilderness, which is the highest quality of Wilderness awarded in Europe. The area boasts a high number of diverse landscapes and biodiversity, including many rare species. Download and read the Brief: [Central Balkan Wilderness Brief](#)



From *Rolando Ramirez*—offered in May from the University for International Cooperation Costa Rica, “Mountains and our Future” is an introductory course in Spanish to familiarize professionals on mountain ecosystems in Latin America. Link to month course on line: <https://www.uci.ac.cr/las-montanas-y-nuestro-futuro/>

From Mountain Partnership

### [Mountain governance survey launched](#)

Mountain Research Initiative (MRI) invites the mountain research community to provide valuable insights into governance in mountain environments by participating in a short online survey. The MRI survey is looking for insights into the major challenges



[Read More](#)

### [Mountain communities stress the importance of biocultural heritage](#)

Ahead of an intergovernmental forum on biodiversity and food security, the International Network of Mountain Indigenous Peoples has published a report highlighting the importance of biodiversity and indigenous knowledge for climate adaptation. A new report from the International Network.

Webinar 12 March—to explore business planning tools to manage protected areas more effectively

Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 encourages countries to protect, by 2020, at least 17 percent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 percent of coastal and marine areas. However, it also emphasizes the importance of those areas being effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected, among others.



**ABT 11: Developing Protected Area Business Plans**  
NBSAP FORUM WEBINAR  
Tuesday 12 March 2019  
8:00 am - 9:00 am EDT/NT  
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm SCT/Seychelles  
[REGISTER!](#)

### **Connected – or not connected? That’s the question! ALPARC December 2018**

*Take up the challenge and test your knowledge in Ecological Connectivity, Fragmentation and Habitats picture quiz!* A picture quiz is running to bring the topic of Ecological Connectivity closer to a wider public. In this perspective the project partners of the ALPBIONET2030 project have collected pictures and questions to set up an entertaining online picture quiz game and raise attention to the key topic of the project: ecological connectivity.

Let pictures speak instead of words: <https://apps.facebook.com/fb-quizzes/ecological-connectivity>



## Tools, Publications and other Media (cont.)

September 2019, Carinthian University of Applied Sciences, Austria, will launch a new master's programme, tailored to nature conservation needs and protected area management—unique in the European region. It aims at the promotion of biodiversity conservation and its contribution to regional sustainable development worldwide. E.C.O. Institut für Ökologie [www.e-c-o.at/](http://www.e-c-o.at/)



From IUCN—If you are interested in **applying for a Threatened Species Grant (Africa)**, please visit the **SOS – Save Our Species website**. There you will find all of the necessary information and documentation relevant to this Call for Proposals including the eligibility criteria for applications.

## Some events and meetings of interest

- 11-15 March **Past plant diversity, climate change, and mountain conservation**, Cuenca, Ecuador.  
The VULPES project of the Belmont Forum has collaborated in organizing this international conference to evaluate the impact of climate change on mountain species, including analyses of montane systems globally and at scales ranging from communities to the gene. [Read more...](#)
- 31 March—7 April **Mountain Travel Symposium**, Whistler, Canada—Mountain Travel Symposium is the largest and longest running annual gathering of mountain travel professionals in the world.
- 27 April—5 May **Mountains and Cultures Trento Film Festival**, Trento, Italy—67<sup>th</sup> edition of the oldest international film festival dedicated to the mountains, adventure and exploration will take place from 27 April to 5 May in Trento, Italy.
- 9—12 May **International conference on "Mountains: Cultures, Landscapes and Biodiversity"**, Baku, Azerbaijan In cooperation with International Climbing and Mountaineering (UIAA), Western Caspian University is organizing an international conference on "Mountains: Cultures, Landscapes and Biodiversity" <http://wcu.edu.az/en/pages/view/about-university>
- 24 May "Our Natural Treasures": European Days of Parks is a call to reconnect with nature, to highlight the natural treasures that make our Protected Areas so special. [European Day of Parks](#)
- 27-29th May **European Wilderness Academy Days** UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Lungau, Austria. *Wilderness in Europe; Fire Management, Alien Species, the [European Wilderness Network](#), the new European Wilderness Quality Standard 2.0, Wilderness communication, sustainable tourism, legal issues, policy and more.*
- 17—20 June African Ecosystem Service Partnership Conference 2019: "Management of Ecosystem Services for Nature Conservation and Human Wellbeing in Africa" Togo [Read more...](#)
- 15 – 20 July European Parks Academy on **Management of UNESCO World Heritage Sites & Ecological monitoring** [More details](#)
- 1 September [Species on the Move 2019](#) Skukuza, South Africa *Species on the Move is an interdisciplinary conference series crossing many research areas.*
- 8-12 September **International Mountain Conference 2019** Innsbruck, Austria an excellent opportunity for experts from different disciplines to come together and discuss mountain-related issues. [Read more...](#)
- 22 – 26 September **Pathways: Human Dimensions of Wildlife Conference** hosted by Colorado State University Estes Park, Colorado *Global conference and training program designed to address the myriad of issues that arise as people and wildlife struggle to coexist in a sustainable and healthy manner.*
- 1—17 October **III Latin America and Caribbean Protected Area Congress** Lima, Peru—Congress of Protected Areas of Latin America and the Caribbean—under the slogan Solutions for welfare and sustainable development.
- October International Master "Management of Conservation Areas" The Carinthian University of Applied Sciences, Austria [More details](#)
- 11 – 17 November **9th World Ranger Congress**, Sauraha (on the border of Chitwan National Park), Nepal
- Late 2019 **African Parks Congress**, Kenya TBC



## 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](#)

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While Mountain Network members can choose not 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: [WCPA membership](#)

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!