

# Mountain Protected Areas

## UPDATE

March 2020 # 105

*I've never seen a fire burn with such intensity and ferocity...while fire is a natural part of the landscape, what we're seeing here today is really quite remarkable in terms of the heat.*

*But the park is resilient, the mountains are resilient, and we are resilient.*

*Brett McNamara,  
Manager, Namadgi National Park  
(part of Australian Alps)  
February 2020*



Wallabies in fire affected Australian Alps feed on air dropped carrots photo: NSW NPWS

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### A note from the editor

As I'm sure you are all aware the Australian Alps (along with an unprecedented area across SE Australia) have been ravaged once again by climate induced fire. For the mountains this means high temperatures, reduced rainfall and dry lightning storms. I live in the Australian Alps – recently I went camping to a pocket of unburnt coast – it was an **8 hour drive** through a blackened landscape – and that was only a very small part of the fire affected area. I was tempted to dedicate this edition to the fires—(a wake-up call to many (politicians) around the world that climate action must be taken now) —but choose instead to focus on the more positive and important aspects of the work being undertaken by various members of the Mountain Network and other organisations. Please read on...

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

### Global



#### Invitation to focus on Western Indian Himalayas at WILD11

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

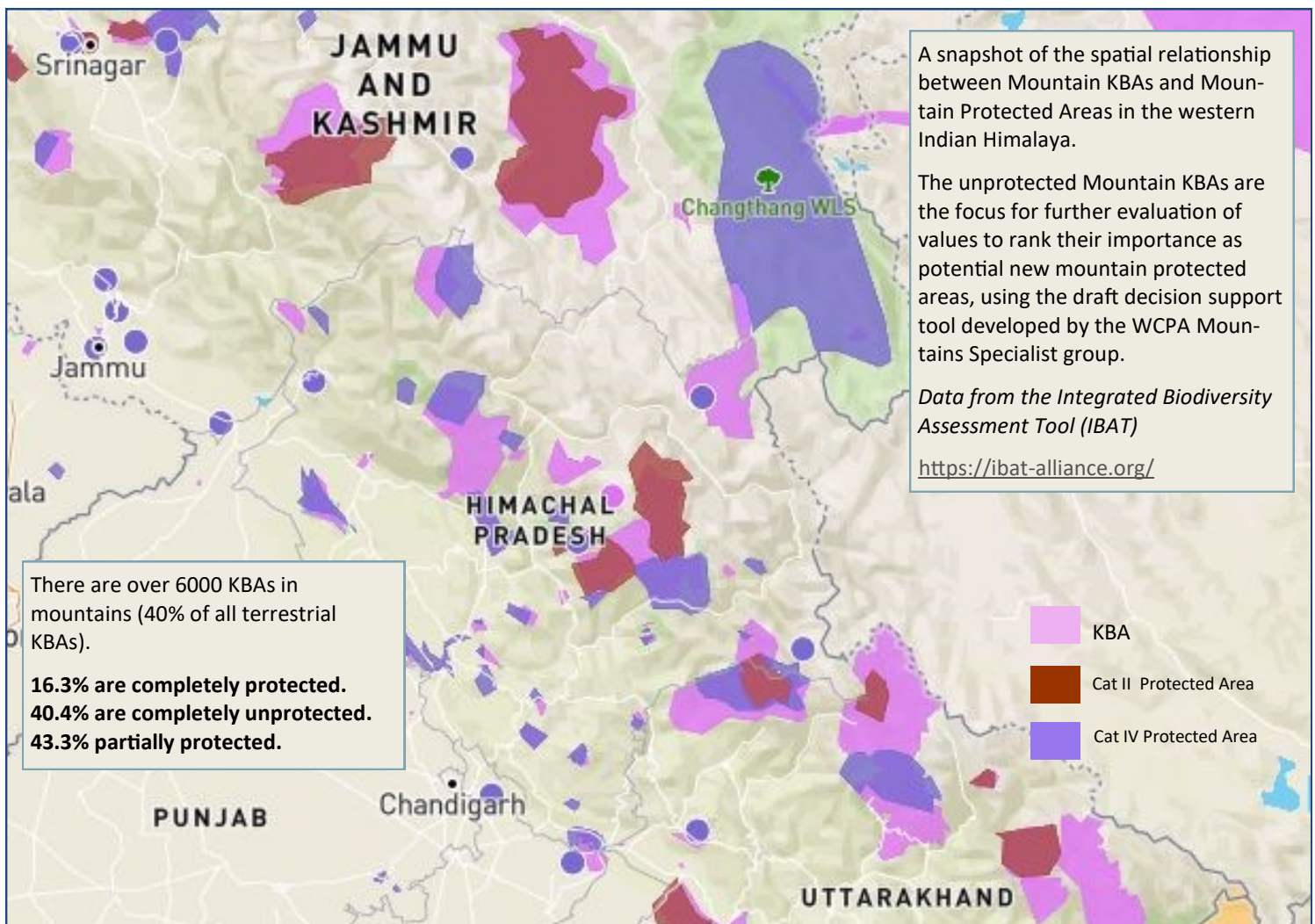
The WCPA Mountains Specialist Group is working on a project to assist in the identification of priorities for establishing new protected or conserved areas in mountains. A draft paper outlines the case for the further protection of mountains and essentially includes a **proposed decision support tool** to prioritise unprotected mountain areas for advocacy. The tool is primarily based on identifying inadequately protected Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in Mountains, then assesses within those, a range of other global values such as, *inter alia*, poorly protected world ecosystems, Biodiversity Hotspots and IUCN Red Lists of species and ecosystems. These priority areas are then ranked using a variety of other regional values that contribute to their importance.

The Mountains Specialist Group will be workshopping this approach at the **Wild 11** conference in Jaipur in March this year. The session will focus on “road-testing” the decision support tool by application to the western Indian Himalayan States (see below).

The regional assessment and ranking process relies heavily on local knowledge, so we are excited about testing this with those in attendance, including the South Asia (Indian) representatives on the Mountains Specialists Group Committee; *Dr Pradeep Metha* and *Dr Ruchi Badola*. The outcome will be a refined decision process that will be ready to seek publication and gain support for its global application.

The next step is the project will be presented at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Marseilles in June this year.

**I invite any members of the Mountain Network / Specialist Group that will be at Wild 11 to come to contribute to the Mountains Workshop. Please let me know by email beforehand: [buffalo\\_springs@bigpond.com](mailto:buffalo_springs@bigpond.com)**



## America-north

### *Home of the Grizzly Bear Spirit*

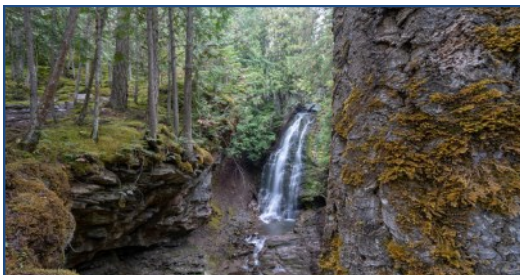
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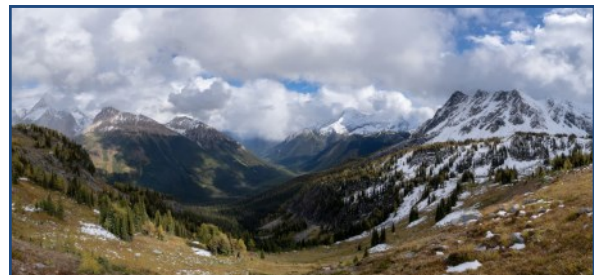
The Purcell Mountain Range is a land of contrasts, bordered on two sides by the largest river in the Pacific Northwest – the mighty Columbia River. This mountain range, spanning over 200,000 hectares is known for its towering peaks and dramatic landscape and is the traditional territory of the Ktunaxa Nation. For many years, the Ktunaxa Nation Council has been working to protect this important piece of Canada’s natural heritage.

Starbird Pass and Mount Monica, Central Purcell Mountains, British Columbia Photo: [Environment and Climate Change Canada](#)

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Jumbo Valley, Purcell mountain range



Photos L and above: Alex Popov

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#### **From Y2Y News and Environment and Climate Change Canada**

In January 2020 Canada announced [the intention to create a new Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area \(IPCA\) in southeastern British Columbia](#). Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y) congratulates Ktunaxa Nation, B.C. and Canada on this historic achievement.

This is a new era for conservation in the age of reconciliation and demonstrates the kind of collaboration needed to effectively protect cultural, recreational and natural capital for future generations.

Deep within in B.C.’s wild **Purcell Mountains**, Jumbo Valley is core territory for Ktunaxa Nation and home to the grizzly bear spirit. Known as Qat’muk, this place is central to the Ktunaxa people’s cultural and spiritual identity. It is also habitat for grizzly bears and a diverse array of other wildlife.

As part of the Yellowstone to Yukon corridor, this region serves a critical role as one of only two remaining mountain ranges in North America connecting grizzlies that roam between Canada and the United States, key to maintaining strong genetic diversity.

Please read this good news story here: [Canadas largest investment in nature](#)

### *Alder Creek to be privately protected*

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Alder Creek is an island of private property surrounded by **Giant Sequoia National Monument** and connects to the even larger **Sequoia National Forest**. The focus will be on protecting the magnificent forest that already exists at Alder Creek, along with planning for public access. Photo: Max Forster/Save the Redwoods League

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#### **Los Angeles Times January 2020 & Mother Nature Network**

A conservation group has reached a \$15.65 million deal to buy the largest privately owned giant sequoia grove left on Earth, an ancient forest with hundreds of the endangered redwood trees. They can live for 3,000 years and grow to over 90 metres (300ft) tall. When they do die the oldest trees, known as monarchs, usually succumb to their own size and collapse. Their giant trunks will rest on the forest floor for another millennium.

Due to its size, health and age diversity this grove represents "the most consequential giant sequoia conservation project of our lifetime," according to the group's president.

Known as Alder Creek, the grove covers a seemingly modest 530 acres (2 square km), but that's a big deal for giant sequoias. The iconic trees once lived throughout the Northern Hemisphere, but they now exist in only 73 isolated groves, all located on the western slopes of California's **Sierra Nevada Mountains**.

That age range is a big reason why this grove is so valuable, according to Sam Hodder, president and CEO of Save the Redwoods League (SRL), a century-old California non-profit that's been working to acquire Alder Creek for more than 20 years. While this purchase might ensure Alder Creek isn't sold to a developer, it will be much harder to protect these or any sequoias from the effects of climate change.

"This gives us the opportunity to understand what's going on with these new threats and exposures, and to do the forest management that needs to be done," he says. "Science-driven forest stewardship to reduce the fuel load in a way that restores the natural balance for the giant sequoia. To help prepare these groves for the hotter, drier fires that are coming."

### *The fable of the giant sequoia tree*

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#### **From The Guardian 'age of extinction'**

Standing quietly on the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada, the Californian giants can survive almost anything – fire, disease, insect attack, cold years, hot years, drought – or so the story goes.

But for the first time in recorded history, tiny bark beetles emboldened by the climate crisis have started to kill giant sequoia trees, according to a joint National Park Service and US Geological Survey study set to be published later this year.



*This is not how sequoias die. It's supposed to stand for another 500 years—Dr Christy Brigham, who is responsible for the welfare of the ecosystems in **Sequoia and Kings Canyon national parks***

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## America-South

### *the Route of Parks...connecting 17 national parks in Chile*

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Tompkins Conservation, National Geographic and MNN 2019

Stretching from Puerto Montt in the north to Cape Horn in the South, the trail connects 17 different national parks, offering travelers access to the Andes Mountain, forests and even a few volcanoes.

The pioneering conservationist behind the world's most ambitious rewilding project has revealed "game-changing" plans that could transform tourism in Chilean Patagonia.

After 25 years of strategic land acquisition by Kristine Tompkins and her late husband Douglas – which led recently to the creation of five new national parks in southern Chile – Tompkins said the next challenge was to encourage 60 communities across the region to develop tourism ventures that will help protect the biodiversity on their doorstep.

At the European launch of the 1,700-mile **Ruta de los Parques** Tompkins said: "We want local people to have a sense of ownership and pride. They will become the first line of defence in conservation."

Five national parks, **Pumalín Douglas Tompkins National Park, Melimoyu National Park, Patagonia National Park, Cerro Castillo National Park and Kawésqar National Park**, were created, and three more, **Hornopirén National Park, Corcovado National Park and Isla Magdalena National Park**, were expanded.

The Tompkins Foundation want Chile to be internationally recognized for having the most spectacular scenic route in the world, and thus become a benchmark for economic development based on conservation.



Visitors to the 'Route of Parks' will find diverse environments, from grassland steppes to snow capped peaks to arid desert mountains. Photo: **Corcovado National Park** Jimmy Chin



Torres del Paine – part the Route of Parks

## Oceania—New Zealand

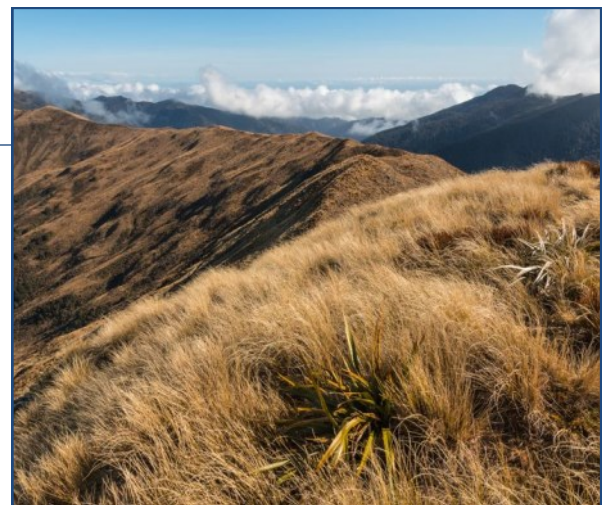
### *Paparoa National Park kaitiaki (guardians)*

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The Ngāti Waewae hapū tribe are the kaitiaki, or guardians, of **Paparoa National Park**, and its native species and ecosystems. This kaitiaki responsibility is passed down through generations and draws on traditional knowledge to care for the land, rivers and species.

The \$12 million Paparoa Track was developed in collaboration with the Paparoa Wildlife Trust and Air New Zealand in order to ensure conservation and preservation were top priorities.

The other nine Great Walks also expand across protected lands throughout New Zealand. These treks often are referred to as "an experience of a lifetime," and typically require reservations months or even years in advance.



Visitors will hike through rainforests and atop mountains during the three-day hike. (Photo: Wildnerdpix/Shutterstock)

## Oceania—Australia

### *Australian fires—really brings home what climate crisis means*



**Nature in Australia is in trouble, and the bushfires have made the situation many times worse.** Over 15 million hectares of land has burned – in a country that is *already* a global deforestation hotspot. Much of the area burnt was in the extensive mountains of the Australian Alps and Great Eastern Ranges including the Forests of East Australia Biodiversity Hotspot. The size of the fires belittles all other fires witnessed in the last few years—larger than many European countries and larger than the devastating fires in the Amazon, Siberia and California in 2018 and 2019.

Due to intense alpine fires in 2003, 2006/7 and 2013 much has been researched and learned about the impacts of fire on the ecology of the Australian Alps. In addition to previous management responses to fire, especially in relation to threatened species and communities, one of the more pressing actions this time has been **feral animal control**. The Mountain UPDATE has reported previously on the lack of feral horse control in **Kosciuszko** and lesser extent **Alpine** national parks, more important now than ever.

#### ***Feral animals are a major issue post fire...***

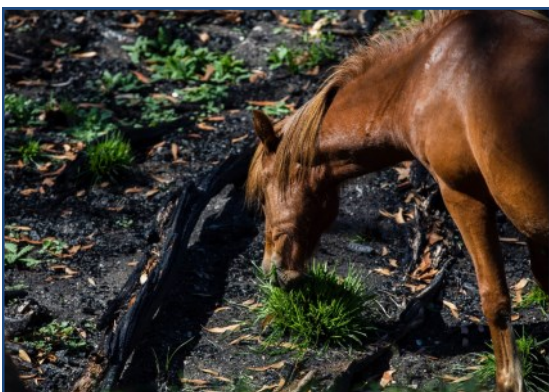
**extract from article by Dr Graeme Worboys**

Feral cats and foxes benefit directly from bushfires that open up protective habitat. These voracious animals prey on native subalpine species including endangered skinks, mammals, mountain crayfish and insects, animals not found anywhere else on Earth. Wildlife can be protected from foxes and cats, but realistic resources are urgently needed to undertake this work.

Feral horses represent the single greatest environmental impact agent to the sub alpine and montane ecosystems and water catchments. The **Kosciuszko National Park** feral horse population has ballooned from **6,000 (2014) to 19,000 (2019)**.

When one heavy horse can trash a mountain stream or a wetland, there is little hope for the native environments of the Kiandra plain – Tantangara area (Kosciuszko NP) where alone, there is a population of 15,000 horses.

The 2020 fires immediately compounded the feral horse problem. The animals appear to have survived the fire in great numbers, their impacts more concentrated and the blackened subalpine environment more vulnerable. This post fire impact is exacerbated by grazing impacts by feral pigs and wild deer to native alpine plant species.



Feral horses freely roam the fire ground feeding on vegetation that should provide food & shelter for native animals. Photo: Sean Davey Reclaim Kosci

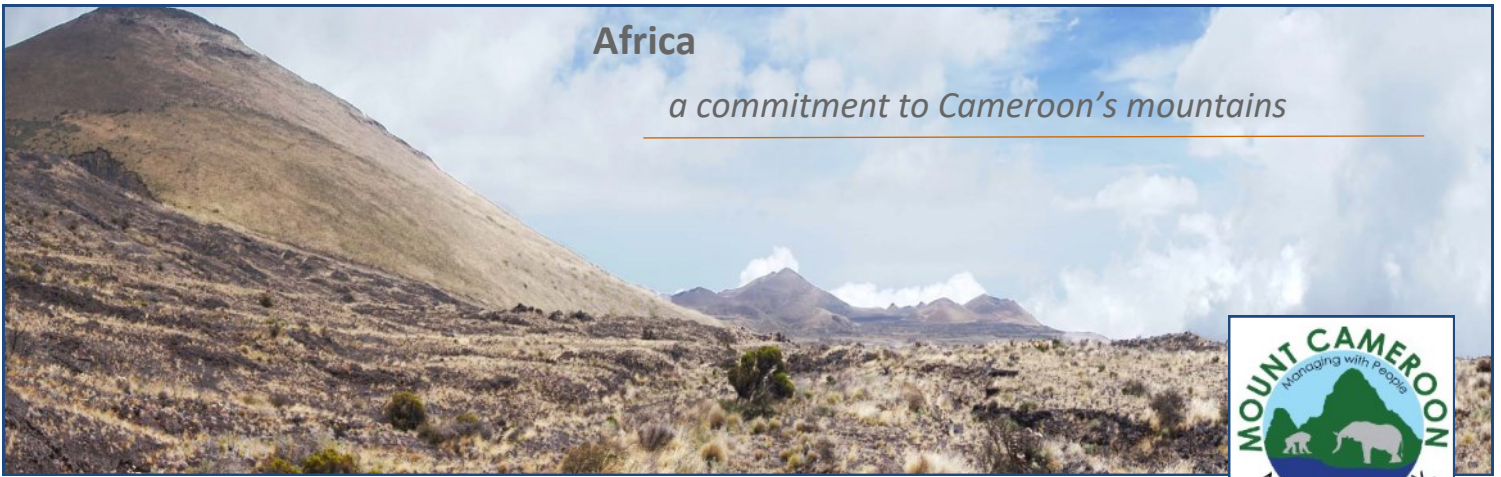


Brett McNamara—Mountain Network member

***The bushfires ravaging Australia are a clear sign of what is to come around the world if temperatures are allowed to rise to dangerous levels. “This is what you can expect to happen ... at an average of 3C [above pre-industrial levels]. It tells us what the future world might look like.” Richard Betts, Exeter University.***

## Africa

*a commitment to Cameroon's mountains*



Adapted from Mountain Partnerships January 2020

The International Centre for Environmental Education & Community Development (ICENECDEV) in Cameroon has released its “Action Plan 2020” - composed of 12 core actions, one of which focuses specifically on mountains.

Cameroon is home to **Mount Cameroon** (4,095 m), the highest point in sub-Saharan western and central Africa. It is part of a range of mountains and hills that separate Cameroon from Nigeria in the north.

The organization plans to promote the conservation of biodiversity in mountain ecosystems. Specific actions include celebrating international United Nations days like World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, liaise with key stakeholders to create lasting impact at the national level and **execute an expansive communications campaign at the local and national level**. They will utilize many strategic alliances and resources to accomplish these goals, including the Mountain Partnership and the Government of Cameroon.

The Mt Cameroon National Park stretches from lowland rain forests at the Atlantic coast through sub-montane and montane forest to alpine grassland at the peak. The mountain is an active volcano with numerous craters, crater lakes, caves, lava flows and ash fields. It presents a fascinating, diverse and astonishing landscape, ideal for hiking tours. You can discover the richness and beauty of its flora and fauna, with a lot of endemic species.

**Mount Cameroon National Park web**

### *Farming lions and other wildlife!*

Taken from Science January 2020 Linda Nordling

A decision by South Africa's government to include more than 30 wild species—including rhinos, lions, and cheetahs—on a list of animals that can be improved by breeding and genetic research could cause considerable damage to their genetic diversity, scientists warn in the *South African Journal of Science*.

The decision, announced in 2019 without prior public consultation, provides a legal mechanism to domesticate wildlife...South Africa's growing number of game breeders **register associations that can determine what a lion, or cheetah, should look like**. That creates a “loophole” that would allow breeders to select for commercially desirable traits such as longer horns or larger body size.



A white rhino with its calf on a private game reserve in South Africa photo: A&S Toon Minden Pictures

### *Scottish and South African researchers to share mountain knowledge*

From MRI News February 2020

The University of the Highlands and Islands is embarking on a new project to help develop mountain research in southern Africa.

Mountains are vital for the production of water in the drought-prone region of southern Africa. With projections on the impact of climate change and population growth, experts have indicated that the area's mountains will become increasingly important for water security. Despite this, they are among the least studied parts of South Africa.

## Central Asia—Himalayas



### Water Towers of the World Ranked on Vulnerability

MRI and The Guardian Global environment editor

The Indus is the most important and vulnerable ‘water tower’, according to the first inventory of high-altitude water sources.

A quarter of the world’s population are at risk of water supply problems as mountain glaciers, snow-packs and alpine lakes are run down by global heating and rising demand, according to an international study.

Strains are apparent elsewhere in the water tower index, which quantifies the volume of water in 78 mountain ranges based on precipitation, snow cover, glacier ice storage, lakes and rivers. This was then compared with the drawdown by communities, industries and farms in the lower reaches of the main river basins.

The study by 32 scientists, which was [published in the Nature journal](#), confirms Asian river basins face the greatest demands but shows pressures are also rising on other continents.

“It’s not just happening far away in the Himalayas but in Europe and the United States, places not usually thought to be reliant on mountains for people or the economy,” said one of the authors of Royal Holloway University.

“We always knew the Indus was important, but it was surprising how the Rhône and Rhine have risen in importance, along with the Fraser and Columbia.”

***The first inventory of high-altitude sources finds the Indus is the most important and vulnerable “water tower” due to run-off from the Karakoram, Hindu Kush, Ladakh, and Himalayan mountain ranges, which flow downstream to a densely populated and intensively irrigated basin in Pakistan, India, China and Afghanistan.***

***1.9 billion people may be at risk from mountain water shortages.***

### Shrubs & Grasses growing around Mount Everest

From The Guardian January 2020

Shrubs and grasses are springing up around Mount Everest and across the Himalayas, one of the most rapidly heating regions of the planet.

It is not yet known how more vegetation might affect water supplies but studies of increased vegetation in the Arctic found that they delivered a warming effect in the surrounding landscape, with the plants absorbing more light and warming the soil.

“A lot of research has been done on ice melting in the Himalayan region, including a study that showed how the rate of ice loss doubled between 2000 and 2016,” said Dr Karen Anderson, of the Environment and Sustainability Institute.

**“It’s important to monitor and understand ice loss in major mountain systems, but subnival ecosystems cover a much larger area than permanent snow and ice, and we know very little about them and how they moderate water supply.”**

“That would be bad news for the Himalayas,” said Anderson. “The subnival zone is where seasonal snow is held and if it is warmer you will get flashy hydrology – quicker melt rates and an increased risk of flooding.”

The study is published in Global Change Biology.



Scientists used satellite data to measure the extent of subnival vegetation – plants growing between the treeline and snowline – in the Himalayas.



# Central Asia—Himalayas

## *pulse of the planet—Hindu Kush Himalaya*

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**Taken from ICIMOD David James Molden Director General**

...For us in the HKH region, 2019 was an important year – from the launch of the [Hindu Kush Himalaya Assessment](#) and the development of the [HKH Call to Action](#) to the country consultations with each of our Regional Member Countries (RMCs) to discuss our collective way forward.

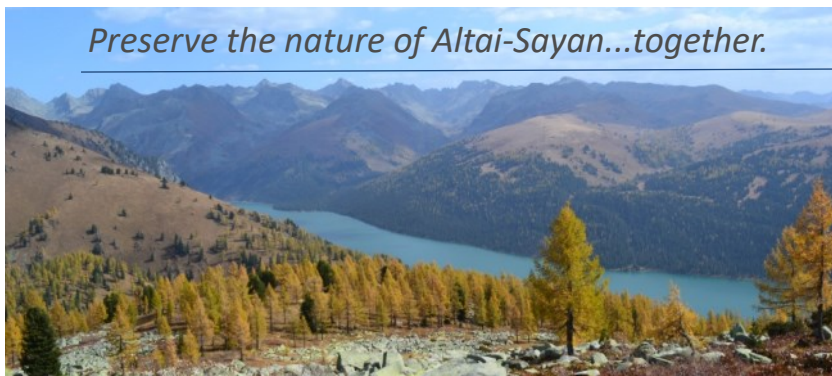
*The next few years will be crucial for climate change. It is going to be equally important for us all to raise our ambition and deliver actions to reduce our emissions and pick up the pace to implement adaptation measures.*

For us at ICIMOD, we are committed to raising our ambition and acting at scale and with speed to protect the HKH. Changes happen here before they happen anywhere else and the beat of the HKH reverberates across the world. We protect this pulse of the planet – and with it the immense biodiversity, ecosystems, and billions of people depending on it. These messages will include the following:

- even 1.5°C is too hot for our mountains;
- it is imperative that we pick up the pace on mitigation, both regionally and globally; and
- we must start significantly scaling up funding for adaptation measures and solutions for the mountains.

One of the highlights of COP 25 for us was seeing two of our RMCs – Bhutan and Nepal – form a strong lobby to raise the mountain voice. This certainly helped in spotlighting the mountains of our region and the urgent challenges that we share. Moving forward, we hope more members will also join in this year and collectively raise their respective ambitions and commitments towards climate action.

Based on the latest science, current emissions trends put our region’s warming close to 5°C by 2100. The consequences of such a reality are unimaginable. So as we begin a New Year and a new decade, let us all make a commitment to be ambitious, to act now, and to act together for a resilient HKH.



From **Tatjana Yashina** Mountain Network Member

**Altai-Sayan Mountain Partnership** is a non-profit organization whose mission is to help preserve the natural and cultural heritage of the Altai-Sayan Ecoregion and develop local communities.

The priority areas for the work of NP Altai-Sayan Mountain Partnership are territories adjacent to the protected areas of the Altai Republic - Ulagansky, Turochaksky, Kosh-Agachsky and Ust-Koksinsky districts.

In addition, the partnership actively cooperates both with the Altai-Sayan Federal Protected Areas, for which it holds annual training seminars and conferences, and with the regional protected areas of the Altai Republic, which are partners in implementing projects related to work with the local population.

**Katunskiy Biosphere Reserve:**

[www.katunskiy.ru](http://www.katunskiy.ru)

**Altai-Sayan Mountain Partnership:**

[www.altaipartner.ru](http://www.altaipartner.ru)





From **Barbara Ehringhaus** in Switzerland, Mountain Network member

**ProMONT-BLANC**, a tri-national umbrella NGO of Alpine clubs, local and environmental organisations of France, Italy and Switzerland, has been engaged in the trans-frontier protection of Mont-Blanc for almost 30 years.

In order to obtain at least a tri-national management plan of the highest mountain massif of the Alps, ProMONT-BLANC proposed and promoted World Heritage designation. However the mayors of the 43 municipalities refused the application as being premature, until 2017 when they decided to go for it.

According to the recommendation of UNESCO consultants they opted for "cultural landscape" in 2018, but the joint inscription on the 3 tentative lists has not yet been written.

### **Intangible World Heritage and Cultural Landscape?**

On international Mountain Day 2019 "Alpinism" (mountaineering) was inscribed as Intangible Cultural World Heritage promoted by Chamonix, Courmayeur and the French Alpine Club who were finally joined by the Italian and Swiss Alpine clubs and the national associations of mountain guides of the three countries.

While ProMONT-BLANC has initially opposed the intangible nomination fearing that such a UNESCO label would ignore any physical protection at all, we now consider the moral responsibility of all alpinists for their environment and the ethical "spirit of alpinism" helpful in the context of the candidate "cultural landscape" as described by UNESCO criteria.

After familiarising ourselves with the possible implications of this category we are sharing the opportunities and pitfalls with our member organisations, administrators and business of the three countries. Raising awareness among the inhabitants, local and regional stakeholders and the national culture agencies is still to start.

Please go to <http://www.pro-mont-blanc.org> or contact **Barbara Ehringhaus** on [bzehringhaus@gmail.com](mailto:bzehringhaus@gmail.com)

An **intangible cultural heritage** is a practice, representation, expression, knowledge or skill considered by UNESCO to be part of a place's cultural heritage; it comprises nonphysical intellectual property such as folk lore, customs, beliefs, traditions, knowledge and language.

### **Some Intangible Cultural Heritage in mountains:**

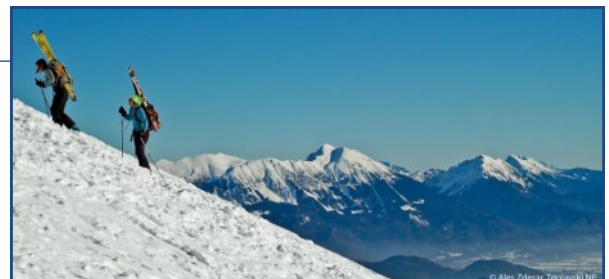
- Alpinism – France, Italy, Switzerland
- Transhumance (seasonal droving of livestock along migratory routes in Alps and Mediterranean) – Austria, Greece, Italy
- Picking Iva grass on Ozren mountain – Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Pilgrimage to the sanctuary of the Lord of Qoyllurit'ï - Peru



## *Open Space Alps kicks off*

From Alparc News January 2020

**OpenSpaceAlps brings together seven partner institutions from Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Slovenia to work on the topic of near-natural open spaces in the core Alpine and EUSALP areas. The Alpine Network of Protected Areas (ALPARC), will be working on the project under its working field Biodiversity and Ecological Connectivity.**



The main objective is to foster sustainable development by contributing to the preservation of open spaces presenting environmental and natural values. These are decreasing due to the development of settlements and transport in the valleys, or are being dissected by tourism, forestry and agriculture related to infrastructures at higher altitudes.

The approach envisaged is to initiate and facilitate processes towards the adoption of new spatial planning approaches in the Alpine countries as well as to promote multi-level, transnational spatial governance.

## Europe

### *Weatherwatch: UK's oldest snow patch clings on – but for how long?*

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#### **From The Guardian January 2020**

It's survived! The UK's oldest and most permanent patch of snow is safely buried under a duvet of fresh snow and will live to see another spring. Known as the Sphinx, this icy pocket situated in an isolated corrie on Britain's third highest mountain, **Braeriach**, in the Scottish Cairngorms range, is thought to have melted only seven times in the past 300 years.

Counting and measuring the pockets of snow that persist year-round is a passion for Iain Cameron. For 15 years, he and his team of volunteers have been tramping the highlands of Scotland, England and Wales, keeping an eye on snow patches. Their records are providing a valuable indicator of the climate crisis.



Iain Cameron measures the Sphinx snow patch (December 2019). Photo: M. MacLeod/The Guardian



Searching for snow patches on the slopes of Braeriach (2017). Photo: M. MacLeod/The Guardian

The story of the Sphinx is a highlight in an [otherwise gloomy report](#), which shows accelerated disappearance of all snow patches and none surviving beyond 22 May in England and Wales this year.

### *Romanian illegal logging...going on for many years*

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#### **EWS and BBC World News**

Romania is home to more than half of Europe's last remaining old-growth and primeval forests — valuable ecosystems home to bears, wolves, lynx, and wildcat.

But there is considerable alarm at the levels of violence illegal loggers are willing to use in order to steal wood. That wood can end up anywhere across Europe, from furniture to paper or building materials.

How is EU to promote environmental and forests protection overseas, if it cannot protect the forests within EU itself? Local groups and initiatives try to stop the logging, which results in more violent situations.

Forest Ranger Liviu Pop had gone out to investigate a possible case of illegal logging in a mountainous region of **Maramures** in north Romania when he was shot dead with a hunting rifle. He is the second Romanian forest ranger killed recently, and the two deaths have heightened fears for the safety of those whose job it is to protect the forests of this eastern EU

### *(Lynx) mum of four*

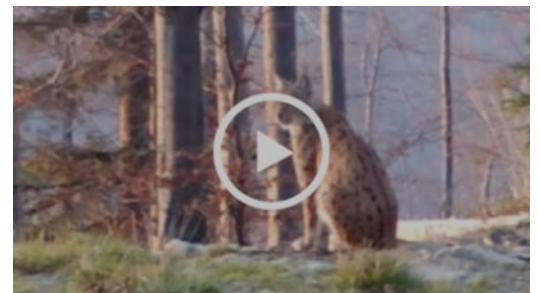
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#### **From SAC Science for the Carpathians 2020 Winter Newsflash**

Researchers from Poland recorded lynx female with four young cats! Camera traps located in Beskid Żywiecki, on the borderland between Poland, Slovakia and Czechia, researchers from the Association for Nature "WOLF" recorded such an optimistic scene.

The whole Carpathian lynx population is currently estimated on not more than 2500 individuals.

Watch the film: <http://www.polishwolf.org.pl/>



## Scree and Talus

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### To our very own...congratulations Graeme!

Friend and colleague, *Graeme Worboys*, was recently awarded a very high honour in Australia, becoming a Member of the Order of Australia (AM), for his extensive work in conservation.

Graeme is our senior advisor to the Mountains Committee, past Vice Chair on the WCPA Executive Committee and past Chair of the Connectivity Conservation and Mountains Specialist Group prior to the split.

He has been instrumental in the work of the Mountains Specialist Group.

### Parks Stewardship Forum– NEW Journal of Place-Based Conservation

From **David Reynolds, President, George Wright Society**

The University of California Berkeley's Institute for Parks, People, and Biodiversity (IPPB) and the George Wright Society (GWS) have just published the inaugural edition of *Parks Stewardship Forum*, The Interdisciplinary Journal of Place-Based Conservation. This new open-access journal serves the global stewards of parks, protected areas, cultural sites, and other forms of place-based conservation—the people at the forefront of conserving the special places most crucial to safeguarding the world's cultural and natural heritage.

The inaugural issue, "**Climate Change and Protected Places: Adapting to New Realities**," looks at how protected places are adapting and building resilience to the impacts of climate change. **Please see links on publications page**

### Images to promote nature conservation in far-eastern Himalaya

From ICIMOD

A photography contest and exhibition was held in Yunnan, China.

Entries highlighted the immense diversity of endangered species in the Gaoligong Mountains, China, and the need for concerted conservation efforts.

### Nothing is sacred - the great dismantling of America's national parks

Guardian January 2020 (Supported by SEJ)

Has the Trump administration filled the parks department with anti-public land sycophants?

For more than 100 years, professional management of USA national parks has been respected under both Democratic and Republican administrations. They may have different priorities, the Democrats often expanding the system and the Republicans historically focused on building facilities in the parks for expanding visitation. But the career public servants of the National Park Service (NPS), charged with stewarding America's most important places, such as the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone and the Statue of Liberty, were left to do their jobs.

The change began within 24 hours of the inauguration when President Trump complained that the NPS was reporting smaller crowds on the **National Mall** than Obama had drawn. Perhaps this is when the NPS wound up on the list of transgressors. Soon the interior secretary, Ryan Zinke, attempted to double the entrance fees, rescinded climate policies and moved seasoned senior national park superintendents around to force their retirements.

### Planning for International Mountain Day 2020 underway

The theme will be related to mountain biodiversity. Half of the world's biodiversity hotspots are concentrated in mountains. Mountains are home to one-third of all plant species; 45 000 plant species have been found in the tropical Andes alone. Climate change, unsustainable farming practices, commercial mining, logging and poaching all exact a heavy toll on mountain biodiversity. IMD 2020 is a day to celebrate the rich biodiversity in mountains as well as to address the threats it faces. More information Mountain Partnerships: [www.mountainpartnership.org](http://www.mountainpartnership.org)



Graeme is a huge supporter of the Mountains Specialist Group and a great source of advice.

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Local villagers of the indigenous Bai ethnicity attend the exhibition Photo: B Wang

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**Yellowstone NP**, and its bison, are under the stewardship of the public servants of the National Park Service.

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## Scree and Talus cont.

### **Breaker of taboos through music**

Didar Ali, one of the founding members of the Bulbulik Heritage Centre in Gulmit, Gilgit-Baltistan Pakistan, has dedicated himself to push the boundaries imposed on communities, promote tolerance, and strive for an inclusive and pluralistic society. Ali has done this through his passion for folk music.

To a large degree, participation of women and girls in any type of music other than religious recitals has been a major taboo in the mountain regions of Pakistan. Women and girls were prohibited from singing and playing musical instruments in public gatherings. However, thanks to Ali's work through his Centre's musical project that started a Folk Music School, he has succeeded in breaking this taboo, and created a secular and safe space for girls and boys to teach and learn music.



Photo: Didar Ali (left) receiving the ICIMOD Mountain Prize 2019 from David Molden.

**Nepal targets sustainable summits in 2020** The Government of Nepal has declared 2020 the Visit Nepal Year. This large-scale campaign is a nationwide effort to dramatically boost tourism in the country. The goal is to host two million tourists this year: double the number of visitors in 2019. ... [Read more](#)

### **Howling for Wolves in Slovenia**

From [European Wilderness Society \(EWS\)](#)

Last year members of the European Wilderness Society drove to Postojna where they participated in wolf howling as part of a census for wolf populations in Slovenia.

Proof is in the howling – an EWS members personal account

With our assigned locations and a quick look at how best to tackle each one we set off to arrive at our first howling point after sunset. Arriving, we quietly prepared ourselves. It is key to make as little noise as possible, so in the car we took note of our location, who would howl, time and date and then got out. Outside of the car we waited for 5 minutes to ensure everything settled before howling to wolves for our first time. With ears peeled for any notion of sound, we waited anticipation for a howl back but unfortunately only heard a cacophony of dogs in the distance. So I guess that meant we were doing something right.

On our night went, driving from howling point to howling point along creeping roads that melted into darkness. Each of us howling at one point and then waiting for what would return our call. The night was not to be ours unfortunately. We came home with only dog cries and a quick stop to look at a frog, which I personally really enjoyed.

However, in the morning we woke up to news of other teams' successes. A few had calls back from packs of wolves while some even heard from packs and their cubs and a very lucky few even saw some cubs!

### **Nepali dish wins International Mountain Day photo and recipe contest**

From [Mountain Partnerships](#)

Ashmita Lama's recipe, "Jumla Special Kwati", is a classic Nepalese mountain recipe made from high-altitude Jumla beans. The beans are an indigenous food linked to the local culture and religious festivities of the Sinja Valley – one of the most remote mountain areas in north western Nepal.

"Jumla Special Kwati" is eaten during the celebrations of the Janai Purnima festival. On this day, Newar farmers worship the frog and eat Kwati to help bring rain and good harvests, as the frog is thought to be the messenger of the god of rain.



### **Is an Aboriginal tale of an ancient volcano the oldest story ever told?**

Science February 2020 [Sciencemag News](#)

Long ago, four giant beings arrived in southeast Australia. Three strode out to other parts of the continent, but one crouched in place. His body transformed into a volcano called Budj Bim, and his teeth became the lava the volcano spat out.

Now, scientists say this tale—told by the Aboriginal Gunditjmara people of the area—has geological basis. New evidence suggests that about **37,000 years ago**, Budj Bim and another nearby volcano formed through a rapid series of eruptions, suggesting the legend may be the oldest story still being told today.

## Scree and Talus cont.

### *New report identifies potential World Heritage sites in Central Asia: World Heritage Thematic Study for Central Asia*

The Cold Winter Deserts of Central Asia are among six globally significant biodiversity sites that could potentially qualify for World Heritage status, according to a new IUCN report focusing on the region comprising Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

These unique landscapes are home to emblematic species such as wild herds of the vulnerable Goitered gazelle, the Asiatic wild ass and the Urial. They also serve as an important breeding and migratory areas for bird species such as the eastern imperial eagle, the Houbara bustard or the Saker falcon. These areas are currently threatened by overexploitation and large-scale infrastructure development.

A possible World Heritage status would help strengthen their conservation.



Mountains of the Pamirs, Tajikistan Yury Biruko IUCN



Sayram – Ugam State National Nature Park Uzbekistan Photo: IUCN Elena Osipova

Did you know?  
Western Tien-Shan, located in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan is one of the world's largest mountain ranges.

### *Park and Local Authorities cooperating on Climate Change Action*

From Alparc January 2020

In the territory of the southern French Alps, an organisation regrouping towns and villages in the region around Briançon and the managers of the Regional Nature Park of Queyras, are actively contributing to the drafting of a local Climate Plan.

Depending on their protection level, parks have a fundamental role to play in the protection of nature and the sustainable development of local production and exploitation of natural resources. In particular, parks are called to work on the adaptation to climate change not only of the fauna and flora, but also of nature-based activities carried out in protected areas.



### *Trans Mountain Pipeline threatens Wilderness*

Canada is moving forward with its expansion of the Trans Mountain Pipeline, which crosses both Alberta and British Columbia for a length of over 1 000 km.

The pipeline crosses land that is important to First Nations, Canadians, and humanity as a spectacular expanse of natural heritage. The most famous protected area the pipeline crosses is **Jasper National Park**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and an incredible Wilderness area of some 11 000 square km. However, wilderness and protected areas abound along the route. To expand the pipeline, land would have to be removed from three provincial parks.

Any threat or reduction in size of the world's endangered Wilderness is of deep concern. But, with the Trans Mountain pipeline, we would pay for its costs twice. We would destroy Wilderness and homes while we continue to contribute to the climate crisis.

### *The Bushfire Crisis: Implications for Australia's Unique Alpine Flora and Fauna*

From Mountain Research Initiative News

The bushfire crisis in Australia has dominated news headlines these past few weeks, affecting cities, towns and rural areas including the unique Australian alpine environment. This has prompted many to question what implications these fires have for these alpine ecosystems, but also the complex interactions with human dimensions...

[Read more...](#)

## Tools, Publications and other Media

**New eco.mont issue: 12-1, January 2020** From Mountain Research Available online  
<https://austriaca.at/eco.mont-12-1>

Brand-new Website Dedicated to the **Alpine School** - From Alparc  
[Here you can see the result.](#) Presenting the Alpine School, and all the materials that have been developed around it. The website contains a lot of freely accessible guides to implement outdoor activities within the model of Mountain-oriented Education. The Alpine App and the Alpine Toolkit for outdoor lessons are also available for download and constitute the perfect complement to in-class lessons.



**Short Courses 2020: Centre for Protected Area Management, Colorado State University**

<https://conservation.warnercncr.colostate.edu/>

1. XXX Curso Internacional de Manejo de Áreas Protegidas (impartido en español) 7 de julio al 8 de agosto, 2020
2. VIII Mobile Seminar on Tourism in Protected Areas (given in English) September 3 – 19, 2020
3. II Seminar on Women's Leadership in Conservation (given in English) October 19 – 30, 2020
4. Seminario Internacional sobre Manejo de Áreas Protegidas Marinas y Costeras En desarrollo

**Climate Change and Protected Places: Adapting to New Realities** *Parks Stewardship Forum* is on:

- University of California's eScholarship platform at <https://escholarship.org/uc/psf>.
- IPPB's website at <https://parks.berkeley.edu/psf>.



From Mountain Partnership 'off the shelf'

**2020 Booklet of Good Practices for vibrant European mountains**

To celebrate the start of 2020, *Euromontana* – the European Association of Mountain Areas - published a new booklet of good practices. This brochure is the result of the exchange of good practices carried out by Euromontana in 2019.

**Science Magazine, Policy Forum: "Accelerating the movement for mountain peoples and policies"**

Yuka Makino, Sara Manuelli and Lindsey Hook - Mountain Partnership—authored this article for *Science*, a peer-reviewed, academic journal produced by the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

From MRI News

**On the Imbalance and Response Time of Glaciers in the European Alps** Zekollari, H., Huss, M., Farinotti, D. *AGU100* 47, 2 (2020). Glaciers are out of balance with present-day climatic conditions. Simulations suggest that the glacier response is strongly dependent on surface steepness rather than glacier size, as commonly reported. [doi.org](https://doi.org)

From Trails Network

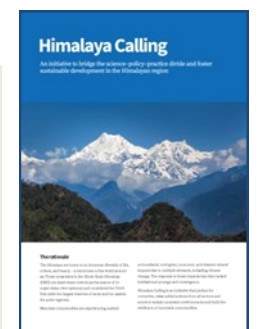
- **Private Sector Tourism in Conservation Areas in Africa**, by Sue Snyman and Anna Spenceley - hardback version [here](#) - kindle version [here](#)
- **Tourism Routes and Trails: Theory and Practice**, by David Ward-Perkins, Christina Beckmann and, Jackie Ellis. Excellent articles on every aspect of Trails. [Tourism Trails](#)

From ICIMOD

**Himalaya Calling**

The Himalaya are home to an immense diversity of life, culture, and beauty – a microcosm of the world around us. These mountains in the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) are Asia's water towers (as the source of 10 major Asian river systems) and considered the Third Pole (with the largest reserves of snow and ice outside the polar regions).

**NB: go to ICIMOD for numerous interesting publications on HKH**



From Marc Foggin Mountain Specialist Group Committee

**CHOOSING ECOTOURISM IN KYRGYZSTAN**—Purpose-driven tourism – for people and nature

<https://plateauperspectives.exposure.co/choose-ecotourism>



## Some events and meetings of interest

### 2020

- 11-13 March **11th World Congress on Snow and Mountain Tourism** Canillo, Andorra
- 14 March **Protected Areas Matter** Brisbane, Australia <https://wildlife.org.au/protected-areas-matter/>
- 19-26 March **11<sup>th</sup> World Wilderness Congress (WILD11)** Jaipur, India
- 23-27 March **2nd IUCN World Environmental Law Congress**, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- 1-3 April **International Conference on Human-Wildlife Conflict and Coexistence**, Oxford, UK
- 3-4 April **Climate Change, Mountains and Future of Humanity**, Kathmandu, Nepal
- April 22 **Earth Day**—will mark the **50th anniversary** of the original Earth Day, when 20 million individuals took to the streets to protest the state of our planet and demand a new way forward.
- 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](#)
- 22-26 June **Forum Carpaticum 2020** Brno, Czechia All the details, including conference program, venue description, important dates, organizers and other useful information can be found on [the conference website](#).
- 2—5 September **8th World Trails Conference**, Nepal



### 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!





## 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: [Get involved - World Commission on Protected Areas | IUCN](#)  
[www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org) > [commissions](#) > [get-involved](#)

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!**