



# IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC) Report





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## ACRONYMS

APAC	Africa Protected Areas Congress
A-PACT	A Pan-African Conservation Trust
APAD	Africa Protected Areas Directors
AUC	African Union Commission
AWF	African Wildlife Foundation
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organizations
IPLCs	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
ICCAs	Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas
KCC	Kigali Convention Center
NbS	Nature-based Solutions
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NNL	No-Net Loss
NRGF	Natural Resource Governance Framework
OECMs	Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Areas
PA	Protected Area AUC - African Union Commission
PPA	Public Private Partnerships
PCAs	Protected and Conserved Areas
SAPA	Social Impacts of Protected and Conserved Areas
SAPA	Social Impacts of Protected and Conserved Areas
SUSO	Stand out Shout Out
WCPA	World Commission on Protected Areas.



## About This Report

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The agenda-setting IUCN Congress on ‘Africa Protected and Conserved Areas’ (APAC) that took place in Kigali in July 2022 was historic in nature, being the first such international congress held on the African continent.

The Congress, attended by leaders, policy makers and practitioners from all over the world, and in particular from 53 African countries, served as a milestone in conservation efforts which have come under immense pressure as global warming, together with increased pressure on land by development activities and population growth takes its toll on the environment.

The Congress, convened jointly by the Government of Rwanda, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), attracted participants from across the African continent and beyond, representing governments, African regional bodies, NGOs, national and international experts and organizations, local communities, Indigenous People, youth, academia, the judiciary, development partners and the private sector.

Deliberation on major issues affecting conservation efforts took place on a range of diverse issues, including for example, the need for improved governance in conservation; empowering communities living in and around protected areas; the place and role of indigenous people and local communities (IPLCs) in conservation; respecting and recognizing the wide variety and number of indigenous and community

conserved areas; infrastructural development and its impact on nature; resource conflicts; the impact of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystems, and how to sustainably finance conservation.

The Congress attracted over **2,400** in-person participants. The four days of deliberations of APAC culminated in the “Kigali Call to Action for People and Nature” which was unanimously adopted by the participants. This was followed by a detailed roadmap on the way forward and guide all stakeholders in playing their part to ensure that nature takes center-stage in policy formulation and implementation.

This report summarizes the proceedings of APAC that took place at the Kigali Convention Centre in Rwanda.



## Foreword

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Hosting the first APAC Congress was not only an honor for the government and people of Rwanda but also a recognition of our role in conservation. The Congress came at the right time because the pressure on wildlife and protected areas has been increasing in together with population growth. In Africa especially, we have seen increased human/wildlife conflict that has resulted in a no-win situation for both people and wildlife.

The rights and roles of IPLCs has been a burning issue for conservationists. Since time immemorial, IPLCs have co-habited peacefully with wildlife but increased pressure on land has led to increasing numbers of conflicts which are sometimes violent. However, in finding solutions, it is important to acknowledge, respect and build on indigenous knowledge and customs to ensure harmonious human/wildlife existence.

The role of infrastructure and its nexus with sustainable wildlife conservation featured prominently in the discussions in Kigali. The Congress noted that although infrastructure is critical for economic development, it shouldn’t come at the cost of interfering with the ecosystems supporting wildlife habitats.

APAC tackled other critical issues such as the role of climate change in conservation; how to tap into science and technology to find the right balance with indigenous knowledge in conservation; the need for governance structures in conservation at

the appropriate levels, and how to ensure there is sustainable financing.

The Congress laid a special emphasis on the role of the youth and agreed that they must be a significant and important part of all conservation efforts – after all, they will carry the baton and be the next generation of elders.

Detailed recommendations were made that will form the basis for long term and sustainable solutions to these challenges. These are captured in the Kigali Call to Action and will form one basis for sustainable efforts in wildlife conservation. It is our hope that the call to action will move to the next phase of implementing the various recommendations from the Congress.

**Dr. Jeanne d’Arc Mujawamariya**  
**Minister for Environment Rwanda**

# Attendees

There was a focus in APAC on “In Africa, by Africa, for Africa, with Africa” and this is reflected in the attendance and agenda.

## AFRICA

- ALGERIA
- ANGOLA
- BENIN
- BOTSWANA
- BURKINA FASO
- BURUNDI
- CAMEROON
- CAPE VERDE
- CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
- CHAD
- THE COMOROS
- CONGO
- COTE D’IVOIRE
- DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
- EGYPT
- EQUATORIAL GUINEA
- ETHIOPIA
- ERITREA
- ESWATI
- GABON
- GAMBIA
- GHANA
- GUINEA
- GUINEA-BISSAU
- KENYA
- LIBERIA
- LIBYA
- MADAGASCAR
- MALAWI
- MALI
- MAURITANIA
- MAURITIUS
- MOROCCO
- MOZAMBIQUE
- NAMIBIA
- NIGER
- NIGERIA
- RWANDA
- SENEGAL
- SEYCHELLES
- SIERRA LEONE
- SOMALI REPUBLIC
- SOUTH AFRICA
- SOUTH SUDAN
- SUDAN
- SWAZILAND
- TANZANIA
- TOGO
- TUNISIA
- UGANDA
- ZAMBIA
- ZIMBABWE



# Key Metrics for Attendance



**280+**  
Youth



**100+**  
Journalists



**2,455**  
Total Attendance



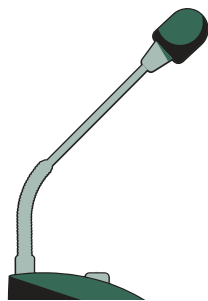
**50+**  
Indigenous peoples and local communities



**185**  
Media



**20+**  
Private sector engagements proposals



**1,108**  
Africa based and 201 non-Africa based representatives



**18**  
Exhibition booths

## HOW THE CONGRESS WAS ORGANISED

After the opening plenary day, the following 5 (**five**) days of the Congress started with 7 (**seven**) high level plenary dialogue sessions where leaders and policy makers from around the World discussed specific thematic areas representing the main issues in Conservation and selected for the Congress.

For the main programme there were 36 events. This was followed by more technical panel sessions and workshops throughout the day (totaling 213). Parallel to this, there were 16 Pavilions where a diversity of players organized discussions, launched strategies and books, and organized specific trainings.

A total of 218 events were held in the 16 pavilions. The exhibition of 53 Posters was permanent and was displayed based on the main APAC Streams. On average over 100 events were held per day lasting from about 2 hours to the whole day.

# Summary of Events

Traditional and social media were active with information about APAC, as reflected by a media report ([link here](#)) generated after the event. The report provides a snapshot of platform-specific performance of the #APAC2022 and #NaturesValue conversations, analytics and reach across entire social media spectrum.

Event Type	19th	20th	21st	22nd	23rd	Total
Main programme (High level dialogues, streams and cross cutting theme sessions).	6	7	13	10	0	<b>36</b>
Events (workshops, campus, trainings, cafes)	25	57	53	51	27	<b>213</b>
Posters					53	<b>53</b>
Pavilion events (16 Pavilions)	4	66	72	63	13	<b>218</b>
Total number of events per day	35	130	138	124	40	<b>467 (+ 53 posters)</b>





## NOTABLE QUOTES

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“Globally we are facing a climate change crisis, and Africa will bear the biggest brunt from the impact of climate change despite having the lowest contribution of greenhouse gas emissions.

**DR JEANNE D’ARC MUJAWAMARIYA,  
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT,  
RWANDA**

“WWF lauds the Kigali Call to Action as a highly significant outcome of APAC, which moves us in the right direction – towards a future where people and nature are at the heart of Africa’s sustainable development journey.”

**ALICE RUHWEZA,  
AFRICAN REGIONAL  
DIRECTOR WWF INTERNATIONAL**

“It is an oft-stated fact that the majority of people in Africa, and in particular those in rural areas, depend on the health of the ecosystem for their survival.”

**H.E HAILEMARIAM DESALEGN,  
FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF  
ETHIOPIA**

“Conservation is a journey, and our future depends on what is happening today.”

**KADDU SEBUNYA,  
CEO, AWF**

“This inaugural IUCN Africa Protected and Conserved Areas Congress has highlighted that Africa’s protected and conserved areas are vital for nature and biodiversity, but also for African peoples’ livelihoods and cultures.”

**DR BRUNO OBERLE  
IUCN DIRECTOR GENERAL**

“In many ways, APAC symbolises the start of a new dialogue and platform to position protected and conserved areas beyond biodiversity conservation to being key pillars in tackling climate change and achieving sustainable development.”

**LUTHER ANKUR,  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR,  
IUCN EASTERN AND SOUTHERN  
AFRICA**

“

THESE HOME-MADE SOLUTIONS ARE WHAT WE AS A CONTINENT NEED. WE MUST FIRST UNDERSTAND OUR CHALLENGES AND THEN TAKE REMEDIAL MEASURES.

**H.E ISSOUFOU MAHMADOU, FORMER PRESIDENT OF NIGER**





# Youth Pre-Congress

## *Youth leadership in Conservation*

The APAC Youth Pre-Congress was organized by the NGO Stand out Shout Out (SUSO) in partnership with the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) and other partners. The Youth pre-congress sat 3 days before APAC and youth delegates from it attended APAC with 65 Youth from 23 African Countries representing 60 Organisations and Youth Networks and the 5 regions of Africa.

The African Youth Voice at APAC was meant to ensure that youth are not only heard but they will also influence key actions to allow for greater youth engagement and inclusion in Protected and Conserved Areas management.

In addition to deliberations on policy issues and commitments, the youth identified actions they will implement from the Kigali Action plan. The Pre-Congress focused on key themes such as Climate Change, Marine Conservation, Governance, Wildlife Crime and Conflict. Attention was also laid on: Protected & Conserved Areas and Governance, Climate Change, Marine Life & Biodiversity, People (Community), Conflict and Infrastructure, and Technology and Youth Engagement.

The youth sought to build capacity and create an enabling environment to allow them to be included

in policy decision making and implementation spaces. They further committed to co-create a platform for engagement with national governments, create opportunities for participation in high-level engagements, and to provide governments with information that facilitates meeting conservation targets.

Recognizing the major role played by social media in the lives of the youth, the pre-Congress proposed the mobilization of a dedicated social media team to package and distribute stories of youth champions and role models, and to promote trends around conservation topics on social media platforms.

There was also a proposal to mobilize youth groups into conservation projects as well as equipping communities on prevention, mitigation and de-escalation of human-wildlife conflict and documentation of indigenous knowledge systems on medicinal plants and other non-timber forest products.

At the end of the Youth pre-Congress, the youth came up with a declaration ([link here](#)) which was adopted by the Congress.

## NOTABLE QUOTES

“Youth are the custodians of the future, hence custodians of Africa’s biodiversity.”

**DR JEANNE D’ARC MUJAWAMARIYA,  
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA.**

“APAC was a clear reminder that we must leverage Africa’s cultural diversity to craft new conservation models that put people at the center alongside nature. It is high time for African policymakers, Western governments, and global conservation funders to recognize that the answer to the global biodiversity crisis is not in emptying the forests of their traditional guardians.”

**PATRICK KIPALU,  
DIRECTOR FOR AFRICAN  
PROGRAM,  
RIGHTS AND RESOURCES GROUP**

“The Youth are (our) long-term partners.”

**HON. ROSEMARY MBABAZI,  
MINISTER OF YOUTH RWANDA**

“It is time for the youth to engage in dialogue that affects you and future generations. This forum gives you the rare opportunity to not only have your voices heard but also play at the highest level in terms of the conservation agenda.”

**FREDERICK KWAME KUMAH,  
AWF VICE-PRESIDENT,  
GLOBAL LEADERSHIP**





# Indigenous People and Local Communities

**IPLCs: A critical plank in conservation** Indigenous People and Local Communities (IPLCs) are a vital and integral part of conservation.

They are the first line of defense in wildlife and conservation efforts. Their voice must be heard. During the Congress, the IPLCs were well present, with more than 67 groups represented. IPLCs are key partners and urgent beneficiaries of technical and financial support for the recognition, respect and management of Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs) outside of state-run Protected Areas. ICCAs have to be respected at the national level (for example through a national registry of ICCAs). In the past, IPLCs have been ignored in conservation yet they play a very important role.

There is a need to acknowledge, respect, recognize and support the rights of IPLCs and their governance systems. The Congress also recognized the need to promote fair and equitable sharing of costs and benefits associated with conservation efforts. The IPLC's strategy is anchored on four pillars: establishment of a pan-African IPLC body; advocacy, campaigns and strategic empowerment; putting people at the centre of conservation and promoting inclusive governance as well as unlocking the economic value of conserved areas.

The congress noted that IPLCs should be empowered and encouraged in conserving biodiversity while at

the same time ensuring that we tap into indigenous science and knowledge that has been accumulated in biodiversity conservation.

The Congress adopted the IPLC Kigali Declaration ([link here](#)) which emphasized the need for stemming the rapid environmental degradation which impacts very heavily on the IPLCs.

## **Avoiding human/wildlife conflict**

Many protected areas are not fenced and wildlife roam on IPLC lands. As a result, wildlife-human conflict is common and the feeling at the community level is wildlife matters more than people. Until recently the vital roles rural communities across Africa played in conservation has been, at best downplayed, at worst ignored, yet much of Africa's wildlife live in IPLCs' territories. For example, the huge concentrations of wildlife in the African savanna often overlap with areas under pastoralism.

The IPLC declaration emphasizes the need to halt conservation related violence and recognize the importance of secure tenure and land justice as the central pillar for the African conservation agenda.

## NOTABLE QUOTES

“APAC serves as an important precedent, laying the groundwork and foundation for a start of dialogues between and among IPLCs, the Youth, African governments, NGOs and other stakeholders involved in PCAs ”

**DR JEANNE D’ARC MUJAWAMARIYA,**  
**MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA.**

“Attending APAC reaffirmed for us that the future of Africa’s conservation lies in the hands of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. We must also ensure that conservation funding reaches community-led initiatives and organizations directly, especially women and youth organizations.”

**SOLANGE BANDIAKY-BADJI**  
**PRESIDENT, RIGHTS AND RESOURCES GROUP/ COORDINATOR, RRI**

“The goal of conserving nature and biodiversity does not recognize the rights of the indigenous peoples and local communities”

**MILKA CHEPKORIR,**  
**KENYA**

“What needs to change in the mainstream conservation industry, and what are the local-to-global efforts to usher in those changes?”

**MS. PAINE MAKKO**  
**TANZANIA**



# Plenaries

## ***Engaging Plenaries Results in Key Insights***

APAC held seven high-level plenary dialogues over the course of six days guided by the thematic areas. There were some prepared speeches, but the sessions revolved around facilitated discussions and lively conversations onstage which the audience took the opportunity to engage them.

Due to APAC's commitment to meaningful youth engagement, young people and representatives of the IPLCs spoke in almost all the plenaries sharing key insights from the pre-congresses.

The opening and closing sessions integrated inspiring and engaging videos that showcased the enthusiasm towards the solutions proposed at the Congress.



# Event Highlights



Day One: A-PACT Launch



Day two: Panelists Challenges and opportunities



Day six: Closing ceremony: Hailemariam Desalegn.



Rangers Presentation



WWF Africa Strategy Launch



Dr. Jeanne d'Arc Mujawamariya: Minister for Land and Environment

# Event Highlights



Cocktail



ACV Film Screening



Luther Anukur, IUCN Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa



Day three: Panelists. Leadership dialogue



# Exhibitions

“

THIS CONGRESS INSPIRES US TO RECOGNISE THAT THERE IS NO COOKIE CUTTER APPROACH TO CONSERVATION ACTION. CONSERVATION ACTION WILL NEED TO LOOK DIFFERENTLY IN EVERY REGION IN ORDER TO PROTECT BIODIVERSITY AND NATURE WHILE ENSURING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF ITS PEOPLE.

RAZAN AL MUBARAK  
IUCN PRESIDENT



People4Nature



The Nature Conservancy



IFAW



SADC



COMIFAC



Southpole



EAC



MAVA FOUNDATION



UNESCO



ACBA



AWF



# APAC Congress Streams

# PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREAS (PCAs)

## **PCA's Key to Biodiversity Protection**

Today, Africa has 14.4 percent of its total landmass (six million square kilometers) and six percent of her seascapes under diverse modes of protection. The participants agreed that PCAs are critical for biodiversity protection and act as a buffer to climate change impacts. Because of the increasing pressure on land from development and population growth, there's an urgent need to secure the areas where biodiversity thrives.

There are several types of management of PCAs and Governments and partners need to look for different models, including OECMs and ICCAs, that fit different contexts and emphasize the importance of IPLCs and conservation. The major challenge is that PCAs in general remain under-funded and therefore, remain at risk of degradation and not serving their purpose. Funding and capacity can be tackled with the involvement of different partners for protected areas management, including the private sector and involving communities, IPLCs and the Youth.

## KEY OUTCOME

**Diversify, respect and invest in the different types of protected areas from state owned to the many thousands of community conserved areas (ICCAs, OECMs).**



# BIODIVERSITY

## *Development Must Go Together With Conservation*

While it is recognized that biodiversity is the basis for life in Africa, its values are often hidden and assumed in the quest to develop. Biodiversity in and around protected and conserved areas has been affected by climate change, development of infrastructure, invasive species, and land use change. Development without conservation of biodiversity and consideration for the people linked to it, will ultimately fail. By recognizing the importance of managing biodiversity, including the need for functional community stewardship, connectivity, representativity and the need for ecological restoration, participants in APAC agreed to collaborate towards a more resilient network of protected and conserved areas and surrounding areas. The participants also recommended that countries adopt policies of No-Net Loss (NNL) of biodiversity for approved infrastructure projects, and enhance synergies with private sector and construction companies on the same and embrace as well as collectively integrate new technologies across Africa to improve the management and accounting of biodiversity, explore opportunities for sustainable financing mechanisms to support the implementation of biodiversity conservation strategies, and mentor, support and educate the next generation of conservationists.

## KEY OUTCOME

**As part of conservation stewardship, demonstrate the importance of integrating biodiversity as part of land and water use planning so that conservation becomes part of human-dominated land and water use. This should result in no-net loss of biodiversity as part of all types of development.**



# PEOPLE

## ***Placing People at the Centre of Conservation***

APAC participants acknowledged that there can be no conservation without considering the people living in and around conserved areas. In particular, the Congress noted that there is a need to share knowledge from different parts of the continent on successful models and mechanisms for involving different groups, be they IPLCs, youth or women.

There was also an appreciation of the fact that livelihoods and the well-being of people should be at the center of all conservation efforts since it is their lives that are at risk from climate change.

At the same time, it is well recognized that biodiversity remains key to economic growth and therefore African governments must apportion part of their revenues to protecting biodiversity and create an enabling environment for the private sector to support conservation initiatives.

Policies must also be enacted to inculcate customary knowledge in policy formulation, build IPLCs capacity and channel more funds to IPLCs and youth institutions for their conservation efforts.

Critically, the people living in and around conserved areas must share equitably in the benefits accruing from PCAs.

### KEY OUTCOME

**Share knowledge from across the continent on successful models for involving different groups, as livelihoods and the well-being of people should be at the centre of all conservation efforts. Demonstrate how biodiversity can be key to economic growth and needs to be invested in and having an enabling environment for the IPLCs and the private sector to support and benefit from conservation.**



# GOVERNANCE

## *Good Governance Foundation for Conservation*

For PCAs to be sustainable, good governance is essential since it clearly lays out the key roles all stakeholders must play, including that of the government, the private sector and local communities.

The Congress assessed the role of governance and how it affects PCAs and other conserved areas including those managed by communities, indigenous peoples and the private sector.

The participants agreed there's a need to improve governance in PCAs by using available tools such as SAPA (Social Impacts of Protected and Conserved Areas) and/or the Natural Resource Governance Framework (NRGF).

The Congress also noted that there is an urgent need to build capacity of PCAs, respect traditional governance systems and understand the land rights and land use planning within the PCAs.

Among other proposals was the need to address the imbalances of power that results in foreign powers, INGOs and Governments controlling funding for conservation thereby having an unhealthy control on what is implemented

## KEY OUTCOME

**Demonstrate improved governance in PCAs by using available tools such as SAPA (Social Impacts of Protected and Conserved Areas) and/or the Natural Resource Governance Framework (NRGF). Build capacity of PCAs, respect traditional governance systems and support land rights and land use planning within the PCAs (all sorts).**



# RESOURCE CONFLICT

## **Tackling Root Cause of Resource Conflicts**

Resource use conflict across Africa is a regular and disturbing occurrence – be it human-wildlife conflicts, land use conflicts, or war conflicts. Understanding the impact of conflict on the lives, livelihoods and security of people who depend on natural resources survival is the first step to finding a lasting solution.

The narrative must change from conflict to co-existence through high level political engagement in conflict resolution. Special emphasis must be placed on bottom-top approaches, so that local communities are at the heart of conservation and can counter illegal wildlife trafficking. The exclusion of IPLCs is still noticeable and leads to situations where the IPLCs find themselves squeezed into marginal areas as economic and exploitative projects encroach on their land.

The participants agreed that there is an urgent need for governments to commit to mainstream conflict prevention and mitigation strategies in national policies and implementation; and to reduce conflicts by using tools that have an immediate impact – such as land use planning, green infrastructure, and human wildlife conflict mitigation measures.

Stakeholders need to work towards coexistence in

conflict-prone zones through high level political engagements and agreements; and commit to continue supporting and replicating successful mechanisms with immediate impact on conflict.

Harmonization of policies and laws within and between countries need to be encouraged by signing framework agreements for implementing and enforcing actions.

### KEY OUTCOME

**Support strategies that change the narrative from conflict to co-existence through political engagement in conflict resolution, supporting bottom-top approaches, and ensuring local communities are at the heart of conservation and can counter illegal wildlife trafficking.**



# CLIMATE CHANGE

## *Tackling Climate Change Sustainably*

Climate change disproportionately affects Africa. APAC explored the interactions of climate change on people living adjacent to and within PCAs, and tackled the issue of the PCAs we want in Africa under a changing climate and the impact of climate change on biodiversity. The Congress agreed to map available knowledge and practice related to PCAs and climate change and demonstrate importance to Nature-based Solutions (NbS) by sharing case studies and best practices.

A proposal was put forward to establish a Pan African regional strategy and platform on PCAs and climate change, and to carry out a valuation of economic natural resources in the context of climate change.

Inclusive and integrated management of PCAs which considers IPLCs' knowledge on solutions for adaptation is needed. PCA management should adapt to climate change and mitigate further damage to the ecosystems. Since people living adjacent to and within PCAs landscapes depend on nature, we must encourage climate-smart agriculture to improve livelihoods, reduce the carbon footprint, and strengthen the resilience to climate change.

It was also acknowledged that ecological connectivity promotes resilience. Promoting and restoring connectivity requires working with multiple stakeholders, especially IPLCs as ecological connectivity should be prioritized in land use planning. It was also noted that wildfires management is a key climate change strategy.



## KEY OUTCOME

**Map available knowledge and practice related to PCAs and climate change and demonstrate importance of Nature-based Solutions by sharing case studies and best practices. Establish a Pan African regional strategy and platform on PCAs and climate change and carry out a valuation of economic natural resources in the context of climate change. Promote resilience through enhanced ecological connectivity.**





# SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WITH INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

## ***Enjoining Indigenous Knowledge with Science & Technology.***

Science, technology and the role of indigenous knowledge are vital for the success and effectiveness of PCAs. The interface between indigenous knowledge and modern scientific approaches can be adapted and mainstreamed for managing PCAs. Lessons and experiences are analyzed and recommendations suggested for science, technology and indigenous knowledge to work hand in hand for successful conservation in Africa.

Renewed focus is needed to maintain functional ecosystems through a merging of science and indigenous knowledge and considering the community as part of the knowledge process and not just beneficiaries. Local communities and indigenous knowledge must be acknowledged and respected to improve access to information.

The Congress proposed greater involvement by the private sector so that innovation and lack of skills will no longer hinder the management of Protected and Conserved Areas.

Governments must promote the use of traditional knowledge as part of national and regional policy and legislation and ensure this is aligned with science

to make a meaningful contribution to improved management of ecosystems. Implementation of clear policy guidance to support innovation and adoption of conservation and climate-friendly technologies is necessary so they have the confidence to invest in protected and conserved areas.

## **KEY OUTCOME**

**Lessons on policy efforts from science, technology and indigenous knowledge should be made available and implemented for mutual benefit. Governments must promote the use of traditional knowledge as part of national and regional policy and legislation and ensure this is aligned with science.**



# SUSTAINABLE FINANCING

## *Creating a Sustainable Financing Model*

There is an urgent need to address the current situation where PCAs are grossly underfunded. Adequate funding must be found for PCAs. Approximately 90% of Protected Areas in Africa are under-funded and budgets are 10-20% of what is required. APAC noted the need to establish innovative funding models, for example IPLC or PCA Trust Funds, Green Bonds and Carbon credits that can be traded in international carbon markets.

The focus should be on long term and sustainable funding. The need for developing a basket of financing options is key. Although carbon credits trading was identified as one method that can be used for funding conservation, there are other sustainable financing models to be explored.

The establishing and operationalizing of a Pan African Conservation Trust (A-PACT) was identified as key to sustainable financing, which would address the need for sustainable financing for Africa's PCAs. But it is critical to include the government, the private sector, and NGOs/CSOs, communities to partner on the payment for ecosystem services/carbon markets.

The capital markets can raise more funds such as green bonds, which is a market with huge potential. Promoting appropriate enabling legal frameworks/policies as the meeting point between the government

and private sector is key, while developing action plans for voluntary involvements/commitments for accountability purposes. APAC supported the promotion of the private sector but with the caveat that their funds are well governed.

Data on the contribution of the wildlife economy should be collected to demonstrate the value of wildlife so that all stakeholders fully recognize biodiversity as a key strategic asset and invest in it.



## KEY OUTCOME

**Establish innovative funding models, for example IPLC or PCA Trust Funds, Green Bonds and Carbon credits, with a focus on long term and sustainable funding through a basket of financing options. Establish and operationalize a Pan African Conservation Trust (A-PACT) as a key to sustainable financing for Africa's PCAs.**



# INFRASTRUCTURE

## ***Mitigating Infrastructure Impact on Biodiversity.***

Infrastructure development is synonymous with economic growth and societal advancement of a country. In Africa, physical infrastructure projects are developing rapidly, sometimes with little or no consideration for the long-term impact on the ecology. It is a double-edged sword.

It is projected that 25 million kilometers of linear infrastructure will be developed in Africa by 2050 with major implications on biodiversity.

The Congress identified the need for effective mitigation to reduce the impact of infrastructure on biodiversity and landscapes. Among the key recommendations was mainstreaming environmental and social safeguards into laws, policies and practice to drive more sustainable infrastructure development.

The need for driving awareness on creating ecology-friendly infrastructure as well as improved transparency and early-stage involvement of all stakeholders in large scale development planning was also identified as critical. Although there's no universal solution to the impact of infrastructure on biodiversity, it is important to ensure that infrastructure development does not destroy ecological connectivity.

PCAs and other stakeholders need to be consulted before such projects are undertaken.

During infrastructure development, social and environmental safeguards must be complied with, including application of appropriate tools to identify and offset and minimize the negative effects. Data should also be compiled to inform infrastructure developers on the status and threats to biodiversity but, if possible, minimize impact on nature when developing infrastructure.



## **KEY OUTCOME**

**Mainstream environmental and social safeguards into laws, policies and practice as a basis for sustainable infrastructure development. Awareness on ecology-friendly infrastructure, improved transparency and early-stage involvement of all stakeholders in large scale development planning was identified as critical. Social and environmental safeguards must be complied with.**



## KIGALI CALL TO ACTION

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***We, the participants in the first IUCN Africa Protected and Conserved Areas Congress, call for:***

- The identification, recognition and empowerment of all custodians of nature in Africa to lead the way in conserving Africa's rich biodiversity through protected and conserved areas (PCAs) that are fair and just, and would achieve ambitious targets to conserve the continent's lands and waters in effective and connected systems. In particular, we call for support to Africa's Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and youth, working in partnership with governments, civil society and private actors, to sustain the wisdom, traditions, scientific and traditional knowledge and customary approaches that will result in effective conservation and the long-term resilience of nature, culture, livelihoods and human well-being.
- Acknowledgment of past and ongoing injustices experienced when indigenous peoples and local communities have not been accorded their rights, roles, responsibilities and expectations in the pursuit of conservation goals, and for these injustices to be halted now and in the future. We call for a mechanism to hear their voices, understand options for resolution of their grievances and reach agreement on remedies that will rebuild confidence, and for the relationship between conservation and people to be restored and respected, so that nature conservation in Africa puts people at the centre.
- Greater public and private financial investment in nature conservation and protected and conserved areas concomitant with their value and the flow of ecosystem services in the wider production landscapes and seascapes, to support human livelihoods and well-being. In particular, to direct funding through mechanisms that are fair, equitable and efficient, and that provide direct support to Indigenous Peoples and local communities, women, youth, and non-governmental organizations to address priority conservation and social outcomes.
- A more integrated approach to addressing the Climate, Biodiversity, Health and Conflict nexus of issues involving all relevant stakeholders. In particular, we call for enhanced Pan-African collaboration, cooperation and partnership for protected and conserved area systems throughout the continent, involving all governance authorities and organizations, consistent with the African Union's Agenda 2063 with its goal for inclusive and sustainable development and the pan-African drive for unity, self-determination, freedom, progress and collective prosperity.



***Promoting inclusive and equitable governance Land and waters in Africa are governed under diverse tenure systems that include state, customary and private ownership and differ from country to country. Many areas governed and managed by IPLCs and private partners contribute to effective and well-connected conservation networks, but do not have legal recognition. The Congress recognized the need to acknowledge, respect, recognise and support the rights and identity of customary governance authorities and resource holders, including women, youth and vulnerable people, and the systems and customary laws they use to sustain resources, and to promote legitimacy, transparency and accountability in decision-making, and the fair and equitable sharing of costs and benefits of PCAs. We call for:***

- Ensuring equitable, effective, generational and gender-responsive participation of all rights-holders and stakeholders, including IPLCs and youth in decision making related to biodiversity, at all levels, including access to justice and information, respect for and promotion of their rights over lands, territories and resources and their equitable enjoyment of benefits from the conservation and sustainable use of biological and genetic resources.
- Enhanced understanding of the power relations among stakeholders, to help limit elite capture, injustice and corruption and to ensure that the marginalized, women and youth are genuinely included in decision making.
- Promotion of truly sustainable use of natural resources and investment in building an appropriate wildlife economy, through rights-based approaches and with the involvement of rights-holders and stakeholders, while halting human rights abuses associated with law enforcement.
- Stronger support and resourcing of rangers, including community rangers accountable to communities to conduct their critical and diverse work professionally, responsibly and accountably in a way that respects human rights. We urge Governments and other organizations to adopt the new International Ranger Federation Code of Conduct presented at APAC.
- Grievance mechanisms based on clear standards that are directly accessible to IPLCs to ensure speedy and appropriate resolution of conflicts and injustices.
- Strategies to resolve human-wildlife conflict and the establishment of a special fund to compensate communities affected by human-wildlife conflict.
- Better understanding and capacity to recognise and support other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) under diverse forms of governance that contribute to national and global biodiversity targets.



***Putting people at the centre of effective and equitable conservation Africa's protected and conserved areas hold unique competitive advantages for addressing poverty and building resilient communities. They contribute to diverse benefits, are vital for African peoples' livelihoods and cultures, and are central to meeting global and national biodiversity and ecosystem targets. Africa's protected and conserved areas (PCAs) estate are the backbone of natural infrastructure underpinning development aspirations on the continent. The 6 million km<sup>2</sup> of Africa's PCAs provide food and water security, erosion and flood control, disease control, climate regulation, carbon sequestration and a host of other critical ecosystem services which underpin human welfare and wellbeing, yet are rarely recognised in national accounting. Central to efforts to improve effectiveness is the involvement of all governance authorities subject to their free, prior and informed consent. To deliver diverse benefits and address threats to PCAs and their significant values, they must be effectively governed and managed. We call for:***

- Assessment of the effectiveness of protected areas and other conserved areas including their governance and management benchmarked against universal standards such as the IUCN Green List Standard and to prioritize actions, capacity development and funding based on the findings.
- Further efforts to identify all areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services that are neither protected nor conserved and to build these into conservation plans and programmes and ensure ecological representativeness, while ensuring that any proposed targets are not achieved at the expense of people.
- Identification and recognition of all areas in the custodianship of governance authorities that meet the definition of other effective area-based conservation areas (OECMs), and to seek their inclusion and support in national systems, following the free, prior and informed consent of their custodians.
- Universities, governments, regional observatories and research institutes to support the collation of information and knowledge and promote greater collaboration between formal science and Indigenous Peoples' and local knowledge to build capacity and to share experiences at national and regional scale, to apply best practices, and to celebrate and reward success in achieving conservation outcomes.
- Governments and non-state partners should collaborate to transform educational curricula at all levels so that nature conservation is integrated into all disciplines including the humanities, physical, biological and social sciences, technology and innovation. Mobilizing the economic value of PCAs and sustainable financing Africa's protected and conserved areas



contribute significantly to economic development at local and national levels, generating services that support the surrounding production landscapes and seascapes, and supporting the livelihoods of local communities through sustainable use and employment, especially through tourism. Nevertheless, many PAs have inadequate resources for their effective management. The COVID-19 crisis resulted in the loss of revenues and exposed the vulnerability of PCAs to economic shocks and brought into sharper focus the underlying financing and resourcing challenges facing protected and conserved areas in Africa and around the world.

***We recognize that African PCAs are grossly underfunded despite their enormous economic value, and that public funding, international assistance and revenues fall short of needs, inhibiting their effectiveness and value. Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation considerations in the production sectors of the economy is key for realizing the full potential of Africa's growth, and the empowerment of its people. However, it is not just the volume of funding that matters, but the way it is used to address the most important threats and weaknesses through fair and equitable access to decision making by all of those involved in governance and management in determining priorities, including rights-holders and stakeholders. We call for:***

- Strong leadership by African governments to integrate environmental priorities in economic and financial

planning that will address the biodiversity and climate crises and sustain the economic value of protected and conserved areas in the further development and expansion of the wildlife economy.

- Urgent action to address the significant under-resourcing of Africa's protected and conserved areas, through a range of instruments, including increased government funding, public-private partnerships, trust funds, and innovative financing mechanisms, such as carbon trading.
- Recognition of the global benefits of Africa's PCAs to attract increased global funding that complements domestic sources, while maintaining strong national and local accountability and ownership, and ensuring that while social and environmental safeguards are essential, this should not result in protracted project preparation or delays in delivering funding.
- Investment through direct grant-funding that focuses on those activities that enhance governance and management effectiveness, and that can catalyze the direct involvement of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and youth.
- Increased investment using appropriate and diverse financing mechanisms such as those announced at the Congress, including the A-PACT trust fund, the NatureAfrica programme and the programming in Africa of the Global Environment Facility.



- Policies, planning approaches and tools leading to long-term funding at scale, including through blended finance instruments supporting conservation action and landscape restoration.
- Establishment of a Pan-African sustainable financing technical advisory service through existing landscape finance efforts to develop capacity at PCA and local levels that can unlock financing opportunities. PCAs as natural solutions to the biodiversity and climate change crises. There is widespread agreement that the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, which impact on human health and wellbeing, must be addressed simultaneously. By protecting ecosystems and natural habitats and the ecosystem services they provide, PCAs act as nature-based solutions that help people cope with the impacts of climate change, health, and disaster risks.

***Recognising that climate change will lead to geographic shifts in the distributions of species, habitats and impact human livelihoods and migration, African protected area networks should be re-evaluated and redesigned to secure natural habitat and improve connectivity, thereby enhancing resilience of biodiversity and communities. Governments to consider PCAs as a first option for climate adaptation and mitigation and as nature-based solutions to address both the climate and biodiversity crises through mutually beneficial action. This should be reflected in implementation, and***

***the next revision, of Africa's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). We call for:***

- Restoring fragmented and degraded ecosystems and avoiding or mitigating the impacts of climate change, new infrastructure and environmentally destructive activities, thereby maintaining ecological connectivity through networks of protected and conserved areas, including OECMs and transboundary areas.
- Positioning of PCAs as a significant sector within One Health frameworks, ameliorating land degradation and contributing to sectoral and institutional cooperation and coordination for health promotion, detection and treatment of disease and better understanding of pathways to human and environmental health and wellbeing.
- ***APAC's Commitment to Action Recognizing Africa's rich and unique biodiversity heritage and the diversity of its peoples, we the participants at the inaugural IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress commit to the following actions:***
- To communicate our recommendations widely, and call upon all governments and stakeholders to support implementation with the necessary urgency, and to monitor implementation.
- To welcome the recommendations made by representatives of Indigenous Peoples and Local







Communities, and youth, and their commitments towards implementation.

- To work with the representatives of youth at APAC2022 now and in the future to create, plan, implement, manage and share the benefits of this collaboration.
- To send a strong message to COP 15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity for the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework regarding the recommendations and commitments captured at this Congress, and to COP 27 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- To request the African Union Commission to declare 18 July of each year “Africa Protected and Conserved Areas Day” to be observed and celebrated across the continent.
- To task the convenors and organizing partners of the inaugural IUCN Africa Protected Areas
- Congress to undertake the development of an African Protected and Conserved Areas Forum as an inclusive and consultative pan-African body for the African Protected Areas Directors (APAD), government agencies, CSOs, Youth, IPLCs, NGOs and private sector to guide the implementation and monitoring of APAC 2022 commitments through smaller regional meetings and the convening of the second APAC within the next 4-5 years.
- To maintain the energy, spirit of hope and commitment of this inaugural APAC and convey this through our work in our respective home countries and institutions.
- Finally, we acknowledge the generosity and hospitality of the government and people of Rwanda, and everyone, including the volunteers, who helped to convene the inaugural IUCN Africa Protected and Conserved Areas Congress, as well as participants who contributed to the rich content and discussions.



## LOOKING AHEAD

***Implementing and monitoring the Call to Action lies at the heart of APAC. This calls for all the disparate groups to have a common vision in following through with the modalities for implementation***

- To walk the talk, the Congress proposed convening of webinars to highlight strategic issues and key areas from the Call to Action. There will also be continuous assessment of progress on implementing of the Kigali Call to Action while ensuring that the case for conservation as a key component of national development and macro-economic planning gains traction.
- Additionally, post APAC AWF and IUCN working collaboratively with key partners will provide support to IPLCs and Youth working in partnership with governments, civil society and private actors, to sustain the wisdom, traditions, scientific and traditional knowledge and customary approaches that will result in effective conservation and the long-term resilience of nature, culture, livelihoods and human well-being.
- We will also work on developing a mechanism to recognize the voices of IPLCs and Youth, understand the options for resolving their grievances particularly on past injustices and reaching an agreement on remedies that will rebuild confidence and putting people at the center of conservation.

- We will ensure greater public and private financial investment in nature conservation and directing such funding through mechanisms that are fair, equitable and efficient to address priority conservation and social outcomes.
- To ensure positive outcomes, we will enhance Pan-African collaboration, cooperation and partnership for PCA systems throughout the continent, involve all governance authorities and organizations, consistent with the African Union's Agenda 2063.
- The APAC youth/IPLCs planned to meet in early 2023 to discuss priority areas for action from the Kigali Call to Action, key among them developing mechanisms to recognize the voices of youth and IPLCs; ensure greater public and private investment in conservation and addressing climate, biodiversity, health and conflict.





THE CONGRESS IS ALSO EXPECTED TO CONFRONT THE ISSUE OF THE KEY ROLES PLAYED BY INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY. DESPITE EVIDENCE THAT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE THE BEST GUARDIANS OF WILDLIFE, MOST DO NOT HAVE LEGAL RIGHTS OVER THE LAND ON WHICH THEY LIVE.

THE GUARDIAN



“The Congress brings together wildlife parks and reserves managers, scientists, and Indigenous and community leaders. It is hoped that increasing the dialogue between groups will improve the health of Africa’s biodiversity hotspots and combat worrying trends, such as the increase in poaching and the illegal wildlife trade.”

AL JAZEERA

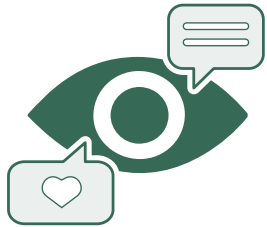
“It is a meeting that was long overdue but like they say, best to come late than not turn up at all. Africa ought to be in the driving seat, leading the discourse on the subject matter, other than waiting for invitations from elsewhere to attend meetings where they end up being on the menu rather than the high table.”

NEW TIMES RWANDA

“As the first Congress of its kind, APAC is an important step away from ‘fortress conservation’ approaches and towards African-driven biodiversity conservation.”

MONGABAY

## Social Media



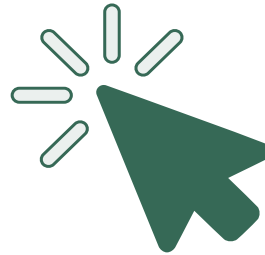
**678,912**

Total post impressions



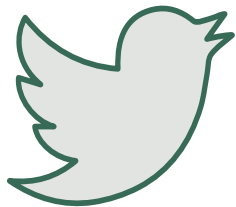
**33,379**

Engagement



**2,604**

Post link clicks



Twitter Impressions

**155,609**



Facebook Impressions

**229,052**



LinkedIn Impressions

**24,580**



Instagram Impressions

**269,671**

Twitter was the most engaging platform, with over 155,000 impressions across the platform, an 884 percent increase compared to other everyday performance. There was also a marked improvement in our presence on LinkedIn, driven by thought leadership articles touching on APAC, leading to an organic engagement increase of 213 percent during this period.

A snapshot of platform-specific performance of the #APAC2022 conversations, analytics and reach across entire social media spectrum can be seen in the graphic on the left.

# APAC Sponsors & Partners



## SUPPORTERS AND PARTNERS



# THANK YOU!

The planning for the IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC) was a complex and time-consuming affair. The logistics of bringing together over 2,400 people from 87 countries and keeping them engaged during the duration of the Congress was immense. The success of the Congress was therefore pegged on the determination, single-mindedness and hard work of many people working in various organisations as well as financial support from the Sponsors.

As the host, the support of the Government and the People of Rwanda, led by His Excellency Paul Kagame is especially appreciated. The retired heads of State as well as all the key dignitaries who livened up the Congress are also highly appreciated as well as all the attendees.

Our sincere appreciation also goes to the Sponsors who played such a key role in making the first APAC congress held in Kigali Rwanda a resounding success.





# IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC) Report