112th Meeting of the IUCN Council[1]

Part I (virtual) on 6 November 2024
Part II (in person) from 28-30 January 2025 in Antigua, Guatemala

DECISIONS[2]

<table>
<tr><th>Dec. #</th><th>Council Decision</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Agenda (Agenda Item I/1)</td></tr>
<tr><td>C112/1</td><td>The IUCN Council,
Adopts the Agenda of its 112th Meeting. (Annex 1)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Constituency Issues (Agenda Items I/2 and II/7.1.1)</td></tr>
<tr><td>C112/2</td><td>The IUCN Council,
On the recommendation of its Governance and Constituency Committee (GCC),
Approves the admission of 19 Members (Annex 2);
Defers the consideration of Federación Indígena Empresarial y Comunidades Locales de México[3], A.C. and Greens Zoological Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre Society until additional information has been received;
Takes note of the name change of the following IUCN Member:
<table>
<tr><th>Member ID</th><th>Previous name</th><th>New name</th><th>Country</th></tr>
<tr><td>ST/100</td><td>Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development (Ministère de l'Environnement, du Climat et du Développement durable)</td><td>Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Biodiversity (Ministère de l'Environnement, du Climat et de la Biodiversité)</td><td>Luxembourg</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
<tr><td>C112/5</td><td>The IUCN Council,
On the recommendation of its Governance and Constituency Committee (GCC),
1. Approves the admission of thirty Members (Annex 5),
2. Defers the consideration of the Faculty of Agronomy of the Lebanese University until additional information has been received,
3. Rejects the admission of the Greens Zoological Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre Society[4],</td></tr>
</table>

[1] The 112th Council meeting was organized in two parts: a virtual meeting held on 6 November 2024 at which selected topics of the agenda were discussed, and a meeting held in person on 29 and 30 January 2025 in Antigua, Guatemala on all remaining topics. References to agenda items are either to Part I virtual or Part II in person.
[2] Decisions C112/1 to C112/4 were adopted during Part I (virtual). The other decisions were approved during Part II (in person).
[3] This organization was subsequently admitted as IUCN Member by Council on 30 January 2025 on the recommendation of its Governance and Constituency Committee.
[4] The rationale for this decision is explained in the Report of the Governance and Constituency Committee to Council (Document C112/II/7.1/4).

4. Approves the membership category change of two Members:

Member ID	Name	Country	Current category	Requested new category
AF/25885	Atlanta Botanical Garden	USA	AF	NG
AF/930	Woodland Park Zoological Society	USA	AF	NG

5. Takes note of the name change of the following seven Members:

Member ID	Previous name	New name	Country
ST/24945	Ministry of Environment (Keskkonnaministeerium)	Ministry of Climate (Kliimaministeerium)	Estonia
ST/466	Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources (Umhverfis- og auðlindaráðuneytið)	Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate (Umhverfis-, orku- og loftslagsráðuneytið)	Iceland
ST/26102	State committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on ecology and environmental protection	Ministry of Ecology, Environmental Protection, and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan
ST/25517	Ministry of Environment and Tourism	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change	Mongolia
ST/41	Ministry of Environment, Environmental Protection Agency, Denmark	Ministry for Green Transition Denmark	Denmark
GA/1229	Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (Ministrstvo za okolje in prostor)	Ministry of Natural Resources and Spatial Planning (Ministrstvo za naravne vire in prostor)	Slovenia
GA/25048	Cultural Heritage Administration	Korea Heritage Service	Republic of Korea

IUCN 2025 Workplan and Budget (Agenda Item I/4)

C112/3

The IUCN Council,

On the proposal of the Director General,

Taking into account the recommendations of its Programme and Policy Committee (PPC) and Finance and Audit Committee (FAC),

Approves the IUCN 2025 Workplan, as revised, and the 2025 Budget. (Annex 3)

Amendments to the Regulations (Agenda Item I/5)

C112/4

The IUCN Council,

On the recommendation of its Governance and Constituency Committee (GCC),

Adopts, in first reading, the proposed amendments to Regulations 72 and 75 reforming the Commission membership renewal process (Annex 4);

Decides to include the proposed amendments on the agenda of the next meeting of the IUCN Council (C113, May 2025) for adoption in second reading, modified as the case may be following the consultation of IUCN Members required by Articles 101-102 of the Statutes;

Requests the Chairs of the Commissions to:

a. prescribe in the bylaws of their respective Commission, before the 2025 Congress, the process and conditions of appointment to and removal from the Commissions' membership and any delegation of this responsibility within

	their respective Commission, as required by Regulations 72 and 75 as revised and adopted in second reading; and b. ensure that the criteria for removal of Commission members are clear, uniform across all Commissions, non-discriminatory and promote diversity and that provision is made for removing Commission members that are deceased or whose condition is such that they are unable to resign from the Commission.
Draft IUCN Programme 2026-29 (Agenda Item II/3)	
C112/6	The IUCN Council, *Welcoming* the completion of the drafting of the 2026-2029 Programme by the Programme Development Working Group, including the extensive consultative process with Members and Commissions and the subsequent incorporation of their inputs; Appreciates the collaborative effort led by a joint Council-Secretariat group as a model for future initiatives; Requests the Programme and Policy Committee (PPC) to oversee the finalization of the document in accordance with the timeline and process established by PPC[5], with a view to submission to Members as a Congress document by 9th July 2025.
Workplan 2025 Climate Crisis Commission (Agenda Item II/4.3)	
C112/7	The IUCN Council, Approves the workplan 2025 of the IUCN Climate Crisis Commission. (Annex 6)
Follow-up to 2021 Congress Decision 145 about the Establishment, operating rules and oversight of National, Regional and Interregional Committees (Agenda Item II/5.2)	
C112/8	The IUCN Council, *On the recommendation of* its Governance and Constituency Committee (GCC), 1. Thanks the Governance and Constituency Committee Task Force on Decision 145 for its survey into the establishment, operations and oversight of National, Regional and Interregional Committees; 2. Recognises the value of the National, Regional and Interregional Committees within the Union along with their diversity and divergent views; 3. Requests the Task Force to continue working with the Global Group for National and Regional Committee Development and other representatives of Committees to: a. Further explore and analyse the activities of National, Regional and Interregional Committees, b. Revise the Operational Guide for IUCN National and Regional Committees, and c. Develop an action plan to support the work of the National, Regional and Interregional Committees in progressing IUCN's vision and mission by May

[5] Cf. Report of PPC to Council C112 (Document C112/II/7.2/3)

	2025.
2025 IUCN Congress registration fees (Agenda Item II/6.3)	
C112/9	The IUCN Council, *on the recommendation of* the 2025 Congress Preparatory Committee (CPC), Approves the registration fee schedule for the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 in Abu Dhabi. (Annex 7)
IUCN Knowledge Management Strategy (Agenda Item II/7.2)	
C112/10	The IUCN Council, *On the recommendation of* its Programme and Policy Committee (PPC), 1. Adopts the Knowledge Management strategy v1.0; (Annex 8) 2. Notes PPC's request to the Secretariat to: a. work with Commissions to develop an operational plan that can be incorporated into the 2026 Annual Workplan; b. commission external support to strengthen the strategic format and elements of the document, while maintaining the core content; c. that provision is made to evaluate the effectiveness of the IUCN Knowledge Management Strategy after a maximum of four years and to revise and strengthen it before the 2029 World Conservation Congress.
IUCN Strategy, Policy and Programme on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean (Agenda Item 7.2)	
C112/11	The IUCN Council, *On the recommendation of* its Programme and Policy Committee (PPC), 1. Expresses its appreciation of the extensive, collaborative work of the Antarctica and Southern Ocean Task Force; 2. Approves the IUCN Strategy, Policy and Programme on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean (Annex 9); 3. Requests the Task Force to finalize drafting the corresponding action plan for review by PPC; 4. Recommends the Task Force members to submit a Forum session on this topic at the IUCN Congress 2025 to raise the profile and awareness of Antarctica and Southern Ocean for biodiversity.

26 February 2025

112th Meeting of the IUCN Council (C112)

Part I by conference call on 6 November 2024
Part II in-person in Antigua, Guatemala, on 28-30 January 2025

Agenda

(Approved by the IUCN Council on 6 November 2024)

Oversight	Strategic	Fiduciary

INF: for information; in principle, no discussion/decision required unless Council decides otherwise
DIS: for discussion in view of providing feedback or guidance
DEC: a decision is required

C112 Part I, virtual		
6 November 2024 from 11:00-14:00 UTC		
1	**Agenda C112** Approval of the draft Agenda	DEC
2	**Constituency Issues** Approval of membership applications based on recommendations from GCC	DEC
3	**IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025** **3.1 Reminder of key processes and timeline in the run-up to Congress** **3.2 Update from the Congress Preparatory Committee (CPC) and, as the case may be, any proposals for decision** CPC will provide an update following its (virtual) meeting scheduled for 5 November 2024 **3.3 Update and decision on Council-sponsored motions** Update and recommendations by PPC (following its meeting scheduled for 4 November 2024) regarding Council-sponsored motions that will be ready for Council's consideration. Council may also wish to: a) adopt a process for approval of the remaining Council-sponsored motions (e.g. mandate the Bureau) in time for submitting them by 15 January 2025; b) seek clarification from or provide guidance to the Motions WG for the next steps in the motions process regarding the Council-sponsored motions.	 INF INF/DEC INF/DEC
4	**Draft IUCN Workplan and Budget 2025** Based on the DG's proposal and the recommendations of the standing committees	DEC
5	**Amendments to the IUCN Regulations** The GCC TF on membership value proposition and the Chairs of the Commissions propose to amend the Regulations in order to reform the Commission membership renewal process. It will be presented to GCC and onwards to Council on 6 November 2024 in order for the IUCN membership consultation period required by Art. 102 of the Statutes to be concluded in time for Council C113 to reconsider the proposal for adoption in May 2025. Amendments to the Regulations must appear on the agenda of the Council meeting [Art. 101 (c)].	DEC

6	**Council's strategic priorities & objectives 2022-25** *Quick update and guidance for preparing substantive discussion at C112 in person:*	
	6.1 20-year Strategic Vision High-level summary of feedback from the IUCN membership (Regional Conservation Forums and online) by the Secretariat and process for preparing a discussion at C112 in person	INF
	6.2 Governance Reforms Update from GCC and its Task Force on statutory reforms with the purpose of providing guidance for the preparation of proposals for discussion at C112 in person	DIS
	6.3 Resolutions Update from PPC and GCC on progress in implementing 2021 Congress Resolutions requiring action from Council	INF
	6.4 International Positioning Highlights from IUCN's engagements since C111 (May 2024) and CBD CoP16 and brief overview of plans for IUCN's engagement at UNFCCC CoP29 and UNCCD CoP16 (possibly also IPBES). Update on the development of a draft IUCN intergovernmental policy strategy requested by Council decision C111/11	DIS
	6.5 Membership value proposition Update on the process for preparing discussion at C112 (in person) on the follow-up to the membership model analysis presented/discussed at C111 (May 2024) taking into account Members' feedback during the RCF	INF

Part II, in-person		
Tuesday 28 January 2025		
All day	**Meetings of the standing committees of the IUCN Council (GCC, PPC and FAC)** Draft agendas and documents of the standing committee meetings to be held on the eve of the Council meeting will be prepared in due time. In accordance with the Procedure for dealing with Letters received from IUCN Members, the standing committees will consider and, as part of their report to Council under Agenda Item 7, make recommendations concerning the response to any such letters, in particular those with comments on the draft agenda of C112.	
Wednesday 29 January 2025		
1	**Report of the Director General** The DG will present an update on activities since the previous Council meeting (the DG's report on achievements against the DG's Objectives 2024 will be submitted at C113 in May 2025)	INF
2	**20-year Strategic Vision for IUCN** Update from the Steering Committee (SC) for the 20-year Strategic Vision on any adaptation of the document *'Unite for Nature' on the path to 2045 - a 20-year Strategic Vision for the Union* incl. the Financial Strategy (Annex 3) that it considers necessary following IUCN Members' feedback though the Regional Conservation Forums and online. Council may wish to give further input to the Steering Committee for preparing the final	DIS

	version of the Strategic Vision which will need to be distributed to IUCN Members as a Congress document at the latest by 9 July 2025.	
3	**Draft IUCN Programme 2026-29** Update from [*PPC* and/or *the Nature 2030 Programme Development Working Group*] on any modifications of the Draft Programme 2026-29 following the feedback from the IUCN membership online and through the Regional Conservation Forums (RCF). Council may wish to give further guidance to [*PPC* and/or *the Nature 2030 Programme Development Working Group*] for preparing the final version of the Draft Programme 2026-29 before Council approves it at C113 in May 2025 for the purpose of distributing it to IUCN Members as a Congress document at the latest by 9 July 2025.	DIS
4	**IUCN Commissions:** **4.1 Reports of the IUCN Commissions** The Chairs of CEC, CEESP, WCEL and CCC will present their annual report as required by Article 77 of the Statutes (20' presentation followed by 10' Q&A on each report). They report on outputs, outcomes, impact and resources raised against the Commission's work plan approved by Council (Regulation 78*bis*). The Chairs of SSC, WCPA and CEM already presented their annual report to C111 in May 2024. **4.2 Council discussion on the performance of the Commissions** (Council Handbook p. 7) As part of the discussion, Council may wish to provide guidance to the Chairs for preparing the draft mandate 2026-29 of their respective Commission in view of submitting it in time to Council C113 (May 2025) for approval taking into account the draft programme 2026-29. (Art. 74 of the Statutes and Regulation 70) Also the draft Commission mandates will have to be distributed as an official Congress document by 9 July 2025 at the latest. **4.3 Workplan 2025 of the Climate Crisis Commission** Noting that the Workplan of Climate Crisis Commission approved by Council decision C/VII in March 2023 was for 2023-24.	INF DIS DEC

Thursday 30 January 2025		
5	**Council's strategic priorities & objectives 2022-25** (continued from the virtual meeting of C112; except the 20-year Strategic Vision) *Purpose is to take stock of what has so far been achieved on each of the Council priorities 2022-25 and discuss and to provide guidance/direction for what is still to be achieved by the time of the Congress (9-15 October 2025)* **5.1 Governance reforms** Update from GCC and its Task Force on statutory reform incl. presentation of proposals ready for Council discussion and decision **5.2 Resolutions** • Annual report of the Secretariat on implementation of Resolutions of the 2021 Congress • Update from PPC and GCC on progress with the implementation of Resolutions requiring action from Council, incl. presentation of proposals ready for Council discussion and decision. This may include proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Congress improving the efficiency and transparency of the motions process during Congress (i.e. pertaining to motions on new and urgent topics), prepared by GCC's TF on the motions process in cooperation with MWG as a follow-up to decision C107/14 (May 2022) **5.3 International Positioning** Overview of IUCN's participation and positioning at the three Rio Convention CoPs recently concluded; update on CoPs and other major intergovernmental policy events that will take place in 2025 (e.g. CITES Standing Committee, Our Ocean,	DIS/DEC DIS/DEC DIS

	UN Ocean, UNGA, UNFCCC CoP30, CITES CoP20, UNEA7); and follow-up to Council decision C111/11 (May 2024) requesting the development of a draft IUCN intergovernmental policy strategy	
	5.4 Membership value proposition GCC recommendations to follow-up on the Membership Model Analysis presented/discussed at C111 (May 2024), taking into account additional feedback from Members during the RCF, including on the sections of the 20-year Strategic Vision concerning IUCN's membership	DIS
6	**IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025**	
	6.1 Update from the Motions Working Group (MWG) on the status of the process following the close of the submission of motions on 15 January 2025, incl. follow-up to Council's guidance to increase the efficiency and transparency of the online motions process (Council decision C111/14, May 2024)	INF
	6.2 Second discussion of topical issues of importance that are likely to be discussed at the 2025 Congress either by way of a motion or the implementation of Resolutions adopted by the previous Congress (such as synthetic biology discussed at C111, May 2024)	DIS
	6.3 Update from the Congress Preparatory Committee incl. presentation of proposals ready for Council discussion and decision	INF/DIS/ DEC
	6.4 Review of the outcomes of the Regional Conservation Forums incl. lessons learnt and recommendations for the next Council	DIS
7	**Reports of the Council's Standing Committees**	
	Under this agenda item, the standing committees will present topics, if any, for information or decision that have not yet been covered under other agenda items.	
	7.0 Letters received from IUCN Members in response to the invitation to comment on the draft agenda C111	INF
	In accordance with the Procedure for dealing with Letters received from IUCN Members (Annex 3, pp 69-70), the standing committees will consider the letters received from IUCN Members in response to the invitation to send comments on the draft agenda of C111 and, under Agenda Item 7, report with recommendations to Council concerning the response to these letters.	
	7.1 <u>Report of Governance and Constituency Committee (GCC)</u>	INF/DIS/ DEC
	The Chair of GCC will present the committee's recommendations to Council based on the Outcomes of its meetings held on […]	
	The report will include among others:	
	7.1.1 Membership applications	DEC
	Based on recommendations from GCC	
	7.2 <u>Report of the Programme and Policy Committee (PPC)</u>	INF/ DEC
	The Chair of PPC will present the committee's recommendations to Council based on the Outcomes of its meetings held on […]	
	7.3 <u>Report of the Finance and Audit Committee (FAC)</u>	INF/ DEC
	The Chair of FAC will present the committee's recommendations to Council based on the Outcomes of its meetings held on […]. This will include the outcomes of the FAC's discussion following the Treasurer's presentation of his report	
8	**Any other business**	

AFRICA							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Country**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
Madagascar Wildlife Conservation	M.W.C.	Madagascar	http://www.madagascar-wildlife-conservation.org	NGO	[Member] Rasmussen Family Foundation [North America and the Caribbean]	[Member] Conservation Allies [North America and the Caribbean]	**APPROVE**
Wildlife Conservation Action	WCA	Zimbabwe	http://www.wildlifeconservationaction.org	NGO	[Member] BirdLife Zimbabwe [Africa]	[Member] Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association [Africa]	**APPROVE**
City of Cape Town	CCT	South Africa	https://www.capetown.gov.za	SN			**APPROVE**
Fikambanana Bongolava Maitso	FBM	Madagascar	https://bongolavamaitso.mg/	IPO	[Member] Rasmussen Family Foundation [North America and the Caribbean]	[Member] Conservation Allies [North America and the Caribbean]	**APPROVE**
Association Antrema Miray	AMI	Madagascar	http://antrema.net	IPO	[Member] Rasmussen Family Foundation [North America and the Caribbean]	[Member] Conservation Allies [North America and the Caribbean]	**APPROVE**
Groupe d'Etude et de Recherche sur les Primates de Madagascar	GERP	Madagascar	http://www.gerp.mg	NGO	[Member] FANAMBY [Africa]	[Member] Conservation Allies [North America and the Caribbean]	**APPROVE**
EAST EUROPE, NORTH AND CENTRAL ASIA							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Country**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
Yerevani Qaghaqapetaran		Armenia	https://www.yerevan.am/en/	SN			**APPROVE**
Agencija za zaštitu životne sredine Crne Gore	EPA	Montenegro	https://epa.org.me/	GA			**APPROVE**
MESO AND SOUTH AMERICA							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Country**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
Municipio de La Estrella	SMADS	Colombia	https://www.laestrella.gov.co/	SN			**APPROVE**
NORTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Country**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
Fundación Dominicana de Estudios Marinos	FUNDEMAR	Dominican Republic	https://www.fundemardr.org/	NGO	[Member] Centro para la Conservación y Ecodesarrollo de la Bahía de Samaná y su Entorno [North America and the Caribbean]	[Member] Grupo Jaragua [North America and the Caribbean]	**APPROVE**
The Gabby Wild Foundation, Inc.	GWF	United States of America	https://gabbywild.org/	NGO	[Member] Re:wild [North America and the Caribbean]	[Member] The Explorers Club [North America and the Caribbean]	**APPROVE**
OCEANIA							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Country**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
Pacific Theological College	PTC	Fiji	https://ptc.ac.fj	NGO	[Member] National Trust of Fiji Islands [Oceania]	[Member] TierraMar Ltd [Oceania]	**APPROVE**
ACT Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate Departmental	EPSDD	Australia	https://www.environment.act.gov.au	GA			**APPROVE**
SOUTH AND EAST ASIA							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Country**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
Department of Environment and Natural Resources	DENR	Philippines	https://denr.gov.ph/	GA			**APPROVE**
ADM Capital Foundation	ADMCF	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China	https://www.admcf.org/	NGO	[Member] Fauna & Flora International [West Europe]	[Member] The Born Free Foundation [West Europe]	**APPROVE**
Yayasan Belantara		Indonesia	https://belantara.or.id/	NGO	[Member] Indo-Myanmar Conservation [South and East Asia]	[Member] The Samdhana Institute Incorporated [South and East Asia]	**APPROVE**
Shenzhen Zhilan Foundation	Zhilan	China	https://www.izhilan.cn/	NGO	[Member] Shan Shui Conservation Center [South and East Asia]	[Member] Qingdao Marine Conservation Society [South and East Asia]	**APPROVE**

WEST ASIA							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Country**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
The friends of the cedar forest committee		Lebanon	https://www.facebook.com/cedarsfriends/	NGO	[Committee] Lebanon National Committee of IUCN Members [West Asia]	[Member] Al Shouf Cedar Society [West Asia]	**APPROVE**

WEST EUROPE							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Country**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
ANDALUS, Asociación para la Supervivencia de la Naturaleza y el Medio Ambiente	ANDALUS	Spain	http://www.asociacion-andalus.org	NGO	[Member] Centro de Extensión Universitaria e Divulgación Ambiental de Galicia [West Europe]	[Member] Fundación Oxígeno [West Europe]	**APPROVE**

International Union for Conservation of Nature

WORKPLAN & BUDGET

2025

Credit: quang nguyen vinh, Pexels

Part I - WORKPLAN

Revised and approved by Council on 6 November 2024

Part I Contents

INTRODUCTION 4

PART I - 2025 WORKPLAN 6

WORKING AS A UNION 6

WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS 6

THE PROGRAMME 9

- Progress and learning from the 2021-2024/25 Programme 9
- Nature 2030 11
  - People 12
  - Land 15
  - Water 18
  - Oceans 21
  - Climate 24
- Knowledge, science and data 26
- Policy and Advocacy 28
- Nature-based Solutions 30
- Business Engagement and the Private Sector 31

SUPPORTING THE PROGRAMME 32

- Knowledge Management 32
- GEF/GCF Portfolio Management 32
- Enhanced donor compliance 33
- Measuring impact 33
- Enhancing the planning process 34

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY 36

- Membership engagement 36
- Convening: From Regional Conservation Forums to Congress and beyond 37
- Regional and National Committees 38
- Contributions for Nature platform 38
- Portfolio engagement with IUCN Constituents 39

COMMISSION ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT 42

RESOLUTIONS 43

APPENDIX: PROGRAMME PORTFOLIO.....48
2025 overview.....48

INTRODUCTION

Adopted in 2021, the IUCN Nature 2030 Programme sets the Union's ambition over a ten-year timeframe and was rolled out through a quadrennial Programme and financial plan, 2021-2024. Initial planning expected the IUCN membership to approve, in 2024, a revised Nature 2030 IUCN Programme for the following quadrennial but due to the COVID crisis this will now occur at the next World Conservation Congress in 2025.

To cover the year 2025, the IUCN Members decided, through an online vote, to extend the current Programme and financial plan, in line with the IUCN Council Decision C111/20. As such, 2025 is a transition year between Programmes, as the new quadrennial Programme will cover the period 2026-2029 and in addition will fit within the context of a new 20-year Strategic Vision for the Union.

In 2025, the Union will mark its presence on the global stage. All of IUCN will focus on delivering an impactful World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi, in October 2025, as a key priority. There will also be other important international fora to navigate, such as the UN Ocean Conference in June 2025, and the UN Climate Change conference in November 2025. It will be critical to take heed of the message of Indigenous Peoples to rally the change that is needed for nature and people. We must keep pushing for the early ratification of the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction treaty before the 2025 World Conservation Congress, as well as the successful conclusion of the negotiations of the Plastics Treaty.

This next year is a good year for IUCN to raise the profile and importance of its Knowledge Products (Key Biodiversity Areas, World Database on Protected Areas, Red List of Ecosystems, Environmental Impact Classification for Alien Taxa, Red List of Threatened Species, Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions, Global Ecosystem Typology) given the growing interest and demand for biodiversity conservation data and metrics both from the public sector (vis a vis national reporting of progress against the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework) and the private sector in terms of corporate disclosure processes

The Red List of Threatened Species celebrates it 60th year in 2025 and therefore IUCN will run a special initiative to further raise its profile, broaden its application and uptake and further mobilise resources in line with WCC-2020-Res-131 "*Ensuring adequate funding for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*". The crisis of species loss is not yet subsiding, but we are positive that improving our offer of species data can make a difference. The addition of marine and freshwater data layers to STAR (Species Threat Abatement and Restoration metric) and the roll-out at Congress of an accessible and easy to use biodiversity metric platform will enable the private sector to make concrete contributions towards the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

With one eye on 2030 and the imperative to achieve Target 3, and other targets of the GBF, IUCN will continue to push for accelerated action on area-based conservation both through Protected and Conserved Areas and Other Effective Conservation Measure (OECMs) in terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine (including high seas) biomes. With respect to Area-based conservation Beyond National Jurisdiction we will launch a major initiative to support

governments on early action for high sea marine protected areas once the High Seas Treaty has been ratified.

To guide this work, this 2025 Workplan & Budget document sets out the Secretariat's planned contributions to advance implementation of the Nature 2030 Programme in collaboration with Commissions and Members. It will function as a roadmap, helping to transition from the Impact Targets of the 2021-2024 period to the new Outcomes and Outputs of the 2026-2029 period. Specifically, it will enable us to chart pathways through which the Union can not only makes substantive scaled-up contributions to the goals and targets of the GBF, but can also help to steer towards the critical and necessary sectoral transformations embodied in the Sustainable Development Goals.

This Workplan & Budget document presents the Secretariat's annual overarching strategic planning and highlights key aspects of delivery in 2025. **Part I** contains the Work Plan for 2025, outlining a framework for delivery with respect to the Congress, the Programme, Membership and Commission engagement, and the IUCN Resolutions, and providing highlights of how the portfolio will contribute to IUCN's five Programme Areas: People, Land, Water, Oceans, and Climate. **Part II** provides the associated budget of the Secretariat and the Commissions' Operating Funds (CoF), in line with the 2021-2024/25 Financial Plan.

PART I - 2025 WORKPLAN

WORKING AS A UNION

The roles IUCN must play to deliver on its Programme and its Mission are diverse. They range from mobilizing its Members and partners to build alliances for conservation, and encouraging research, to science generation and mechanisms to provide trusted information for conservation. They also entail promoting and taking appropriate conservation actions, including resource mobilization, and influencing policy and environmental law in local, national, regional and global domains. This 2025 Workplan document reflects these roles and in addition places emphasis on the following elements:

- **Alignment:** This document aligns all our efforts across the Union and aspires for IUCN to become bigger than the sum of the parts. The 20-year Strategic Vision and Programme to be adopted in 2025, as well as the Contributions for Nature Platform, will also help us move towards that direction.
- **Impact**: IUCN must focus its efforts on the change it seeks to create – its impact. It needs to action the biggest 'levers' that can make a difference for nature and facilitate scale up.
- **Regional and National contexts**: The Regional Conservation Forums held during 2024 have been rich and diverse. They have been a powerful means to mobilise IUCN Members, Commissions and the nature community. They have shown that the Union's regional and national voices are as valuable as its global one. Each can seek to ensure that it has its own plans and vision, in keeping with overall global plans.
- **External stakeholders**: Our interactions with youth, women, indigenous people, governments, other key stakeholders and the global community to make change happen, resonate across the Union. Our engagements with other parts of society, such as the private sector, need to be more substantive if IUCN is to contribute to deep change.

WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS

2025 is the year of the World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi as a hybrid event, the first of its kind for IUCN. The Union will need to be focused on this task if this is to be a success for the 6,000 to 10,000 people expected to join in person, along with the thousands who will join online. The hybrid online conference will allow many to join who could not before – both in terms of convening and voting in the Member's Assembly.

With 1,450 diverse Members, over 17,000 Commission members, 70+ National and Regional Committees and 1,100 Secretariat staff, the potential for impact is huge. In terms of impetus, the Regional Conservation Forums have created immense energy to guide us towards Abu Dhabi. Below is the ADNEC Centre in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, where the World Conservation Congress 2025 will be held. IUCN has now completed negotiations of the Congress hosting agreement with the Government of the United Arab Emirates, represented by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment.

Aligned with the successful delivery of Congress, every part of the Union and every team of the Secretariat has built Congress into their plans for 2025. Delivering a successful Congress is truly a Union-wide effort. The Congress must create a prodigious and lasting impact for our nature constituency whilst creating a financial surplus. A task of this magnitude entails several layers of governance and management, both internally and externally with the host Government. The Council's Congress Preparatory Committee (CPC) will oversee the entirety of the process, providing strategic direction and checkpoints.

Various committees and working groups have already been established and will continue be established in the near future, to oversee preparations made by the organizing team in relation to the venue, logistics, travel and accommodation from all over the world, sustainable Congress accreditation, security and access, VIPs, VVIPs, press and communications and multiple other tasks required to deliver a Forum, Exhibition and Members' Assembly, as distinct components of the Congress.

The Secretariat will continue working on a draft Congress Workplan, to be submitted to CPC, that specifically notes:

- **Members –** including Indigenous Peoples and Youth, giving their effort and energy to the Congress.
- **Commissions –** helping to shape the agenda with their tools, data, knowledge and initiatives.
- **National and Regional Committees** – mobilizing their Members and working on motions, Programme and 20-year Strategic Vision.
- **Regions** – each region has devoted special attention to how they are going to build Membership and Commission engagement and support these through Congress. This

involves the development of Motions and their validation. Also helping to seek support for those in low- or middle-income countries and ensuring that members can participate and attend (online or in person).

- **Centres –** building momentum and coherence around thematic areas of work underpinned by cutting edge knowledge and science and bringing together coalitions of actors initiatives to drive real conservation change.
- **Membership & Commissions Engagement -** Improving One Programme realisation in IUCN strategy; also mobilising the Union and beyond (new partners, participants, sponsors, etc.)
- **Communications** – to upscale efforts towards Congress, webmasters, and other communications specialists are needed if the Union is to maximise its impact and the ripples this can create.
- **Technology** – powerful systems and platforms are needed to run a hybrid Congress.
- **Governance and Legal** – strengthen the ability to manage and support the Motions process, Resolutions and their successful delivery.
- **Human Resources -** management of staff and volunteer assignments, coordination of SEAH function before, at, and after Congress, Congress HR management system, and Congress staff and volunteer orientation and support.
- **Council-given direction and leadership** for the success of the Congress.

This has to be IUCN's main 2025 priority, to make the Congress a success in every respect. The Union may need to prioritise and hold back on other activities to make sure this Congress is delivered with excellence.

Each World Conservation Congress creates a unique opportunity to engage and bring together the entire Union, including Secretariat staff. Efforts will be made in 2025 to connect as many staff members as possible to Congress, leveraging the new hybrid technology that will be deployed.

The Secretariat will carefully plan the work of its staff to be able to deliver on both the Congress and other work planned for 2025. The Union must have the right staffing to do its work effectively and with quality. This will require effective recruitment, clear delegation of work and realistic work objectives, as well as a need to prioritise activities.

THE PROGRAMME

Summary

- Progress and learning from delivery of the 2021-2024/25 Programme
- Nature 2030
  - People
  - Land
  - Water
  - Oceans
  - Climate
- Knowledge, science and data
- Policy and advocacy
- Nature-based Solutions
- Business Engagement and the Private Sector

The current IUCN Programme Nature 2030 was approved electronically by Members in February 2021. It had been written for the period January 2021 to December 2024. As the COVID 19 pandemic disrupted the Congress cycle by one year, it was therefore necessary to seek Member approval to extend the current programme document by one year[1]. This means that 2025 is somewhat unique – it represents not only a continuation of the current intersessional programme of work but also a transition into the next programme cycle and the period to be covered by the new 20-year Strategic Vision.

The following section therefore briefly describes how the 2026-2029 draft Programme has been framed, including how it responds to recommendations of the External Review of the current programme, as necessary context for the 2025 programme work plan.

Progress and learning from the 2021-2024/25 Programme

The External Review of the IUCN Programme 2021-2024/25 was completed in the first quarter of 2024 and presented to the IUCN Council and Framework partners. The objective of the review was to evaluate the overall performance of the IUCN Programme 2021-2024/25 considering (1) relevance, (2) coherence, (3) effectiveness, (4) efficiency, (5) sustainability, and (6) impact to ensure the accountability of IUCN towards its Council, framework partners, constituents, donors, and other stakeholders. It also aimed to provide lessons learnt that will generate actionable recommendations and improvements. Below are key highlights from the review; more can be found in the External Review IUCN Programme 2021-2024 report and the Management response.

[1] The result of this Membership vote will be published on the 23 October 2024.

Relevance - The 2021-24 Programme was found to reflect the wide priorities of IUCN's wide constituency.

Coherence - The Programme is strongly aligned with the global nature conservation agenda. There was also strong alignment between the Secretariat's work and the work of Commissions.

Effectiveness - Overall, the review found that IUCN has been effective in delivering work aligned with the Programme. While it is not possible to conduct a systematic assessment of the entire project Portfolio, there is plenty of evidence that IUCN is delivering good conservation action.

Efficiency - Over the review period, IUCN has been very active in improving its efficiency along several dimensions. We find that as regards resource efficiency, the attainment of financial targets is overall moving in the right direction and that resource mobilisation and cost recovery are improving as well, although there is still further progress needed.

Impact - IUCN produces impacts at the international level, thanks to its convening power, its technical knowledge and its legitimacy as a long-standing actor of the conservation field. It also generates impact at the project level and changes lives of its beneficiaries.

Sustainability - IUCN is on a trajectory of progress and benefitting from a favourable environment where the demand for conservation knowledge and action is strong and growing. IUCN has taken steps to strengthen lessons learning and sharing, although there is still need for systems strengthening. It has taken several initiatives to improve the services it renders to its Members and is progressing towards stronger financial sustainability, but still can and has to do better, notably as regards its capacity to report on results, with attention to be paid to limiting the risks of generating deficits associated with certain projects and its work with private sector.

GESI - IUCN exhibits a strong commitment to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) through its policy framework and programmatic. However, the integration of GESI across IUCN's portfolio varies.

The review made seven key recommendations: -

a) Realign on the purpose and the role of the Nature 2030 Programme in directing IUCN's work
b) Build a Programme Theory of Change
c) Recalibrate the Prioritised Programme Areas in the next iteration of Nature 2030
d) IUCN should include a strategy to operationalise the Programme in its next quadrennial Programme document
e) Strengthen results monitoring and reporting practices
f) Reflect on the scope and purpose of the next Programme evaluation
g) Strengthen GESI practices across the Union

As IUCN moves into 2025, the learnings from the Regional Conservation Forums, the survey on the draft 20-year Strategic Vision and 2026-2029 Programme, and from the above External Review are feeding into the preparation of the next Programme 2026-2029:

- **Aligning old and new Programme activities**. IUCN will measure outcomes from both the 2021-2024/25 Programme and 2026-2029 Programme and have proposed a way to align these in our Outcome Framework. This means that by 2030 IUCN will be able to retrospectively report and account for the Union's effort in the past decade, under its Nature 2030 Programme, while setting a clear course of action for the future. This also means that the 2026-2029 Programme will be better positioned to articulate "how" delivery will be achieved over the next four-year period. Alignment with the 20-year Strategic Vision allows us to bring both the long-term vision and programmatic priorities

closer together, which previously had been difficult to achieve, as highlighted in the external review.

- **Focus our efforts around three core impacts:** Aligned with our proposed 20-year Strategic Vision, IUCN's focus for the upcoming quadrennial period will be characterised by three topline objectives:

> (1) The Union will refocus its efforts on its core conservation mission by scaling up action that protects and restores **species and ecosystems** in a fair and inclusive manner.
>
> (2) IUCN will intensify its focus on the **nature-climate nexus** for mutually beneficial solutions for the planet.
>
> (3) Through its conservation action to address biodiversity loss and the causes and impacts of climate change, IUCN will promote **justice, equity and rights**, demonstrating that effective conservation is a vehicle for achieving social justice outcomes, and understanding that equity and justice are a cornerstone of sustainable conservation.

- **Our catalytic roles:** There is still much greater scope for greater Union-wide alignment of activities, and clearer reporting on impact and progress. As such, the 2026-2029 Programme will be more directive in how it deploys its catalytic roles. It recommends that the 2026–2029 revision incorporates a robust Theory of Change, and recalibrates some of the Programme Priority Areas, include a mechanism to operationalise the Programme for all constituent parts of IUCN and strengthen the reporting of results and outcomes. The previous 15 Impact Targets have been reframed as 12 Outcome Areas, that coherently align with the 20-year Strategic Vision and, collectively, represent the key pathways to change that the Union will follow over the next four years. This has enabled the inclusion of 21 specific and measurable ***high-level outputs*** that IUCN commits to deliver over the course of the quadrennial period; the first time in the history of the IUCN Programme. All of this will be tested and rolled out in 2025-26 and will address weaknesses identified by the external review.

Nature 2030

The IUCN Nature 2030 Programme is delivered through IUCN Members, Commissions, implementing and executing partners, and a wide range of stakeholders, coordinated by the Secretariat's Centres and Regional and Country Offices. Nature 2030 organises this work across five interconnected areas: (1) People, (2) Land, (3) Water, (4) Ocean and (5) Climate.

This section of the document describes the activities that will be undertaken in 2025 according to each area of our programme of work, including a focus on indigenous peoples, youth, gender equality and women's empowerment as critical elements of this. It will conclude by giving a brief description of a series of common catalytical areas of work and/ or cross cutting themes, specifically Knowledge, Science and Data; Policy and Advocacy; Nature-based Solutions; and Business Engagement and the Private Sector.

Highlights about the project portfolio which underlies Programme delivery are also provided in the Appendix, showing data such as the portfolio's main donors, project typologies, geographic scope and funding by Programme area.

People

Credit: 2013CIAT/Neil Palmer

Within the Nature 2030 Programme, IUCN has focused activities in the PEOPLE Priority Area on realizing rights and improving governance frameworks. In 2025, as we transition to the new Programme, IUCN will expand its work on people-centred approaches, to incorporate stakeholders' rights, agency and benefits within specific societal transformations that have a direct impact on biodiversity conservation outcomes, such as urbanisation, financing, sustainable use of natural resources for economic gains and climate change. In doing so, IUCN recognizes that certain groups of society need focused attention due to historic marginalisation and lack of equal opportunities. Therefore, IUCN will continue to prioritise specific activities with indigenous people, women and youth.

Impact target 1.1 Fully realised rights, roles, obligations and responsibilities to ensure just and inclusive conservation and sustainable use of nature

In 2025, IUCN will work with its Indigenous Peoples member organizations to:

- Chart pathways for the provision of more inclusive conservation finance to Indigenous Communities, underpinned by requested capacity building and accelerate "Stewarding

the Earth" - women-led Indigenous intergenerational mentorship through the Podong Indigenous Peoples Initiative.

- Launch the European Union supported COLOURS (Centres of Excellence, Opportunities Legacy Rights and Science) initiative, initiating a conservation grievance redress platform and charting pathways for the recognition of Indigenous Lands and Territories as part of 30 x 30 (Target 3).
- Consolidate the outcomes of the GEF7 Inclusive Conservation Finance, together with Conservation International, pulling lessons and insights from Indigenous communities supported across 5 countries, synthesizing these and facilitating discussion, reflections and next steps with ICI beneficiaries.
- Facilitate the promotion of Indigenous People led conservation and pathways to achieve this, including more direct access to finance and support for capacity building

Impact target 1.2 Equitable and effective governance of natural resources at all levels to benefit people and nature

IUCN will focus its work on effective and equitable governance on two key stakeholder groups, women and youth.

On gender:

- Support National Climate Change Gender Focal Points in the negotiation and agreement of more ambitious Gender Action Plans under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- Launch the Gender Equality and Climate Policy Scorecard that IUCN has developed with UN Women and Binghamton University.
- Under its Resilient, Inclusive, and Sustainable Environments (RISE) initiative, undertake an evidence-based review on the link between gender equality integration and environmental outcomes, publish a gender-based violence assessment in Indonesia for marine, forestry, climate adaptation and clean energy sectors, and synthesize available learnings and cases studies using the IUCN PANORAMA platform. We will also award up to seven new projects addressing sexual exploitation in fisheries and Indigenous women's rights. IUCN will also revise its Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy.

On Youth:

- Support the IUCN Youth Advisory Committee members including enabling the mainstreaming of the role of youth in implementation of the IUCN portfolio, facilitating an online Global Youth Summit (tentatively mid-April) and a youth engagement strategy for World Conservation Congress and a YAC succession plan.

Preparing for One Health

- Continue to develop IUCN's capacity to systematically engage on One Health building from ongoing policy engagements as well as other activities in Central Asia – effectively deploying OECMs within the Tien Shan as a vehicle to prevent zoonotic spillover – and in Vietnam – supporting government to incorporate One Health measures into its planning framework.

Impact target 1.3 Enhanced realisation and enforcement of the environmental rule of law

In 2025, IUCN will continue to invest a growing share of its portfolio (up by 16% compared to 2024) to support the critical importance of the environmental rule of law, through:

- Support for the Nature Crime Alliance with the IUCN Director General joining the Alliance's Steering Committee and thereby positioning IUCN to align with the Alliance's vision to end nature crime.
- Explore how "big data" can be harnessed to track and control the unsustainable use and trade of wildlife, drawing on the experience of IUCN Commissions specialist groups and key actors such as the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.
- With the leadership of the World Commission on Environmental Law, continue engagement with proceedings in the International Court of Justice to issue Advisory Opinion on State obligations to protect the climate system and the legal consequences if such obligations were breached, profiling the conclusions of the Court and provision of advice to IUCN State Members.

Programme Area & Impact Target	2025 budget (m CHF)	% of total 2025 budget
PEOPLE	27.3	19%
IT1.1 Fully realised rights, roles, obligations and …	8.4	6%
IT1.2 Equitable and effective governance of natural ….	15.8	11%
IT1.3 Enhanced realisation and enforcement …	3.0	2%

Land

Credit: 2014CIAT/Georgina Smith

The LAND programme area historically represents the largest bloc of programmatic activity within the IUCN portfolio, and this continues to be the case. Forty percent of the portfolio value is allocated to terrestrial conservation efforts. However, behind this headline there have been several important developments that will be critical to enable a successful transition to the 2026-2029 Programme, particularly some of the new areas of work on "global transformations". Work on production landscapes, specifically agriculture and food systems, has grown over the current intersessional period and the year-on-year growth of this part of the portfolio exceeds 10%. In 2024, for the first time, IUCN launched a major flagship report on Agriculture and Conservation. Work on the Urban-Nature nexus has continued to take root, albeit from a low base, with the portfolio value increasing by 33% with Nature-based Solutions to Urban development proving a key entry point.

Impact Target 2.1 Ecosystems are retained and restored, species are conserved and recovered, and key biodiversity areas are safeguarded

IUCN has continued to support national governments, members and other organisations to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), in particular spatial planning, restoration, monitoring, effective area-based conservation, and species conservation action.

Key results included building a partnership to achieve 30x30 goals, supported by technical guidance provided by WCPA and partners, strengthening ecosystem restoration monitoring to report on Target 2 via the Restoration Barometer, re-activating the Green List Panel to re-list existing sites and list new sites, and engaging a wide spectrum of existing and new jurisdictions to support capacity development.

After ten years of the Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme, tiger populations have expanded across their range, there is lower human-wildlife conflict surround tiger populations, and communities and organisations have had their capacity built to manage conservation actions into the future. For World Heritage, IUCN delivered over 40 state of conservation reports on nature conservation needs of sites spanning 34 countries fulfilling IUCN's statutory responsibilities.

In 2025, IUCN will:

- Lead four new CBD Regional Scientific and Technical Cooperation Support Centres, and partner with other Centres to support the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Roll out the Green List Development Plan in collaboration with WCPA, to refine the engagement, capacity development and assurance processes for scaling up equitable and effective protected and conserved areas.
- Support the preparation of National Species Action Plans in at least six countries and provide targeted technical and financial support through grant-making including a new call for proposal under the Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Project (phase IV) and SOS Lemurs (phase II). IUCN will furthermore work with grantees of SOS African Wildlife to consolidate lesson learnt and will work to convene a donor roundtable to explore opportunities for additional resource mobilisation for the SOS regranting mechanisms.
- Provide new guidance for the identification and recognition of "other effective area-based conservation measures" and help address the complexities of protected areas overlapping the boundaries of indigenous peoples' and local communities' conserved areas.
- Contribute to the monitoring of World Heritage Sites in support of the World Heritage Convention and in line with IUCN's statutory role.
- Encourage progress towards greater inclusivity and involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities in protected and conserved areas.
- Update and expand the Restoration Barometer tool to monitor the progress of countries against GBF Target 2.
- Contribute to capacity development that will raise the visibility of tropical primary forests and native grasslands including intact forest landscapes and support the development of national forest financing strategies.

Impact Target 2.2 Thriving production landscapes are sustainable, and nature's value and benefits are safeguarded in the long term

IUCN continued to support national governments and organizations to apply consistent tools and methods for the sustainable management of multifunctional production landscapes. Among other results, IUCN finalised and launched its second flagship report on Agriculture and Conservation. The report brings together data on agriculture from a wide spectrum of organisations and makes key recommendations for policy makers on how to balance food security with nature conservation, in support of Target 10 of the GBF. IUCN also supported governments in setting and implementing national restoration targets as part of revised NBSAPs, and for updated Nationally Determined Contributions for climate change mitigation and for achieving land degradation neutrality.

In 2025, IUCN will:

- Further strengthen action on the ground with the launch of the Forest Landscape Restoration Hub with the Government of Germany, WWF and WRI together with IUCN regions and country partners
- Mobilise the Forest Action Facility with KfW, the German Development Bank.
- Develop a capacity building programme on Sustainable Agriculture and NbS for practitioners, and continue to develop relevant knowledge products and tools, with the support of IUCN Commissions, based on key IUCN products and standards, to promote the transition to sustainable agricultural systems.
- Facilitate further Common Ground Dialogues in pilot countries to promote synergies between agriculture and conservation sectors to be showcased at the WCC.
- Continue to support the mainstreaming of the transformation of food and agricultural systems in the Rio conventions and other global political convenings, including the WCC, for policy change with potential for positive biodiversity outcomes.
- Continue to showcase the fundamental role of family farming in transforming food and agricultural systems and increase the role of family farming in climate change and biodiversity protection strategies through the Forest and Farm Facility.

Impact Target 3.3 Nature and people thrive in cities while delivering solutions for urban challenges and a sustainable ecological footprint

Following an internal review, IUCN convened the newly formed IUCN Urban Alliance, composed by members of the Union, including representatives from each membership category, from Commissions, and Secretariat. The group will guide the members in advising the IUCN Council on urban-related issues.

In 2025, IUCN will:

- Increase visibility of IUCN in relevant networks for cities and for youth to mobilise partnerships and resources, including by building upon innovative frameworks with potential significant cultural reach, notably “Sports for Nature”.
- Strengthen and continue to work through the IUCN Urban Alliance to expand universal access to high-quality green spaces and to enhance biodiversity conservation in cities, leveraging IUCN Members and expertise of Commissions.
- Build a portfolio of projects to lay a firm foundation for programme work on cities in the next programme period.
- Support cities to establish their GBF-aligned baseline and targets by applying the Urban Nature Indexes and assist local governments in applying these indexes.

Programme Area & Impact Target	2025 Budget (m CHF)	% of total 2025 budget
LAND	56.6	40%
IT2.1 Ecosystems are retained and restored, species …	40.4	28%
IT2.2 Thriving production landscapes are sustainable…	14.1	11%
IT2.3 Nature and people thrive in cities …	2.1	1%

Water

2025 will see IUCN raise its profile internationally with the Freshwater Challenge building momentum. The Freshwater Challenge (FWC) has now 46 country signatories and the European Union is now also supporting the Challenge while the US government has embedded the Challenge into their national plans and approaches, launching America the Beautiful Freshwater Challenge. IUCN has been prominent in developing the FWC, hosting a country meeting in Gland, private sector event in Stockholm and at UN Climate Week, and the supporting the incorporation of the FWC into the One Water Summit at UNCCD COP16 later this year.

IUCN has strengthened its programmatic focus on wetland and wetland conservation, while maintaining its long-established and well-recognized water stewardship (SDG6) and hydro-diplomacy (basin governance) activities, thereby providing an overall improved balance to its current scope of work. A Freshwater Biodiversity Strategy is currently being developed for review by Council. The overall share of the portfolio dedicated to Water remains relatively stable.

Impact Target 1.1 The loss of freshwater species and decline of freshwater ecosystem health is halted, and restoration initiated.

A 19% increase in the portfolio value dedicated to freshwater species and wetland work across IUCN (both bilateral and multi-lateral financed), a new workplan on wetlands, a Freshwater Biodiversity Strategy under development and the incorporation of Ramsar into the Freshwater Challenge highlight a renewed focus on freshwater species and wetland conservation. IUCN is in the process of incorporating freshwater habitats and freshwater-

obligate species into a STAR metric and a freshwater STAR will be shortly available. The Technical Guidance developed by the WCPA Commission Specialist Groups to support the protection and restoration of freshwater ecosystems will be launched at the CBD COP16 in Cali.

In 2025, IUCN will:

- Complete and launch a One Programme Freshwater Biodiversity Strategy for IUCN, incorporating activities and fundraising approaches to increase the volume and impact of IUCN's work on freshwater biodiversity specifically.
- Grow and continue to nurture the Freshwater Challenge through mobilising financial resources for countries, raising freshwater restoration within the political landscape, develop tracking approaches and integrate freshwater restoration into country reporting processes, and influencing MDB programming to assert global influence on financial programming for freshwater.
- Complete the STAR layer for freshwater species and incorporate it into existing key knowledge platforms such as IBAT.
- Support the develop of an initiative focused on financial instruments to reduce risks to river dolphins in support of the Cali Declaration
- Develop a set of "lighthouse initiatives" on global wetland ecosystem conservation in support of the Convention on Wetlands.

Impact Target 3.2 Equitable access to water resources and all associated ecosystem services are secured

2024 saw progressive work on water stewardship: (1) Developing the Valuing Water Youth Journey, as well as leadership course for young water leaders incorporating learning from intergenerational engagements established for the Meghna basins and in Eswatini. (2) increasing awareness and use of the benefit sharing approaches developed on good water governance and direct interventions supporting States to negotiate water agreements to ensure environmental protection and sustainable practices. While the current projected portfolio value allocated to these activities has declined slightly compared to 2024, there are several projects under development that are anticipated to come on-stream by mid-2025.

In 2025, IUCN will:

- Grow an initiative and deliver a report on the role of trans-frontier conservation to support transboundary water agreements and improved governance, and how formal agreements and arrangements should incorporate freshwater biodiversity more centrally into their mechanisms for cooperation.
- Mobilise the indigenous water governance initiative with partners for Congress as a first of its kind set of activities and actors working on indigenous water issues.
- Secure a new initiative on water and youth building on the successful youth journey to date.
- Build a targeted innovation initiative with the hydropower industry and multi-lateral financers on the role of hydropower standards to improve freshwater ecosystem services.

- Secure follow-on resources for the SUSTAIN programme on water and land stewardship (currently operational in East Africa) following the successful completion of phase 1 at the end of 2025.

Impact Target 3.3 Water governance, law and investment decisions address the multiple values of nature and incorporate biodiversity knowledge

IUCN's work on Hydro-diplomacy and governance has been a recognized mainstay of programme delivery across several intersessional periods. In 2024, IUCN started work on transboundary water management in Central Asia for the first time and will continue to grow this through 2025 under the Swiss Blue Peace Initiative.

The portfolio of multi-lateral work has continued to grow based on the leverage approach of the global BRIDGE programme. New projects on the Ruvuma basin and the Mekong focusing on freshwater fisheries have helped maintain the portfolio size and range of work, with a healthy pipeline of international waters under development for 2025, including a very large initiative targeting transboundary water management in the Horn of Africa.

IUCN is in the process of becoming a member of the Steering Committee of the Transboundary Water Cooperation Coalition hosted by the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) as an outcome of the 2023 UN Water Conference.

In 2025, IUCN will:

- Launch the CREATES (Climate Resilient Eastern African Transboundary and Environmental Sustainability) programme in the Horn of Africa. This programme supports transboundary water management with a focus on increasing water security, promoting regional stability, and enhanced resilience through the application of NbS to water stewardship.
- Support the Transboundary Waters Collaboration Coalition to mobilise advocacy actions and grow political will to support transboundary water cooperation for peaceful and sustainable development and freshwater ecosystem protection.
- Grow the multilateral portfolio of international waters projects in Africa and South America.
- Develop an initiative for launch at the Congress on glaciers with IUCN members that support the 2025 International Year of Glacier Preservation.
- Extend the SUSTAIN initiative to the Middle East with a focus on resilient nature-based water security.

Programme Area & Impact Target	2025 Budget (m CHF)	% of total 2025 budget
WATER	13.8	10%
IT3.1 The loss of freshwater species and decline of …	3.8	3%
IT3.2 Equitable access to water resources and all …	4.5	3%
IT3.3 Water governance, law and investment …	5.5	4%

Oceans

2025 is a key year for Ocean Conservation. The UN Ocean Conference will precede the World Conservation Congress by three months with the prospect that High Seas Treaty could be ratified within that timeframe opening the way for the establishment of Marine Protected Areas in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

At the same time more work is required to accelerate the conservation of marine and coastal areas that lie within countries exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in order to reach agreed protection targets under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Finally, 2025 could see agreement on a new international treaty to curb plastic waste pollution. However, there is an urgency to begin preparing countries and companies to take early action and not to wait until the Treaty comes into force. Overall, the Ocean-related portfolio remains stable with a good distribution of resources across the three impact targets and a healthy and growing pipeline.

Impact Target 4.1 The loss of marine species and decline of marine ecosystem integrity is halted, and restoration initiated.

IUCN will align its work with both formal and informal (type II) global commitments that focus on halting and reversing the loss of marine biodiversity, including the Climate Champions *Marine Conservation Breakthrough* and engagement with ecosystem specific commitments such as the *Mangrove Breakthrough* that were formalized in 2024.

In 2025, IUCN will prioritise the following actions:

- Continue to support updating the Marine Species Red List assessment, with an update of 264 species and finalizing the development and roll-out of a marine STAR layer that will be incorporated into relevant decision-support frameworks including IBAT and Nature Positive metrics.
- Engage with IUCN State Members to encourage the early ratification of the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Treaty and, in parallel, build capacity among Parties for early action on identification and establishment of Marine Protected Areas in areas beyond national jurisdiction.
- Through collaborative initiatives with IUCN Members, upscale national and local policies and initiatives that support mangrove restoration and conservation. Capacity building and identification of additional financing will be key elements to enhancing ecosystem integrity.
- Contribute to the sustainable management of fisheries, marine living resources and their habitats in the Bay of Bengal region for the benefit of coastal states and communities.
- Regrant resources that support IUCN non-State Members and partners in the restoration and conservation of critical marine habitats and blue carbon ecosystems.
- Support on-ground action through regranting to and capacity building of IUCN Members and partners in European Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories.
- Develop and test a means to validate impacts on MPA effectiveness, linked to financial mechanisms, using the Green List Standard and validation in the Indonesian seascapes of the Coral Triangle.

Impact Target 4.2 Uses of marine natural resources generate overall positive biodiversity outcomes and sustain livelihood benefits for coastal communities.

Credit: Amanda Cotton, Ocean Image Bank

IUCN has pioneered the establishment of large-scale regenerative seascapes that mobilise and align government support to ensure that the use of marine resources benefit the livelihoods of coastal peoples and their economies. The Great Blue Wall in the Western Indian Ocean now has the support of 13 countries, an established Secretariat hosted by IUCN and a multi-year portfolio worth approximately CHF 80 million. Other countries and regional blocs are now interested in replicating these regenerative blue economy arrangements and structures.

In 2025, IUCN will:

- Support the implementation of the first tranche of Great Blue Wall regenerative blue economy activities in Kenya, Tanzania, Comoros, Mozambique, Madagascar and the Seychelles.
- Promote and build capacity around the Regenerative Blue economy principles through South-South cooperation, laying the groundwork to expand ocean conservation actions based on the Great Blue Wall model to at least one other IUCN programmatic region.

- Promote the establishment of a connected network of regenerative seascapes that are positive for nature and people at the UN Ocean Conference and the IUCN Congress.
- Provide grants and technical assistance to members and partners projects designed to leverage blue carbon finance and blue natural capital projects.
- Strengthen the management capacities of the Mono Biosphere Reserve and the Bouche du Roy Marine Protected Area and promote the conditions for sustainable economic development based on environmental protection and enhancement objectives.
- Increase economic inclusion for sustainable commodities through improved access to alternative financing and employment opportunities in Central America.

Impact Target 4.3 Ocean and coastal processes are maintained as a key foundation for planetary stability.

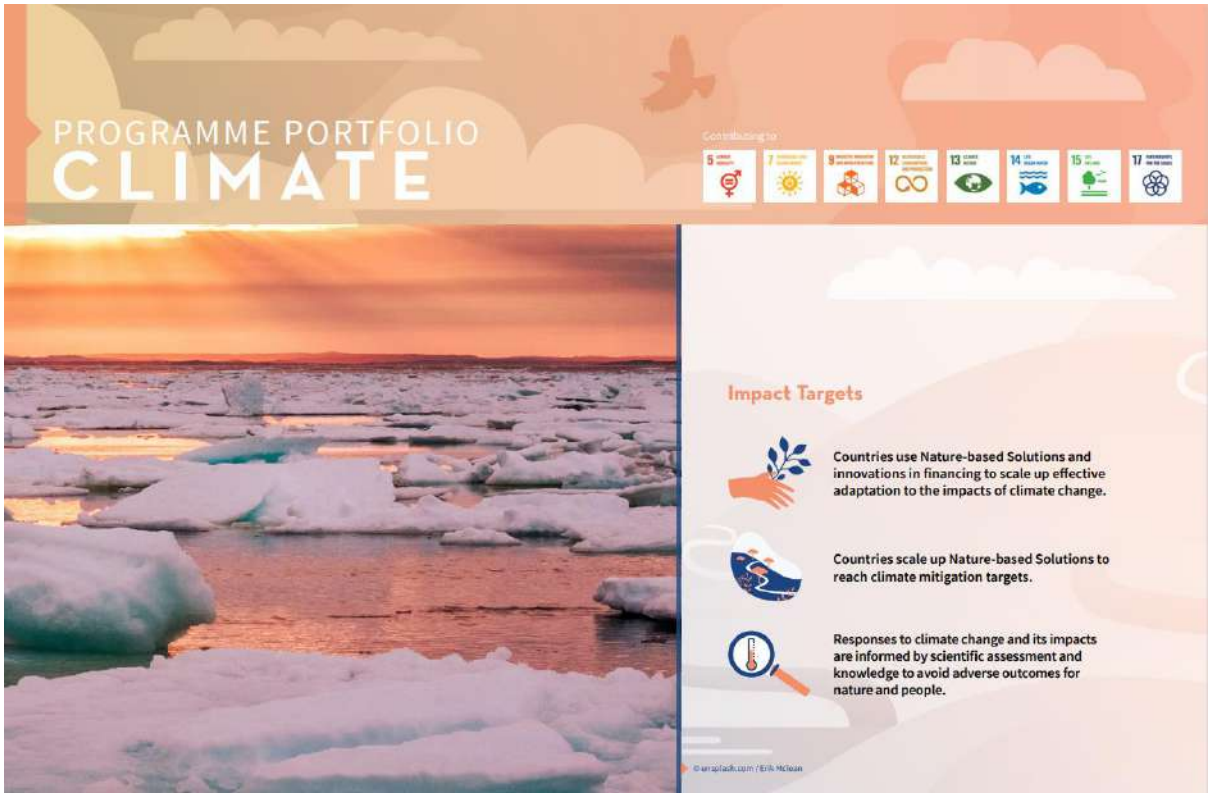
The world's Oceans support millions of people worldwide through fishing, tourism, and other industries. The critical role the Ocean plays in the regulation of climate, biodiversity and its importance in the Blue Economy will be directly affected by its ability to maintain its complex biophysical functions. At the start of the current intersessional period this area of work was relatively nascent. It has now developed and stabilized with, for example, the multi-year value of the EPPIC initiative increased to almost CHF 30 million in 2024.

In 2025, IUCN will prioritise the following:

- Support policy and regulatory frameworks supporting science-based solutions for plastic reduction that build on an international legally binding instrument.
- Build a network of States, NGO and private sector actors under the framework of EPPIC (End Plastic Pollution International Collaborative) to promote innovation, developed national plastic inventories, catalyse resources and support projects around the world to develop early-action, real-world plastic circularity solutions.
- Integrate scientific knowledge and understanding of ocean processes into decision-making processes within the global science fora.
- Develop guidelines and procedures for addressing potentially polluting shipwrecks.
-

Programme Area & Impact Target	2025 Budget (m CHF)	% of total 2025 budget
OCEANS	19.1	13%
IT4.1 The loss of marine species and decline …	5.1	4%
IT4.2 Uses of marine natural resources generate …	7.7	5%
IT4.3 Ocean and coastal processes are maintained …	6.2	4%

Climate



The profile of Climate Change and Energy Transition will be a major feature of the 2026-2029 IUCN Programme. This makes 2025 a particularly important year as IUCN broadens its engagement beyond the climate-related application of Nature-based Solutions to embrace a more comprehensive approach that will address the inter-related nature of the biodiversity-climate nexus including the impacts of climate change and climate change policies and approaches on biodiversity. The World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi precedes UNFCCC COP30 in Belem by only one month, providing a unique opportunity for the conservation community to send collective messages on the nature-biodiversity nexus to Parties to the Climate Convention.

Within the UNFCCC, IUCN will advocate for countries to bridge the existing ambition and implementation gaps to keep the 1.5°C temperature rise goal alive, to concretely integrate Nature-based Solutions within their new Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) due in 2025, and to press for greater climate finance to flow towards nature and Indigenous peoples. IUCN will also work with the COP Presidencies Troika, including Brazil, to ensure that biodiversity-climate linkages are prioritised and that that UNFCCC COP30 in Belem has 'Climate and Nature' as its central theme.

Impact Target 5.1 Countries use Nature-based Solutions to scale up effective adaptation to the impacts of climate change

In 2025, IUCN will continue**:**

- Spearheading best practices and technical guidance on NbS for climate adaptation, influencing national, regional, and global initiatives.

- Enabling scaled up implementation of NbS underpinning the climate and biodiversity nexus through initiatives such as NAbSA (Nature-based Solutions for climate Adaptation: Monitoring & Impact Evaluation), Global EbA Fund, and Regenerative Seascapes in the West Indian Ocean
- Promote the next round of resource mobilisation for the Global EbA Fund with a view to doubling (to approximately USD 28 million) the total disbursed fund value by 2028.
- Catalysing global recognition of NbS through FEBA (Friends of Ecosystem-based Adaptation) and ENACT (Enabling NbS for Accelerated Climate Transformation) networks – both of which are coordinated by IUCN - and supporting integration into nationally determined contributions (NDCs) by 2025.
- Supporting FEBA working groups on biodiversity, health, humanitarian action, and climate adaptation.
- Expanding ENACT membership by a further 25 State and Non-State actors and launching a dashboard to track climate and biodiversity actions.
- Using the instruments and platforms profiled above to advocating for nature-climate integration at COP30 and contributing to key UNFCCC frameworks and partnerships.

Impact Target 5.2 Countries scale up Nature-based Solutions to reach climate mitigation targets

The climate imperative of ensuring protected, well managed and restored ecosystem as a contribution to urgently needed mitigation action is clear. The use of NbS in the context of climate change mitigation is therefore linked with IUCN priorities to ensure high integrity and quality mitigation outcomes and avoid "greenwashing". In addition, IUCN works towards implementation of this impact target by supporting its Members to transparently report NbS mitigation outcomes through the Contributions for Nature Platform.

In 2025, IUCN will:

- Continue working to support the inclusion of natural, managed and restored ecosystems into enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions and within the Long-term, Low emissions Development Strategies (LT-LEDS) of countries.
- Provide technical support and guidance (in a formal Technical Assistance function) to optimize conservation and social outcomes from three blended climate finance vehicles.
    - **the Subnational Climate Fund** (SCF) for regenerative agriculture and NbS projects are designed to generate mitigation outcomes with the highest environmental and social quality
    - **the Nature+ Accelerator Fund**, managed by Mirova, with the aim to provide early-stage seed funding for NbS investments mitigation while delivering positive impacts both on biodiversity and the wellbeing of local communities.
    - **the WALD Innovation Facility**, which will start operations in 2025, is a grant-funded assistance initiative established to leverage private sector voluntary carbon market investments in terms of biodiversity conservation impact. The Facility enables the development and implementation of well-designed, innovative, high impact NbS projects based at or near Key Biodiversity Areas in Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

- Support to the growing momentum for nature-based climate action through the ENACT partnership to promote up to 2.4 billion hectares of healthy natural ecosystems, to be secured by 2030.

Impact Target 5.3 Responses to climate change and its impacts are informed by scientific assessment and knowledge to avoid adverse outcomes for nature and people

This impact target has laid the foundation for IUCN's work on the Energy Transition, as well as associated issues related to global decarbonization trajectories, including topics such as geo-engineering, and the risks of mal-adaption.

In 2025, IUCN will

- Deliver guidance for building responsible supply chains within the renewable energy sector, working with private sector and governments to advance landscape and seascape strategic planning with respect to sustainable renewable energy and grid deployment.
- Produce guidance on measuring and assessing impacts on biodiversity in the marine environment alongside several discussion papers to help the renewable energy and grid sector navigate and contribute towards nature positive targets.
- Report on restoration and conservation actions by the renewable energy sector through the Global Initiative for Nature, Grids and Renewables (GINGR).
- With the support of the World Commission on Environmental Law, the GINGR partners will develop targeted guidance on policy enablers that facilitate sustainable decarbonization strategies.
- Develop and submit for Members consideration a policy process for IUCN on geo-engineering
- Deliver capacity building to at least 60 delegates from UNFCCC and CBD on the integrated implementation of climate and biodiversity through NbS.

Programme Area & Impact Target	2025 Budget (m CHF)	% of total 2025 budget
CLIMATE	24.3	17%
IT5.1 Countries use Nature-based Solutions and …	15.0	11%
IT5.2 Countries scale up Nature-based Solutions …	2.8	2%
IT5.3 Responses to climate change and its impacts …	6.5	5%

Knowledge, science and data

Knowledge, science, and data provision are constantly highlighted by IUCN membership as some of the most valuable outputs of the Union.

In 2025, IUCN will prioritise the following knowledge, science and data outputs, many of which will be delivered in tandem with, or integrated into, those activities described in the five programme priority areas profiled above.

IUCN Red List of Threatened Species Strategic Plan

In 2025, IUCN will leapfrog delivery of the Red List Strategic Plan and capitalize on the 60th anniversary as a communication and fundraising campaign to ensure adequate funding for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Some of the priorities include:

- Undertake IUCN Red List of Threatened Species assessments, improving the systems to deliver the assessment results to decision-makers, including advancing regional and national red lists, as well as development of an updated Species Information Service.
- Deliver a "RED LIST AT 60" (RL@60) communications and fundraising campaign.
- Continue mobilisation of Species Threat Abatement & Restoration (STAR) metric from the Red List, including addition of further species groups, increasing spatial resolution, and automating production and serving of the metric.

Measurement of "Nature Positive"

IUCN will work towards increasing measurement of "Nature Positive" outcomes via testing and learning from pilots with companies and subnational governments helping to deliver robust metrics to mobilise action towards the GBF. Specific priorities include the following themes:

- Delivery of a Council-sponsored resolution on Nature Positive & Publication of guidance on Measuring Nature Positive outcomes (V3) at WCC25 including final ecosystem metric methodology & value chain contribution calculation.
- Socialising the Nature Positive approach among key stakeholders and deliver capacity building for Nature-related corporate disclosure for example in Korea, to support dissemination of the Nature Positive approach, and promote the use of IBAT.
- Continue engagements with the private sector to develop & promote the use and application of Nature Positive Methods and Metrics & conduct critical on-the-ground testing of the approach to measuring nature positive.
- Maintain IUCN role in KBA Partnership, including as a KBA Partner and (through SSC and WCPA) in convening SAC.
- Continue to advance Red List of Ecosystems and Global Ecosystem Typology, including further assessments, and serving the products through IBAT.

Knowledge for conservation impact

In addition to the above, IUCN will also focus on delivering and incorporating credible knowledge for conservation impact in inter-governmental, public and private sector decision-making in 2025. Specific priorities include the following themes:

- **Knowledge Management and Learning**: together with a Commissions, develop a IUCN Knowledge Management Strategy
- Develop an IUCN Policy on Synthetic Biology in relation to Nature Conservation, to be considered by the IUCN Membership for adoption at the 2025 WCC.
- Continue IUCN engagement in provision of Indicators to UNSD for the SDGs and to the CBD for the GBF, as well as engagement with IPBES. With respect to IPBES, IUCN will mobilise expertise to support the finalisation of the IPBES Business & Biodiversity Assessment, support the development of First Order Draft of IPBES Monitoring

Assessment; engage with the First Order Draft of IPBES Spatial Planning & Connectivity Assessment and customised IUCN data for input to the First Order Draft of IPBES Second Global Assessment.

- Natural capital and mainstreaming nature work in support of an IUCN policy on Natural Capital (Res-120) for example through projects such as BIODEV-2030 and the EU Biodiversity Finance project.
- Advance data generation on Invasive Alien Species, in particular for application of EICAT (Environmental Impact Classification for Alien Taxa).
- Advance the development and promotion of the Green List of Species and the Green List of Ecosystems as scientifically robust instruments to recognise and document conservation success.

Policy and Advocacy

Effective policies, laws, and governance structures are fundamental for effective conservation action, for setting standards, and for shaping and enforcing regulations. Policy is central to IUCN's work and its ability to deliver on its Programme. By leveraging its collective voice, the Union can help shift public debate and shape policies, and influence stakeholders, way beyond its immediate network.

In 2025, IUCN will continue to play a key role in the implementation of the goals and targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework – assisting and influencing Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and others as they continue to update their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), establish national biodiversity targets and implement them. By continuing to engage in the CBD processes (including the CBD Subsidiary Bodies), IUCN will advocate for commitments and actions, scientifically sound and coherent decisions, and enhanced and fair conservation practices. IUCN will put forward its conservation tools, knowledge products and best practices for advancing the work of the Convention, supported by the decisions and outcomes of the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025. Through the regional scientific and technical cooperation support centres, partnerships and alliances, IUCN will continue to join forces with its Members and other actors to keep ambition high and enable the swift implementation of the Biodiversity Plan.

Conferences of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is scheduled for 23 – 31 July in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) will take place in Samarkand, Uzbekistan 24 November to 5 December 2025. IUCN will be actively taking part in both COPs, contributing to the preparatory processes (e.g. CITES standing Committee in February 2025) as well as inputting into the decision-making processes of each of these key agreements with scientific and technical expertise and sound policy advice, developed collaboratively with the IUCN Council.

On climate change, IUCN will continue to engage strongly in all relevant processes of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). IUCN will advocate for countries to bridge the existing ambition and implementation gaps to keep the 1.5°C temperature rise goal alive, to concretely integrate Nature-based Solutions within their new Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) due in 2025, and to press for greater climate finance to flow towards nature and Indigenous peoples. IUCN will also work with the COP Presidencies Troika, including Brazil, to ensure that biodiversity-climate linkages are prioritised and that UNFCCC COP30 in Belem has 'Climate and Nature' as its central theme.

On the wider United Nations' agenda, IUCN will actively engage in the UN Ocean Conference, co-hosted by France and Costa Rica and to be held in Nice, France, in June 2025, to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14. The overarching theme of the Conference is "Accelerating action and mobilizing all actors to conserve and sustainably use the ocean", a theme IUCN links closely to.

IUCN will engage in the two Preparatory Commissions (PrepComs) planned in 2025 to advance the entry into force of the Agreement under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) and the Convening of the First Meeting of the COP to the Agreement. In the same vein and continuing to advocate for a moratorium on deep seabed mining in accordance with IUCN Resolution 122 of Marseille, the Union will participate in and contribute to the meetings of the International Seabed Authority in 2025.

In 2025, IUCN, as part of its Antarctic Strategy will submit papers to both the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) and Convention for the Conservaton of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) on several key topics, including 1) bringing stronger tourism management to the continent (ATCM), 2) supporting the establishment of sub-Antarctic MPAs (CCAMLR), and 3) highlighting species status information in the context of fishing and climate change (CCAMLR). We will also ensure that protecting Southern Ocean biodiversity is part of the agenda at UNOC3.

IUCN will also engage in the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4) and contribute to the deliberations and outcomes emphasizing the need for enhanced finance for nature and climate. In a focused and strategic manner, IUCN will also take part in specific sessions of the UN Human Rights Council.

At the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF 2025) that will take place in July on the theme 'Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals for leaving no one behind', IUCN will contribute to the discussions mostly around SDG 3 (good health and well-being), SDG 5 (gender equality), and SDG 14 (life below water).

IUCN will again actively participate in the UN General Assembly, the UN High Level Week and Climate week in September.

Under the broader chemicals, waste and pollution agenda, IUCN Secretariat in close collaboration with WCEL, will engage towards finalization of the negotiations towards the adoption of a legally binding treaty to tackle plastic pollution.

In addition, IUCN will also continue to follow the discussions towards the establishment of a Science Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution prevention (SPP), engage with the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions, the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and its Global Framework on Chemicals and with the WTO in relation to environmental provisions in Trade Agreements, plastic pollution and environmentally sustainable plastics trade. Finally, IUCN will have a focused and limited engagement at the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury that will take place in Geneva, Switzerland, in November 2025.

South Africa will hold the G20 Presidency in 2025 and through the IUCN Regional Office for East and Southern Africa (ESARO), IUCN will seek to support the South African government as a technical partner, building on its previous collaborations with G20 Presidencies, most recently in India in 2023, where IUCN contributed to the "Environmental and Climate Sustainability" and "Sustainable Finance" workstreams. IUCN will also explore opportunities to support the Canadian G7 Presidency in 2025, including potentially on invasive alien species, Nature Positive Economies, and other priorities.

Nature-based Solutions

In 2025, IUCN will focus on enhancing and expanding the Nature-based Solutions (NbS) Standard and its associated tools to promote sustainable and resilient practices globally. IUCN also plans to finalise and launch several resources and guidelines, increasing support for the private, public and urban sectors. Below is a summary of key deliverables:

Nature-based Solutions standard and tools

- Global NbS standard update (version 2.0): Complete the update and officially launch the new version of the NbS standard at the World Conservation Congress (WCC).
- Investment screening tool: Both private and public sectors will benefit from the IUCN NbS investment screening tool, set for completion and launch in 2025.
- Urban NbS guideline: In collaboration with an expert advisory board, IUCN will release a comprehensive guideline on urban NbS.
- NbS economics and financial feasibility guideline: To assist in assessing the economic benefits of NbS, IUCN will launch a new guideline that covers financial feasibility.
- Enhanced quality assurance thresholds and metrics: This initiative will introduce refined thresholds and metrics to ensure the quality and effectiveness of NbS projects.
- Guidance on NbS mainstreaming: IUCN will complete guidance documents aimed at integrating NbS into national and subnational policies and plans.

NbS thematic reports

- Wetlands NbS report: In collaboration with the Ramsar and IUCN water experts, IUCN will publish a report analysing the cumulative benefits of NbS in wetlands and their impact on the planetary crisis.
- Locally-led NbS case study book: This report will highlight locally-led NbS success stories, offering a valuable resource for practitioners and policymakers alike.

- Profile how Nature-based Solutions framework can be applied to support application to One Health.

Constituency engagement and resolution implementation

- Strengthening NbS engagement: IUCN will deepen its internal collaboration across all Constituents to drive NbS implementation and build stronger support for these initiatives.
- Resolution monitoring and reporting: IUCN will ensure all NbS-related resolutions are systematically monitored and reported on, reinforcing accountability and progress tracking.

NbS capacity building

- Professional certificate in NbS: IUCN will continue delivering the NbS professional certificate, adapting the course content to align with emerging demands.
- Customised NbS training: IUCN will develop and offer additional tailored NbS training sessions, available on demand to meet the unique needs of both internal and external stakeholders.

Business Engagement and the Private Sector

Engagement with the Private Sector is seen as a critical part of the new 20-year Strategic Vision and IUCN is already taking forward this work. In hosting the Leaders Forum 2024, IUCN brought together large groups of the private sector together with Members and Governments to discuss a future path for nature including how the Private Sector can help address the drivers of biodiversity loss, can help innovate and find solutions and can mobilise capital to achieve this. The Private Sector is diverse and ranges from small social enterprises and nature-based business to large multi-national corporations. The potential of the private sector is being explored as a non-voting category of membership, through the Governance and Constituency Committee of the IUCN Council.

Leadership and Council approval of the new private sector engagement strategy

A Private Sector Engagement Strategy will be collaboratively developed by the IUCN Council's Private Sector Task Force (PSTF) for consideration by members. This aims to identify innovative options for strengthening our engagement and impact with businesses aligned with the draft Work Programme and 20-year Strategic Vision.

Securing new funding from the private sector: Alongside the core goal of delivering impact for nature, the strategy refresh process will consider how business engagements provide an entry point to deliver flexible and innovative funding to IUCN. The strategy will include financial models to explore this, aligned with the resourcing needs and financial plans of the new Programme, with clear methods to ensure that the appropriate tools, guidelines, skills, and risk management mechanisms are in place for funding from businesses to contribute significantly to IUCN's work and relevance over the long term.

SUPPORTING THE PROGRAMME

Summary

Knowledge Management

GEF/GCF Portfolio Management

Enhanced donor compliance

Measuring impact

Enhancing the planning process

Knowledge Management

The Knowledge Management, Learning and Library Services team was established in late 2021. This unit coordinates many Secretariat services for IUCN. This includes coordinating the development and implementation of the IUCN Knowledge Management Strategy, an important piece of work that will see progress in 2025.

The IUCN Knowledge Management Strategy will tie in closely with the IUCN quadrennial Programme Nature 2030 as well as the 20-year Strategic Vision and will support implementation of both. It is designed to underscore delivery of IUCN's mission and vision, i.e. focus on the knowledge that is required for the organisation to fulfil its objectives. The Strategy also aligns closely with the draft knowledge management strategy to support the implementation of the GBF and follows the same general logic as this document, positioning IUCN as an important player for supporting implementation of the GBF KM strategy.

GEF/GCF Portfolio Management

Strengthen IUCN's position as a GEF Implementing Agency (IA) and GCF Accredited Entity (AE): The GEF and GCF overlap due to the cross-cutting nature of work to address the climate crisis, but also differ in distinct ways. The GEF has a much wider mandate than GCF, as it serves as the financial mechanism for six global environmental conventions and treaties including CBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD, Stockholm convention on POPs, Minamata Mercury Convention, and the Montreal Protocol on Ozone depleting substances. GEF is the world's largest funder of biodiversity protection. GCF is the world's largest dedicated climate fund serving developing countries. GCF projects tend to be larger in size than GEF projects but take considerably longer to develop and approve. Both funds offer significant opportunities for IUCN engagement.

2025 represents an opportunity to strengthen IUCN's strategic niche and focus in both GEF and GCF partnerships. The following value proposition will be brought forward to advance on this agenda:

IUCN's strategic niche and focus in the GEF partnership: The GEF Secretariat sees that IUCN is the global leader in science-based conservation, with an unmatched set of resources, tools, partnerships and programmes supporting effective conservation action (Red Lists, STAR, Protected Planet, NbS Standard, ROAM, Agrobiodiversity Monitoring Framework and

indicators, Urban Nature Indexes, etc.). It is also the largest and most diverse environmental network offering unparalleled convening and reach.

IUCN leads substantial engagement in forest conservation and restoration including leading GEF8 Mesoamerica Forest IP; Co-leading Indo-Malay Forest IP; GEF6 Restoration Initiative, etc. and IUCN also provides pioneering support for IP- and LC-led conservation including GEF7 Inclusive Conservation Initiative.

IUCN has been working on Innovative finance for nature - CPIC & Nature+ Accelerator; Restoration Challenge Grant with Blockchain; and sustainable, regenerative agriculture is a growing part of the portfolio.

In 2025, the GEF's Small Grants Programmes offer an opportunity to expand support for conservation and for IUCN to determine how it can step into this role.

Similarly, IUCN has a strategic niche and focus in GCF partnership. IUCN provides nature-based solutions to climate change including conservation of terrestrial and marine areas, restoration, and sustainable land management. The Union also drives low-emission, climate-resilient agriculture and fisheries practices, securing livelihoods while reconfiguring food systems.

Our engagement with GEF and GCF portfolios will continue at pace in 2025 as IUCN brings pipeline projects from proposal to implementation, working closely with governments to attend to national and regional priorities. The IUCN Secretariat will also need to look carefully at the business model to ensure this effectively supports the Union's work.

Enhanced donor compliance

The IUCN Secretariat is seeking to continually improve its level of donor compliance, and its capacity to keep up with a growing portfolio and diversity of donor requirements. This applies not only to the Secretariat, but equally to an ever-growing array of implementing and executing partners.

In 2025, IUCN will reinforce the importance of management oversight and compliance with IUCN policies and procedures and donor rules, and will aim to help its executing partners with capacity building. The Union will also need to further develop its oversight capacity, as well as continue building whistleblowing capacities, environmental and social safeguards and grievance mechanisms for its projects with some level of social and environmental risk. The Secretariat aims to increase its oversight and safeguards capacity to support this.

Measuring impact

Theory of Change and results architecture: As IUCN moves towards the finalisation and adoption of the 2026-2029 Programme, 2025 will be the capital in finalising all approaches and instruments to measure impact. This is especially important in the context of our shared capacity to demonstrate results on both the IUCN Programme and the 20-year Strategic Vision.

As such, the approach and supporting tools underpinning section 6 of the 2026-2029 draft IUCN Programme (Programme Accountability) will be further developed and implemented in 2025. This includes:

- Adjustments to be made to the Contribution for Nature Platform to better capture Members contributions and this will be enhanced by the application of both Freshwater and, later in 2025, Marine Star, which can then capture members contributions to freshwater and marine conservation.
- The articulation of a clear theory of change visual and narrative building on the Programme content to help outline the underlying assumptions and causal linkages leading to the desired results laying the groundwork for strategic actions.
- A detailed results architecture (including master data management capability) with specific indicators from all Constituents for tracking progress and measuring Programme outputs and outcomes.
- A Union impact scorecard serving as a dynamic reporting tool that helps track key indicators included in the results architecture.

Influencing policy: In 2025, IUCN will also embed the recommendations from the recent independent evaluation of IUCN's influence on policy into its policy influencing strategy by defining a clear policy influencing operational framework. In this strategy and framework IUCN will confirm key definitions and concepts, update the conceptual model of the policy cycle and create a visual model to enhance communication of the framework. More importantly, criteria will be established to identify key policy topics that require specific programmatic approaches, referred to as "policy influencing programmes," which will incorporate tailored theories of change and impact measurement approaches. Lastly, IUCN will develop a roadmap for implementation of its policy influencing strategy, outlining the expected contributions from Commissions, Members, the Secretariat, and projects to ensure coordinated efforts across the Union.

Enhancing the planning process

This is also the last year of this quadrennial programmatic cycle and this process will need to be updated and enhanced as the Union ratifies its new 20-year Strategic Vision, Programme and Financial Plan. It has already been recognised by IUCN senior leadership that the annual planning cycle needs to be upgraded if we are to fully take a one-programme approach to the implementation of the 2026 to 2029 Programme. This should help reduce fragmentation between IUCN components and set a clear, comprehensive and fully-owned direction with respect to annual priorities and shared objectives. It will enable Commissions and Secretariat to strengthen their collaboration and in doing so offer Members a better defined programmatic value proposition. Framing the planning process and looking at each element as it currently stands, future annual work planning will focus on:

- **A Strategic direction** – created by the 20-year Strategic Vision (to be adopted at Congress in Abu Dhabi).
- **Effective Coordination: –** Members, Commissions and the Secretariat supporting the Programme and work plan.

- **Workforce plans** – to identify the skills, competencies, and expertise the Secretariat needs to service the Union and leverage the change that follows from the 20-year Strategic Vision and Programme.
- **Budgets** – to advance in ensuring there are resources to (1) implement the work plan and Programme, (2) scale up our efforts, (3) innovate, and (4) invest for the future.
- **KPIs** – simple metrics to guide and focus our efforts. This will enable us to keep our workplans on track and devise whether resources are being applied in the right way (these flow from the DG's Strategic Objectives and the results framework being implemented).
- **Risks** – a clear understanding of the risks faced, IUCN's risk appetite, and how risks will be mitigated and reduced for the future. The Secretariat has a strategic risk log and will continue to ensure effective risk management.

The above elements imply a dynamic process, as these need to be put in place at each level of the Union or with a Union-wide focus. They have the potential to maximise the power of the Union and strategically focus its efforts. It will equally take several years to get all of these elements in place. Enhancing the planning process in 2025 will then carry forward into the next quadrennial.

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

Summary

- Membership engagement
- Convening: From Regional Conservation Forums to Congress and beyond
- Contributions for Nature platform
- Regional and National Committees
- Portfolio engagement with IUCN Constituents

Membership engagement

To improve and foster Member engagement in 2025, the Secretariat has developed a set of implementation priorities for 2025 in order to deliver on the Membership Strategy that Council approved in 2020 (Council document: Annex 26 to decision C98/24). These priorities build on Member feedback provided by the IUCN membership satisfaction survey (see box on next page), the IUCN membership model analysis and direct feedback from Members on engagement activities carried out in 2024. The priorities are supported by a roadmap with the goal to increase Member satisfaction, grow the membership base, and boost the active contribution of Members to the Union's conservation goals.

The 2025 roadmap focuses on delivering on the following four membership goals or priorities:

- **Membership recruitment**: Activities to attract at least 40 new IUCN Members in 2025 with a focus on new State and Subnational Government Members. A membership marketing campaign will be piloted in 2025 to increase awareness of IUCN membership among potential members.
- **Membership engagement**: Activities to boost Members' engagement will include two issues of the Member magazine, an IUCN Pavilion at COP30 in Belem, Brazil, along with greater promotion of opportunities for Members to get involved in projects and capacity building courses.
- **Members and Congress**: Increasing the participation and engagement of all IUCN Members and National/Regional Committees in the run up to and during the IUCN Congress.
- **Membership improvements**: Building on the Council-commissioned membership model analysis, the Secretariat will work closely with the Council Governance and Constituency Committee to introduce improvements to the IUCN Membership model.

IUCN Member Satisfaction Survey 2024
83% of IUCN Members are very or somewhat satisfied with membership. This includes a 6% increase of very satisfied Members from the 2023 survey with improved Member communication cited as the most notable development over the last year.

The most common reasons for satisfaction:

- IUCN's resources and technical support for local conservation activities
- Opportunities from IUCN to:
- Learn new conservation skills / knowledge
- Be part of a global conservation network
- Get involved in conservation projects

The most common reasons for dissatisfaction:

- Membership benefits are not clear and accessible enough
- Membership dues are too high for small organisations
- Insufficient capacity building activities or opportunities to get involved in conservation projects

Convening: From Regional Conservation Forums to Congress and beyond

Convening and networking are key catalytic roles that IUCN plays in supporting the Union to achieve its work. In 2024, the focus was on convening at the regional level with 9 Regional Conservation Forums (RCF) held in:

- Mexico, Central America & the Caribbean RCF in Mexico City, Mexico, 16–19 April
- Africa RCF in Nairobi, Kenya, 24–28 June
- USA RCF in Washington DC, USA, 20-21 August
- Asia RCF in Bangkok, Thailand, 3–5 September
- West Asia RCF in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 9–11 September
- Oceania RCF in Suva, Fiji, 16–20 September
- East Europe, North and Central Asia and West Europe RCF in Bruges, Belgium, 30 September – 3 October
- Canada RCF in Ottawa, Canada, 1-2 October
- South America RCF in Santa Marta, Colombia, 14–18 October

Each RCF brought together Members, National and Regional Committees and Councillors from the region, along with regional Commission members and Secretariat staff. Combined, the RCFs attracted an audience of some 3,200 IUCN constituents and between 60% and 90% of Members in each region.

The RCFs have been powerful forums for discussion and socialization of potential Congress Resolutions. During the final day of each RCFs, Members were briefed on how to best prepare for the IUCN Congress over the coming year including sessions on submitting motions, on the election process for Councillors from the region, and opportunities to get involved at Congress via submitting event proposals for the Congress Forum and hosting a pavilion at the Congress Exhibition.

In 2025, Member engagement activities will prioritise ensuring Members can maximise the value they gain from convening at Congress. And following Congress in November 2025, IUCN will take the messages from the resolutions and other Congress outputs to the UNFCCC COP30 meeting in Belem, Brazil, as well as provide IUCN constituents another major opportunity to convene at the IUCN Pavilion at COP30.

Regional and National Committees

Regional and National Committees are officially recognized groups in the One Programme Charter. IUCN has over 70 officially recognized groups of Members in countries and regions which are known as either National, Regional or Inter-regional Committees. In 2025, they will continue to facilitate cooperation among Members, and with other parts of the Union, and support the participation of Members in the Programme and governance of IUCN. Committees vary greatly in size and activities. Some will work to jointly implement projects in 2025, whereas others will act predominantly as vehicles for exchange and networking. The focus in 2025 will be to prepare Members for Congress.

Contributions for Nature platform

An enduring challenge facing nature conservation – and one of the reasons why achievement of global goals for nature has proven so elusive – is that it is extremely difficult to document the aggregate contributions of nature conservation action. IUCN was mandated to do this in its founding statutes, but no mechanism was developed to enable such documentation until the specification in the IUCN Programme Nature 2030, approved by IUCN Members in the 2021 IUCN World Conservation Congress in Marseille, France, requesting the establishment of an IUCN Contributions for Nature Platform.

The platform was developed over the subsequent year and launched at the 2022 IUCN Leaders Forum in Jeju, South Korea, and is accessible for all IUCN constituents to document their conservation and restoration contributions. To date, the IUCN Contributions for Nature Platform has been used by c.200 IUCN constituents to document c.10,000 contributions. The number of contributions grew rapidly after the Regional Conservation Forums.

In 2024, IUCN initiated a major campaign to support and incentivise IUCN constituents in documenting contributions into the platform, seeking as an initial target to have 20% of IUCN Members having documented at least one contribution by the end of 2024. This campaign

will continue in 2025, aiming to demonstrate that the platform can serve as a central tool for supporting the documentation of:

- The projects and contributions of individual IUCN constituents toward conservation
- The Union-wide delivery of the IUCN Programme
- The conservation activities at a national and regional level along with subsequent coordination and gap analysis of these efforts
- Progress towards the global goals for nature by IUCN

The platform will continue to evolve in 2025, with planned innovation to the system including addition of data from aquatic ecosystems and data on climate change adaptation contributions, as well as extended reporting (e.g. on contributions towards the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework).

Portfolio engagement with IUCN Constituents

Over the past year, IUCN has made significant strides in enhancing opportunities for Members to access the IUCN network, build capacity, and become more involved in the organisation's portfolio of projects. These efforts have been particularly important for ensuring that all stakeholders, including civil society and governmental bodies, are able to engage effectively with IUCN's mission through the portfolio.

To facilitate IUCN's capacity to report on engagement with Constituents and beyond, a dedicated Project Portal page was designed and rolled-out in 2024. In scope were approximately 800 projects going back to the inception of the 2021-2024 IUCN Programme. In 2024, the Secretariat undertook an exercise to see the level of involvement of IUCN members, commissions and committees in projects. This identified that approximately 59% of projects included one IUCN constituent. The 2025 engagement with IUCN Constituents is summarized in the figures below. It shows an increase in engagement to 65% – a momentum that is projected to continue in 2025.

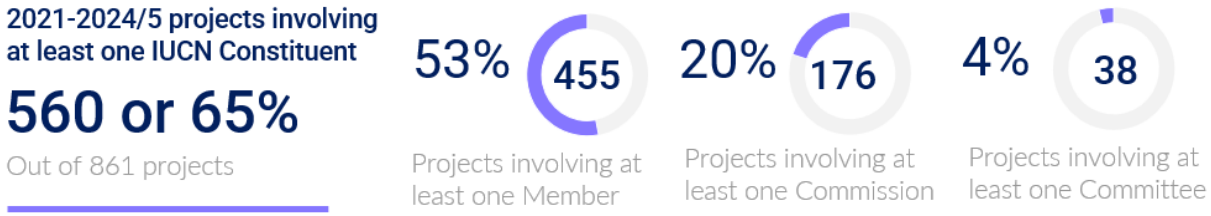


Figure 1: IUCN Constituents engagement through portfolio (2021-2024/5)

Within the 65% engagement, the breakdown of the portfolio by member engagement type and region looks as follows:

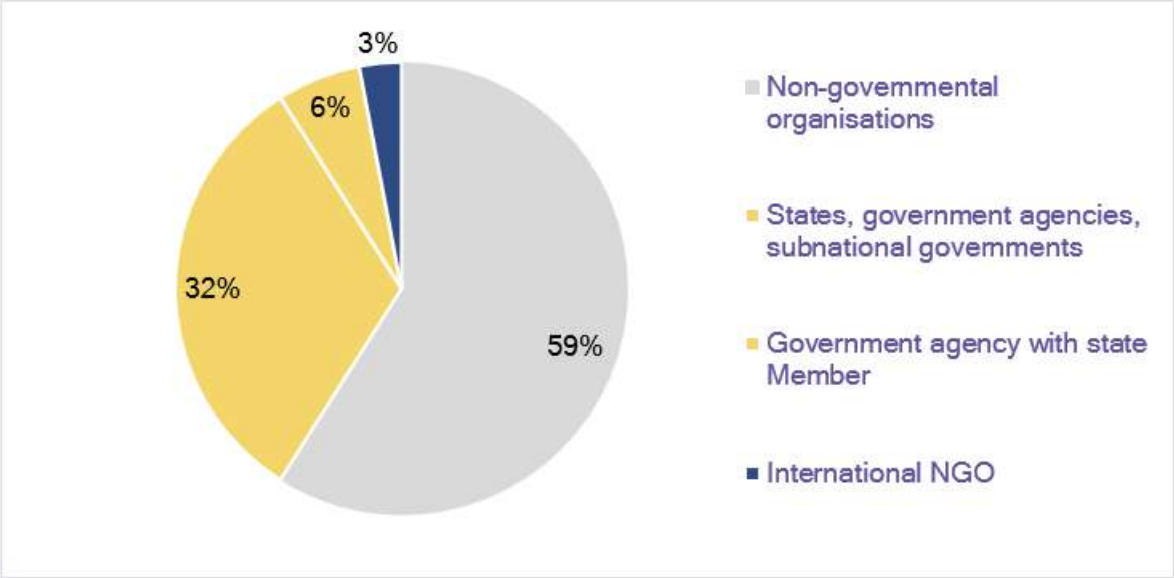


Figure 2: 2025 portfolio Member distribution by statutory region (distinct count)

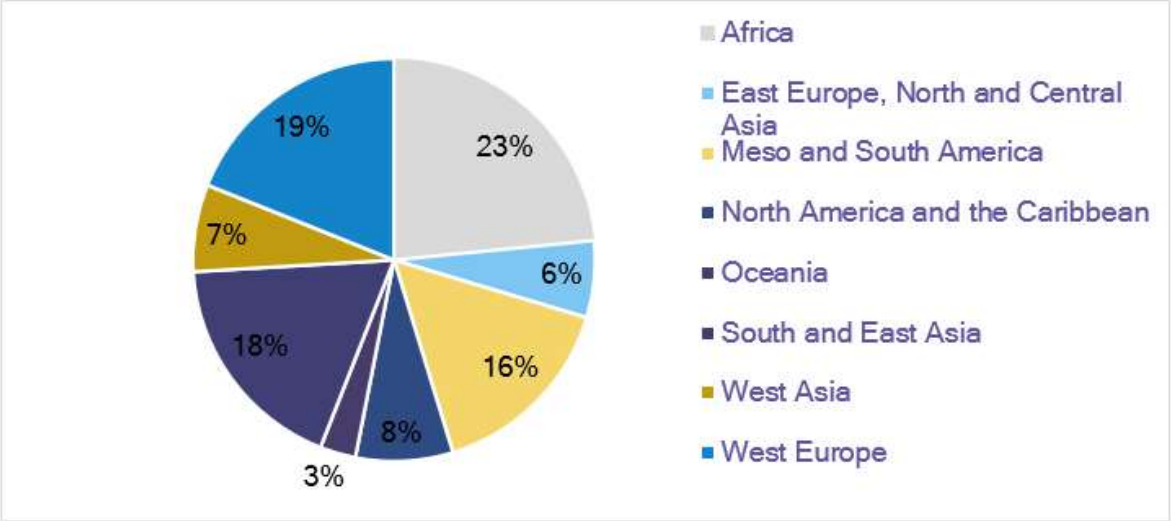


Figure 3: 2025 portfolio Member distribution by type (distinct count)

In the IUCN portfolio, the engagement with Constituents can take various forms.

- Some Constituents play an **implementation role**
- Some play a **governance and strategy role**
- Others play a **technical expertise role** contributing through specialised knowledge, resolving technical challenges and ensuring adherence to sectoral standards.
- Some are involved in **quality assurance** to help monitor and enforce quality standards, overseeing evaluations to ensure consistent project delivery.
- Finally, some provide direct **project management and coordination support**

In line with a long-term ambition where *all* projects include local Members and Commissions (in as far as possible) and demonstrate true engagement[7], the three pillars of the Union shall continue to seek opportunities to work more closely together. However, this will also change the risk profile of our work. Our ambition is to advance to a greater percentage of all projects including at least one IUCN constituent in 2025.

The survey shows that IUCN Constituents benefit from the portfolio in many further ways:

(1) Through **technical assistance**, offered as non-financial aid, helping partners with project design, skill enhancement, and strengthening their capacity for implementation.

(2) **capacity strengthening**, where members or partners are equipped with new conservation-related knowledge and skills through training, workshops, and educational materials,

(3) **policy support**, assisting partners in developing and implementing effective conservation policies, advocating for policy changes, and navigating complex policy environments, and

(4) **accessing and using science and knowledge**, empowering them to use conservation science and knowledge to achieve their goals.

COMMISSION ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT

At the Council meeting in November each Commission will present their own 2025 workplan. We do not duplicate that detail here – rather we leave them to present in their own words and their own format then.

The Union and Secretariat will continue to support the Commissions in 2025 with the aim to improve the efficiencies and effectiveness of support provided to the Commissions: membership, finance, administration and communication.

Particular focus areas in 2025 will be:

- **Socialising several new policies and guidelines** developed in 2024 including: Use of Commission logos; Principles of Engagement between Commissions and Secretariat; Commission member grievance mechanism; and Policy for Commissions members Providing Voluntary versus Paid Support to Projects (still under development).
- **Administrative and financial support for the Commission Operating Fund** including the processing of an estimated 1500 financial transactions for the Commissions.
- Ensuring Commission members can be easily found according to their expertise using **IUCN Engage.**
- **Support Commission succession planning** with four Chairs finishing two terms in October 2025.
- **Supporting Commissions with a Commission-wide member onboarding program** and with activities to increase engagement of Commission members.
- **Activities to increase the participation and engagement of all Commissions members** in the run up to and during the IUCN Congress.

RESOLUTIONS

Summary

Implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework

An inclusive and rights-based approach to conservation

An integrated approach to addressing the climate and biodiversity crises

Advancing ocean and marine conservation

Addressing waste and plastic pollution

Addressing synthetic biology

Delivering the 20-year Vision

The IUCN World Conservation Congress is the highest decision-making body of IUCN, and through the adoption of Resolutions and Recommendations, it defines the general policy of IUCN.

The last IUCN Congress in Marseille adopted a total of 137 Resolutions and Recommendations covering a wide spectrum of issues. These corresponded to both the governance of the Union as well as to the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, sustainable development and human wellbeing. IUCN will continue to make every effort to deliver existing active Resolutions, whilst paving the way for a new set of IUCN policies to be adopted at the Congress in Abu Dhabi.

Implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework

Of the 137 Marseille Resolutions, 22 explicitly address the GBF and its elements[2]. Resolution 7.116 *"Develop and implement a transformational and effective Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework"*, will continue being an overarching reference, providing a comprehensive set of key elements needed for a transformational framework. It will remain central to IUCN's efforts to implement the Biodiversity Plan.

In 2025, IUCN will continue to actively engage in the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) processes, including attending subsidiary meetings and participating in the global review of collective progress. It will offer its conservation tools, knowledge products and best practices to Parties of the CBD and other stakeholders as they navigate the implementation phase.[3] In alignment with Resolution 7.043 *"Enhancing implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity through National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)",* IUCN will continue to assist and influence Parties as they update their NBSAPs, establish national biodiversity targets, and implement them.

This will be greatly facilitated by the launch, in 2023 by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF). As a GEF Agency, IUCN begun accessing this new fund, on behalf of Parties to the CBD, in the last quarter of 2024 and expects to

continue doing so in 2025. The GBFF aims to help countries achieve the GBF goals and targets with a strategic focus on strengthening national-level biodiversity management, planning, policy, governance, and finance approaches.

IUCN will in addition leverage its partnerships and alliances [4] to influence, facilitate and drive the rapid implementation of the GBF. With support from Red List Partners, and as mandated by Resolution 7.131, IUCN will continue to fundraise for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. In line with Resolution 7.096, IUCN will actively engage with the CBD Inter-Agency Liaison Group on Invasive Alien Species (IAS), working with the other Members on the delivery of CBD COP decisions on providing guidance and tools to support progress towards GBF Target 6.

Aligned with GBF Target 3 and a number of Marseille Resolutions, including Resolution 7.080 *"Recognizing, reporting and supporting other effective area-based conservation measures"*, Resolution 7.118 *"Recognizing and supporting indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights and roles in conservation"* and Resolution 7.125 *"Setting area-based conservation targets based on evidence of what nature and people need to thrive",* IUCN will advocate strengthen and expand protected areas and OECMs in the right places while safeguarding areas of importance for biodiversity, natural heritage, climate mitigation and adaptation and recognizing the rights and territories of Indigenous peoples and local communities.

An inclusive and rights-based approach to conservation

Reinforcing an inclusive and rights-based approach to conservation, Marseille Resolutions 7.002, 7.036, 7.041, 7.115, 7.118, 7.119, 7.129 and 7.137 explicitly refer to Indigenous peoples and to local communities. These Resolutions will help shape collaboration across the Union to advocate for the recognition and respect of Indigenous rights and territories and the important role Indigenous peoples play in conservation. IUCN is committed to continuing its advocacy for the safeguarding of Indigenous rights.

In 2025, IUCN will advance its commitment through the Podong Indigenous Peoples' Initiative[5], enhancing its collaboration with the IUCN Indigenous Peoples' Organisations Members and the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) to support Indigenous peoples' contributions to the conservation of biodiversity and climate solutions through their Indigenous knowledge systems. IUCN will continue its efforts to ensure their full and effective leadership and access to adequate resources for the implementation of the GBF, the Paris Agreement and other global goals.

An integrated approach to addressing the climate and biodiversity crises

Building on Resolutions 7.015, 7.030, 7.032 and in particular 7.114, IUCN will continue to call for limiting global warming to below 1.5°C through sustained reduction of emissions and increase in removals from sinks. IUCN will advocate for the elimination of all fossil fuel subsidies as well as the use of coal for energy and the reduction of other fossil fuel consumption. The relationship between nature conservation and climate change will continue to feature as one of IUCN's key policy messages, including the impact of climate change on species and ecosystems. IUCN will continue to advocate for the energy transition to renewables as both nature positive and just.

In line with Resolution 7.060 "*Promotion of the* IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions*,"* IUCN will continue to call on all actors and sectors implementing NbS, whether through market or non-market mechanisms, to adhere to a high-integrity approach in the design, verification and scaling up of such initiatives by applying the IUCN Global Standard for NbS™. The implementation of this Resolution will be further supported by the roll-out of ENACT - *Enhancing Nature-based Solutions for an Accelerated Climate Transformation*, which IUCN can deploy to amplify and support accelerated implementation of NbS and commitments through profiling and promoting good practices and success stories.

In 2025, IUCN will continue its impactful engagement in UNFCCC processes, particularly at COP30 in Brazil, and through its UN Observer role will provide input into COP30 decisions and outcomes aligning with IUCN's Resolutions, Programme and 20-year Strategic Vision.

Advancing ocean and marine conservation

The ocean and marine conservation agenda will be an integral part of IUCN efforts in 2025, guided by Resolutions 7.019, 7.023, 7.025, 7.032, 7.107, 7.113, 7.116, 7.122 and 7.128. These Marseille Resolutions provide a clear mandate and direction for Council, Members, Commissions and the Secretariat to accelerate action on ocean and marine conservation. Collaboration on initiatives related to legal and regulatory frameworks, the BBNJ agreement, the third United Nations Oceans Conference, and the development of a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution in marine environments will continue to be a priority.

In support of the new High Seas Treaty (BBNJ agreement) and in line with Resolution 7.128 *"Acting for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in the ocean beyond national jurisdiction"*, IUCN will call on its Members for technical support and active participation in implementing the agreement. Working through its Commissions, IUCN will provide scientific and legal advice to ensure the effective implementation of area-based management tools, particularly marine protected areas, to combat climate change and protect marine ecosystems, safeguarding the benefits these ecosystems provide to people while aligning with GBF Target 3. IUCN will develop an Explanatory Guide on the BBNJ agreement, through a consultative and participatory process involving UNOC, CBD, IUCN WCC and others.

In fulfilling the mandate from Resolution 7.122 "*Protection of deep-ocean ecosystems and biodiversity through a moratorium on seabed mining"*, IUCN will advocate for a moratorium on deep seabed mining, issuing of new exploitation and new exploration contracts, and the adoption of seabed mining regulations for exploitation, by the International Seabed Authority (ISA).

Addressing waste and plastic pollution

The focus on the broader chemicals, waste and pollution agenda in 2025 will grow with increasing requests for action to tackle plastic pollution as evidenced in Marseille Resolutions 7.010, 7.015, 7.019, 7.069, 7.077, as well as action on other international biodiversity goals and targets including Target 7 of the GBF and SDG12.

Through its active engagement in the negotiations towards the adoption of a legally-binding UN treaty to tackle plastic pollution, engagement in the wider international policy processes

on pollution, chemicals and waste, and the implementation of various projects, IUCN will continue to address these issues in line with the mandates provided by the Resolutions 7.019 "*Stopping the global plastic pollution crisis in marine environments by 2030"* and 7.069 "*Eliminate plastic pollution in protected areas, with priority action on single-use plastic product".*

Addressing synthetic biology

Recent technological advancements in synthetic biology create both significant risks and significant opportunities for nature conservation, as well as challenges in creating coherent policies and regulations to guide its potential applications. In 2025, guided by the IUCN Council, the Union will continue to advance in the implementation of Resolution 7.123 "*Towards development of an IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation"* which to date has followed a rigorous process to engage Members and experts in the development of this new IUCN policy.

This effort is being led by the 16 members of the Policy Development Working Group, who have been closely following the process mandated in the IUCN Resolution. The Working Group developed a first draft policy in early 2024, which underwent Union-wide peer-review and generated 391 comments. The Working Group met to then revise the draft policy on the basis of these comments, responding to each individually, and producing a second draft which in turn underwent Union-wide peer review between July and August and yielded 430 comments. In 2025, the IUCN Secretariat will continue to support this process with a view to presenting the Policy for adoption at the World Conservation Congress, as part of a Council-led motion.

20-year Strategic Vision

In 2021, through the Marseille Congress Decision 147, IUCN Members requested

Council to develop a new 20-year Strategic Vision for the Union. The IUCN Council established an intersessional Council Working Group (the 20-year Strategic Vision Steering Committee [6]) to lead and work with the Director General on this strategic initiative. The Congress Decision requested the Council to:

- "develop a long-term integrated Strategic Vision that includes a Financial Strategy, a Strategic Plan and other implementation plans, that follow the four-year planning process of the Union"; and
- "establish a clear roadmap to ensure the Union effectively and efficiently fulfils its mandated objectives, in particular by actively engaging its membership, while ensuring financial sustainability".

A final draft of the 20-year Strategic Vision was created in May 2024, followed closely by the Financial Strategy as an annex to this document. The IUCN Council Finance and Audit Committee worked closely with the Steering Committee in shaping this Annex.

The 20-year Strategic Vision document has subsequently been aligned with the draft Programme 2026-2029. Both underwent a full feedback process through the Regional Conservation Fora (RCFs) and an online questionnaire for IUCN Members, Commission

experts and Secretariat staff to make comments. In addition, individual meetings with special groups such as Indigenous Peoples and the Youth Advisory Committee, as well as the private sector at the Leaders Forum in October 2024, also served to gather feedback on the 20-year Strategic Vision. The Vision's Finance Strategy, however, received less exposure, reason for which the IUCN Secretariat will be running two or three online workshops to gather further Member feedback and attain sufficient and targeted engagement on this critical piece of the 20-year Strategic Vision.

The aim is to consolidate all internal and external feedback received and to create a next draft of the 20-year Strategic Vision in January 2025, which then needs to be agreed by the Steering Committee before being placed before Congress. Work continues at pace.

APPENDIX: PROGRAMME PORTFOLIO

2025 overview

In 2025 and in line with previous years, the value of the project portfolio will continue its slight upward trend from CHF986m to CHF1,063m. More detail is provided in the following section.

The portfolio under implementation grows significantly while there is a notable decrease in projects under development. The overall portfolio value increases moderately by 8%

Figure 4: Evolution of the portfolio value (CHF million)

Notes:

* Project types included: Executing, implementing, SLA
* Project types excluded: Loosely earmarked, over the counter, internal investments

While the portfolio has slightly fewer projects and shorter average durations, the average value per project has grown significantly

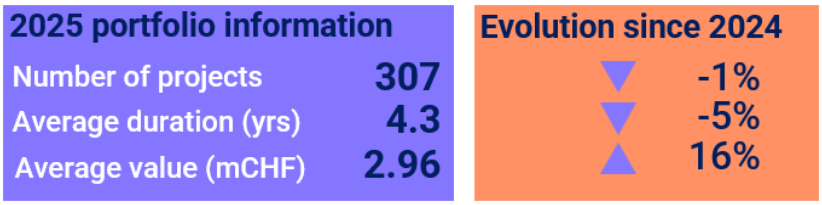


Figure 5: Basic portfolio information

Notes:

* C projects
* Project types included: Executing, implementing, SLA

The majority of the portfolio activities are focused on national-level projects, while global and regional projects represent smaller portions of the total portfolio value.

Figure 6: 2025 portfolio activities by geographic level

Notes:

* B & C projects
* Project types included: Executing, implementing, SLA
* Project types excluded: Loosely earmarked, over the counter, internal investments

In 2025, portfolio growth is observed across most donor types, with the biggest increase in working with governments

Donor type	2024 budget contract amount (MCHF)	2025 budget contract amount (MCHF)
Multilateral Organisations	468	435
Governments	235	348
Foundations	39	52
International NGOs	12	32
National NGOs	4	16
Private	14	15
High Net Worth Individual	0	8
Academic	3	1
TOTAL	774	908

Figure 7: Portfolio value by donor type

Notes:
* C projects only
* Project types included: Executing, implementing, SLA
* Project types excluded: Loosely earmarked, over the counter, internal investments

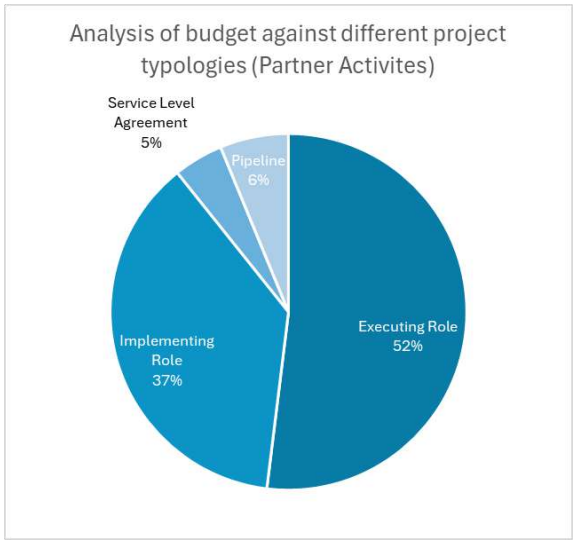
In 2025, the government of Germany becomes IUCN's top donor

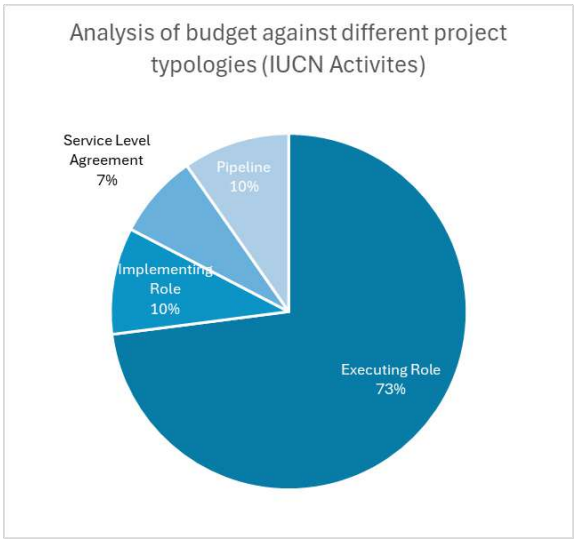
Donor	2025 Budget (m CHF)
Government of Germany	22.5
Global Environment Facility	19.8
Green Climate Fund	14.0
European Commission	11.7
Government of the United States of America	7.4
United Nations Environment Programme	4.6
Government of France	4.4
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	4.0
Government of Sweden	3.5
Government of the Netherlands	3.2

Table 1: 2025 budget distribution by top 10 donors

Notes
* C projects only
* Project types included: Executing, implementing, SLA
* Project types excluded: Loosely earmarked, over the counter, internal investments

The budget expenditures distribution across the IUCN project typology demonstrates the importance of the executing role in the financial balance of IUCN – representing app. 69% of the portfolio value in 2025. However, it is worth pointing out that increasingly IUCN's execution role is characterized by a regranting component where resources are channelled to IUCN members and partners and the total value transferred through these efforts is substantial. For instance, the value of all active projects (C projects) that have at least one grant making component sums to **340 million CHF**, representing **37% of the total portfolio value**. This trend is growing with the value of all pipeline projects (C and B) with at least one grant making component sums to 78 million CHF, representing 50% of the total pipeline value. Furthermore in addition to the actual regranting element these projects tend to be characterised by an increased focus on knowledge transfer and management, support for monitoring and evaluation and capacity building.





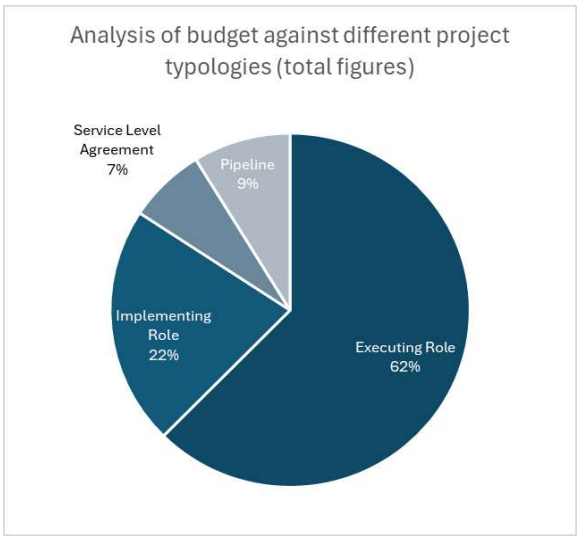


Figure 8: 2025 budgeted expenditures by project type

Notes

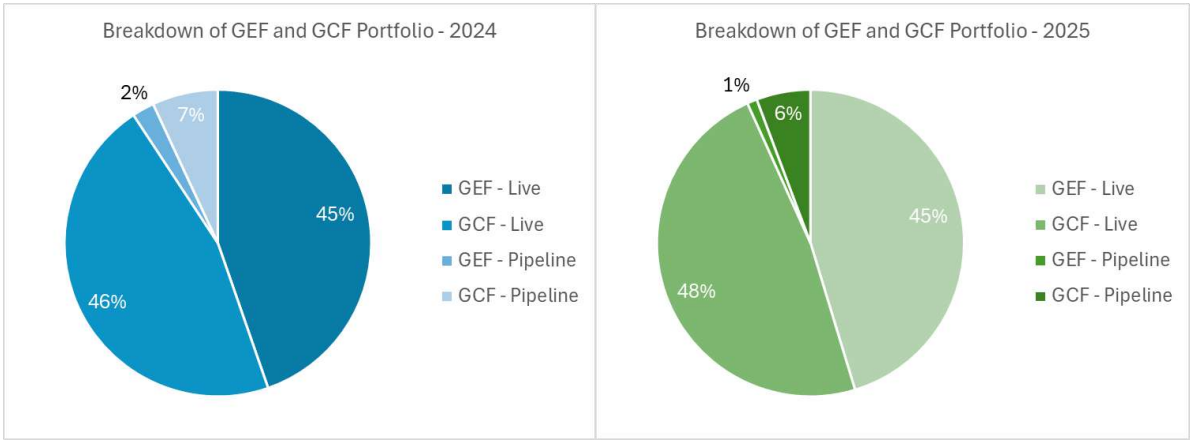
* Project types included: Executing, implementing, SLA
* Project types excluded: Loosely earmarked, over the counter, internal investments

GEF and GCF portfolio values (portfolio and annual tranche) are both decreasing as we move into 2025. This trend is valid for both projects under implementation and what is currently in the pipeline.

Figure 9: Comparison of 2024 and 2025 GEF and GCF portfolios

Notes

- GEF projects shown are only those for which IUCN is the implementing agency.



The 2025 IUCN budget allocations to the SDGs reflect a small increase in funding for most goals, a considerable boost for SDG 13 (Climate action) and SDG 14 (Life below water), and a decrease for SDG 17 (Partnership for the Goals)

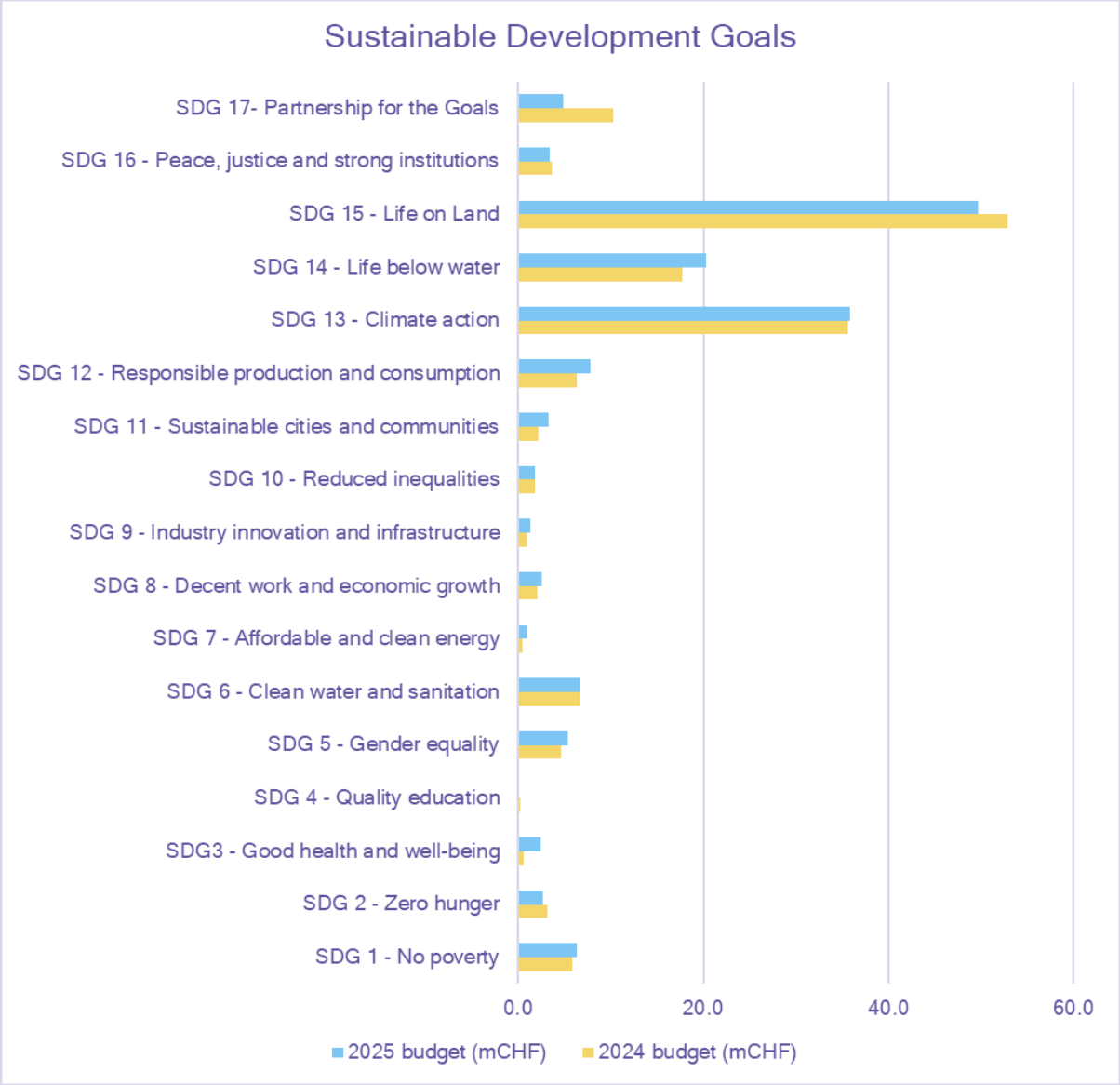


Figure 10: 2024 and 2025 budget allocation per SDG (mCHF)

Notes

* B & C projects
* Project types included: Executing, implementing, SLA
* Project types excluded: Loosely earmarked, over the counter, internal investments

International Union for Conservation of Nature

WORKPLAN & BUDGET 2025

Credit: quang nguyen vinh, Pexels

Part II - BUDGET

Approved by the IUCN Council on 6 November 2024

Part II Contents

PART II 2025 BUDGET 3
Summary 3
Overall financial situation 3
Reserves 6
Budget summary 7
Income 8
Membership dues 8
Framework income 9
Other unrestricted income 10
Operating expenditure 11
Other income and expenditure 12
Transfers from/(to) reserves 12
PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS 13
THE BIG 5 AND RISK 15
Introduction 15
Increasing unrestricted income and diversifying our revenue streams to ensure flexibility 15
Building reserves and ensuring sufficient reserves to manage through a crisis and invest in our future 16
De-risking the portfolio and pro-actively addressing long-term risks 16
Greater cost recovery 16
Controlling costs and investing in programming to support our mission and future development 17
Focusing on Risk Management 18
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FINANCIAL PLAN 2021-2025 19
ANALYSIS OF THE 2025 BUDGET BY ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE 20
STAFFING LEVELS AND COSTS 24
ALLOCATION OF UNRESTRICTED INCOME 25
FINANCIAL RISKS IN THE 2025 BUDGET 26

PART II 2025 BUDGET

Summary

The 2025 budget represents the fifth year of implementation of the 2021-2025 Financial Plan and is a year where we are laying the foundations for the financial strategy for the 20-year Vision to be voted on at Congress towards the end of 2025.

The total income budget is 2025 CHF 214m and the total expenditure budget is CHF 213m, a significant increase on the forecast for 2024 (total expenditure CHF 166m) and that of 2023 (CHF 164m). The Congress is responsible for the most significant increase in both income and expenditure in 2025, compared with 2024. See Figure 1 below.

A surplus of CHF 2.1m is budgeted for 2025.

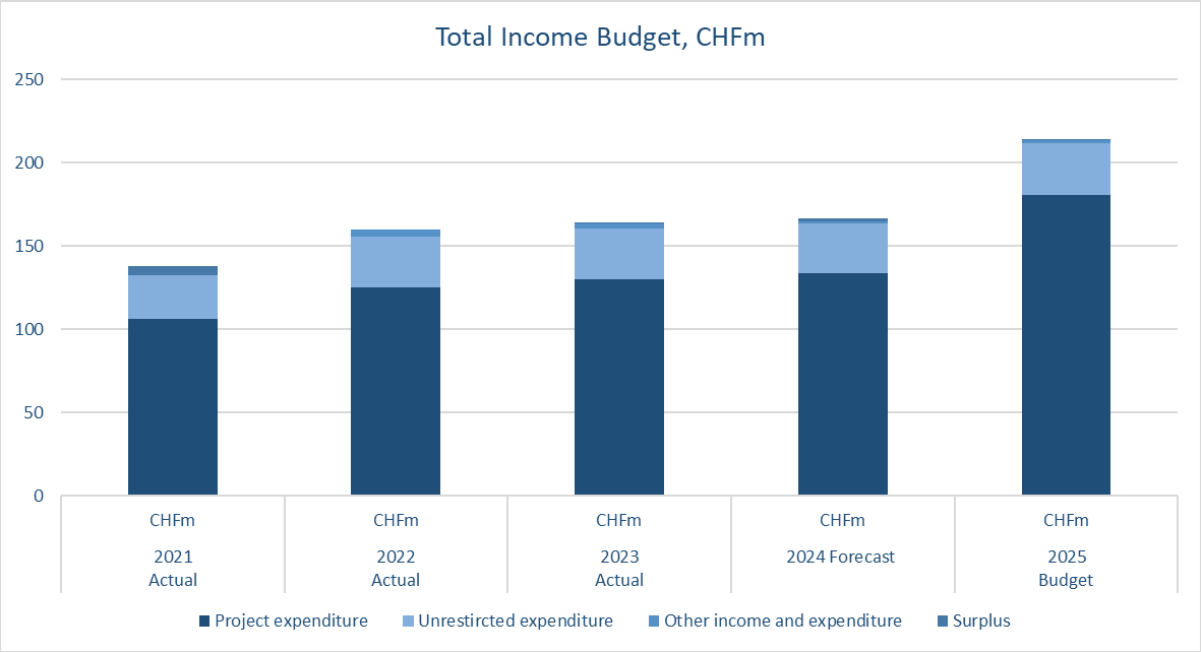


Figure 1: Total income budget

Overall financial situation

Our funding pipeline remains strong, driven by donor support for the IUCN Programme and a growing project portfolio. 81% of project funding for the 2025 budget is secured. However, to be prudent, the budgeted value of membership dues and Framework income are based on the 2024 projected income. IUCN finances face a number of structural challenges identified in the financial plan for the 20-year strategy. During 2025 several initiatives and plans will also be completed to ensure budgets for 2026 and beyond can reflect the needed changes.

Figure 2 shows income trends over the last 3 years together with the forecast for 2024 and the budget for 2025. Project income shows a steady increase from 2021 to 2024 and a substantial increase in 2025 driven by both the World Conservation Congress and increases across the project portfolio. Project Income is recognised as expenditure is incurred.

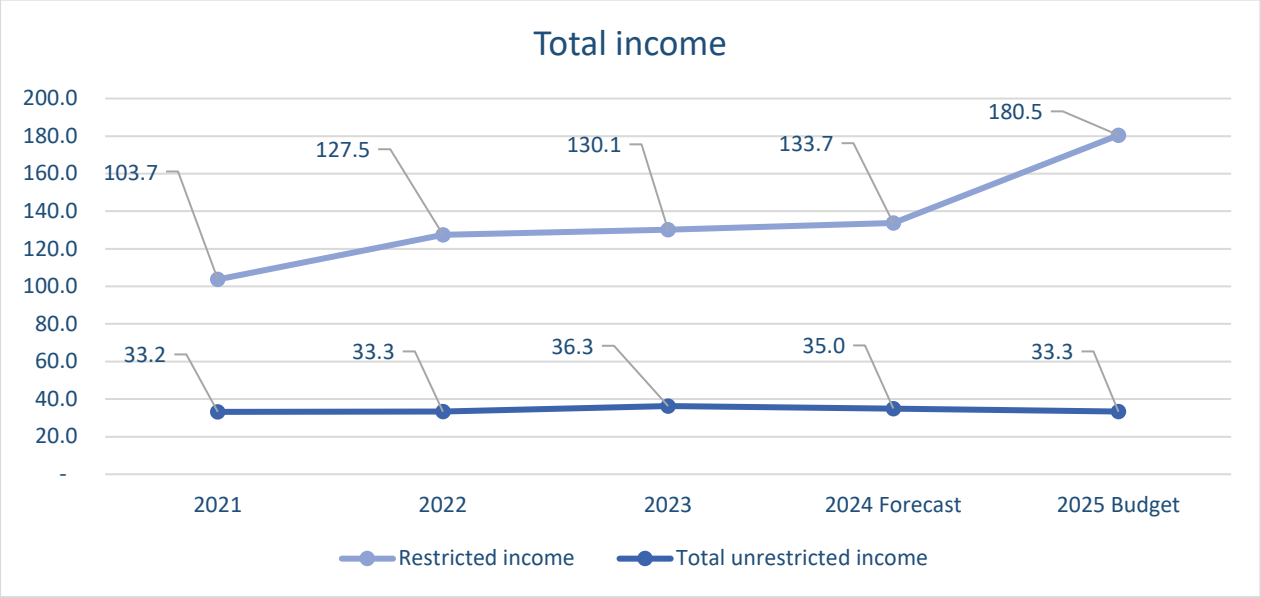


Figure 2: Income trends, CHF Million

The above figures include Congress 2025 income budget of CHF24.2m.

Figure 3 shows trends in unrestricted income. Framework Income is expected to remain constant in 2025 and Membership dues are expected to decline slightly. The main reasons the Other Income budget has reduced in 2025 are owing to a 2-year donation from BNP Paribas that ended in 2024, and separately some reclassifications of project income.

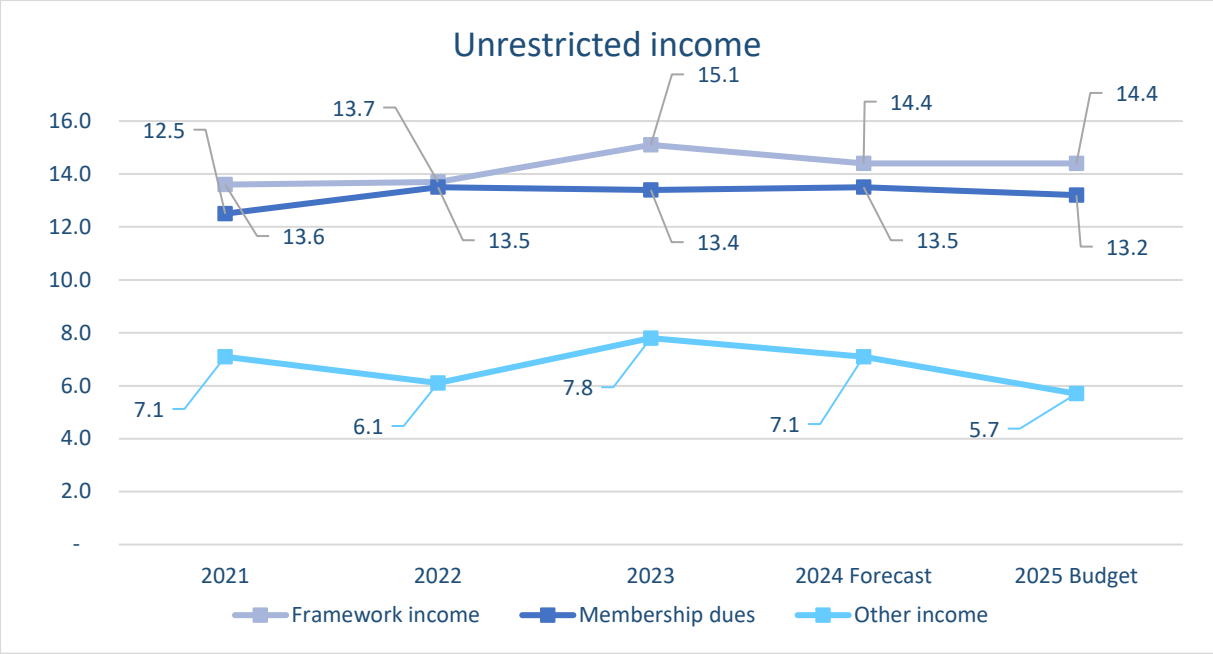


Figure 3: Unrestricted income trends, CHF million

Figure 4 below shows the evolution of the value of the project portfolio total value. At the end of September 2024 projects under implementation had a total value of CHF 908m and those under development a total value of CHF 155m. The light blue bar shows projects under development and this has slipped back slightly given the high level of project wins.

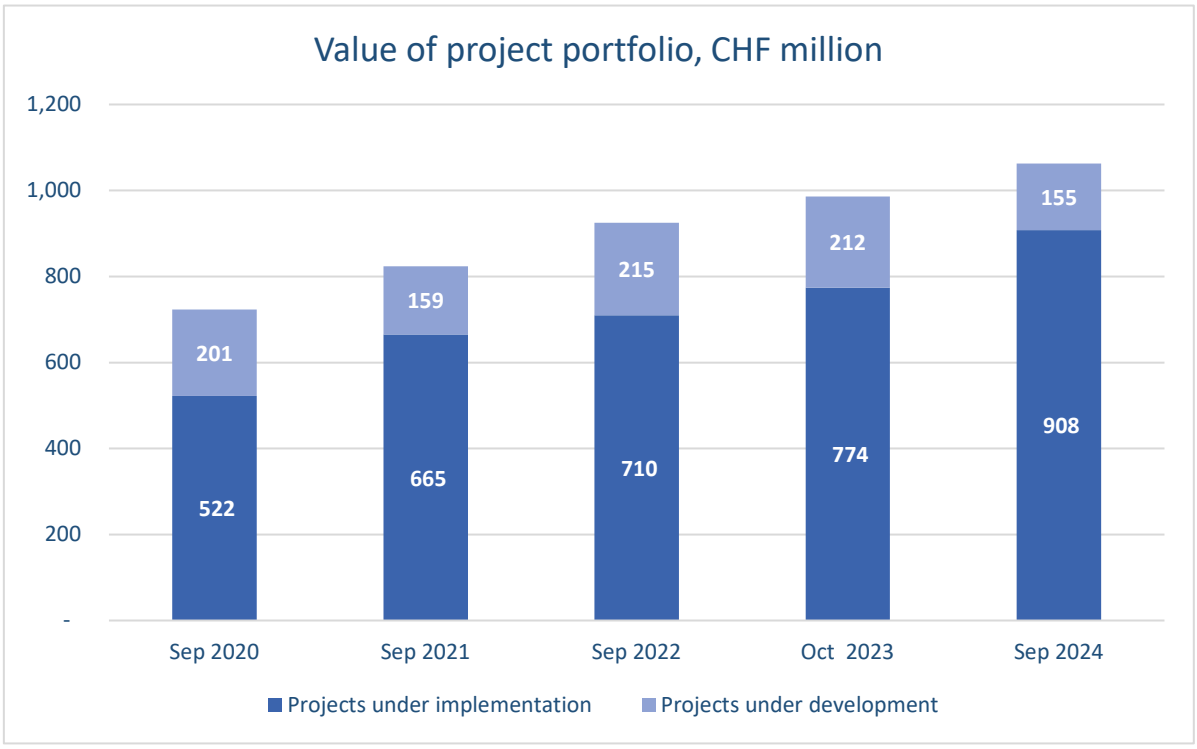


Figure 4: Portfolio evolution, showing execution, implementation and service level agreement total portfolio value.

Reserves

IUCN reserves stood at CHF 24.0m at the end of 2023, comprising CHF 20.6m in unrestricted reserves and CHF 3.4m in designated reserves. The 2024 forecast anticipates an increase of unrestricted reserves to CHF 22.9m and the 2025 budget an increase to CHF 25.0m. Figure 5 shows the expected progression of reserves.

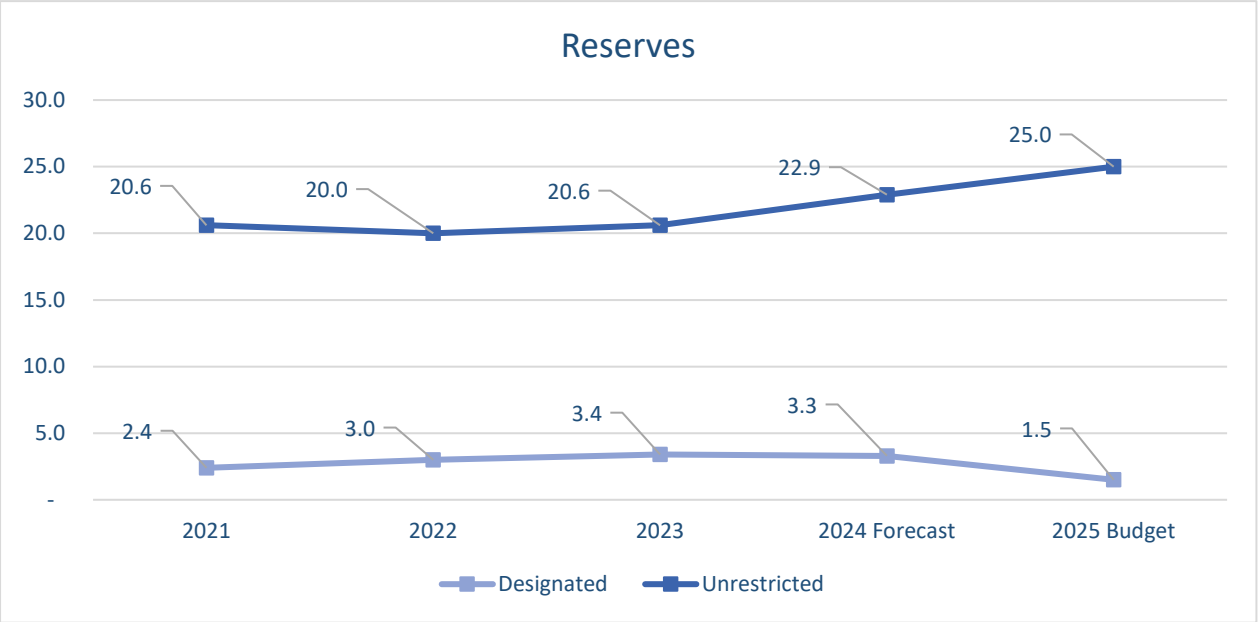


Figure 5: IUCN Reserves, CHF Million

A growing portfolio and the expansion of grant-making programmes and projects implemented through partner organisations continue to increase the level of financial risk taken on by IUCN. It is therefore essential that IUCN builds its reserves to support higher levels of risk, while balancing this off against the investment needed to drive unrestricted and our infrastructure for the future. This is a fine balancing act, but one we must get right – further explored in the Big 5 section below. The current unrestricted reserves target is CHF 36m. This will be recalibrated in 2025 to take account of portfolio growth and planned changes in its composition.

Reserves are also discussed under the financial strategy Big 5 “Building Reserves and ensuring sufficient reserves to manage through a crisis and invest in our future”.

...

Budget summary

Total Table 1 shows the budget for 2025, analysed between unrestricted (Unrest.) and restricted (Rest.) funding streams. The budgeted result for 2025 is a surplus of CHF 2.1 million.

Total Income is budgeted at CHF 213.8m in 2025 (Budget 2024: CHF 187.2m) and total expenditure at CHF 213.4m. Reserve movements of CHF 1.7m (described in section "Transfer from/(to) reserves" below) bring the budgeted result to CHF 2.1m.

BUDGET SUMMARY	2023			2024			2025		
	Unrest.	Rest.	Total	Unrest.	Rest.	Total	Unrest.	Rest.	Total
CHF m	Actual	Actual	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Budget	Budget	Budget
Income									
Membership dues (gross)	13.4		**13.4**	13.5		**13.5**	13.2		**13.2**
Framework income	13.1	2.0	**15.1**	12.4	2.0	**14.4**	14.4		**14.4**
Project income		128.1	**128.1**		131.7	**131.7**		180.5	**180.5**
Other income	7.8		**7.8**	7.1		**7.1**	5.7		**5.7**
Total income	**34.3**	**130.1**	**164.4**	**33.0**	**133.7**	**166.7**	**33.3**	**180.5**	**213.8**
Cross charges and allocations									
Allocations to projects	(2.6)	2.6	-			-	(0.5)	0.5	-
Staff cost recovery	37.0	(37.0)	-	40.6	(40.6)	-	41.6	(41.6)	-
Indirect cost recovery	11.6	(11.6)	-	12.1	(12.1)	-	14.3	(14.3)	-
Total cross charges and allocations	**46.0**	**(46.0)**	**-**	**52.7**	**(52.7)**	**-**	**55.4**	**(55.4)**	**-**
Operating expenditure									
Staff costs	62.8		**62.8**	68.4		**68.4**	70.6		**70.6**
Other operating costs	13.3		**13.3**	14.3		**14.3**	15.8		**15.8**
IUCN activities		44.3	**44.3**		30.5	**30.5**		60.8	**60.8**
Implementing partner activities		39.8	**39.8**		50.5	**50.5**		64.3	**64.3**
Total operating expenditure	**76.1**	**84.1**	**160.2**	**82.7**	**81.0**	**163.7**	**86.4**	**125.1**	**211.5**
Net operating result	**4.2**	**-**	**4.2**	**3.0**	**-**	**3.0**	**2.3**	**-**	**2.3**
Other income and expenditure									
Interest income and financial charges	0.3		**0.3**	0.3		**0.3**	-		**-**
Investment gain / (losses)	0.3		**0.3**	0.6		**0.6**	-		**-**
Foreign exchange losses	(2.3)		**(2.3)**	(0.5)		**(0.5)**	(0.8)		**(0.8)**
Provisions and write offs	(1.4)		**(1.4)**	(1.3)		**(1.3)**	(1.1)		**(1.1)**
Total other income and expenditure	**(3.1)**	**-**	**(3.1)**	**(0.9)**	**-**	**(0.9)**	**(1.9)**	**-**	**(1.9)**
Result for the year	**1.1**	**-**	**1.1**	**2.1**	**-**	**2.1**	**0.4**	**-**	**0.4**
Transfers from / (to) designated reserves	(0.5)		**(0.5)**	0.2		**0.2**	1.7		**1.7**
Result after reserve transfers	**0.6**	**-**	**0.6**	**2.3**	**-**	**2.3**	**2.1**	**-**	**2.1**

Table 1: Budget Summary

The budget includes initial investments on organizational development referred to as the "Big 5":

(1) increasing unrestricted income and diversifying our revenue streams to ensure flexibility,

(2) building reserves and ensuring sufficient reserves to manage through a crisis and invest in our future,

(3) de-risking the portfolio and pro-actively addressing long-term risks

(4) increasing cost recovery; and

(5) controlling costs and investing in programming that will achieve our mission and future development. IUCN will also need to strengthen its financial governance to achieve this.

Plans, investments and work in these areas form the path forward for our short- and medium-term financial goals over the next several years.

These investments are further explored in section 4 below.

Income

Membership dues

Table 2 shows details of the budget for membership dues.

MEMBERSHIP DUES	2023 Unrest.	2024 Unrest.	2025 Unrest.
CHF m	**Actual**	**Forecast**	**Budget**
Membership dues (gross)	13.4	13.5	13.2
Provision for non-payment	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.6)
Net Membership dues	**12.6**	**12.7**	**12.6**

Table 2: Membership dues

Membership dues are budgeted at CHF 13.2m, slightly lower than the forecast for 2024. It does not include an estimate of dues from Members that may join in 2025, nor does it include an estimate of Members who may leave. In a Congress year we expect an uplift in members but are unsure given the state of global events. We have budgeted on a prudent basis. A provision of CHF 0.6m has been budgeted to cover the risk of late payment or defaults.

Framework income

Table 3 shows details of framework income by partner (including funding given for innovation), analysed between unrestricted and restricted sources.

FRAMEWORK INCOME	2023	2024	2025
	Unrest.	Unrest.	Unrest.
CHF m	Actual	Forecast	Budget
Denmark	1.5	1.3	3.3
Norway	1.7	1.8	1.8
Sweden	4.1	4.0	4.1
Switzerland	1.5	1.5	1.5
France	1.3	1.1	1.2
Finland	0.7	0.7	0.7
Republic of Korea	0.7	0.8	0.8
United States	0.5	0.5	0.5
Luxembourg	0.5	0.5	0.5
New Partner			-
Deferred	0.6	0.2	-
Total Framework income	**13.1**	**12.4**	**14.4**
In-kind	**1.1**	**1.1**	**1.0**
Cash	**12.0**	**11.3**	**13.4**

Table 3: Framework income

Framework income is budgeted at CHF 14.4m. The budget is based upon the assumption that existing contracts with framework partners will be renewed in 2025 at the same level as 2024. We have started renegotiating our framework agreements and will continue this in 2025. See the Big 5 section "Renewing and Expanding Framework Partnerships" for more information below.

Unrestricted contributions include CHF 1.0m of in-kind contributions. This represents the value of staff provided by some partners. Some of these staff have technical programmatic roles, and others corporate roles.

The 2024 forecast includes CHF 0.2m of income deferred from 2023.

Other unrestricted income

Table 4 shows details of other unrestricted income.

OTHER UNRESTRICTED INCOME	2023	2024	2025
	Unrest.	Unrest.	Unrest.
CHF m	Actual	Forecast	Budget
Government tax exemptions	1.8	1.7	1.8
Rental income and services	0.9	1.0	1.3
Patrons of Nature	0.6	0.7	0.7
Deferred income	0.8	0.8	0.5
Consultancy income	0.2	0.3	0.1
Other income	3.5	2.6	1.3
Total Other Unrestricted income	**7.8**	**7.1**	**5.7**

Table 4: Other unrestricted income

Other unrestricted income is budgeted at CHF 5.7m. This includes income from Patrons of Nature (CHF 0.7m), rental and service fee income from 3rd parties (CHF 1.3m), the in-kind value of tax exemptions (CHF 1.8m) and other income (CHF 1.3m).

Fundraising and project development

There is high potential to increase fundraising return; to realise this it will be necessary to invest in our fundraising efforts to drive unrestricted growth for the future (more below in the BIG 5 section).

Fundraising for unrestricted or loosely restricted funds is performed primarily by the Strategic Partnerships Unit at Headquarters and to a lesser extent the Regional Office for North America which raises funds from high-net-worth individuals and foundations through its 501(c)(3) entity. The total budget is CHF 1.2m, representing 1.4% of unrestricted operating costs, less than similar organizations would spend. However, we saw a massive effort by regions to fundraise for the Regional Conservation Forums in 2024. This is not included in the figures above.

Additional fundraising investment in 2025 is catalytic. It will be directed towards gathering data on where best to place future investment to build unrestricted funding, match funding and project flexible funding.. This will form the basis of a forward-looking fundraising plan.

Operating expenditure

Table 5 shows details of operating expenditure.

OPERATING EXPENDITURE	2023		2024		2025	
	Unrestricted		Unrestricted		Unrestricted	
CHF m	Actual	%	Forecast	%	Budget	%
Staff costs	**62.8**	**83%**	**68.4**	**83%**	**70.6**	**82%**
Operating expenditure						
Consultants	2.4	3%	2.6	3%	2.8	3%
Grants to partners	0.5	1%	0.5	1%	0.1	0%
Travel	2.8	4%	3.0	4%	4.2	5%
Workshops and conferences	0.3	0%	0.3	0%	0.5	1%
Publications and printing costs	0.5	1%	0.5	1%	0.7	1%
Office and general administrative costs	3.2	4%	3.5	4%	3.7	4%
Vehicles & equipment - costs & maintenance	1.0	1%	1.1	1%	1.1	1%
Professional fees and costs	0.5	1%	0.5	1%	0.5	1%
Depreciation and amortization	2.1	3%	2.3	3%	2.2	3%
Sub-total Other operating expenditure	**13.3**	**17%**	**14.3**	**17%**	**15.8**	**18%**
Total Operating expenditure	**76.1**	**100%**	**82.7**	**100%**	**86.4**	**100%**

Table 5: Operating expenditure

The increase in staff costs of CHF 2.2m in 2025 compared to the forecast for 2024 is compensated by an increase in staff cost recovery of CHF 1m and a modest increase in indirect cost recovery as this also funds certain staff positions. The increase in staff costs is due to additional positions for Congress, and additional programme positions, linked to higher levels of project expenditure in the Regions and Centres. Inflation is also a contributory factor.

The increase of CHF 1.2m in travel primarily relates to the funding of participants to the World Conservation Congress in 2025.

Reduction in grants to partners is partially compensated by a slight increase of the costs in the budget line “Consultants” and the fact that additional new grant agreements covering financial year 2025 might be signed at a later stage.

Other income and expenditure

Table 6 shows details of other income and expenditure.

OTHER INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	2023	2024	2025
	Unrest.	Unrest.	Unrest.
CHF m	Actual	Forecast	Budget
Interest income and financial charges	0.3	0.3	-
Investment gain / (losses)	0.3	0.6	-
Foreign exchange losses	(2.3)	(0.5)	(0.8)
Provisions and write offs	(1.4)	(1.3)	(1.1)
Total Other Unrestricted income	**(3.1)**	**(0.9)**	**(1.9)**

Table 6: Other income and expenditure

Interest income and financial charges include interest of CHF 0.1m and financial charges of CHF 0.1m. The current trend is towards a reduction in interest rates and hence interest income. Many donors also require that any interest earned on their cash advances are credited to the project being funded.

Nothing has been budgeted for increases in the value of IUCN's investment portfolio through asset growth, nor has any provision been made for possible losses. The assumption is that the investment portfolio at the same level, as we work to find new investment advisors.

A provision of CHF 0.8m has been budgeted for foreign exchange losses. A hedging strategy is in place to minimise such losses; however, this cannot protect IUCN from losses that result from the translation of balance sheets maintained in non-CHF currencies.

Provisions and write offs include a provision for projects in deficit of CHF 0.5m and a provision for non-payment of membership dues of CHF 0.6m.

Transfers from/(to) reserves

In 2025 CHF 1.7m will be released from designated reserves. This is money set aside for specific purposes. Releases from reserves are as follows (including):

- CHF 0.1m will be released from designated reserves to cover part of the January 2025 Council Meeting.
- CHF 0.3m will be released from designated reserves to fund work on the 20-year strategy.
- CHF 0.9m will be released from designated reserves to fund 2025 World Conservation Congress.
- CHF 0.4m will be released from designated reserves for the Commissions

PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS

Total project expenditure is budgeted at CHF 181m (including CHF24.2m for Congress) compared to a 2024 forecast of CHF 133.7m.

Table 7 shows the evolution of project expenditure over the period 2023 to 2025, analysed by the main expenditure categories.

PROJECT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	2023		2024		2025	
	Restricted		Restricted		Restricted	
CHF m	Actual	%	Forecast	%	Budget	%
Project income	**130.1**	**98%**	**133.7**	**100%**	**180.5**	**100%**
Allocations from unrestricted income	2.6	2%	-	0%	0.5	0%
Total income	**132.7**	**100%**	**133.7**	**100%**	**181.0**	**100%**
Project expenditure						
IUCN activities	44.3	33%	30.5	23%	60.8	34%
Implementing partner activities	39.8	30%	50.5	38%	64.3	36%
IUCN staff costs recovery	37.0	28%	40.6	30%	41.6	23%
Overheads cost recovery	11.6	9%	12.1	9%	14.3	8%
Total project expenditure	**132.7**	**100%**	**133.7**	**100%**	**181.0**	**100%**

Table 7: Project income and expenditure

Growth is strongest in implementing partner activities (primarily GEF/GCF portfolio) after adjusting for the impact of the Congress on the 2025 IUCN activities figures above. The Secretariat will continue work started in 2022 to increase the level of cost recovery from the portfolio and hence the proportion of the infrastructure funded by the project portfolio. This will include a more rigorous approach to budgeting and strengthened project review, including an assessment of financial returns, before entering into contracts with donors.

The substantial work, started in 2024, to de-risk the project portfolio, will be completed in 2025.

Table 8 (reproduced below from the workplan) provides an analysis of project expenditure by project typology.

Typology definitions are as follows:

Executing**:** IUCN is responsible for the management and administration of the day-to-day activities of projects in accordance with performance and assurance requirement from the implementing role or other donors.

Implementing: IUCN is responsible for the oversight of project execution performed by other entities and accountable to the Funds on the delivery of the project. IUCN receives money directly from the donor and is responsible for disbursing fund to executing agencies

Internal investment**:** A temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique service, product or business capability based on our institutional priorities

Loosely earmarked funding**:** Flexible funds provided by a donor(s) linked to geography (region, country, etc.), a programme/thematic area that we can manage.

Over the Counter: A service or a product that would generate income by offering it to mass or multiple customers. These could include Convenings (eg Congress), publications etc

Service Level Agreements are projects set up to deliver a service to meet the objectives of a client in exchange for consideration (payment). The client, together with IUCN has defined the scope of work and outcomes. Private sector engagement could fall under this typology.

PROJECT EXPENDITURE BY PROJECT TYPOLOGY	2025				
	Restricted				
	Budget				
CHF m	IUCN activities	Implementing partner activities	Overheads cost recovery	IUCN staff costs recovery	**Total**
Under implementation - C list	**36.0**	**60.3**	**13.1**	**36.8**	**146.2**
Executing Role	28.6	33.4	7.8	27.7	**97.5**
Implementing Role	3.8	24.0	4.2	2.1	**34.1**
Internal Investment	-	-	-	0.2	**0.2**
Loosely Earmark	0.2	-	-	0.2	**0.4**
Over The Counter	0.4	-	-	2.7	**3.1**
Service Level Agreement	3.0	2.9	1.1	3.9	**10.9**
Pipeline projects - B list	**24.8**	**4.0**	**1.2**	**4.8**	**34.8**
Executing Role	2.5	3.1	0.6	3.5	**9.7**
Implementing Role	0.2	0.9	0.3	0.1	**1.5**
Internal Investment	-	-	-	-	**-**
Loosely Earmark	-	-	-	-	**-**
Over The Counter	21.0	-	-	0.1	**21.1**
Service Level Agreement	1.1	-	0.3	1.1	**2.5**
Total project expenditure	**60.8**	**64.3**	**14.3**	**41.6**	**181.0**

Table 8: Project expenditure by project typology

Expenditure under the executing role represents 59% of total project expenditure, implementation 20%, over the counter 13% (2025 Congress) and Service Level Agreements 7%.

In 2025 the Academy and NbS are included under Executing, The Academy is growing with small surpluses; discounted courses and pro bono learning are available for many members. The NbS budget is mainly focused on technical assistance – helping the private sector to change.

THE BIG 5 AND RISK

Introduction

Council are articulating IUCN's financial sustainability in both the short and long term as the 'BIG 5' financial concerns: (1) increasing unrestricted income and diversifying our revenue streams to ensure flexibility, (2) building reserves and ensuring sufficient reserves to manage through a crisis and invest in our future, (3) de-risking the portfolio and pro-actively addressing long-term risks , and (4) increasing cost recovery, while (5) controlling costs and investing in programming that will achieve our mission and future development. IUCN will also need to strengthen its financial governance to achieve this.

The Big 5 will take considerable effort to achieve. IUCN needs to balance holding reserves for our security, versus the investment it needs to ensure transformational change. **This is a real balancing act, which IUCN must get right.** Without investment, IUCN will have limited scope to increase its unrestricted income which is vital to allow future flexibility to permit rapid action in the face of changing needs, or to invest in efficiency savings and the leveraging of funding from different sources. On the other hand, if the Union does not have enough funds as a buffer to protect it in bad times, then this places the Union at undue risk. IUCN must ensure this balance in both the short and longer-term. The Secretariat will be working on four-year financial projections and four-year plans for the budget which will be submitted to Council with the Programme 2026-29.

Increasing unrestricted income and diversifying our revenue streams to ensure flexibility

Council and FAC have discussed the need to build greater unrestricted income, and this will come from greater levels of fundraising from trusts, foundations, and high net worth individuals, as well as from governments (as framework funding). The Secretariat will undertake a consultancy to look at generating fundraising income from ~~trusts and foundations and other~~ unrestricted sources in late 2024 and early 2025. This will give us an idea of where to invest and also how much investment will be needed to attain a critical mass with fundraising. **IUCN will need to make an investment from reserves to drive this.** The COO and CFO will work through FAC to complete appropriate plans for this and return to Council.

The Secretariat will grow the academy work for the Union and its income as it progresses towards Congress (as members become more aware of our capacity development offers). A new online system has been built to facilitate this.

The Union can also look towards greater levels of gifts-in-kind, and not just monetary income. The Union should aim to work closer with partners who can bring skills and knowledge to partnerships that drive solutions to our shared challenges. The Secretariat will look at the High-Net-Worth Individuals 'Patron of Nature' Programme and refresh this as part of our fundraising consultancy.

Renewing and Expanding Framework Partnerships

Framework Partners provide multi-year unrestricted financial contributions to support the IUCN Programme and related operations. This support is essential for IUCN's operations and its capacity to implement the Programme and innovate.

In 2025, the focus will be on the finalization of the renewal of Framework Partnerships with Denmark, Finland, France, Luxemburg, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland for the period 2025-2028 or 2026-2029 (Sweden and Luxembourg). The Republic of Korea renewed its commitment for 2025-2029 in 2024. Negotiations will also take place with the US State Department for 2025 Annual Voluntary Contribution. Discussions and engagements around new framework partnerships will continue throughout 2025.

IUCN will continue to engage Framework Partners in the development of the 20-year vision as well as seek their input in the development of the 2026-2029 IUCN Programme, which will be the basis for their continued support. This will include the ability to demonstrate clear results/value-for-money – the latter being key factor in decision-making for continued unrestricted funding.

Active engagement and participation of all Framework Partners will be expected in the lead up to and during the World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi. Other engagements with Framework Partners will be around events such as UNOC3 and UNFCCC.

The Secretariat will continue to devote significant efforts into strengthening strategic engagements with its Framework Partners with high level meetings with all current and prospective Framework Partners during the course of 2025. The Secretariat will work closely with Framework Partners on the implementation of the recommendations of the 2024 External Review.

Building reserves and ensuring sufficient reserves to manage through a crisis and invest in our future

The 2025 budget aims to build unrestricted reserves by CHF2.1m, as approved by the members in the 2025 Financial plan. The Union needs to fine tune and make better use of its reserves while plan the progressive use of reserves for operational and fundraising investments which will contribute to the organization's future financial stability, while maintaining a sufficient buffer to cover current risks. This will be reviewed further in 2025.

De-risking the portfolio and pro-actively addressing long-term risks

The Secretariat plans to do some urgent and important work on looking at the growth targets of implementation versus execution projects. This is critical as implementation projects (mainly GEF-GCF) carry a far lower level of overhead recoveries and agency fees than our portfolio.

The GEF-GCF portfolio is growing rapidly and the Union needs to understand how it will pay for this infrastructure. The Secretariat will obtain some modelling support to help it with this critical work.

The Secretariat will also be working on a clearer risk-based approach to donor contracts. The new project portal will facilitate better quality decision-making and portfolio decisions as it rolls this out in late 2024, early 2025 for the Union.

Greater cost recovery

It is critical to achieve full cost recovery and ensure that donors and funders pay a fair proportion of infrastructure costs, and all necessary direct project costs to deliver for the Union. We have started on this journey but can do more. The Secretariat will be working on simple ways to increase this, including enhanced sign off through the project portal, pro-forma budget templates and training.

IUCN must also work out how it supports sufficient infrastructure costs for the GEF-GCF portfolio and how costs can be recovered for this.

Controlling costs and investing in programming to support our mission and future development

Programmatic investments in the budget include technology updates of the Red List flagship product. (CHF 3m) to ensure a back office and data management function which is fit for the future.

We are also investing in the following Programmatic activities: Contributions for Nature positive (CHF 0.1m), Water: (CHF 0.2m), Human Rights in Conservation, (CHF 0.3m), and World Heritage (CHF 0.2m).

The Union will need to invest in integrated, powerful systems that enable IUCN to operate efficiently and take advantage of the digital dividend and new ways of working with better technology.

- ERP evolution: Following the IT assessment in early 2024 it was requested by Council to work towards updating the current ERP systems that effectively support all of our portfolio and operational work. The ERP evolution project was started in the last quarter of 2024 and is planned to go throughout 2025. This will form the basis for the choice of a new suite of integrated business applications covering Finance, HR, Procurement CRM, Project Portfolio, Time Recording and potentially other systems which integrate with this. The selected suite is planned to be implemented in 2026 for a go live in 2027.

- PAAS and Portal evolution: In 2024, the Secretariat deployed an important upgrade to the Programme and Project Portal to strengthen IUCN performance, assurance and accountability. The roll-out took place in early October and involved many IUCN staff across the globe. The Portal includes several new modules, such as the new Members and partners page, the results planning module, and the results monitoring module. Additionally, the Project Proposal Appraisal Score system (PAAS) was completely revised to better empower IUCN's second line functions (such as finance, monitoring and evaluation, safeguards and business engagement) to strengthen our internal controls and ensure high quality across the whole portfolio. We will continue roll out in 2025.

- Grants portal evolution: Grant making is a major vehicle for the delivery of the IUCN portfolio and in turn the IUCN programme. It is also a mechanism for the involvement of IUCN Members in programme delivery and a key element of both the membership strategy and the 20-year vision strategy.
    - In 2025, efforts will continue on building IUCN's grant management business capability and its grant management portal. The key purpose of the portal is to have an institutional tool that supports the efficient delivery of grant-making projects. It will result in cost savings through the elimination of stand-alone, project specific portals, and will also support the standardization of grant management processes across the Secretariat. Consequently, it will reduce risk and facilitate reporting both at a project and programme level.

The following technology investments are included in the 2025 budget:

- Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP) System Evolution: CHF 0.2m
- Grant management system: CHF 0.2m
- Corporate Website upgrades: CHF 0.1m
- Congress systems: CHF 0.1m

Focusing on Risk Management

The latest risk management exercise conducted as part of the 2025 planning process has allowed IUCN to reiterate the importance of ensuring long-term sustainability and operational success. The findings can be summarized in three groups. Addressing these risks will be critical to ensuring IUCN's continued ability to deliver on its mission while safeguarding financial stability and operational health. As in previous years, IUCN will continue tackling these challenges in 2025.

Business model and sustainability: IUCN faces a growing imbalance between restricted and unrestricted funding, limiting its financial flexibility and sustainability. Key risks include the potential for unsustainable portfolio growth, shifting donor priorities, and financial uncertainties that could strain the organisation's reserves. If left unaddressed, these challenges may hinder IUCN's ability to innovate, grow, and maintain resilience, jeopardizing its long-term viability in a rapidly evolving global landscape.

Prioritisation and focus: IUCN must sharpen its focus, balancing ambitious goals with achievable outcomes to avoid overextension. Without clear prioritisation, staff could become overburdened, leading to unrealistic targets and challenges in talent management. Additionally, gaps in partner selection could further impact programme execution. Failure to streamline ambitions and enhance staff well-being will negatively affect decision-making and overall programme performance.

Internal controls and fraud prevention: Strengthening internal controls is essential to mitigate risks related to donor reporting, fraud, and compliance breaches. Inadequate frameworks for internal controls could expose IUCN to financial mismanagement, including fraudulent reporting and failure to comply with donor contracts. This not only risks financial integrity but could also damage stakeholder trust, undermining the organization's operational and financial health.

We have invested an additional CHF0.1m in our oversight capacity to address this.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FINANCIAL PLAN 2021-2025

The 2025 budget represents the fifth year of implementation of the Financial Plan 2021-2025*. The Plan sets out a series of targets. Table 9 - taken from the Financial Plan - shows the targets set and progress made after taking into consideration the 2025 budget.

Target	Target value	Period	2025 progress
Increase membership dues	10% of total value	2021–2025	Increase of 8% compared to 2020
Maintain current level of framework income	0%	2021–2025	Increase of 19% compared to 2020
Increase value of project portfolio: • GEF/GCF • Other	 15% 5%	Year-on-year	Increase in total portfolio of 58% from 2020 to 2024.
Increase annual level of restricted income and expenditure	10%	Year-on-year	Increase of 133% compared to 2020 audited accounts.
Increase level of operational costs funded by cost recovery (both direct costs and indirect costs)	From 63% to 70%	2021–2025	Budget level for 2025 is 66% Forecast for 2024 is 64% Actual for 2023 was 64% Actual for 2022 was 61% Actual for 2021 was 56% Actual for 2020 was 54% Work on the cost recovery model will be phased in in 2025 with the objective of increasing the level of recovery. (The baseline and target value in the Financial Plan were erroneously calculated)
Non-staff operating costs not to exceed 20% of total operating costs	20%	2021–2025	The budgeted level of non-staff operating costs for 2025 is 18%
Grow income from foundations	From 9% to 12% of total income	2021–2025	2025 proportion of the portfolio is 6%, up from 3% in 2022
Grow income from private sector	From 3% to 5% of total income	2021–2025	2024 proportion of the portfolio is 2%, the same as in 2023
Increase reserves	CHF 3m	2021–2025	Unrestricted reserves increased by CHF 5.6m from 2020 to 2023. The forecast result for 2024 is a surplus of CHF 2.3m. The budgeted result for 2025 is a surplus of CHF 2.1m. If the forecast for 2024 and the budget for 2025 are achieved the total increase would be CHF 10.0m.

Table 9: Progress against Financial Plan Targets

*The period has been extended by one year as the next IUCN planning cycle commences in 2026

ANALYSIS OF THE 2025 BUDGET BY ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Table 10 below presents the 2025 budget by organisational structure and function at a high level. The organisation is presented in 3 blocks: regions, centres and headquarters. Headquarters supports both regions and centres as many corporate functions are partially centralised, e.g. global leadership; oversight and legal; planning, monitoring and evaluation; global services such as finance, HR and IT. The term "Headquarters" denotes staff that have a headquarters role, including those based in Gland, Switzerland as well as staff based in other offices.

Consolidated Budget Analysis of the budgeted expenditure by organizational structure	Staff costs	Other costs	Total operating expenditure	IUCN project activity	Implementing partners project activities	Budget 2025 Total expenditure		Budget 2024 Total expenditure		Budget 2023 Total expenditure	
	CHFm	CHFm	CHFm	CHFm	CHFm	CHFm	%	CHFm	%	CHFm	%
REGIONAL OFFICES											
Corporates	7.8	3.0	10.8	-	-	10.8	10%	11.5	11%	8.2	9%
Management and Union	5.9	1.8	7.7	-	-	7.7	7%	7.4	7%	6.5	7%
Programme	16.3	1.2	17.5	30.5	42.8	90.8	83%	83.6	82%	79.4	84%
REGIONAL OFFICES - Sub-Total	**30.0**	**6.0**	**36.0**	**30.5**	**42.8**	**109.3**	**100%**	**102.5**	**100%**	**94.1**	**100%**
CENTRES											
Corporates	1.9	0.2	2.1	-	-	2.1	4%	2.2	5%	1.7	3%
Management and Union	1.2	0.1	1.3	-	-	1.3	2%	1.0	2%	1.1	2%
Programme	18.1	0.7	18.8	9.4	21.5	49.7	94%	45.0	93%	46.2	94%
CENTRES - Sub-Total	**21.2**	**1.0**	**22.2**	**9.4**	**21.5**	**53.1**	**100%**	**48.2**	**100%**	**49.0**	**100%**
HEADQUARTERS UNITS											
Corporates	12.2	5.3	17.4	0.3	-	17.8	36%	17.2	51%	16.3	61%
Management and Union	5.8	3.6	9.3	21.4	-	30.7	61%	14.1	41%	8.0	30%
Programme	1.4	0.2	1.6	-	-	1.6	3%	2.7	8%	2.3	9%
HEADQUARTERS UNITS - Sub-Total	**19.4**	**9.1**	**28.3**	**21.7**	**-**	**50.1**	**100%**	**34.0**	**100%**	**26.6**	**100%**
CENTRAL PROVISIONS											
Corporates	-	1.3	1.3	-	-	1.3	68%	0.6	43%	0.5	100%
Management and Union	-	0.6	0.6	-	-	0.6	32%	0.8	57%	-	0%
Programme	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%	-	0%	-	0%
CENTRAL PROVISIONS - Sub-Total	**-**	**1.9**	**1.9**	**-**	**-**	**1.9**	**100%**	**1.4**	**100%**	**0.5**	**100%**
Corporates	**21.9**	**9.8**	**31.6**	**0.3**	**-**	**32.0**	**15%**	**31.5**	**17%**	**26.7**	**16%**
Management and Union	**12.9**	**6.1**	**18.9**	**21.4**	**-**	**40.3**	**19%**	**23.3**	**13%**	**15.6**	**9%**
Programme	**35.8**	**2.1**	**37.9**	**39.9**	**64.3**	**142.1**	**66%**	**131.3**	**71%**	**127.9**	**75%**
TOTAL	**70.6**	**18.0**	**88.4**	**61.6**	**64.3**	**214.4**	**100%**	**186.1**	**100%**	**170.2**	**100%**

Table 10: Analysis of the 2025 budgeted expenditure by organisational structure, CHF Million

Taking the organisation as a whole, programme functions account for 66% of the budget, management and union functions 19% and corporate functions 15%. Corporate functions include service functions such as finance, administration, human resources and information systems, as well as legal, oversight, global communications and partnerships.

Figure 6 and Figure 7 present the above information graphically.

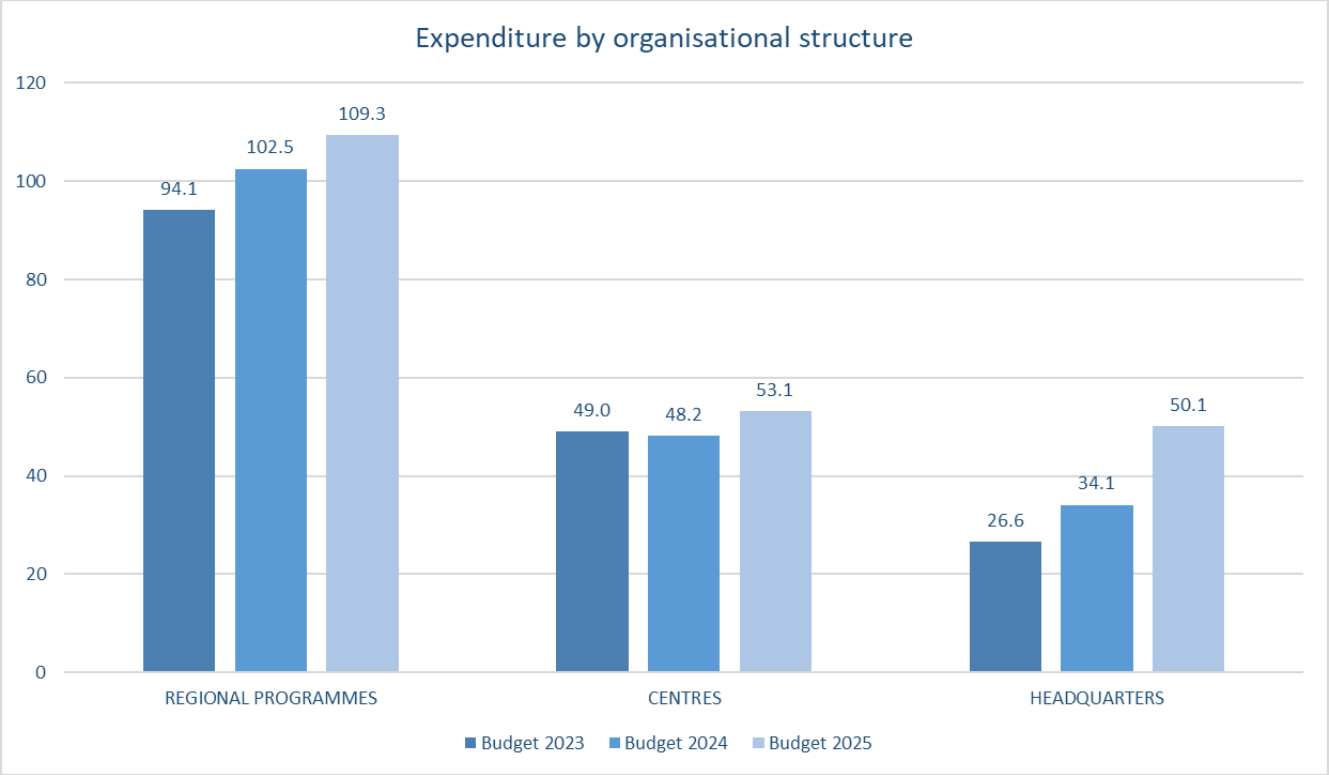


Figure 6: Expenditure by organizational structure

Headquarters expenditure has increased owing to additional capacity required in the Convenings Unit to manage the Congress. This can be seen below via the increase in costs between 2024 and 2025 under Management and Union.

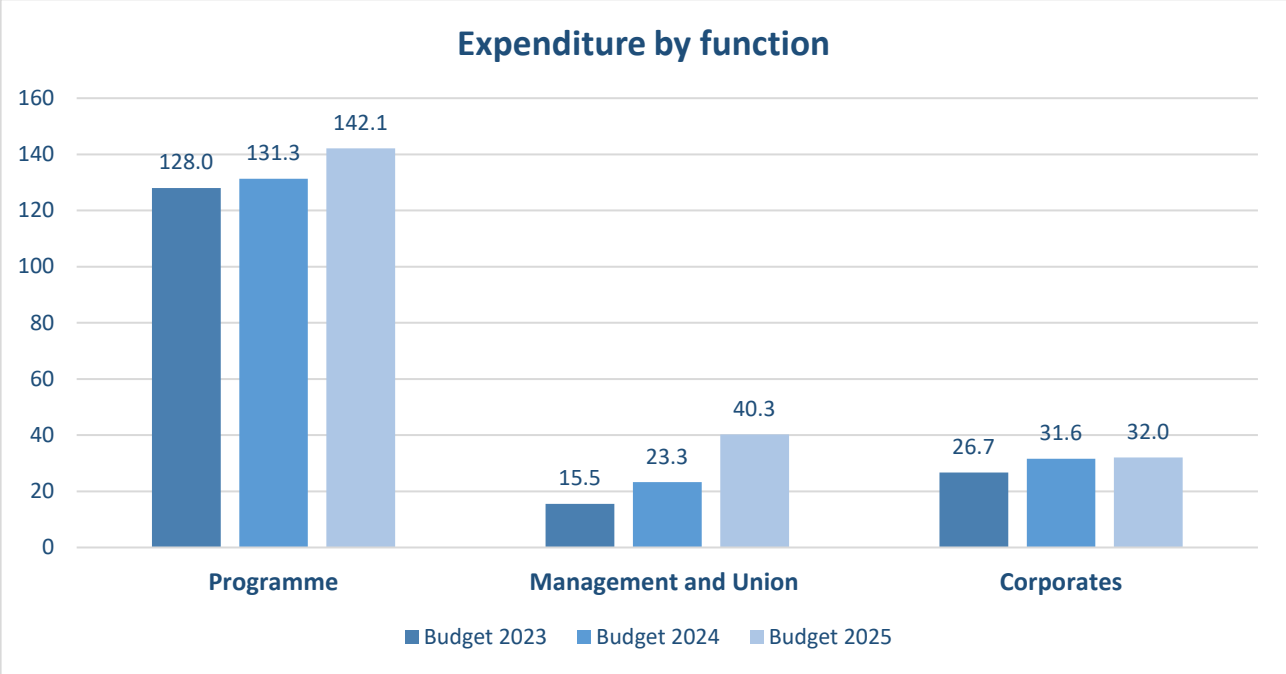


Figure 7: Expenditure by function

Management and Union costs increase significantly in 2025 due to scaling up of Convenings work and related activities in preparation for the 2025 World Conservation Congress.

Figure 8 provides a breakdown of the budget of the regions and Figure 9 a breakdown of the budget of the centres.

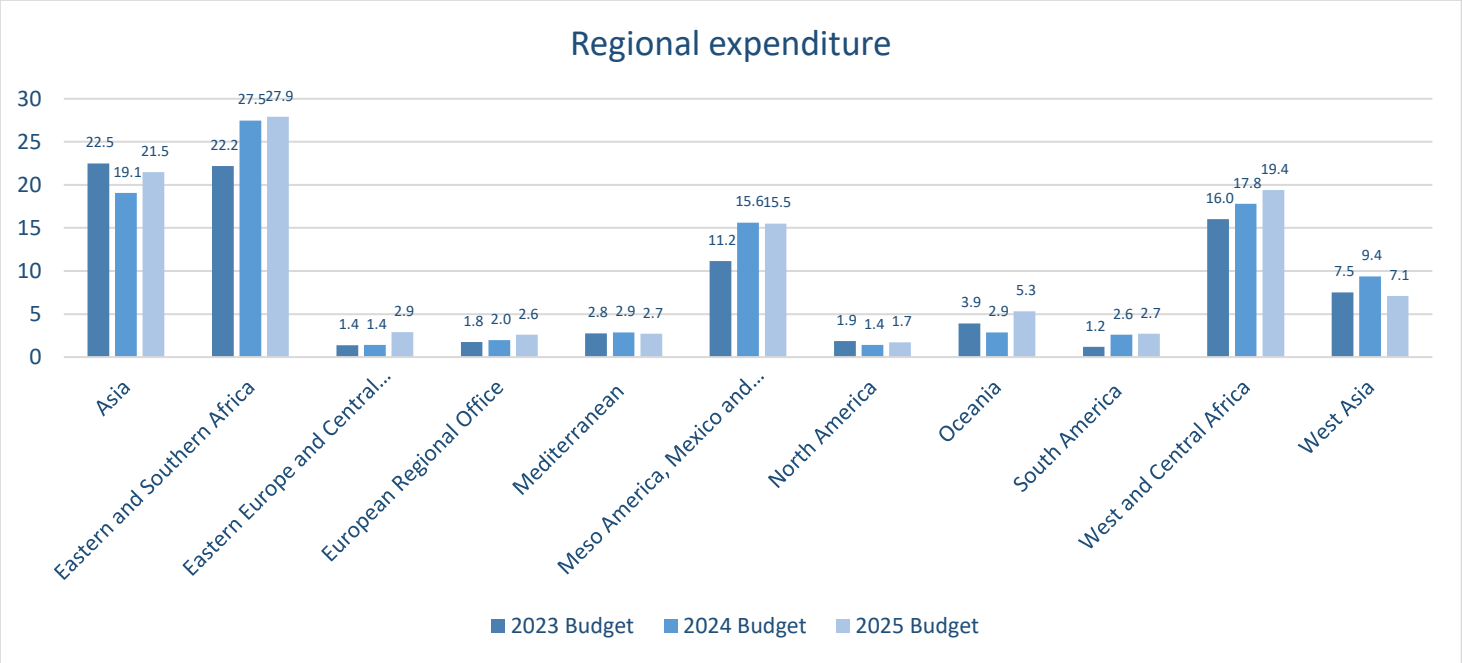


Figure 8: Expenditure by Region

Total regional expenditure is budgeted at CHF 109.3m (2024: CHF 102.5m; 2023: CHF 94.1m)

Regions with the highest level of expenditure are Asia, Eastern and Southern Africa; West and Central Africa; and Meso America, Mexico and Caribbean, which together account for 77% of total regional expenditure.

Figure 9 excludes direct support costs for the Centres.

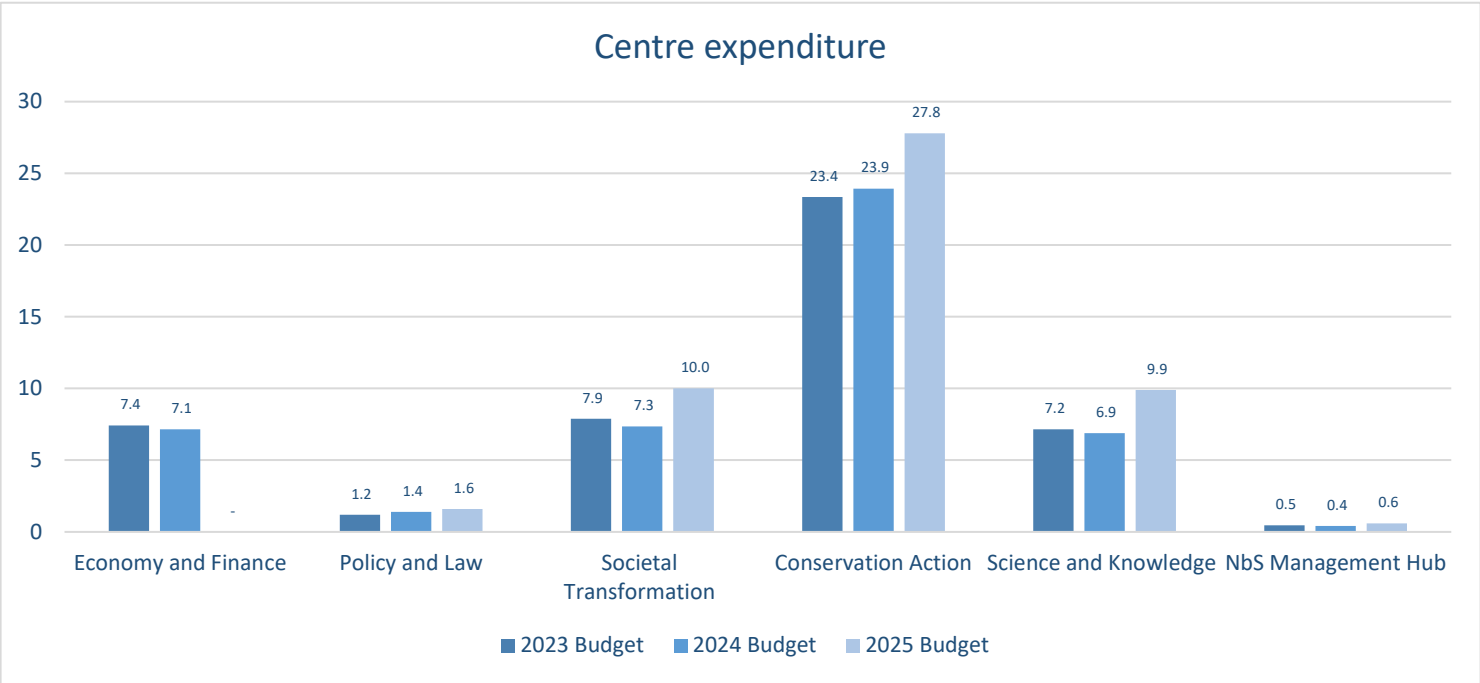


Figure 9: Expenditure by Centre

The Economy and Finance centre was restructured in May-June 2024 and the teams were redistributed across the other centres according to best fit programmatically.

Total Centre expenditure is budgeted at CHF 53.1m (2024: CHF 48.2m; 2023: CHF 49.0m). These numbers are higher than the sum of the bars above as they include direct support to Centres. The Centre for Conservation and Action accounts for 52% of the total expenditure for Centres. The Centre manages large grant making projects as well as other high value projects. Many of the Centre projects include regional components. The value of these components are reflected in the regional budgets.

STAFFING LEVELS AND COSTS

Figure 10 below shows staffing cost by organisational structure and the number of full-time equivalent positions (FTE).

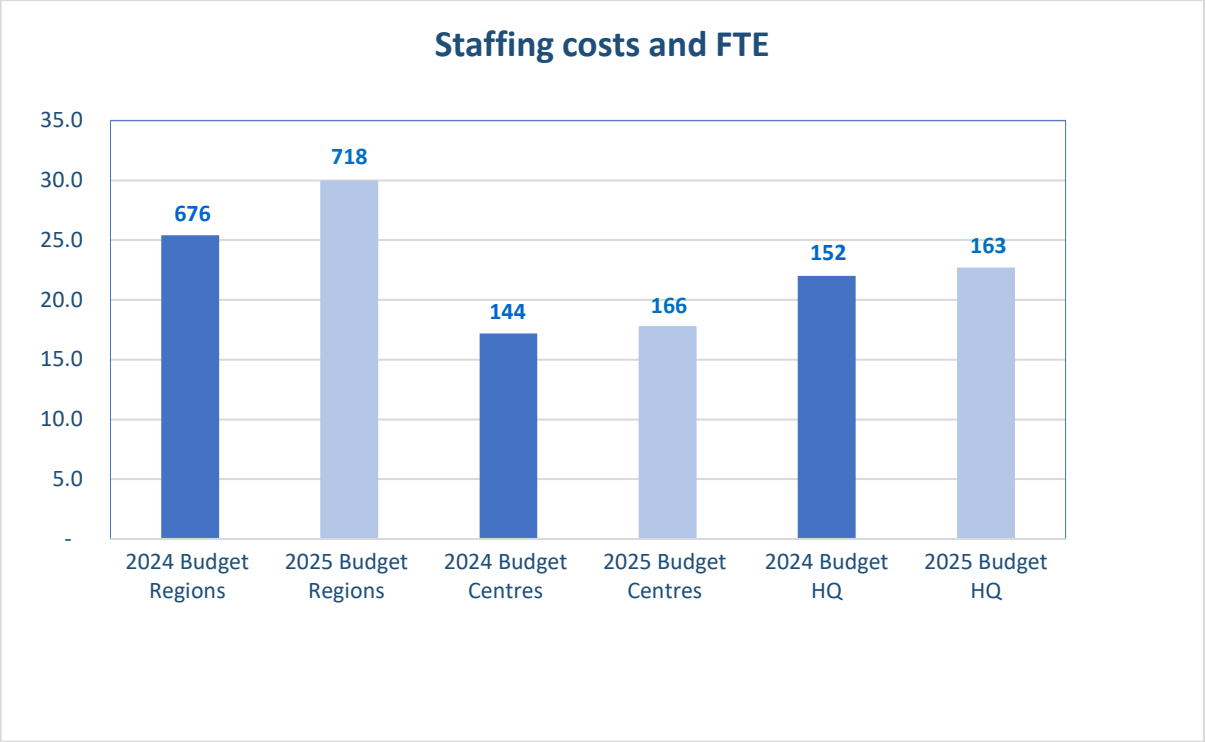


Figure 10: Staffing costs, CHF million, and number of staff, FTE

The total budgeted staff cost is CHF 70.6m, an increase of CHF 5.9m (9%) compared to the 2024 budget. The increase is partly attributable to an increase in the number of budgeted positions (8% or 75 positions) and partly attributable to inflation and market adjustments.

ALLOCATION OF UNRESTRICTED INCOME

Table 11 shows the allocation of unrestricted income for the years 2023 to 2025. Unrestricted income comprises membership dues, framework and other unrestricted income such as income from rent and services and tax rebates (see Table 4: Other Unrestricted Income for details). The final column shows how membership dues are allocated in the budget, this is separate from income from unrestricted sources.

ALLOCATIONS OF UNRESTRICTED INCOME	2025 Unrestricted Budget			2025 Unrest Budget
CHF m	**2023 Total**	**2024 Total**	**2025 Total**	2025 Membership
Regions	4.7	4.9	4.5	1.8
Centres	2.9	3.8	3.3	-
Commissions	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4
Directorate	2.6	2.4	2.2	1.1
Centre for Policy and Law	0.8	0.8	0.9	-
Governance	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9
Membership and convenings	2.5	2.4	2.1	2.1
Corporate services group	7.7	7.7	8.3	2.5
Global finance group	3.5	4.4	4.1	1.2
Investment in new technology			0.4	-
Provisions	0.6	0.6	1.0	1.0
Projects	3.6	-	-	-
Total	**31.0**	**29.3**	**29.1**	**12.0**

Table 11: Allocation of unrestricted income, CHF million

Unrestricted income allocations are made on a strategic basis to support the implementation of the workplan and the statutory objectives of the Union. Allocations take into consideration income generated from the project portfolio which fund the majority of the infrastructure costs of the regions and a significant proportion of corporate costs at headquarters.

FINANCIAL RISKS IN THE 2025 BUDGET

The main risks for 2025 are as follows: The numbers after the risk name correspond to the risk numbers in the institutional risk register.:

1. Delays in project implementation R10, R11 and R3

Risk description

Project expenditure is budgeted to be CHF 181m, a 17% increase on the 2024 forecast of CHF 134m (after adjusting for the impact of the Congress – CHF 24.2m in budget 2025). The increase reflects a growing portfolio and an expected increase in the expenditure rate of several large projects.

36% of project activities are budgeted to be executed by partners (2024 forecast: 38%). This carries a risk as IUCN does not have direct control over the rate of expenditure by partners and relies on the quality mechanisms the Union puts in place to manage this.

Risk impact

Delays in project implementation would result in lower levels of cost recovery and an increase in the risk of staff costs not being fully funded. It would also result in a reduction in the funding of corporate costs by the project portfolio, meaning a higher portion would have to be funded from other income sources.

No cost extensions also lead to execution and implementation work with insufficient funds for staff overhead recovery to complete the work.

Risk mitigation

All projects are monitored as part of standard project management procedures. Execution performed by partners is regulated by contractual requirements. Contractual requirements require regular reporting. This provides a basis for the identification of delays in incurring expenditure and for subsequent follow up.

For large scale projects, such as GEF and GCF projects, and large value grant making projects, supervision missions are performed. At a global level the rates of project implementation and cost recovery are monitored on a monthly basis in order to identify areas of concern and action needed.

Risk Level: Medium

Risk Owner: Centre and Regional Directors

2. Projects in development not realised or delayed R3

Risk description

A total of CHF 35m of project expenditure is budgeted to come from contracts not signed as at 30 September 2024. After adjusting for the Congress, this represents 8% of total budgeted project expenditure (2024 19%). There is a risk that project contracts are not signed or that signature is delayed.

Risk impact

Reduction in the level of project expenditure resulting in a lower level of cost recovery which in turn would result in a reduction of funding for operating costs.

Risk response

Conversion rates of projects under development will be monitored and a risk assessment performed at the end of each quarter. If the level of conversions is low, budget modifications will be considered, including a review of staffing levels. At the project level, staff recruitment will be aligned with expected contract start dates.

Risk Level: Low

Risk Owner: Centre and Regional Directors

3. Disallowed project expenditure R10 and R11

Risk description

The growth in the project portfolio and subsequent increase in project expenditure increases the risk of disallowed costs. Disallowed costs may be incurred by either IUCN directly or by partners. The increase in the level of expenditure through partners organisations further increases this risk.

Risk impact

Disallowed costs would need to be written off, thereby impacting the financial result.

Risk response

IUCN's internal control framework and associated policies and procedures are designed to minimise disallowed expenditure. In addition, project expenditure is monitored against budget by project managers and project finance staff. Due diligence is performed on implementing partners and donor contractual conditions are passed on to partners. In the event that losses occur they are assumed by regions and centres. A general provision of CHF 0.5m (2024 forecast 0.5m) is included in the budget.

Risk Level: Medium

Risk Owner: Centre and Regional Directors

4. Congress

Risk description

The 2025 Congress represents a significant financial risk. There are several elements to this risk.

Coverage of IUCN direct costs is dependent on registration revenue (and therefore the level of attendance) and raising funds from donors to cover various costs such as the participation of Members with limited financial resources. In addition, regions and units must fund their own participation from their own core or project budgets. No additional funds have been made available to them for this purpose. Finally, Congress activities can divert attention from normal project implementation, resulting in delays and reductions in cost recovery as noted above (risk 1).

Risk impact

This is an inherent risk of the Congress, but we will plan to mitigate this.

Risk response

The Congress budget is actively managed. A prudent estimate has been made of registration revenues. Costs dependent on fundraising will only be incurred when the funds have been secured. Projects and unit workplans include Congress activities. Delivery of many projects includes a Congress element.

Risk Level: Medium

Risk Owner: Chief Operating Officer

5. Non-payment of membership dues R18

Risk description

Members may decide to withdraw from IUCN or delay payment of membership dues. This could happen for a variety of reason. The 2021 Congress approved a new scale of membership dues for all categories of Members. This included a change in the methodology for the calculation of dues for National and International Non-Government Organisations and Indigenous People's Organisations. This resulted in a significant increase in the level of dues for some Members and a reduction for others. This has led to some delays in payment.

Risk impact

Reduction in the level of membership dues income.

Risk response

A provision of CHF 0.6m has been included in the 2025 budget for non-payment of membership dues.

Risk Level: Low

Risk Owner: Chief Operating Officer

6. Exposure to foreign exchange fluctuations R16

Risk description

Several of IUCN's Framework contributions (Sweden, Norway, Finland, France, US) are received in currencies that are not closely aligned with the Swiss franc. Foreign exchange markets are currently quite volatile, driven by an uncertain global economic environment. It is possible that the actual Swiss franc value of contributions will be lower than projected in the 2025 budget. In addition, IUCN receives and spends funds in a variety of currencies for projects and this creates a foreign exchange risk. As part of the year end consolidation process, non-Swiss franc balances are revalued to Swiss francs at the year-end exchange rate. This can result in an exchange loss that needs to be recorded in the income statement.

Risk impact

Reduction in the year-end result.

Risk response

Framework contracts will be assessed and hedged where this makes financial sense. In respect of the project budget, a natural hedging strategy is in place whereby project assets and liabilities are balanced to the extent possible. A general provision of CHF 0.8m is also included in the budget for exchange gains and losses.

Risk Level: Medium

Risk Owner: Chief Finance Officer

7. Investment losses R7

Risk description

IUCN maintains a portfolio of financial investments, primarily comprising bonds and equities. Gains and losses are driven by global financial markets. The portfolio is revalued to market at each month-end and gains and losses are taken to the income statement. Unfavourable financial markets would result in a reduction in the value of the portfolio.

Risk impact

Although losses would be unrealised, under IUCN's current financial policy they would be recorded in the income statement resulting in a reduction to the year-end result.

Risk response

The investment portfolio is conservative and actively managed. The overall risk level is low. Interest rates rose during 2022 and 2023 but are now considered to be at, or close to, the peak of the cycle. Any reduction in interest rates should have a positive impact on the portfolio in 2024. IUCN is also running a tender process to strengthen the management of it's investment portfolio

Risk Level: Low

Risk Owner: Chief Finance Officer

8. Framework agreements are not signed R8

Risk description

At the time of preparation of the 2025 budget, some agreements with framework partners require amendment for the extension of the current funding period. Although, indications from framework partners are positive, there is a small risk that the level of framework income budgeted may not be achieved.

Risk impact

Reduction in the level of Framework income.

Risk response

The Director General and Director of the Strategic Partnerships Unit are in negotiation with Framework partners and communications have been positive concerning the 2025 funding.

Risk Level: Low

Risk Owner: Director of Strategic Partnerships

Proposed amendments to the IUCN Regulations to reform the process for the renewal of the membership of the IUCN Commissions

Existing provisions of the IUCN Regulations	Proposed amendments (with track changes)	New text of the IUCN Regulations as amended (all track changes 'accepted')
Regulation 72 The terms of appointment of Commission members, shall continue for six months after the close of the ordinary session of the World Congress following their appointment, or until reappointments are made, whichever is sooner.	Regulation 72 ~~The terms of appointment of Commission members, shall continue for six months after the close of the ordinary session of the World Congress following their appointment, or until reappointments are made, whichever is sooner.~~ Once appointed, members of the Commission are part of the Commission until they resign or are removed. Commission members may resign at any time and will be reminded of this possibility following the adoption of new Commission mandates by the World Conservation Congress. The bylaws of each Commission shall prescribe the process and conditions of appointment to and removal from the Commissions' membership.	Regulation 72 Once appointed, members of the Commission are part of the Commission until they resign or are removed. Commission members may resign at any time and will be reminded of this possibility following the adoption of new Commission mandates by the World Conservation Congress. The bylaws of each Commission shall prescribe the process and conditions of appointment to and removal from the Commissions' membership.
Regulation 75 The Chair of each Commission shall be responsible for the appointment or reappointment of the members of the Commission.	Regulation 75 The Chair of each Commission shall be responsible for the appointment or ~~reappointment~~ removal of the members of the Commission. Any delegation of this responsibility within the Commission shall be prescribed in the Commission's by-laws.	Regulation 75 The Chair of each Commission shall be responsible for the appointment or removal of the members of the Commission. Any delegation of this responsibility within the Commission shall be prescribed in the Commission's by-laws.

AFRICA							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Statutory state**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
Kishoka Youth Community Based Organization (C.B.O)	K.i.Y.O	Kenya	https://kishokayouthorg.wordpress.com/	NGO	[Member] Wildlife Clubs of Kenya [Africa]	[Member] Community Action for Nature Conservation [Africa]	APPROVE
Association Analasoa		Madagascar	https://www.conservationallies.org/partner/analasoa	NGO	[Member] Rasmussen Family Foundation [North America and the Caribbean]	[Member] Conservation Allies [North America and the Caribbean]	APPROVE
Sabyinyo Community Livelihood Association	SACOLA	Rwanda	https://www.sacola.co	NGO	[Member] Association Rwandaise des Ecologistes [Africa]	[Member] Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association [Africa]	APPROVE
Rwanda Rural Rehabilitation Initiative	RWARRI	Rwanda	https://www.rwarri.com/	NGO	[Member] Association Rwandaise des Ecologistes [Africa]	[Member] Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association [Africa]	APPROVE
ECOLE NATIONALE DES EAUX ET FORETS	ENEF	Cameroon	https://enefcameroun.cm/index.php	GA			APPROVE
ISLAND BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION	IBC	Seychelles	https://unisey.ac.sc/island-biodiversity-and-conservation/	NGO	[Councillor] Dr Maud LELIEVRE [West Europe]	[Member] Mauritian Wildlife Foundation [Africa]	APPROVE
AMENAGEMENT DES TERROIRS ET PRODUCTIONS FORESTIERES	ATPF	Niger	https://ongatpf.org	NGO	[Member] Africa's Sustainable Development Council [Africa]	[Member] Association de Gestion des Ressources Naturelles et de la Faune de la Comoé-Léraba [Africa]	APPROVE
Fundação Tartaruga	FT	Cabo Verde	https://www.turtle-foundation.org/en	NGO	[Member] Cameroon Environmental Watch [Africa]	[Member] Organisation pour la Nature, l'Environnement et le Développement du Cameroun [Africa]	APPROVE
IMPlementing environmental ACTions for change in Madagascar	IMPACT Madagascar	Madagascar	http://impactmadagascar.org/	NGO	[Member] Madagasikara Voakajy [Africa]	[Member] Conservation Allies [North America and the Caribbean]	APPROVE
Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association	KWCA	Kenya	https://kwcakenya.com/	NGO	[Member] Conservation Alliance of Kenya [Africa]	[Member] Wildlife Research and Training Institute [Africa]	APPROVE

MESO AND SOUTH AMERICA							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Statutory state**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
Consejo Nacional de Áreas Protegidas	CONAP	Guatemala	https://conap.gob.gt/	GA			APPROVE
Asociación para el Desarrollo Sostenible SINERGIAS.	Asociación SINERGIAS	Guatemala	https://www.sinergias.org.gt/	IPO	[Member] Asociación SOTZ`IL [Meso and South America]	[Member] Asociación Ak'Tenamit [Meso and South America]	APPROVE
Organización Para El Desarrollo De Corquín	ODECO	Honduras	https://odeco.org	NGO	[Member] Asociación para el Manejo Integrado de Cuencas de La Paz y Comayagua [Meso and South America]	[Member] Mancomunidad de Municipios del Parque Nacional Montaña de Celaque [Meso and South America]	APPROVE

NORTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Statutory state**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
Ocean Conservancy		United States of America	https://oceanconservancy.org/	NGO	[Member] Environmental Defense Fund [North America and the Caribbean]	[Member] Natural Resources Defense Council [North America and the Caribbean]	APPROVE
Indianapolis Zoological Society, Inc.	IZS	United States of America	https://www.indianapoliszoo.com/	NGO	[Member] St. Louis Zoological Park [North America and the Caribbean]	[Member] Woodland Park Zoological Society [North America and the Caribbean]	APPROVE
Friends of Wildlife Justice Commission, Inc.	FoWJC	United States of America	http://wildlifejustice.org	INGO	[Member] National Whistleblower Center [North America and the Caribbean]	[Member] World Resources Institute [North America and the Caribbean]	APPROVE

SOUTH AND EAST ASIA							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Statutory state**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
Botanical Survey of India	BSI	India	https://bsi.gov.in/	GA			APPROVE
INDIAN REGIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR LANDSCAPE ECOLOGY	IRALE	India	https://irale.org/	NGO	[Member] Aaranyak [South and East Asia]	[Member] Gujarat Institute of Desert Ecology [South and East Asia]	APPROVE
Shen Zhen Ban Dao Guo Jia Di Zhi Zi Ran Gong Yuan		China		NGO	[Member] Guangzhou Haizhu Wetland Center for Research and Education [South and East Asia]	[Member] Shenzhen Mangrove Wetlands Conservation Foundation [South and East Asia]	APPROVE

WEST ASIA							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Statutory state**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
Association for Community & Environment		Lebanon		NGO	[Member] Al Shouf Cedar Society [West Asia]	[Member] GHADI [West Asia]	APPROVE
Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture Office in Al-Ahsa	MEWA	Saudi Arabia	http://www.mewa.gov.sa	GA			APPROVE

WEST EUROPE							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Statutory state**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
SNV	SNV	The Netherlands	https://www.snv.org/	INGO	[Committee] IUCN National Committee of The Netherlands [West Europe]	[Member] TREE AID [West Europe]	APPROVE
Fundación Marilles	FM	Spain	https://marilles.org/	NGO	[Member] Fundación Biodiversidad [West Europe]	[Member] Fundación Aula del Mar Mediterráneo [West Europe]	APPROVE
Ecozoo Conservation		France	https://www.zoodessables.fr	NGO	[Member] Association Française des Parcs Zoologiques [West Europe]	[Member] Red Panda Network [North America and the Caribbean]	APPROVE
Union of Nature Foundation	UoN	The Netherlands	https://www.uon.org	NGO	[Honorary Member] Dr Russell MITTERMEIER [North America and the Caribbean]	[Member] Wilderness Foundation [Africa]	APPROVE
Walter Zoo Gossau		Switzerland	http://www.walterzoo.ch	NGO	[Member] Stiftelsen Nordens Ark [West Europe]	[Member] Zoo Zurich AG [West Europe]	APPROVE
Institut Océanographique de Monaco		Monaco	https://www.oceano.org/	NGO	[Member] Office français de la biodiversité [West Europe]	[Member] Institut de Recherche pour le Développement [West Europe]	APPROVE
Future For Nature	FFN	The Netherlands	https://futurefornature.org	NGO	[Committee] IUCN National Committee of The Netherlands [West Europe]	[Member] Commonland [West Europe]	APPROVE
Surfrider Foundation Europe	SFE	France	https://www.surfrider.eu/	INGO	[Comité] Comité national de l'UICN, France [West Europe]	[Membre] Centre de Culture Scientifique, Technique et Industrielle de la Mer OCEANOPOLIS BREST [West Europe]	APPROVE

DEFERRED FROM GCC17

MESO AND SOUTH AMERICA							
Organisation	**Acronym**	**Statutory state**	**Website**	**Category**	**Endorser name 1**	**Endorser name 2**	**GCC recommendation to Council**
Federación Indígena Empresarial y Comunidades Locales de México, A.C.	CIELO	Mexico	https://www.cielo.org.mx/	IPO	[Member] Asociación SOTZ´IL [Meso and South America]	[Member] Fundación para la Promoción del Conocimiento Indígena [Meso and South America]	APPROVE

IUCN Climate Crisis Commission
Work Plan 2025

Approved by the IUCN Council, decision C112/7, 29 January 2025

1. Introduction

Resolution (WCC-2020-Res-044-EN) charges the new ***'The Climate Crisis Commission' to mobilize and coordinate the Union and engage with Regional and National IUCN Committees and broader civil society efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change based on the best available science*** *coming from the IPCC and taking into account the actions and initiatives that are developed in the* ***UNFCCC through the Global Climate Action Agenda***. It declares that ***"transformative change for a system-wide reduction of greenhouse gas emissions" is necessary***.

The Climate Crisis Commission's vision is ***a world in which global warming is limited to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels and society is adapting to manage climate risks in ways that enhance socio-ecological resilience, are Nature Positive, and promote just*** **and inclusive** ***outcomes for all***.

To achieve this goal, the Commission must lead and support science (traditional and Western science) and rights-based solutions, focusing on just transition and decarbonization, synergies between climate and biodiversity, and addressing vulnerabilities in nature and human sectors.

The Commission will work towards consolidating IUCN's extensive climate-related policies by fostering stronger alignment across biodiversity and climate initiatives, facilitating cross-sector partnerships, and promoting integrated approaches to ecosystem-based adaptation. Specific efforts will focus on harmonizing policies with multilateral frameworks such as the UNFCCC, CBD, and SDGs, while leveraging IUCN's convening power to drive collaborative action. Guided by equity, social and climate justice, ecosystem integrity, environmental safeguards, and a rights-based approach, these efforts will drive sustainable transformations. Special emphasis will be placed on engaging all sectors and actors, particularly women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples, while upholding their rights, including, in the case of Indigenous Peoples, rights to lands, territories, self-determination and Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

2. Goal

By the end of 2025, IUCN CCC will have proved effective in bringing a more holistic, integrated and just approach to the development and implementation of IUCN climate policy and programs and to IUCN's engagement with other international and regional processes. This will enhance its effective contribution to the efforts of the world community in limiting warming to below 1.5ºC and enabling the necessary adaptation and resilience.

3. Objectives

1. Develop and promote holistic policies and guidelines for a just transition from fossil fuels to appropriate clean energy sources while supporting to enable the conditions that can strengthen climate and nature convergence and effectively address both challenges.
2. Collaborate with other Commissions and the Secretariat to promote synergistic policies

with multilateral processes, including the UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD, Ramsar, CITES, UNEA, and those related to the ocean, food systems.

3. Promote credible, effective, results-driven Net Zero systems[1] that enable actionable public and private targets.
4. Advance in completing the necessary systemic elements to achieve effective Net Zero and Nature Positive outcomes.
5. Promote solutions integrating science, including Indigenous Peoples' science and traditional knowledge systems, and, as appropriate, local knowledge to advance synergistic climate-biodiversity outcomes.
6. Identify and address policies and practices that result in perverse outcomes for climate and/or biodiversity or which hinder climate and nature convergence.
7. Promote the use of accurate data and appropriate technology and decision making tools and frameworks to deliver solutions to address the climate and nature crises, whilst preventing uses of technology that are contrary to climate, nature, rights and sustainability objectives.
8. Promote innovative solutions, tools and mechanisms to tackle the climate and nature crises, through addressing IPCC's four climate transitions and IPBES's five key drivers of nature loss.
9. Promote inclusivity by working with Indigenous Peoples, women, youth and impacted communities.
10. Enhance public awareness and capacity building for impactful Commission actions.
11. Promote knowledge generation and sharing on climate and nature and their synergies among Commission members, other IUCN Commissions, the Secretariat, IUCN initiatives, Members and projects.
12. Actively engage all CCC members at global, regional, and local levels in an inclusive manner, leveraging their expertise and ensuring their full participation in the implementation of the CCC 2025 Work Plan.
13. Initiate the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the impact of Commission-led initiatives on climate and biodiversity objectives and use findings to refine future actions.

4. Work plan 2025 objective and priorities

For 2025, the IUCN Climate Crisis Commission has prioritized impactful action on climate and biodiversity through three key objectives: fostering synergies between climate and nature goals, crafting a strategic Roadmap to UNFCCC COP30, and strengthening the credibility and integration of the Net Zero Framework. These efforts directly address the urgent need for science-driven, integrated solutions as highlighted by IPCC and IPBES findings. By leveraging an active membership base, robust internal and external partnerships, and strategic visibility, the CCC aims to establish itself as a leading force in addressing the intertwined crises of climate change and biodiversity loss.

5. Workstreams

5.1 Thematic Focus

1. **Policy and climate justice thematic group**
   Lead: Daniel James

   The Commission will build upon the IUCN portfolio of Congress climate-related resolutions and, by engaging with the IUCN membership, will contribute to multilateral and national processes in ways that strengthen and promote just transition, decarbonization and synergistic climate-biodiversity policies and actions.

[1] Net Zero system, which includes clarity on the balance between reductions and removals, clear standards to guide economic activities toward Net Zero, systems to validate Net Zero targets, mechanisms to secure national Net Zero targets and Long-Term Strategies, and pathways to advance more enforceable Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), among other elements.

- Participate in and organize events related to the priorities of the IUCN and CCC; promote evidence-and rights-based policies and programs, building upon and critiquing as needed, decisions made in the global multilateral political processes.
- Advocate for ambitious climate and biodiversity commitments by contributing to the implementation of the CBD decision on Biodiversity and Climate (CBD/COP/DEC/16/22), that promotes a closer dialogue and joint actions between the 3 Rio Conventions (Climate, Biodiversity and Desertification); driving alignment in national planning processes, including through Nature based Solutions (as defined by UNEA 5/5).
- Develop a roadmap for COP30 that builds upon, advances, and where necessary, challenges the outcomes of CBD COP16, UNFCCC COP29, and UNCCD COP16. This roadmap will focus on the principle of 'rebuilding credibility in the process' by working in key areas such as the Net Zero system, vulnerability, and accelerating critical transitions (IPCC and IPBES), among others.
- Advocate, for both, stronger commitments to phase out fossil fuels and recommendations to the Global Goal on Adaptation in order to t strengthen and prioritize adaptation strategies at the national level that promote justice, ecosystem integrity and resilience, at COP30 and other key multilateral fora.
- Foster synergies between climate and biodiversity goals, including aligning NBSAPs with NDCs, NAPs and Long Term Strategies; working with IUCN regional and national offices.
- Advocate for a just energy transition that prioritizes the protection of biodiversity and the recognized distinct collective rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the human rights of local communities, women, disabled persons, and other stakeholders.
- Promote the adoption of two motions for the World Conservation Congress, *Harnessing IUCN's Power: Driving Synergy for Net Zero, Nature Positive, and a Just Energy Transition* and *Confirming the Status of the Climate Crisis Commission*.
- Call for the negotiation of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- Foster collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities networks to advocate for their rights and ensure their meaningful involvement in implementing National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, as well as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

2. Solutions thematic group
Lead: Brendan Mackey

The Solutions Thematic Group (STG) focusses on the efficacy, integrity and justice of solutions for (1) mitigating greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel emissions and emissions from the loss and degradation of ecosystems and (2) adapting to climate impacts and projected climate risks. STG will develop partnerships with organisations that are developing and implementing climate solutions with the aims of (i) assessing and reporting on their advantages and disadvantages, (ii) “road-testing” them through implementation via IUCN member organisations and networks, and (iii) raising awareness of and advocacy for integrated solution pathways.

The solutions theme will have a particular focus on how proposed solutions contribute to achieving the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees C above pre-industrial levels including:

- How clean energy infrastructure can be planned to avoid perverse impacts for biodiversity and Indigenous Peoples and local communities;
- Ensuring adaptation options address critical climate risks options and do not cause an increase in greenhouse gas emissions or negatively impact biodiversity or Indigenous Peoples and local communities;
- Evaluating proposed mitigation solutions for their integrity of policy options in the context of implementing Article 6 of the Paris Agreement regarding the international transfer of mitigation outcomes;

- Risk assessments for technological approaches to carbon drawn-down; and
- Integrated strategic planning for decarbonization that harmonizes strategies and options across sectors and promotes synergies for adaptation in human and natural systems, paying particular attention to key biodiversity areas and the needs of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

The CCC will partner to identify, co-design and help implement solutions based on the best available science, Indigenous Peoples' knowledge systems, local community knowledge, best practices, and sustainability drivers in the private sector. We will assess the role of technology in contributing to climate solutions, considering both harmful and positive aspects for peoples, communities, planetary health, ecosystems, and the economy.

In 2025, the solutions theme will explore and develop collaborative projects with the external partner organisations and initiatives including from this indicative list of potential partners:

- Climate Interactive to further develop the nature-based solutions related modules on their Climate Solutions Generators
- The Global Climate Change & Energy Transition Team from the Centre for Societal Transformation on developing a joint report on integrating climate and nature through the adaptation agenda -GGA- (assessment, metrics and reporting)
- Project Drawdown with a focus on their “100 solutions" initiative, engaging with IUCN NGO network to identify which set of solutions are most impactful, feasible and appropriate in a given context (i.e., integrated placed-based assessments).
- Great Transition Initiative to develop use of scenarios as a tool for understanding long term climate risks and strategic planning of climate solutions
- Development Alternatives for solutions aimed at local communities in rural and economically developing country contexts, including tools that integrate Indigenous knowledge and scientific data for nature-based and climate-resilient solutions.

The CCC will also begin working on working papers and policy briefs addressing the following issues:

- A just energy transition that prioritizes the protection of biodiversity, and the recognized distinct collective rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the human rights of local communities, women, disabled persons, and other stakeholders.
- The implications of climate technologies on global warming, biodiversity, and human well-being.
- Transparent reporting mechanisms and guidelines for conservation funders, intermediaries and investors to enhance Net Zero frameworks and safeguard against greenwashing.
- Elements for a credible and mandatory Net Zero system.

The CCC will also begin designing and resource mobilisation for developing an open-access platform to share success stories and replicable models of integrated climate-biodiversity solutions globally.

3. **Finance thematic group**
   Lead: Charles Di Leva

The Commission will stimulate collaboration -internally and externally- to unlock resource mobilization from all sources and contribute to efforts aimed at transforming the financial system. We will promote the creation of innovative, accessible, and participatory financial mechanisms that support the goals and targets of the Kunming to Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the goals of the Paris Agreement.

- Identify critical funding gaps in integrated climate-biodiversity initiatives and advocate for targeted and innovative financial instruments and mechanisms, such as green bonds and biodiversity credits, to mobilize resources for high-impact, integrated climate-biodiversity projects to address these gaps, including through partnerships with Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and private investors provided that such funding will protect both ecological and environmental integrity.
- Delineate the different risks and benefits associated with different forms of funding and private investment.
- Recommend actions that can help ensure carbon and biodiversity market integrity, including by addressing double-counting issues, and the development and implementation of transparent monitoring and reporting frameworks and mechanisms.
- Leverage outcomes from COP16 (Cali Fund) and relevant climate and carbon funds to advocate for accessible, equitable, and rights-based public and private funding mechanisms that prioritize Indigenous Peoples and local communities, ensuring alignment with global biodiversity and climate goals, and that will avoid human rights abuse while ensuring Free, Free, Prior and Informed Consent if Indigenous Peoples lands, territories, resources or ways of life are potentially impacted.

4. **Climate and Nature Nexus thematic group**
   Lead: Virginia Young

   The Commission realizes the inherent possibilities at the convergence of climate and nature, bridging the gap between discourse and action by transforming these opportunities into concrete, high-impact interventions and initiatives. This includes recognising: the pivotal role of biodiversity in underpinning ecological integrity; the importance of retaining and restoring ecological integrity for climate mitigation, limiting climate impacts on nature and retaining critical ecosystem services; and the vital role of Indigenous Peoples as stewards and caretakers of nature and rights-holders in this regard.

   - Support actions to implement the CBD COP16 decision related to the convergence of climate and biodiversity, ensuring progress through rights and science-based mechanisms that strengthen cooperation among the Rio Conventions.
   - Develop practical guidance and technical briefs to guide implementation in NBSAPs and NDCs to increase understanding of the critical role of biodiversity and ecological integrity for climate mitigation and adaptation and the importance of protecting and enhancing ecological integrity for the ecosystem service of carbon retention.
   - Develop a set of briefs with partners (other Commissions and external partners) covering the following suggested areas (to be determined): importance of biodiversity and ecological integrity for the stability of ecosystems and longevity of and risks to, carbon storage; reforms to carbon accounting to reflect the importance of ecosystem integrity for carbon retention.
   - Contribute to the revision of the IUCN Nature based Solutions Global Standard and IUCN policy development on ecosystem/ecological integrity
   - Prepare a Technical Brief to help unpack target 8 of the Global Biodiversity Framework and identify synergies with IPCC AR6 WG 11 on Adaptation and IPCC WG 111 on Mitigation.
   - Identify and prioritize high-risk ecosystems to recommend and advocate for intervention to safeguard biodiversity and enhance climate resilience, linking with national planning instruments (e.g. NDCs and NBSAPs).

5.2 Cross-Cutting Areas

1. **Communications and Outreach**
    - Communicate the CCC's vision, mission, and objectives through targeted outreach with the support of the Commissions Support Unit, the IUCN Secretariat, Members and partners.

2. **Partnerships**
    - Develop strategic internal partnerships with the Secretariat - specially with the Global Climate Change & Energy Transition Team from the Centre for Societal Transformation and strengthen our collaboration with other IUCN Commissions to elevate the urgency of the climate crisis in the international space.

3. **Flagship initiative**
    - Promote the adoption of the motion, **"*Harnessing IUCN's Power: Driving Synergy for Net Zero, Nature Positive, and a Just Energy Transition*,"** to establish a credible, rights-based framework for Net Zero and Nature Positive goals.

5.3 Internal Organization and Structure

1. **Membership**
    - Convene members under principles of inclusion, ensuring active participation and representation from all regions, including frontline and directly impacted Peoples and sectors. Continue convening and engaging the membership through regular communication and inclusive dialogue to foster collaboration to implement the 2025 work plan, to support CCC participation at the World Congress and key multilateral and regional fora.

2. **Cross-Commission Collaboration**
    - Promote synergies across Commissions through dedicated mechanisms and jointly developed projects and knowledge and advocacy products.

3. **Regional and Thematic Coordination**

    Initiate the creation of regional task forces or working groups, in coordination with the thematic groups and CCC Steering Committee, to enhance region-specific collaboration. These could:

    - **Provide members with an opportunity to volunteer to support** the development or implementation of one or more activities or actions within each theme of the Work Plan.
    - **Create a platform** to share CCC updates with a regional perspective, fostering localized knowledge exchange and capacity building.
    - **Identify high-priority areas** and opportunities for collaboration at the regional level.
    - **Strengthen connections** between regional members and global CCC initiatives.

6. Organizing the Work

Through this 2025 Work Plan, the IUCN Climate Crisis Commission will drive impactful, integrated responses to the global climate and biodiversity crises, reinforcing the importance of collaboration, inclusivity, and science-based frameworks for a sustainable future.

The IUCN CCC Steering Committee, the Regional Vice Chairs, and the Thematic leads will continue organizing the work, foster collaborations across Commissions and Secretariat and convening the members to actively contribute to further developing and implementing this Work Plan until the end of 2025.

Approved by the IUCN Council, decision C112/10 on 30 January 2025

	IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 Registration fees (in USD)	(until 30 June 2025 at 23:59 CET)	(1 July - 18 September 2025 at 23:59 CET)	(as of 19 September 2025 at 23:59 CET)
ONSITE PARTICIPATION	ONSITE PARTICIPATION			
High income countries	DELEGATES FROM HIGH- INCOME COUNTRIES*			
High income countries	IUCN Members / IUCN Commissions	628	785	942
High income countries	Standard	966	1208	1449
High income countries	Young Professionals (age 28-35)	290	362	434
High income countries	Youth** (under age 27 included)	194	242	290
High income countries	Accompanying person	242	302	362
High income countries	Day Pass	194	242	290
Low/Mid income countries	DELEGATES FROM LOW- AND MIDDLE- INCOME COUNTRIES*			
Low/Mid income countries	IUCN Members / IUCN Commissions	574	717	860
Low/Mid income countries	Standard	882	1103	1323
Low/Mid income countries	Young Professionals (age 28-35)	265	331	397
Low/Mid income countries	Youth** (under age 27 included)	177	221	265

	Accompanying person	221	276	331
	Day Pass	177	221	265
UAE				
	Day Pass for UAE Residents			
	Participants living in UAE	80	100	120
	Young Professionals (age 28-35)	60	75	90
	Youth** (under 27) participants living in UAE	40	50	60

VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION		**VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION**		
	High Income	**DELEGATES FROM HIGH- INCOME COUNTRIES***		
		IUCN Members / IUCN Commissions	130	163	195
		Standard	200	250	300
		Young Professionals (age 28-35)	60	75	90
		Youth** (under age 27 included)	40	50	60
	Low/Middle Income	**DELEGATES FROM LOW- AND MIDDLE- INCOME COUNTRIES***		
		IUCN Members / IUCN Commissions	104	130	156
		Standard	160	200	240
		Young Professionals (age 28-35)	48	60	72
		Youth** (under age 27 included)	32	40	48

*Delegates from Low-income, Lower-middle income and Upper-middle income countries - as per World Bank Classification. The Criterion is residence, not nationality.

**To be able to register as a Youth, individuals must be between 18 and 27 (inclusive) years old and present proof of age (official identity card stating the age). For Young Professionals, the age is between 28 and 35 inclusive.

Categories definition

1. ***Members:*** All participants who are staff of IUCN Member organizations, IUCN Commission members or staff of IUCN National or Regional Committees. Members registering only for the Assembly would be entitled to register free of charge.
2. ***General:*** Any participant who is not affiliated to IUCN under category 1.
3. ***Youth:*** Any participant born after 9 October 1997. Participants registering as youth will be required to prove their age with an ID at registration, and possibly onsite.
4. ***Young professionals:*** Any participant born between 9 October 1989 and 8 October 1997
5. ***Residents of the United Arab Emirates***: Any individual domiciled in the UAE who can provide a justification of residence (ID card, driving license, etc.).
6. ***Day Pass***: Any individual who wishes to participate in only one day of the Congress. Day passes will be available to participate between 9 and 13 October 2025.
7. ***Accompanying persons:*** registration that must be linked to a full Congress registration and which will only give restricted access to the following parts: Opening ceremony, opening reception, closing ceremony, exhibition, social events in the evening (after 6:00 pm).

IUCN Knowledge Management Strategy

Approved by the IUCN Council, decision C112/11 on 30 January 2025

Contents

1. Introduction 4
1.1 Vision and mission 4
1.2 Making a case for KM 5
1.3 Defining the scope 7
2 Knowledge management in IUCN 9
2.1 Historical overview 9
2.2 The current situation 10
2.2.1 Actors involved 11
2.2.2 Strengths and weaknesses in IUCN's current KM practices 12
2.2.3 Status quo in IUCN for selected key issues 14
3. Where do we want to go 15
3.1 Strategic priorities 15
Strategic priority 1: Improve the design and sharing of relevant knowledge to catalyse action for nature 16
Strategic priority 2: Improve knowledge flow and learning across IUCN 17
Strategic priority 3: Enhance institutional capacity and efficiency for knowledge management 18
Strategic priority 4: Identify and allocate appropriate resources to implement IUCN knowledge management strategy 19
3.2 Core values 20
Annex I: Results of IUCN Members and staff survey 21
Annex II: External trends and developments 26
Broader trends relating to knowledge and information 26
Open science 26
Cross-functional knowledge sharing 26
Proactive knowledge retention 26
Misinformation and credibility 27
Shortened attention spans and implications for knowledge dissemination 27
Metrics for measuring knowledge initiatives 27
Trends relating to technology 27
Cloud storage 27
Information mobility 27
Powerful collaboration tools and platform consolidation 28
Artificial intelligence 28
Trends relating to knowledge management for biodiversity conservation 28
Overview 28
Plethora of biodiversity data and information platforms 29

Autonomy over data, information and knowledge 29
Indigenous and local knowledge in conservation 29
Knowledge management under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) 29
Evolution in conservation evaluation to measure genuine impact in conservation 30

1. Introduction

1.1 Vision and mission

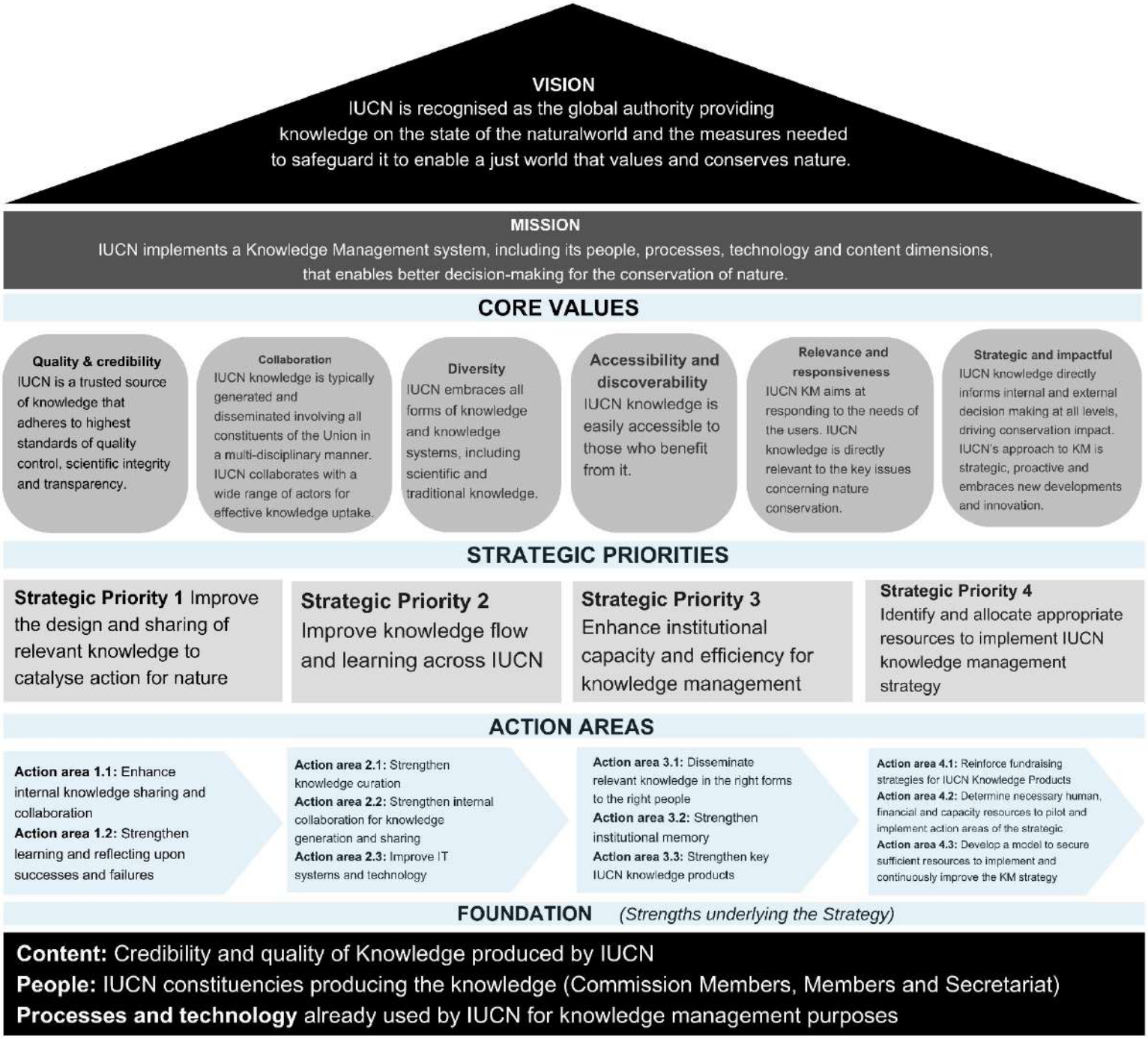
The **Vision** for the IUCN Knowledge Management (KM) Strategy is:

IUCN is recognised as the global authority providing knowledge on the state of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it to enable a just world that values and conserves nature.

The **Mission** of the IUCN Knowledge Management Strategy is:

IUCN implements a Knowledge Management system, including its people, processes, technology and content dimensions, that enables better decision-making for the conservation of nature.

Figure 1: Strategy House – Summarises the key elements of the KM Strategy, guided by its vision and mission)



1.2 Making a case for KM

Article 3 (g) of IUCN Statutes, list as a mean for IUCN to attain its objectives "provid(ing) scientific and other authoritative information, including traditional ecological knowledge, in the form of assessments, analysis, and advice on the status and trends of nature and natural resources, including on threats, human behaviour, conservation measures and future scenarios"[1].

Producing and disseminating authoritative knowledge is thus part of IUCN's DNA. IUCN Statutes highlight the role of the Commissions to do so, defining them as "networks of expert volunteers entrusted to develop and advance the institutional knowledge and experience and objectives of IUCN"[2]. IUCN's strong capacity to produce and disseminate authoritative knowledge also stems from

[1] IUCN Statutes and Regulations
[2] Art 73 of IUCN Statutes and Regulations

the number and diversity of its Members, who collaborate through the Union in advancing knowledge and action for conservation.

According to the external review of the IUCN Programme 2021-2024, IUCN publications, Standards-based knowledge products and tools are held in extremely high regard[3], and in the draft quadrennial Programme "Nature 2030" (2026-2029), "Guiding conservation with robust science, data and multidisciplinary evidence" is listed as part of IUCN's catalytic roles. This is also highlighted amongst IUCN's core roles in the 20-year Vision document.

Knowledge Management (KM) is a professional field and academic discipline, which has been mainstreamed since the late 1990s and is evolving constantly. There is an increasing recognition of the importance of KM, organisations are increasingly focusing on KM methods to stay competitive, with many large organisations setting up dedicated KM departments and processes[4].

Investing in KM – or not – comes with a number of benefits, or respectively, costs, relating to reputation and credibility, efficiency and institutional impact.

Without a robust KM system, knowledge fails to reach the right people, resulting in inefficiency, a lack of impact on decision-making and action, poor quality outputs, and lost institutional knowledge when individuals discontinue their engagement with the Union or projects conclude. This fosters silos, risks repeating past mistakes and limits the organisation's ability to innovate and seize new opportunities. Institutional strategies and policy debates may lack the foundation of well-organised knowledge assets, leading to poorly informed decisions. All these elements can ultimately damage the organisation's reputation.

Conversely, investing in KM ensures knowledge reaches the appropriate and various audiences, leading to informed decisions and action, efficiency, high-quality outputs, and retained knowledge for smooth transitions. Strategies and policies are informed by a clear understanding of the organisation's collective knowledge, resulting in more effective decision-making. Furthermore, KM nurtures collaboration, fosters communities of practice, and breaks down silos, enhancing satisfaction, cohesion, and integration among individuals, groups and constituents that form part of the organisation. By leveraging collective knowledge, new initiatives are more likely to succeed, and a culture of innovation and exploration of unexpected benefits flourishes.

With these elements in mind, a number of IGOs and NGOs active in the conservation domain have invested in the development and implementation of KM processes in recent years.

[3] iucn_21-24-external-review_final.pdf
[4]

IUCN largely continues to be perceived as a leading and credible source of knowledge on the status of nature and the measures needed to safeguard it, but it is affected by all the above-mentioned costs of not having proper KM in place and stands to gain greatly by strengthening its KM system (see also section 2.2).

A clear, overarching KM strategy, aligned with IUCN's mission, is essential to guide organisational efforts, establish expectations, promote consistency and a structured approach, as well as accountability across constituents, individuals, groups and units that form part of the Union.

This strategy proposes to build on and strengthen existing mechanisms and processes, and introduce new ones where needed, to ensure institutional knowledge is systematically captured, retained, and aligned with IUCN's conservation goals.

It is also important to note that, as for any strategy, the priorities and actions of the IUCN Knowledge Management Strategy are meant to be evaluated and revised. This document is a **first attempt** to bridge an important gap for IUCN (the previous proposal for a strategy in the domain is 25 years old), and meet the needs of the Union by providing a strategic direction to IUCN KM. We propose to **evaluate and revise the strategy after a four-year period (in 2029),** thereby **aligning this process with the development of the quadrennial Programme**.

1.3 Defining the scope

The IUCN KM Strategy is a strategy for the Union, with roles for Members, Commissions and Secretariat. It is meant to align closely with the IUCN quadrennial Programme "Nature 2030", as well as the 20-year Vision, and will support the implementation of both. It is also designed to support the delivery of IUCN's mission and vision, i.e. focus on the knowledge that is required for the organisation to fulfil its objectives and deliver on its Programme.

There are many definitions of KM. One workable definition that is useful for the purposes of this strategy defines KM as "*the right knowledge at the right time for the right people in the right way*.", and one might want to add "to inform decision-making and action". For the purpose of this strategy, we adopt a broad understanding of KM, which includes informal ways of knowledge sharing in addition to formal ones.

To take an informed approach to KM, it is essential to understand **what we mean by "IUCN knowledge".** That said, there is no single answer to that question. In general terms, knowledge is based on facts, as well as feelings and experiences. Understanding IUCN knowledge can be approached from different angles, adding up to a holistic answer. This includes for example:

1. **Classifying IUCN's explicit knowledge, including knowledge assets** – over which IUCN has complete ownership – **and knowledge outputs** – typically derived from numerous sources and consequently, with shared intellectual property rights –; **differentiating between operational and technical assets and outputs** (see figure 2 for an illustration of these different elements). In this context, knowledge outputs should not be confused with communication channels (website, social media, newsletters, …).
2. **Classifying knowledge outputs according to their intended audience**.
3. **Building on IUCN's understanding of "knowledge products"**[5]. There has never been a Union-wide agreed-on definition of the term, but the Knowledge Products Strategic Roadmap proposes an IUCN Knowledge Product typology.

[5] C108/7/1 Knowledge Products Report – Strategic Roadmap (23 December 2022)

4. **Classifying IUCN knowledge outputs according to the constituents involved in their production** (noting that most knowledge is produced in collaboration between multiple components of the Union).
5. **Classifying IUCN knowledge according to its "origin"**, including impetus for producing a certain piece of knowledge, funding sources, …
6. **Classifying IUCN knowledge into formal and informal forms** – both of which would include explicit (documented) as well as tacit (undocumented) knowledge.

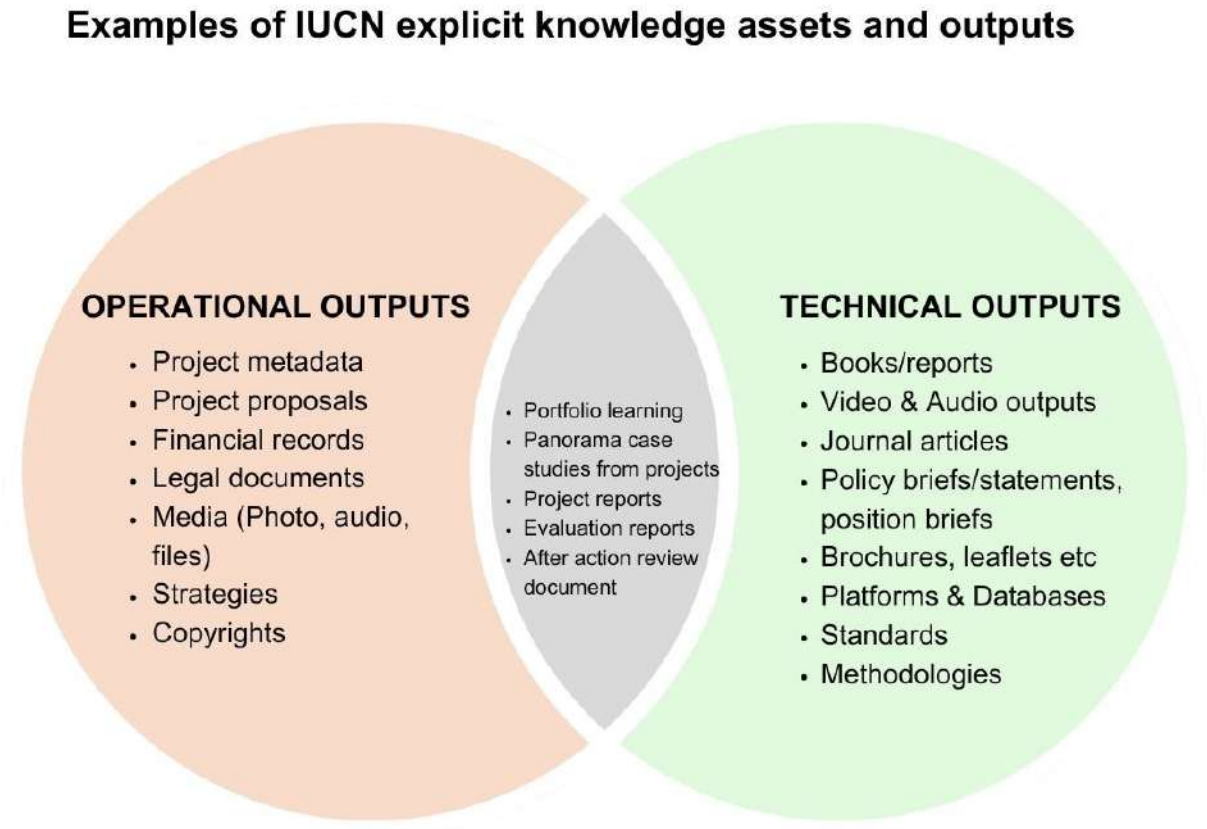


Figure 2: Examples of IUCN explicit knowledge assets and outputs

Questions of "what is owned by IUCN" in terms of intellectual property play a role as well. The copyright and open access policies define this for publications, but not other knowledge outputs. Particularly when Members and Commissions are involved in knowledge creation, the question of what constitutes "IUCN knowledge" in terms of intellectual ownership cannot be easily answered. This means that **"IUCN knowledge" for the purposes of this Strategy is not equivalent to knowledge that is "IUCN owned"**.

In conclusion, rather than attempting to define "IUCN knowledge", **it is more appropriate to speak of "knowledge for the purposes of this Strategy".**

Recalling the Vision of the Strategy, the ultimate purpose of KM is for IUCN to better influence conservation practice. IUCN's knowledge is part of the pathway to achieving IUCN's mission and, ultimately, its vision. Rather than seeing knowledge as a suite of assets with an unknown or potential value, it can be seen as **an incremental suite of knowledge elements that IUCN builds around its decision-making, influencing, convening, problem-solving purpose, and which are continually expanded, modified and adapted in relation to IUCN's purpose**.

Collecting and preserving knowledge for an unspecified purpose is also valid, in the hope that one day it might prove useful. Hence, the KM Strategy should provide space both for better "managing" IUCN knowledge to achieve the organisation's purpose, as well as fostering "blue-sky" thinking to generate innovative solutions and new knowledge to new challenges that might arise.

Importantly, the KM Strategy embraces not only one type of knowledge, such as scientific knowledge, but multiple ways of knowing, including those derived from different cultures, such as Indigenous and traditional knowledge. Even though multi-dimensional, this approach to defining "IUCN knowledge" is still useful for informing strategic decision-making about KM.

The IUCN KM Strategy will focus on IUCN knowledge, as it is defined in the first part of this section. The Strategy will not directly focus on data and information management, or data protection – cognisant, however, that knowledge is in part based on data and information[6]. The Strategy will also not focus on document and knowledge management for corporate functions such as human resources and legal purposes, given that there are many existing mechanisms and no need for duplication. Chapter 3 provides more specifics on the question of what IS (rather than IS NOT) included in the scope of the Strategy.

The IUCN KM Strategy also aligns closely with the draft knowledge management strategy to support the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), positioning IUCN as an important player for supporting implementation of the GBF KM strategy.

IUCN also notes the adoption the Knowledge Management Strategy to support the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), which was adopted at the CBD COP16 in Cali, and provides an opportunity for IUCN to position itself further as an important player for knowledge management in the context of the KMGBF.

Finally, as mentioned in Section 1.2 above, this strategy is meant to guide action in the field of KM for IUCN **for a period of four years**, at the end of which time it will be revised, ideally with a view that the next version is available to align with and support the preparation of the next IUCN programme.

2 Knowledge management in IUCN

2.1 Historical overview

When IUCN was founded in Fontainebleau on 5 October 1948 as the International Union for the Protection of Nature (IUPN), one of its original objectives was to "collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information about the 'Protection of Nature"'[7], with the collections of the IUCN Library predating IUCN itself. Generating, synthesising, collecting, organising, sharing and applying the latest scientific and practical knowledge is core to IUCN's identity as an organisation.

For a long time, there has not been a systematic, institution-wide approach to IUCN knowledge management (KM), but it is important to note KM as a discipline only emerged in the early 1990s and became mainstream inside many large companies and organisations by the late 1990s and early 2000s.

External reviews of IUCN conducted in 1999 and 2003, discussions and resolutions from the 2000 IUCN World Conservation Congress in Amman, and a review of the Commissions, raised the issue of knowledge management. As a response, IUCN commissioned the International Institute for

[6] Reference to DIKW pyramid
[7] International Union for the Protection of Nature established at Fontainebleau, 5 October 1948 | IUCN Library System

Sustainable Development (IISD) at the end of 2003 to conduct an in-depth IUCN KM study, which informed the development of a draft IUCN KM strategy, led by a Special Advisor. Following a 6-month consultation process, the draft KM strategy and its companion document were issued in December 2005, but never formally approved by relevant IUCN constituencies.

Over the following years, KM remained a priority for the organisation, coordinated by a "Science and Knowledge Management Unit" at the Secretariat. The unit developed several regional KM strategies.

In 2008, the IUCN WCC held in Barcelona, Spain adopted a Resolution "urging the Director General to develop a clear policy and strategy for the management of biodiversity data, information and expert analysis generated through the work of the IUCN Secretariat and Commissions"[8].

By the 2012 IUCN WCC in Jeju, Republic of Korea, the Science and Knowledge Management Unit had morphed into the Science and Knowledge Unit, headed by the Chief Scientist, and its mandate no longer included the development and implementation of KM processes and tools for the institution. While there was no longer a central coordinating unit for KM within the Secretariat, many knowledge management processes were maintained and initiated across the Union over this period, such as the maintenance of the IUCN library system, the establishment of DOIs and tracking of all IUCN publications, the development of various platforms such as the Union Portal, Resolutions Database, Project Portal, Contributions for Nature Platform, IUCN Engage, development of the PANORAMA initiative, and many others. Capacity development and learning – not equivalent but interrelated to KM – has majorly advanced as well, including through the establishment of the IUCN Academy as well as promulgation of training programmes on the IUCN Red List, the Key Biodiversity Areas standard and many other knowledge products.

In parallel, a broad array of sister processes were advanced through the Commissions, National, Regional, and Interregional Committees, as well as Members.

In 2021, the Director General commissioned a strategic review of IUCN data products to help IUCN understand opportunities to extend the uptake, reach, conservation impact, and financial sustainability of its "knowledge products". This resulted in a "Strategic Roadmap on Knowledge Products and Knowledge Management", which forms part of the basis for the KM Strategy, at least as far as knowledge that is based on IUCN data is concerned.

In the second half of 2021, a Knowledge Management, Learning and Library Services team was established in the IUCN Secretariat. This Unit will coordinate the implementation of the current IUCN KM Strategy. However, it is essential to note that implementation of the Strategy will depend and rely on collective ownership by many components of the Union involved in KM – including Commissions with their Specialist Groups and Task Forces; Members through their Committees and individual activities; and other Secretariat units such as the Global Information Systems Group, the Institutional Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, the Human Resources Group and all programmatic units.

2.2 The current situation

A survey issued to all Member organisations and Secretariat staff showed there is a very strong understanding of the general concept of KM across the organisation, even though understanding of specific aspects may differ. KM forms part of the work of almost all staff and Members, especially the elements of knowledge organisation and sharing, as well as knowledge uptake, use and application (see annex 1 for a summary of the results of the survey).

[8] WCC 2008 RES 012

2.2.1 Actors involved

Producers of IUCN knowledge

IUCN's knowledge is being produced by all components of the Union, often as the result of collaborative efforts.

As per IUCN Statutes, the **Commissions** are "networks of expert volunteers entrusted to develop and advance the institutional knowledge and experience and objectives of IUCN"[9]. They cover all aspects of conservation and produce a very significant portion of IUCN knowledge, notably through the development of knowledge products such as the Red List of Threatened Species, the Red List of Ecosystems assessments, the Global Invasive Species Database, EICAT, GRIIS; guidelines such as the Protected Area Best Practice Guidelines; Standards such as the IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions, as well as many other publications. As per the Statutes, the role of the IUCN Commissions is to bring experts together "to develop and advance the institutional knowledge and experience and objectives of IUCN". In 2022, two of the five IUCN reports that received most online attention were produced by Commissions.[10]

IUCN **Members** also generate knowledge, with or without direct link to their membership in the Union. They use IUCN knowledge in their practice and influence its development through their work for a more sustainable future. Some of IUCN's knowledge products are co-managed by the secretariat and Member organisations, such as Protected Planet.

The **Secretariat** also produces a share of IUCN knowledge, often in collaboration with Commissions and Member, including reflections on lessons learned from projects or policy processes.

Users of IUCN knowledge

With its status as the "global authority on the state of nature", IUCN provides knowledge for use by a wide range of actors engaged in activities that impact nature.

The conservation community itself is a central user group for IUCN knowledge, but stakeholders beyond those with formal responsibility over nature conservation -including the private sector and education institutions-, also rely on IUCN knowledge for their learning, operations and decision-making. Media often quote IUCN knowledge products and information or cite our experts (Secretariat, Commissions) as spokespeople.

Finally, with recent technological developments, a lot of "users" are not real persons anymore but AI tools that parse information and provide summaries for AI users.

[9] Article 73 of IUCN Statutes
[10] iucn_21-24-external-review_final.pdf

2.2.2 Strengths and weaknesses in IUCN's current KM practices

The table below summarises the views collected through the consultation process and contains an overview of what are considered the current strengths and weaknesses in IUCN's KM practices, looking into the four components of KM: Content, People, Processes and Technology.

Table 1: Strengths and weaknesses in IUCN's current KM practices

KM component	Strengths	Weaknesses
Content	- A reputation in the world for being a credible, science and knowledge-based organization - High degree of familiarity with many of IUCN's knowledge products [11] - A wealth of high-quality, authoritative content; IUCN KPs being held in high regard - A vast project portfolio, generating rich insights from conservation practice	- Access to scientific literature to ensure the robustness of content - Lack of formalisation of knowledge, where this is appropriate and feasible
People	- A vast network of experts across the components of the Union, collaborating around knowledge - Some level of senior management support for making KM a priority, promoting its importance and ensuring that it receives appropriate institutional support - A set of engaged KM champions across the organization, who might or might not have formal KM responsibilities - A dedicated Secretariat unit to coordinate KM	- Roles and responsibilities relating to KM are not clearly defined. - Over-reliance on individuals, resulting in knowledge loss when those individuals discontinue their association with the Union.
Processes	- Collaboration between IUCN constituents is the norm, e.g. in project development and execution or the elaboration of knowledge products - Many existing processes, governing the generation of data; the production of official IUCN ISBN publications (including Open Access Policy[12]), policy position papers, official statements and press releases; monitoring, evaluation and learning for projects; onboarding and offboarding of staff; … - An established tool and methodology for knowledge discovery, capture, exchange and dissemination of good practices in conservation (PANORAMA[13]), which can be mainstreamed more strongly in the organization	- No clear, overarching KM strategy has been in place so far to guide organizational efforts, establish expectations, and promote consistency across units - Multitude of policies and processes relating to knowledge, not necessarily synchronized

[11] iucn_21-24-external-review_final.pdf
[12] PO.KMP_.1_IUCN_Open_Access_Policy_October_2024.pdf
[13] www.panorama.solutions

	- Good KM practices and habits in many teams and offices - Formal processes for knowledge sharing are part of the organisational life and culture, e.g. bi-annual management workshops, Council meetings, Regional Conservation Forums and the IUCN World Conservation Congress, Brown Bag Lunches, Town Halls, regular team and unit meetings, … - Many informal formats and spaces for knowledge sharing exist as well - Stable and unique identifiers (DOIs) that help increase discoverability are granted to official IUCN ISBN publications; IUCN ISBN publications usually have their own dissemination plan - A number of taxonomies or classification systems for knowledge exist (e.g. keywords used for tagging publications in the IUCN Library System; the "job families" used by HR for grouping staff; the emerging "project typology" and metadata used for tagging projects; ..) - Processes supporting knowledge uptake, e.g. capacity development delivered through the IUCN Academy or through activities of projects	- Complexity of IUCN publication processes - No centralised governance of taxonomies for IUCN's knowledge - Lack of robust offboarding processes that ensure knowledge retention - Lack of standardized, consistently applied processes for ensuring knowledge retention from projects and initiatives - No aggregated reporting instruments to capture the Secretariat's non-portfolio work, including knowledge creation[14]
Technology	- IT systems and platforms are in place that can principally support KM functions: - Internal-facing systems – some only accessible by Secretariat staff, others for the whole Union (Union Portal, IUCN Engage, Confluence, MS Office Suite – in particular MS Teams and MS SharePoint relevant for KM, J Drive, the Human Resources Management System (HRMS), IUCN Academy platform including staff orientation course, the Programme and Project portal, Species Information System (SIS), …) - External-facing systems and platforms (corporate website, Library System, Contributions for Nature platform, PANORAMA web platform, IUCN Academy platform, RLTS website, Open Project Portal, …) - IUCN's libraries have always played, and continue to play, an important role both in terms of knowledge discovery – for example by providing staff access to latest scientific articles – and collection, by acting as repositories for publications	- No central, accessible knowledge repository, knowledge sharing platform or central "KM entry point" - Existing platforms are not necessarily up to date, fit for purpose, well-integrated with each other or used to their full potential. - No strategic use of AI for KM, no AI policy

[14] iucn_21-24-external-review_final.pdf

2.2.3 Status quo in IUCN for selected key issues

This section outlines the current situation in IUCN with regards to selected key issues that are considered critical in the context of this Strategy. An overview of selected major external trends and developments that are of direct relevance to IUCN's KM can be found in annex II.

Open science and aspects relating to intellectual property of knowledge

The IUCN World Conservation Congress in Bangkok, Thailand (2004) adopted a Resolution that called on Members to adopt the Principles of the Conservation Commons, which includes a principle on open access[15].

The IUCN copyright policy[16] was adopted in 2022. It applies to Work that is capable of copyright protection that is processed by IUCN and no other forms of intellectual property rights. It applies to IUCN Secretariat to the extent that they create Work in the name and on behalf of IUCN, share the IUCN Work with third parties and/or contribute to or incorporate own material and/or third-party copyright protected material to become part of the IUCN Work.

In 2024, IUCN has adopted an open access policy for publications[17], aiming to increase the accessibility to conservation information. By making all its publications freely available, IUCN aims to support global efforts to address biodiversity loss and climate change. This policy aligns with IUCN's commitment to opening information widely, empowering communities, researchers and policymakers to make more informed decisions for the protection and sustainable management of nature.

Finally, traditional knowledge generated in IUCN projects would normally be owned by the Indigenous Peoples, but IUCN is systematically granted a license to use it.

Indigenous and local knowledge

IUCN has long supported the rights, governance, worldviews and traditional knowledge of Indigenous peoples and local communities. This is reflected in the governance bodies of IUCN, notably with an elected Indigenous Councillor to IUCN's Council, to the distinguishing of the Indigenous Peoples Organisation (IPO) category of the IUCN membership.

The related IPO strategy includes ensuring indigenous representation, worldviews and knowledge in IUCN's Council, IPO participation in IUCN National and Regional Committees, and increased indigenous engagement with IUCN Commissions and large-scale projects funded under the GEF and EU. The Podong Initiative is IUCN's flagship commitment to expand IPO membership and advance Indigenous interests across the Union. The IUCN Resolution WCC 2020 002 concerning strengthened institutional inclusion of Indigenous peoples provides the mandate and further impetus for this work.

One of the most significant outcomes of Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity CBD COP16 was the establishment of a Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j) (SB8J). This body aims to advise the COP and other subsidiary bodies on matters concerning Indigenous peoples and local communities. It will be responsible for ensuring their effective participation and for providing guidance on the application of traditional knowledge in biodiversity conservation.

[15] WCC Resolution 3.085
[16] PO.LGL.2_IUCN Copyright Policy_November 2022.pdf
[17] PO.KMP_.1_IUCN_Open_Access_Policy_October_2024.pdf

IUCN has been named explicitly as a duty bearer in the related programme of work on 8j, which was also adopted, recognising the challenges faced by these groups in developing countries. The decision urged Parties to consider national legislation, circumstances, and priorities when implementing the programme, of which IUCN's KM strategy can support.

Artificial intelligence and the security of information

Artificial intelligence could prove a very powerful tool for KM, but the use of AI also raises many concerns such as the consent of the authors of the knowledge to be used by the AI, issues of intellectual property rights and the crucial question of the reliability/quality of the solution proposed to the user by the AI. The IUCN KM Strategy must be implemented to serve a trusted source for AI tools, avoiding hallucinations and removing fake knowledge.

Another important element is to make sure IUCN knowledge is at the same time safe from any change/alterations and open to the people who need it. Hackers from all sides are trying not only to take money but also to change the "truth" serving interested parties that do not want the truth to be public. An important element of the KM Strategy is also about how to secure IUCN knowledge.

IUCN engagement in KM under the CBD process

IUCN has always been considered an important provider of biodiversity data and information and knowledge for CBD Parties (as well as Parties to other Conventions). IUCN also produces knowledge outputs, such as position papers, to inform the CBD process itself. It has engaged in the development of the knowledge management strategy accompanying the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including through representation in the Informal Advisory Group on Technical and Scientific Cooperation. Several IUCN offices have been selected to host regional TSC support centres and will play an important role in providing KM and other related services to Parties.

3. Where do we want to go

3.1 Strategic priorities

The IUCN KM Strategy is meant to be needs-based and IUCN constituents were asked to share their views on the main priorities to improve current IUCN KM practices. This was done thorugh a combination of formal and informal consultation mechanisms, held between January and November 2024. A Working Group established by Council has been tasked with the drafting of the KM Strategy and provided guidance for the consultation process. Commissions were invited to provide input through their Steering Committees or leadership group, in addition to being represented on the Working Group. Members and staff were consulted through a survey (see annex I) and through many individual consultations.

Based on these consultations, the recurring themes and identified needs were synthesized into the following **four overarching strategic priorities** for IUCN KM.

1. **Improve the design and sharing of relevant knowledge to catalyse action for nature**
2. **Improve knowledge flow and learning across IUCN**
3. **Enhance institutional capacity and efficiency for knowledge management**
4. **Identify and allocate appropriate resources to implement IUCN knowledge management strategy**

The strategic priorities and associated action areas are not ranked and are interlinked, with many actions supporting more than one strategic objective.

Further details on each strategic priority and accompanying action areas are provided below.

To put these action areas into practice, operational aspects must be considered. As a follow up to the approval of the IUCN KM Strategy, an **Operational Plan** will be developed, which will outline key requirements for operationalising the strategic priorities and associated action areas, including governance aspects, as well as measures for review, monitoring and evaluation of the strategy.

Strategic priority 1: Improve the design and sharing of relevant knowledge to catalyse action for nature

The creation and dissemination of relevant knowledge are critical for IUCN's mission to drive impactful conservation efforts globally.

As a knowledge-based organisation, IUCN generates a wealth of data, information and knowledge that inform evidence-based decision-making and policy development at all levels, in particular through the work of the Commissions. However, the lack of consistent knowledge sharing practices, and of systematic strategic integration of internal and external knowledge can cause fragmentation and inefficiencies, as well as increase the risks around the quality of the knowledge disseminated, which could ultimately impact institutional credibility.

The Programme and the 20-year vision of IUCN can only influence the world through effective flow of knowledge, and IUCN will remain an essential convenor of knowledge to catalyse action for nature by ensuring that credible and up to date knowledge products flow to the appropriate audiences.

Action area 1.1: Strengthen key IUCN knowledge products and outputs

Action 1.1.1: Focus on unique IUCN knowledge

- Highlight critical tools and datasets that are unique to IUCN to inform high-level decisions and conservation action, and ensure they reflect different ways of knowing.
- Update and complete the mapping and definitions of IUCN knowledge products.

Action 1.1.2: Strengthen relevance and quality assurance of IUCN knowledge

- Create open spaces for the exchange of innovative ideas and knowledge generation involving all components of IUCN.
- Review existing and propose new roles, bodies, and processes for guaranteeing the relevance and quality of knowledge produced by IUCN in various formats and integrating different ways of knowing.

Action 1.1.3: Integrate external knowledge

- Link IUCN-generated knowledge with external sources to create synergies and leverage best practices.
- Ensure the integrity of IUCN’s work and reinforce decision-making (both internally and externally) by supporting the information and research needs of IUCN.

Action area 1.2: Improve sharing of relevant knowledge through appropriate means

Action 1.2.1: Build understanding of who is using IUCN knowledge

- Map user groups and their respective needs to ensure knowledge dissemination formats are continuously adapted and improved according to user needs.

Action 1.2.2: Strengthen knowledge dissemination

- Put in place protocols and decision trees to determine the most appropriate formats/outputs for disseminating IUCN knowledge, based on clearly defined target audiences and objectives, ranging from easy-digest communication pieces to peer-reviewed publications or articles.
- Ensure that knowledge both collected by IUCN and generated by IUCN is curated and made accessible to parties according to best practice.
- Ensure IUCN sharing aligns with standards and best practice to ensure ready accessibility to all suitable audiences, including in open access and scholarly publishing when appropriate.
- Invest in building the IUCN Academy as a key mechanism for dissemination of IUCN knowledge in the form of training courses.
- Systematically measure uptake and consider impact of knowledge outputs

Strategic priority 2: Improve knowledge flow and learning across IUCN

Strategic planning and decision-making in IUCN must be based on knowledge management systems and learning from past and best practices. Optimising knowledge management systems for planning and decision-making, as well as strengthening internal sharing and learning across components of the Union, will contribute to this objective, just like strengthening systematic and participatory practices for reflection, evaluation and learning.

Action area 2.1: Enhance internal knowledge sharing and collaboration

Action 2.1.1: Foster learning communities

- Building on the practice of mechanisms such as Specialists Groups and Task Forces driven by Commissions, strengthen or establish internal communities of practice to enable regular, strategic internal knowledge exchange, and foster peer learning and knowledge retention.
- Deliberately support joint learning on mutual topics of interest, using appropriate methodology, such as reflection on “solution pathways” to achieve a desired conservation outcome.
- Encourage all IUCN components to ensure that any knowledge product developed can be accessible to all IUCN components as soon as possible.

Action 2.1.2: Create a sharing culture

- Develop recognition programmes to highlight and reward staff, teams or Commission members that actively share knowledge and collaborate effectively.
- Encourage senior leaders to lead by example in sharing knowledge proactively and regularly.

Action area 2.2: Strengthen learning and reflecting upon successes and failures

Action 2.2.1: Foster a culture of learning and reflection

- Promote organisational values that encourage openness, trust, and a non-punitive approach to learning from mistakes.
- Encourage the active clarification and documentation of tasks, roles and decisions to ensure that information and knowledge are adequately passed on and shared.

Action 2.2.2: Establish mechanisms for documenting and sharing lessons learned

- Ensure that use of appropriate reflection, learning and impact evaluation tools looking at successes, failures and constraining conditions, such as After-Action Review, becomes the standard for major initiatives, internal processes, events and large projects, and that these tools are used to foster learning for the future.
- Promote systematic use of key KM methodologies such as PANORAMA for reflecting on, documenting and sharing learnings from projects.

Strategic priority 3: Enhance institutional capacity and efficiency for knowledge management

Investing in institutional structures, systems and human capacity for KM is essential for proper knowledge creation, curation and dissemination. Doing so will foster collaboration and create efficiencies, ultimately leading to IUCN better being able to pursue opportunities to fulfil its mission. Inefficiencies are currently created by fragmented KM stemming from the lack of institutional systems, resulting for example IUCN constituents spending a lot of time looking for relevant information and knowledge. In that regard, institutional memory was flagged as a key priority with regards to internal KM. Knowledge and valuable insights are often lost at “closure moments”, when experts leave the organisation or when projects and initiatives end. IUCN needs to ensure that learnings and insights from are systematically captured, shared and built on for future programming.

Focusing on the way IUCN produces knowledge outputs, is also part of this strategic priority. Properly designed and integrated digital tools, user-friendly and suitable for IUCN’s structure, are essential for organising, retrieving, and sharing information and knowledge effectively, particularly with advancements in technology. Harnessing AI and other innovative technologies in an appropriate manner, while being cognisant of their risks, can further create efficiencies.

To ensure that needs and priorities of all IUCN are met, all components of IUCN should be part in strengthening information and knowledge sharing. This includes positioning KM as part of the value proposition to Membership.

Action area 3.1: Improve the way knowledge is organised and classified

Action 3.1.1: Standardise practices for documenting knowledge

- Map, review and optimise IUCN systems, mechanisms, protocols, governance mechanisms and taxonomies aimed at generating, storing, managing and disseminating knowledge across all components of IUCN.
- Develop or improve guidelines and templates for documenting and storing knowledge, including obligations relating to converting tacit into explicit knowledge; store on shared systems that allow tagging and easy dissemination; and align with standards and best practices.

Action area 3.2: Strengthen institutional memory to ensure knowledge retention

Action 3.2.1: Strengthen offboarding procedures

- Improve current offboarding practices to ensure knowledge retention when individuals discontinue their association with the Union.

Action 3.2.2: Ensure documentation and archiving of IUCN's history

- Aim at establishing an institutional archive that includes fit for purpose records management and archival practices to ensure that IUCN history, including that of the Commissions, is preserved and made accessible.

Action area 3.3: Strengthen collaboration inside the Union and proactivity for knowledge generation and sharing

Action 3.3.1: Strengthen knowledge sharing amongst Membership

- Explore and strengthen mechanisms for the Secretariat to play a more active role in facilitating knowledge exchange among IUCN Members, building on existing mechanisms such as the IUCN Engage platform, Regional Conservation Forums and the World Conservation Congress, to ensure greater awareness of expertise and opportunities amongst Members.
- Prioritise the needs of IUCN Members in the strategic development of key IUCN tools and products, such as PANORAMA and the Contributions for Nature platform, ensuring that these tools and platforms are a valued part of IUCN's offer to Members.

Action 3.3.2: Strengthen collaboration between IUCN Knolwedge Products governance mechanisms

- Develop opportunities and mechanisms for collaboration.

Action 3.3.3: Strengthen collaboration within the Secretariat

Action area 3.4: Improve IT systems and technology

Action 3.4.1: Establish clear KM entry points using IT systems and platforms

- Create a clear "entry point" for knowledge needs, using existing platforms as appropriate or improve existing systems to effectively fulfil that purpose, including a.o. the Library System, the Union Portal, IUCN Engage.
- Strengthen mobile and remote access to this platform and other relevant internal systems

Action 3.4.2: Harness new technology and innovation

- Explore the potential and assess the risks of modern technologies like AI, big data analytics, cloud computing, and chatbots to improve KM efficiency and accessibility, and apply these technologies as appropriate, paying particular attention to avoiding hallucinations, removing fake knowledge and putting the emphasis on cyber security.

Strategic priority 4: Identify and allocate appropriate resources to implement IUCN knowledge management strategy

To maintain an effective, efficient, transparent and collaborative KM system, it is essential that the required financial, human and technical resources are made available and are accessible to all concerned actors across the Union. This includes optimisation of existing resources as well as mobilisation of new and additional resources, exploring innovative models for funding and capacitating KM.

As a follow up to the approval of the IUCN KM Strategy, an Operational Plan will be developed, which will provide a framework for the implementation of the strategy and will help facilitate incorporation of explicit knowledge components in the IUCN annual work plan and budget.

Action area 4.1: Develop a model to secure sufficient resources to implement and continuously improve the KM strategy

Action 4.1.1: Determine necessary and available human, financial and capacity resources

- Inventory the current resources, and those that will be required for each action of the strategy.
- Develop a map of potential allies to ensure funding to maintain effective KM for IUCN.

Action 4.1.2: Develop an Operational Plan taking into account resource assessment

- In the Operational Plan, define timelines, funding sources and responsibilities, along with other operational parameters, e.g. governance and monitoring and evaluation.
- Define and implement pilot initiatives on selected action areas, taking into account analysis of existing, and mobilisation of additional resources, in addition to other considerations around urgency and prioritisation.
- Develop long-term business model for KM at IUCN, including investments in key tools, initiatives and platforms.

Action area 4.2: Reinforce the role and application of knowledge products across the IUCN Portfolio

Action 4.2.1: Integrate IUCN knowledge into project design analysis

Action 4.2.2: Prepare costing guidance to support incorporation of KM into projects

Action 4.2.3: Screen projects for the use and application of knowledge products at the design stage before final sign off

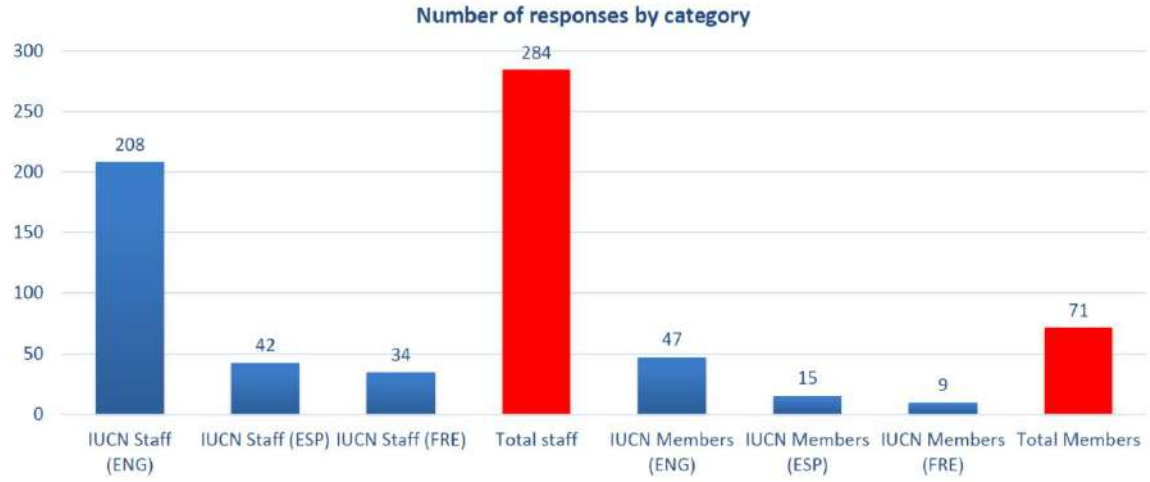
3.2 Core values

The implementation of the KM Strategy will be guided by the following core values:

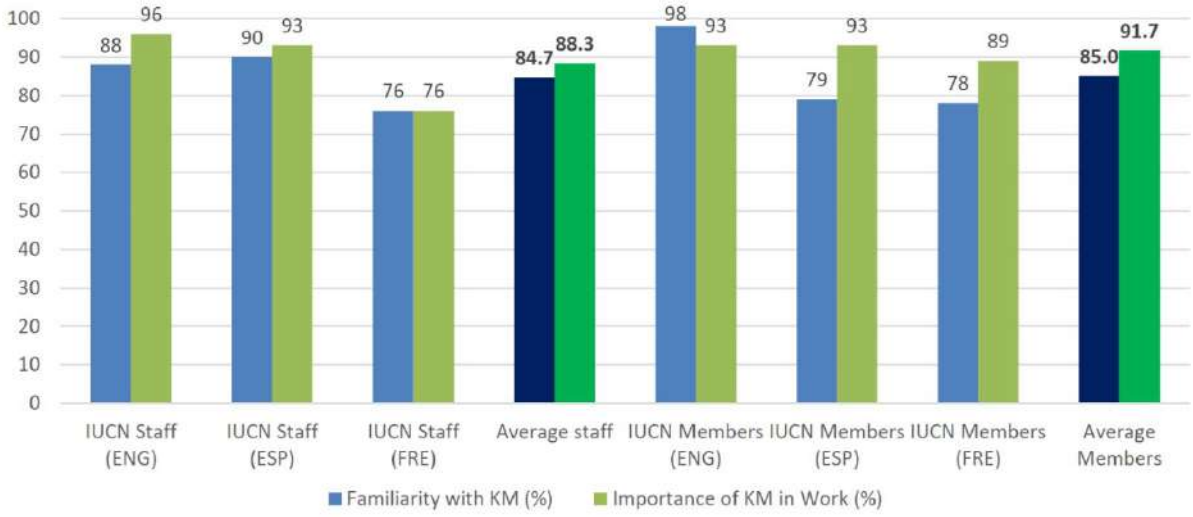
1. **Quality and credibility:** IUCN is a trusted source of knowledge that adheres to highest standards of quality control, scientific integrity and transparency.
2. **Collaboration:** IUCN knowledge is typically generated and disseminated involving all constituents of the Union in a multi-disciplinary manner. IUCN collaborates with a wide range of actors for effective knowledge uptake.
3. **Diversity:** IUCN embraces all forms of knowledge and knowledge systems, including scientific and traditional knowledge.
4. **Accessibility and discoverability:** IUCN knowledge is easily accessible to those who benefit from it.
5. **Relevance and responsiveness:** IUCN KM aims at responding to the needs of the users. IUCN knowledge is directly relevant to the key issues concerning nature conservation.
6. **Strategic and impactful:** IUCN knowledge directly informs internal and external decision making at all levels, driving conservation impact. IUCN's approach to knowledge management is strategic, proactive and embraces new developments and innovation.

Annex I: Results of IUCN Members and staff survey

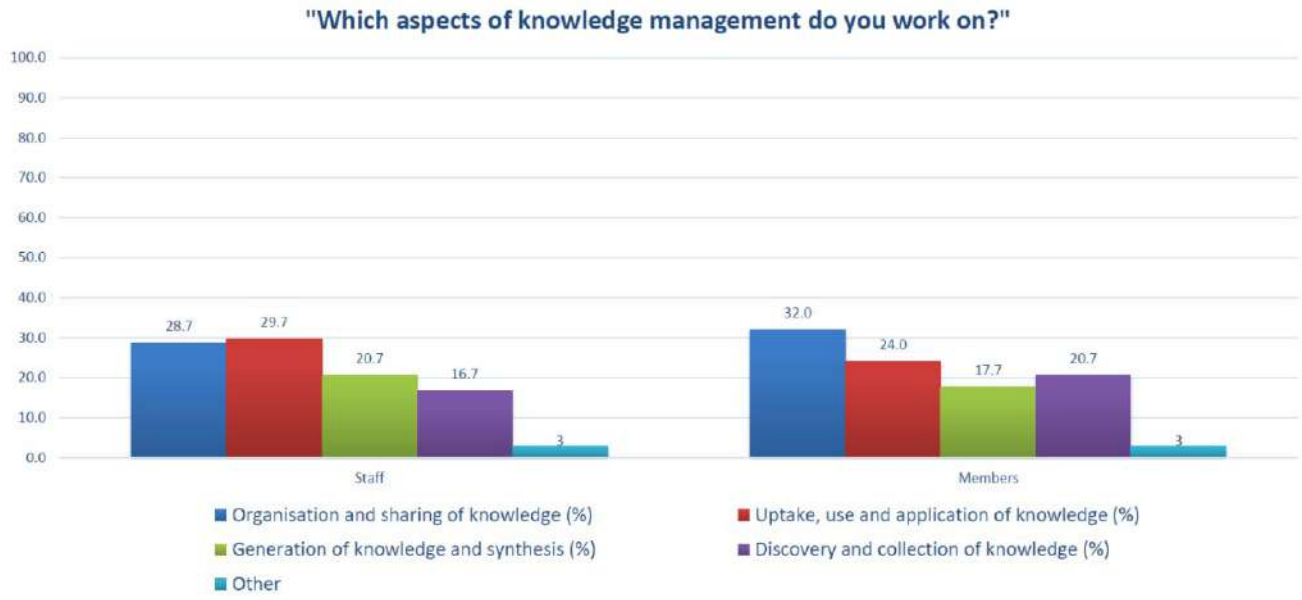
- Survey was distributed in October/November to all Member organisations (71 responses) and Secretariat staff (284 responses), in the 3 IUCN languages
- 3 weeks response time
- Multiple choice as well as open comments
- Provides strong empirical base for KM Strategy; could potentially be repeated regularly to gauge progress



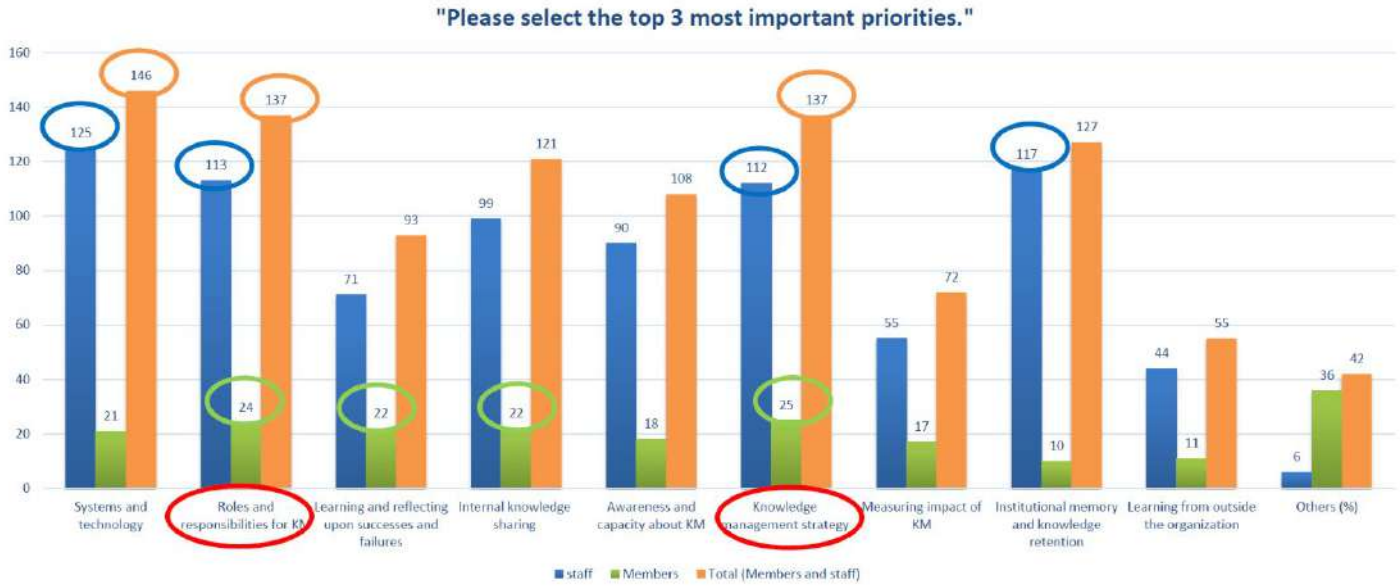
Familiarity with, and importance of KM in work



Involvement in KM Aspects



Most important KM priorities



KM Strategy - Survey Questionnaire

At its 109th meeting, the Council requested the Secretariat to develop an IUCN Knowledge management strategy.

Please take a moment to complete the survey to support us with this process.

1. Knowledge management is the process of organising, creating and using knowledge inside an organisation. Were you familiar with this concept?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

2. Based on the above definition, would you say that knowledge management is an important part of your work?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

3. Which aspects of knowledge management do you work on?

- ☐ Generation of knowledge and synthesis
- ☐ Discovery and collection of knowledge
- ☐ Organisation and sharing of knowledge
- ☐ Uptake, use and application of knowledge
- ☐ Other*

***Please specify if Other (maximum 80 words):**

4. In your view, what should be the key priorities for improving IUCN's current KM practices?

- ☐ Roles and responsibilities for knowledge management should be clearly defined. There need to be sufficient people with mandates and resources to fulfil KM responsibilities.
- ☐ Knowledge management strategy: A strategic approach should guide KM practices, habits and tools.
- ☐ Awareness and capacity about knowledge management concepts, methods and tools should be developed.
- ☐ Systems and technology to manage organisational knowledge need to be fit for purpose and up to date; storage and sharing of documented knowledge should take place in a systematic, coordinated

manner across systems

- ☐ Institutional memory and knowledge retention: IUCN should protect itself from knowledge loss when people leave the organisation, or when projects and initiatives end.
- ☐ Learning from outside the organisation: IUCN should prioritise or incentivise learning from outside the Union.
- ☐ Internal knowledge sharing should take place regularly, deliberately and strategically, e.g. through internal communities of practice.
- ☐ Learning and reflecting upon successes and failures in our conservation work should be done systematically to critically review and improve key practices, strategies or objectives.
- ☐ Measuring impact of knowledge management: There should be robust outcome or impact indicators for IUCN's knowledge management activities; these should be used systematically.
- ☐ Other*

***Please specify if Other* (maximum 150 words):**

0/150

---

5. Out of the priorities you identified, please select the top 3 that are most important, in your view.

- ☐ Roles and responsibilities for knowledge management should be clearly defined. There need to be sufficient people with mandates and resources to fulfil KM responsibilities.
- ☐ Knowledge management strategy: A strategic approach should guide KM practices, habits and tools.
- ☐ Awareness and capacity about knowledge management concepts, methods and tools should be developed.
- ☐ Systems and technology to manage organisational knowledge need to be fit for purpose and up to date; storage and sharing of documented knowledge should take place in a systematic, coordinated manner across systems.
- ☐ Institutional memory and knowledge retention: IUCN should protect itself from knowledge loss when people leave the organisation, or when projects and initiatives end.
- ☐ Learning from outside the organisation: IUCN should prioritise or incentivise learning from outside the Union.
- ☐ Internal knowledge sharing should take place regularly, deliberately and strategically, e.g. through internal communities of practice.
- ☐ Learning and reflecting upon successes and failures in our conservation work should be done systematically to critically review and improve key practices, strategies or objectives.
- ☐ Measuring impact of knowledge management: There should be robust outcome or impact indicators for IUCN's knowledge management activities; these should be used systematically.
- ☐ Other*

---

6. Why did you select these priorities? (maximum 100 words)

0/150

7. If you agree, please provide your name, so that we can follow up with you if appropriate.

Annex II: External trends and developments

This section focuses on key trends that are of particular relevance to IUCN, including on organizational approaches and behaviour, technology, and key developments relating specifically to KM for biodiversity conservation.

Any selection of relevant trends will necessarily be subjective and include gaps. Thus, this chapter is not meant as a comprehensive, objective overview of all trends in the field, but rather an overview of some of the major developments that are deemed to have strong implications for IUCN's future strategic approach to KM.

Broader trends relating to knowledge and information

Open science

There has been a continuous development towards making knowledge, particularly research results, freely available, or open access, with a growing movement pushing for open access / open science to become the standard. [18]

According to the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science[19], "open science is a set of principles and practices that aim to make scientific research from all fields accessible to everyone for the benefit of scientists and society as a whole." The aim is also to ensure that even the production of that knowledge is inclusive, equitable and sustainable, therefore furthering the right of everyone to share in scientific advancement and its benefits, as stated in Article 27.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[20]. Open Science is built upon five key pillars: open scientific knowledge, open science infrastructures, science communication, open engagement of societal actors and open dialogue with other knowledge systems. Open science can also often include aspects of open access, open data, and the open-source movement.

Cross-functional knowledge sharing

"Organizations are increasingly breaking down departmental silos to adopt a more holistic approach to knowledge management", and more generally to their ways of working[21]. "Fit for purpose" cross-functional teams that come together temporarily to address a task provide important benefits in terms of knowledge retention and mutual learning, as they assemble a wide range of skillsets, experiences, ideas, views and attitudes[22].

Proactive knowledge retention

"[Proactive knowledge retention] centers on building a culture where knowledge sharing is integral, encouraging employees to contribute their insights actively." Fostering a culture of learning and sharing and investing in proactive knowledge retention is increasingly being recognized as being essential to addressing the risk of knowledge loss in organizations and companies. [23]

[18] content (mpg.de)
[19] UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science - UNESCO Digital Library
[20] Universal Declaration of Human Rights | United Nations
[21] Overcoming Corporate Silos | SpringerLink
[22] Pdf (businessperspectives.org)
[23] The 5 Biggest Knowledge Management Trends for 2024 | Bloomfire

That said, a 2023 study showed that while 87% of the surveyed organizations acknowledged the significance of knowledge retention, only 43% of them had a formal strategy for this[24].

Misinformation and credibility

"Fake news" - information that is deliberately misrepresented with the aim of deceiving an audience for political, commercial or personal purposes – has become a phenomenon that has been amplified through social media and other means by which information is shared on the internet. Even beyond this is the issue of deep fakes, made all the more relevant by recent innovations in generative AI capabilities. As a result, retaining their reputation and credibility, and ultimately the trust of their audiences, has increasingly become a challenge for providers of information and knowledge such as media companies, news outlets and other organizations.[25]

Shortened attention spans and implications for knowledge dissemination

Particularly linked to the rise of social media, people's attention spans have shortened significantly. This has an impact on the way knowledge and information are being consumed and the formats in which they need to be disseminated. More comprehensive knowledge outputs are being consumed less and less as they often don't meet the requirements of today's users. Knowledge needs to be "packaged" to be social media friendly.

Metrics for measuring knowledge initiatives

While sharing and uptake of knowledge – particularly tacit knowledge – is not easy to measure, organizations are increasingly conscious of the fact that metrics and analytics are essential for measuring the success or shortcomings of a KM strategy. This goes alongside a more general trend around institutional accountability and measuring results. Key performance indicators, or KPIs for KM initiatives can e.g. monitor user engagement, the time spent on tasks or utility of content.[26]

Trends relating to technology

Cloud storage

Storing an organization's documented (explicit) data, information and knowledge remotely through a cloud provider (also known as "software as a service", or Saas), rather than on-premises, has increasingly become the norm in recent years, providing greater flexibility, security and cost-effectiveness.[27] Cloud storage holds great potential for KM, making all knowledge of an organization or team easily accessible for all concerned. At the same time, the move towards cloud-based KM is accompanied by new concerns around security and data breaches.[28]

Information mobility

As people around the world spend an increasing amount of time on mobile phones, the convenience and accessibility that mobile devices continue to make information mobility an important trend impacting knowledge management systems.[29]

[24] Workforce risk management | Deloitte Insights
[25] How media organizations can get real and confront fake news (ey.com)
[26] Top 10 knowledge management trends for 2023 (clearpeople.com)
[27] 15 Hot Knowledge Management Trends for 2024 (proprofskb.com)
[28] The Impact of Cloud Computing on Knowledge Management Solutions
[29] 15 Hot Knowledge Management Trends for 2024 (proprofskb.com)

Powerful collaboration tools and platform consolidation

IT solutions for organizational KM are increasingly becoming all-purpose tools that also enable task management and collaboration, in addition to information access and knowledge exchange.[30]

Artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence, or AI, increasingly integrates into KM practices and has many potential implications for, and applications to KM. The magnitude of its impact on the field of KM is subject to heated debate, with some experts seeing it as a major game-changer, while others describe it as another new technology, with the changes that it will bring to the practice of KM being comparable to past waves of technological advancements. Over the last several years, technologies have converged across KM, enterprise data, and artificial intelligence.

Implications include:

- Elevated profile of KM: The growing prominence of generative AI has elevated the importance of enterprise knowledge management among executives.
- Enhanced knowledge capture, discovery and organization: AI can support the sorting, classifying and structuring of data, information and knowledge, transforming vast, unstructured data into organized, accessible knowledge. Unlike a normal search engine, an AI-backed search system considers the user's search history and the query's context to deliver intelligent suggestions.
- Informing decision-making: By creating systems that learn and improve based on the data that is being entered, AI can help generate valuable insights, forming a symbiotic relationship with KM.
- Trust, risk, and security management: The flipside of the potential for AI to improve institutional KM is that many users have concerns over data security and accuracy of results, which indeed bears risks, as AI becomes more and more part of daily reality, while still evolving and improving. AI is known to "hallucinate", i.e. make up answers, which can lead to misinformation. Large language models (LLMs) might also use intellectual property of organizations without permission. It is important for organizations to establish robust protocols for managing these risks.

Trends relating to knowledge management for biodiversity conservation

Overview

A continuous lack of reliable biodiversity information and knowledge has been pointed out by numerous sources.[31], [32] There is increasing attention to the importance of making knowledge available and facilitating knowledge transfer in the nature conservation community. A number of trends are worth highlighting here.

[30] 15 Hot Knowledge Management Trends for 2024 (proprofskb.com)
[31] KM4B Webinar #01 Unlocking the power of knowledge to support the Kunming Montreal GBF (youtube.com)
[32] Access to scientific literature by the conservation community [PeerJ]

Plethora of biodiversity data and information platforms

Over the past years, a vast number of platforms that provide data and information – much less so knowledge – on biodiversity have emerged, both at global as well as regional and national levels. This also includes research repositories specific to ecological subjects. In the best of cases, these platforms inform decision-making by providing easy access to up-to-date, relevant, credible data and information, integrated from all relevant sources. Challenges include a lack of interoperability between platforms, limited coordination on their strategic development – including decision-making on investing into new platforms – and lack of awareness and political buy-in regarding these tools particularly at the practitioner level.

Autonomy over data, information and knowledge

Countries increasingly call for sovereignty over their biodiversity related data, pushing back on data being collected, analysed and translated into recommendations by large organizations and companies. This trend has been described as a "deglobalization" or "decolonization" of data. Related issues include the question on which data is considered "official" and has buy-in and credibility at country level.

There is also increasing recognition and protocols around consent and intellectual property in relation to the knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities.

Indigenous and local knowledge in conservation

IUCN has long supported the rights, governance, worldviews and traditional knowledge of Indigenous peoples and local communities. This is reflected in the governance bodies of IUCN, notably with an elected Indigenous Councillor to IUCN's Council, to the distinguishing of the Indigenous Peoples Organisation (IPO) category of the IUCN membership.

The related IPO strategy includes ensuring indigenous representation, worldviews and knowledge in IUCN's Council, IPO participation in IUCN National and Regional Committees, and increased indigenous engagement with IUCN Commissions and large-scale projects funded under the GEF and EU. The Podong Initiative is IUCN's flagship commitment to expand IPO membership and advance Indigenous interests across the Union. The IUCN Resolution WCC 2020 002 concerning strengthened institutional inclusion of Indigenous peoples provides the mandate and further impetus for this work.

One of the most significant outcomes of Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity CBD COP16 was the establishment of a Subsidiary Body on Article 8(j) (SB8J). This body aims to advise the COP and other subsidiary bodies on matters concerning Indigenous peoples and local communities. It will be responsible for ensuring their effective participation and for providing guidance on the application of traditional knowledge in biodiversity conservation.

IUCN has been named explicitly as a duty bearer in the related programme of work on 8j, which was also adopted, recognising the challenges faced by these groups in developing countries. The decision urged Parties to consider national legislation, circumstances, and priorities when implementing the programme, of which IUCN's KM strategy can support.

Knowledge management under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

In the "post-2020 process", which resulted in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, KM was for the first time in the CBD process acknowledged as being central to the achievement of global biodiversity targets:

Transparent and timely access to biodiversity data, information and knowledge is essential for development of concrete actions at national level. Parties recognized the importance of KM for effective implementation by approving a dedicated target – Target 21 – as part of the GBF. Further, the GBF is accompanied by a standalone KM strategy, which was approved by COP16. That strategy defines KM as follows: "*Knowledge management encompasses a range of processes, strategies and practices through which biodiversity-related data, information and knowledge are generated and collected; organized, curated, stored and shared; and used or applied to achieve biodiversity-related objectives and outcomes.*"

Following COP15, the CBD Secretariat has launched the "Knowledge Management 4 Biodiversity" (KM4B) initiative, which aims to strengthen national capacities in KM through webinars, training sessions and other activities.[33]

Other initiatives and platforms that aim to improve access to relevant data, information and knowledge also emerged following COP15.[34]

The network of regional and sub-regional support centres for technical and scientific cooperation (TSC), along with the global TSC coordination mechanism, will likewise play an important role in collecting and disseminating data, information and knowledge and strengthening exchange networks between practitioners.

Evolution in conservation evaluation to measure genuine impact in conservation

[33] Main page | Convention on Biological Diversity (cbd.int)
[34] A global knowledge support service for biodiversity | Global Knowledge Support Service for Biodiversity (chm-cbd.net)

IUCN Strategy, Policy and Programme on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean

Approved by the IUCN Council, decision C112/12 on 30 January 2025

INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE

[pic deleted -just temporarily -]

Photo Credits: Lou Sanson

Taskforce Members (as at Nov 2024):

Councillors: Catherine Iorns (Chair), Sonia Castaneda Rial, Peter Cochrane, Sue Lieberman, Hasna Madoud, Imen Meliane, Vivek Menon, Madhu Rao.
Commission Experts: Daniela Cajiao, Neil Gilbert , Ally Kristan, Guillermo Ortuno, Lou Sanson,
Members: Scott Hajost (ASOC), Barry Weeber (ECO)
Secretariat: Heidi Weiskel

INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE

World Headquarters
Rue Mauverney 28
1196 Gland, Switzerland
mail@iucn.org
Tel: +41 22 999 0000
Fax: + 41 22 999 0002

Table of Contents

Introduction....4
1 Antarctica and the Southern Ocean....5
1.1 Overview of the environment and biodiversity....5
1.2 Antarctic Governance....6
1.3 Pressures on the Antarctic and Southern Ocean environments....7
1.4 What is needed to maintain ecosystem integrity and diversity....10
2 IUCN: Organisational analysis and existing relevant work....13
2.1 IUCN Members and Commissions....13
2.2 IUCN Secretariat....14
2.3 Council....15
2.4 Relevant existing work of IUCN....15
3 Organisational Strategy....19
3.1 IUCN's Niche and Strengths....19
3.2 Future IUCN strategic vision and work priorities....21
3.2.1 Longer-term Policy goals....21
3.2.2 4-year work program, 2026-2029....25
3.2.3 2025 priorities....27
3.3. Strategies:....28
3.3.1 Coordination....28
3.3.2 Delegations to meetings....29
3.3.3 Secretariat staff....29
3.3.4 New institutional structures/organisation....29
3.3.5 Budget....30
4 Proposed next steps for Council and/or the Taskforce....31
APPENDIX 1: IUCN RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON ANTARCTICA AND THE SOUTHERN OCEAN....32
APPENDIX 2: Historical Development of IUCN Policy on Antarctica....33
APPENDIX 3: Relevant international environmental instruments....34
APPENDIX 4: IUCN Commissions current mandates....35
Action Plan - Potential detail on elements, for consultation....36

DRAFT IUCN Strategy, Policy and Programme on Antarctic and the Southern Ocean

(DRAFT of Jan 2025; for PPC and Council)

"…*feelings of indescribable delight upon a scene of grandeur and magnificence far beyond anything we had seen or could have conceived*."
Captain James Clark Ross, log entry, 1842

"…*the stark polar lands grip the hearts of men who have lived on them in a manner that can hardly be understood by the people who have never got outside the pale of civilisation*"
Sir Ernest Shackleton

Introduction

Antarctica and the Southern Ocean represent 20 percent of the planet's surface. The continent itself is a frozen desert that receives little precipitation, most of which falls as snow. However, this austere appearance belies this area's importance as an ecosystem and its role in global biodiversity and in maintaining and regulating globally important ecosystem services. Antarctica is the only continent with no human-induced extinctions, and demands ongoing attention to maintain its value as a natural reserve devoted to peace, science and high standards of environmental protection.[1]

The Antarctic and Southern Ocean Strategy, Policy and Programme (hereinafter the Strategy) has been developed as a result of the IUCN Council decision C109/28 establishing a Taskforce on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. It defines the potential areas for intervention by IUCN in favour of Antarctic and Southern Ocean biodiversity. The Strategy will suggest how such interventions will make use of IUCN's network and other strengths, and suggests how component programmes[2] will organise and coordinate their efforts to optimise the Union's impact in the region, particularly through policy interventions and advocacy. It aims to ensure that such efforts further conservation in these regions while contributing to the delivery of the IUCN Programme of work into the future.[3] It also aims to bring the world closer to meeting the global targets under the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda, the Paris Agreement, and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

The activities envisaged under the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Strategy are intended to:

- draw on the scientific, legal and technical expertise of IUCN's Secretariat and Commissions to ensure that the best available scientific and technical knowledge is translated into actionable advice for the conservation of biodiversity in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean regions;
- provide significant contributions to the IUCN Programme of work;
- provide a means to deliver on the mandate conveyed by the more than 20 IUCN Congress and General Assembly Resolutions and Recommendations adopted over the years in relation to Antarctica and the Southern Ocean;[4]
- respond to the needs expressed by Members and partners with an interest or concern in the region;
- ensure that the lessons learned in work undertaken in the Antarctic are available to other regions;

[1] See, eg, Pertierra, L. R., et al. (2021). Ecosystem services in Antarctica: Global assessment of the current state, future challenges and managing opportunities. *Ecosystem Services*, *49*, 101299; McCarthy, A. H., Peck, L. S., & Aldridge, D. C. (2022). Ship traffic connects Antarctica's fragile coasts to worldwide ecosystems. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *119*(3), e2110303118.
[2] The term "component programmes" refers to IUCN's programme units. It includes Global Thematic Programmes, Commissions and Regional Programmes
[3] Currently this programme of work is entitled Nature 2030; see WCC-7th-001-fr.pdf (iucn.org).
A new 4-year programme and 20-year vision is expected to be adopted in October 2025.
[4] See Appendix 1.

- compile the evidence in support of the application of a precautionary approach and the implementation of an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management;
- complement and bring added value to activities being pursued by IUCN Members and partners with an interest in or a conservation concern for the region.

The Strategy will enhance IUCN's capacity to influence, encourage and assist countries, institutions and the private sector to conserve the integrity and diversity of Antarctic and Southern Ocean ecosystems. It is also intended to help ensure that intrinsic values (including wilderness), ecological integrity, and scientific values are given proper consideration. Further, it is intended to help ensure that in those cases where use of natural resources is appropriate, it is done in an equitable and ecologically sustainable way, based on sound science and with full consideration of the precautionary principle.

[insert a picture here]

1 Antarctica and the Southern Ocean

1.1 Overview of the environment and biodiversity

Antarctica and the Southern Ocean have many internationally-significant values: the region harbours critically important and largely intact ecosystems, and plays an important role in influencing global climate and oceanic systems; it is critically important for many species; it is important for globally-relevant research and monitoring which can provide greater understanding of the natural environment and ecological processes; and greater accuracy of global climate change models. It has great value as the world's largest remaining wilderness area, and it has significant intrinsic and inspirational values.[5] As such, the region provides a wide variety of essential biodiversity and ecosystem services for the world.

The Antarctic Treaty Area comprises the area south of 60 degrees South latitude. The area covered by the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) extends in part north of this limit in the south Atlantic and south Indian Ocean and is intended to include waters up to the Antarctic convergence, the boundary where southern, colder and nutrient-rich waters meet warmer waters, and includes some sub-Antarctic Island Exclusive Economic Zones.[6]

The Antarctic continent contains little biomass, and most terrestrial biodiversity is concentrated in ice-free areas near the coasts; this makes these areas particularly important for Antarctic biodiversity, while being highly vulnerable to human impacts.[7]

In contrast, the Southern Ocean that surrounds Antarctica is highly productive and supports a rich diversity of species. Antarctic krill are central to the marine food web and provide a primary source of food for many species, including whales, seals, sea-birds and penguins.

[5] See, e,g Hanessian, J. (1960). The Antarctic Treaty 1959. *International & Comparative Law Quarterly*, *9*(3), 436-480.
[6] See, eg, Brooks, C. M. (2013). Competing values on the Antarctic high seas: CCAMLR and the challenge of marine-protected areas. *The Polar Journal*, *3*(2), 277-300.
[7] See, eg, Brooks, S. T., Jabour, J., Van Den Hoff, J., & Bergstrom, D. M. (2019). Our footprint on Antarctica competes with nature for rare ice-free land. *Nature Sustainability*, *2*(3), 185-190.

Threats to Antarctic biodiversity are increasing primarily from climate change, non-native species invasions, localised pollution and the increasing footprint of human activity, including fishing.[8] Of particular concern is the apparent reduction in sea ice cover around Antarctica which has concerning implications for krill productivity as well as for the iconic Emperor penguin, which relies on stable sea ice as a habitat for breeding and moulting. Despite the various threats, comparatively few species in Antarctica or the Southern Ocean have been assessed for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, for example, and only one species - the Antarctic Cudweed plant - is listed as Endangered.[9]

Antarctica has never had an indigenous human population; however, during the austral summer, a few thousand people live at stations and bases managed by governmental Antarctic programmes. During the austral winter, the human population living on the continent decreases to around 1,000. In contrast, temporary tourist visitor numbers to Antarctica now number well over 100,000 per year, and appear to be continuing to increase.[10]

1.2 Antarctic Governance

The Antarctic Treaty[11] and related agreements (see below), collectively called the Antarctic Treaty System (ATS), regulate human activities and international relations in the region. The Antarctic Treaty was agreed with the objectives of setting aside disputes over territorial sovereignty, promoting freedom of scientific investigation, and prohibiting military activities on the continent. Every year the original twelve Parties to the Treaty plus those Parties that demonstrate their interest in Antarctica by conducting substantial research activity there - together called the Consultative Parties - meet "for the purpose of exchanging information, consulting together on matters of common interest pertaining to Antarctica, and formulating and considering and recommending to their Governments measures in furtherance of the principles and objectives of the Treaty" (Art. IX). This forum is the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM). The Treaty's Article IV puts on hold territorial claims made by seven countries and instead establishes a consensus-based decision-making process among all Consultative Parties to the Treaty. Agreements reached under the auspices of the Antarctic Treaty include:[12]

- The Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals (CCAS, 1972) which aims to protect Southern Ocean pinnipeds. CCAS provides for the sustainable taking of Antarctic seals; however, commercial sealing activity has never returned to the region and is now largely prohibited by Annex II to the Protocol.[13]
- The Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR,1980) which has the objective of conserving Antarctic marine life. CCAMLR allows for harvesting of marine species but only in a sustainable manner that takes account of the effects of harvesting on other components of the marine ecosystem.
- The Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (the Protocol, 1991) which designates Antarctica as a continent devoted to peace and science.[14] Five Annexes to the Protocol set out tough rules aimed at protecting the natural Antarctic environment. The Protocol also prohibits mineral resource activities for commercial purposes and

[8] See, eg, Tejedo, P., Benayas, J., Cajiao, D., Leung, Y. F., De Filippo, D., & Liggett, D. (2022). What are the real environmental impacts of Antarctic tourism? Unveiling their importance through a comprehensive meta-analysis. *Journal of Environmental Management*, *308*, 114634.

[9] https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/44044/15245091 - the most recent assessment was 2012.
[see this link for the search results: https://www.iucnredlist.org/search?query=antarctica&searchType=species]

[10] See, eg, https://geographical.co.uk/science-environment/tourism-numbers-in-antarctica-have-risen-to-over-100000-per-year

[11] The Antarctic Treaty opened for signature on 1 Dec 1959 and entered into force on 23 June 1961. In 2024 there are 58 parties.

[12] The Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities was signed in 1988 but it was subsequently rejected and never entered into force.

[13] The Seals Convention has only been ratified by 16 AT Parties and its implementation is opposed by some Antarctic Treaty Parties.

[14] This incorporates the Agreed Measures for the Conservation of Antarctic Fauna and Flora (1964) (entered into force in 1982).

requires any planned activity to be subject to an environmental impact assessment before it can proceed. A sixth annex on liability arising from environmental emergencies was adopted in 2005 but is yet to enter into force. In 2024, 42 parties to the Antarctic Treaty have ratified the Protocol.

In addition to the Consultative Parties, some states become Non-Consultative Parties through acceding to the Antarctic Treaty. As of December 2024, there are 56 member States of the Antarctic Treaty: 29 Consultative Parties and 27 acceding States.

An independent body that plays a key role in the Antarctic Treaty System as a Permanent Observer is the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR).[15] SCAR provides independent scientific advice to the ATS bodies through its Standing Committee on the Antarctic Treaty System (SCATS).[16] Another Permanent Observer is the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs (COMNAP). COOMNAP provides advice to the ATS drawn from the national Antarctic programs' experience and expertise.[17]

Other organisations can participate in meetings as Invited Experts. IUCN is an Invited Expert, as are other inter-governmental organisations such as the United Nations Environment Program, scientific organisations such as the World Meteorological Organisation, and non-governmental organisations such as the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO) and IUCN Member the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC). [As of January 2025, there are __ organisations with the status of Invited Expert.]

For more than sixty years, the Antarctic Treaty has successfully met its objectives of promoting peaceful use and scientific exploration and international cooperation to that end. To date the ATS has allowed the region to remain relatively untouched, compared with more populated regions in the world; however, increasing pressures are impacting species and putting at risk the natural environmental values of the region.[18]

Other international laws also apply to Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, including environmental and shipping[19] laws, as well as laws of the sea, for example. But it is the Antarctic Treaty System that has provided relevant governance to date.

1.3 Pressures on the Antarctic and Southern Ocean environments

The Antarctic and Southern Ocean environments are facing challenges and threats to their functioning and existence. As with many other environmental issues worldwide, these challenges and threats are being addressed only very slowly and there are many fears that, just as with climate change, national and international action is too slow to guard against calamitous loss of biodiversity in the future.

The primary threat to Antarctic and Southern Ocean ecosystems and biodiversity is from **climate change**, and the physical, chemical, biological and ecological impacts that it is causing. Such effects include large-scale sea-ice retreat, unseasonal weather patterns affecting breeding and feeding, the increasing acidification of the Southern Ocean, and the alteration of the entire Antarctic food web.

Sea ice provides the foundation for Antarctic marine ecosystems. Sea ice seeds phytoplankton growth, which is the food at the base of the whole Antarctica and Southern Ocean food webs. It

[15] See https://scar.org/
[16] For more information on SCAR's role in the ATS, see, eg, https://scar.org/policy/sc-ats.
[17] See, eg, https://www.comnap.aq/
[18] See, eg, Hughes, K. A., Convey, P., & Turner, J. (2021). Developing resilience to climate change impacts in Antarctica: An evaluation of Antarctic Treaty System protected area policy. *Environmental Science & Policy*, *124*, 12-22.
[19] See, eg, the International Maritime Organization's International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code), and the International Convention for Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL). See, eg, https://www.imo.org/en/ourwork/safety/pages/polar-code.aspx

provides habitats for many species, including for the growth of krill, which is the food for many marine species, from fish to penguins to whales. Sea ice also provides breeding and resting grounds for larger animals such as penguins and seals. Unfortunately, warming sea temperatures have already seen the extent of winter sea ice drop since 2016. 2024 saw three years in a row of record low ice coverage.[20] This loss of ice has seen the loss of breeding grounds for emperor penguins, for example, and the consequent complete failure of four out of five breeding colonies with 10,000 chicks drowning when their ice shelf melted prematurely in 2022. The loss of krill habitat threatens the food supplies of other fish, penguins, and even whales who each eat tonnes of krill in a day.

The waters of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean are among the most vulnerable in the world to acidification from the absorption of carbon dioxide (CO_2) from emissions in the air.[21] This vulnerability results from the low temperatures increasing the dissolution of CO_2, from the upwellings from deeper waters, as well as the reduced amount of sunlight across the year. Acidification limits the growth of many organisms at the base of food webs, from bacteria, to phytoplankton and microalgae, to invertebrates, to fish. Animals with carbonate shells and skeletons are particularly affected. The acidity of Southern Ocean waters has already increased and is happening too fast for marine species to adapt. Unfortunately, acidification is forecast to increase considerably and more rapidly if CO_2 levels in the air are not reduced significantly. Ocean acidification threatens to destabilise the entire Antarctic and Southern Ocean marine ecosystems.

Unseasonal snowstorms have led to the breeding failure of seabirds in some regions. While species may be adapted to life in a harsh climate, unseasonal harshness can come when species are unprepared for it and be devastating to their feeding and breeding.

Overall, as climate change accelerates, temperature anomalies will increase; this will make the effects on Antarctic and Southern Ocean species and ecosystems much worse than the effects that we have already seen.

Other human activities are placing pressures on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean:

Fishing impacts and overfishing remains one of the greatest threats to marine conservation globally. Industrial fishing in the Southern Ocean provides increasing pressures on Antarctic food webs, particularly the expanding harvest of Antarctic krill. While the killing of whales and seals has become much less acceptable globally, the harvesting of the food that whales and other species depend upon is growing. This has the potential to threaten the food web and thus the Southern Ocean ecosystem, especially with the likelihood of reduced krill breeding due to climate change. Fishing also damages cold water corals, coral reefs, sponge fields and seamounts, as well as fish, invertebrate, and mammal species, and can significantly harm biodiversity.

Fishing activities also ensnare other species such as birds, seals and cetaceans as 'bycatch'. Even though it is unintended, it is yet another pressure on vulnerable populations, especially seabirds. Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in particular is recognized as a grave threat to marine ecosystems.

Fishing vessels in the Southern Ocean are mainly outside the requirements set for other vessels by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). Not all CCAMLR members have ratified the Cape Town Agreement 2012 to Enhance Fishing Safety, which has yet to enter into force.

Human visits introduce **non-native species** that can become invasive. Non-native species have already been found in Antarctica and it can be expected that these will increase as the waters

[20] See, ,eg https://theconversation.com/devastatingly-low-antarctic-sea-ice-may-be-the-new-abnormal-study-warns-212376

[21] See, eg, 'Effects of ocean acidification on Antarctic marine organisms: A meta-analysis', available at: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/ece3.6205

warm and other species migrate toward the poles. Unfortunately, some will gain toeholds on the continent and in its surrounding waters and displace the existing and unique species.

Diseases not previously seen in the region can also be spread both by human activities and naturally by other species. In September 2023, Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N1 clade 2.3.4.4b (HPAI) was found in Antarctica for the first time ever, having come down to the Antarctic peninsula via migrating birds.[22] This has had a devastating impact on bird and mammal populations elsewhere in the world, including in nearby southern Argentina.[23] Bird deaths have already been reported in Antarctica and there are fears for vast increases in future numbers. As the climate warms, Antarctic and Southern Ocean species will become exposed to - and die from - more diseases that they have never faced before.

Tourism[24] in Antarctica has expanded rapidly. As mentioned above, tourist visitor numbers to Antarctica reached 122,072 in the 2023-24 season (78,848 of which went onto land), and are projected to increase.[25] Such visits increase the risks for the introduction of new species and diseases, as well as pressures from the infrastructure needed to support such numbers. The Polar Code vessel requirements developed by the IMO are designed to increase the safety of tourist vessels. However, there is little regulation of tourist activity. Membership of IAATO is voluntary and not all tour operators are members; not all tourist vessels are flagged to Antarctic Treaty parties; and tourists are able to visit Antarctica without operators.

Thie increasing tourism comes on top of the ongoing expansion of national Antarctic science programmes and their infrastructure. The environmental impacts of such human activities are cumulative.

Antarctica is particularly sensitive to **pollution**, primarily as the colder temperatures mean that any pollutants take longer to break down naturally, in addition to rough weather and a lack of human presence meaning that response and clean-up is more difficult and less likely. Even though Antarctica is uninhabited (except for those staying at the scientific bases), pollution is still a threat to biodiversity there. MARPOL permits ships to discharge grey water into Antarctic waters. Scientists and tourists used to dispose of food waste and sewage at sea and on land, and sewage is still disposed of into the ocean from some research bases in accordance with the limited provisions of the Protocol. Chemical pollution has been found to come from this waste, including introduced bacteria and endocrine disruptors that affect many species within the areas of the discharges. Many bases also have historical, 'legacy' pollution in the form of metals, fuels, and plastics that have simply been discarded, especially when bases have been closed.[26] While today such materials must be removed, old ones remain from a time when removal was not mandatory.

Oil spills are an increasing risk as shipping activity increases, from both tourism and shipping. Any spills have significant negative effects, due to the long length of time that the oil persists in the environment, the lack of abilities to respond easily, and the large numbers of sea life that can be affected.

Other pollution can arrive in the region via the sea or the air. For example, pollutants from fossil fuels, chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), lead, and other highly toxic persistent organic pollutants (POPs) have long been found in Antarctica.[27] Black carbon from shipping in the region is increasingly being seen as a concern, particularly because the dark colour absorbs heat; when

---

[22] See, e,g *Updated Biological Risk Assessment and Recommendations for Highly Pathogenicity Avian Influenza in Antarctica*, Prepared by Meagan Dewar, Antonio Alcami, Michelle Wille, on behalf of the SCAR Antarctic Wildlife Health Network (16 December 2024); available at: https://scar.org/scar-news/life-sciences/awhn-news/hpai-update-bulletin-dec-2024

[23] See, eg, https://buenosairesherald.com/society/bird-flu-kills-over-1300-baby-elephant-seals-in-chubut

[24] https://www.iucn.org/resources/issues-brief/impacts-tourism-antarctica

[25] See, eg, IAATO's report to the ATCM-46 (May 2024). See also https://geographical.co.uk/science-environment/tourism-numbers-in-antarctica-have-risen-to-over-100000-per-year

[26] See, eg, https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-023-02740-0 ;

[27] See, e,g https://intlpollution.commons.gc.cuny.edu/antarctic-pollution-issues/

it lands on ice and snow it can both raise the surrounding temperature and melt it faster, causing a loss of the snow and ice.[28] Discarded fishing gear and other litter from human activities have caused deaths to birds, seals and other sea life that get entangled in it. Microplastics have now also been found in Antarctic snow,[29] wildlife[30] and sediments,[31] which can carry toxins and affect organisms that ingest it. Darker, airborne microplastics can also have the same warming effect on snow and ice as other airborne pollution such as black carbon.

Possible future pressures include an increasing interest in **biological prospecting** and applications for patents for commercial exploitation of genetic material. A range of Antarctic organisms is being targeted, including the ecologically important Southern Ocean krill.

1.4 What is needed to maintain ecosystem integrity and diversity

There are many measures needed to address the pressures identified above.

In relation to **climate change**, the primary measure needed for protection of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean is the reduction of greenhouse gases (GHGs) in the atmosphere. Unfortunately, the gases already emitted are like a blanket wrapping the earth, and we are continuing to warm up underneath the blanket. Temperatures will continue to rise even if there were no more additional emissions. Goals such as having net zero emissions by 2050 will not save Antarctic and Southern Ocean ecosystems and species. Calamitous adverse effects are already being suffered in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, with an average temperature rise of 1.5C in 2024, and they will get worse without a reversal of the current and projected temperature rises. GHGs will need to be reduced from current levels, not merely held steady with net zero emissions. Moreover, this should be undertaken rapidly, to avoid further ice losses. Decarbonisation will likely need to be attained by 2040, and CO2 concentrations lowered to 350 ppm (from the current level of approximately 420 ppm).

There is a need to develop adaptive management approaches to address and reduce the effects of climate change on marine living resources. Concrete adaptive actions will need to be taken, such as identifying climate change refugia for species and protecting sites of special interest for ecosystems and species.

Antarctic Treaty and CCAMLR parties are currently grappling with how to include the implications of climate change in their management considerations. These needs have already been identified by CCAMLR;[32] action is thus needed to maintain the focus and encourage action to fill the need. Not all countries see CCAMLR or the ATS as having an important role in climate action.

Conversely, the role of the Southern Ocean needs to be a focus of any attempts to discuss the current science relevant to Antarctica as well as its impact on the rest of the globe. It is absolutely critical to look in detail at the biogeochemical cycles in the Southern Ocean and their impacts on food webs, for example, not only in order to figure out what Antarctic species will need in order to survive in a climate changed future, but what the impact on the rest of the globe will be of such

[28] See, eg, Cordero et al, 'Black carbon footprint of human presence in Antarctica' Nature Commun. 2022; 13: 984; Published online 2022 Feb 22. doi: 10.1038/s41467-022-28560-w ; available at https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8863810/

[29] See eg https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/in-a-first-microplastics-are-found-in-fresh-antarctic-snow-180980264/

[30] S Bhattacharjee et al, "Do microplastics accumulate in penguin internal organs? Evidence from Svenner island, Antarctica," 951 *Science of The Total Environment*, 175361 (Nov 2024), ISSN 0048-9697, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2024.175361.

[31] See, eg, Waller, C. L., et al (2017). Microplastics in the Antarctic marine system: an emerging area of research. *Science of the total environment*, *598*, 220-227; Munari, C. et al. (2017). Microplastics in the sediments of terra nova bay (ross sea, Antarctica). *Marine pollution bulletin*, *122*(1-2), 161-165; Reed, S., Clark, M., Thompson, R., & Hughes, K. A. (2018). Microplastics in marine sediments near Rothera research station, Antarctica. *Marine pollution bulletin*, *133*, 460-463.

[32] See, e,g report from Meeting 42, Oct 2023.

changes in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.[33]

Area-based protections:

Area-based protections under the Environmental Protocol are an important way to reduce human-induced pressures on ecosystems and wildlife. There is a need to increase protection through establishing a representative network of protected areas on land and sea.

There are well-established procedures already in place to designate Antarctic Specially Protected Areas (ASPAs) on land. Yet less than 4% of the Continent's ice-free areas is formally protected and the current list of ASPAs lacks a network approach. Further, particular values identified in the Environmental Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty are poorly represented in the current system of ASPAs. More work needs to be done to identify such protected areas, including research to expand the representativeness of the current protected areas, and ones that create species-based area protections.[34]

In Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, one of the most important such area-based protections are marine protected areas (MPAs). The Environmental Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty (through its Annex V) and CCAMLR (through Article IX-2(g)) provide mechanisms to create MPAs on the high seas. To date CCAMLR has established two MPAs including the large-scale Ross Sea Region MPA. But other candidate MPAs in the Antarctic Peninsula, Weddell Sea (Phase 1) and East Antarctica have failed to secure approval.

More MPAs need to be established in order to better protect species and ecosystems from the various pressures identified above, especially to provide a buffer for the future impacts of climate change. This may be under the ATS and CCAMLR mechanisms or other international agreements.[35]

CCAMLR has also adopted conservation measures designed to avoid adverse impacts from bottom fisheries on some benthic Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs).[36] [Yet recent proposals to adopt conservation measures for proposed VMEs have not been able to secure consensus.[37]]

It is likely that additional area-based tools need to be developed and adopted in order to better provide for the needs of species and ecosystems, including in response to climate change.[[38]]

Species-based protections:

The Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty provides for the designation of Specially Protected Species. Criteria for designation are based on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Currently only one seal species is designated as specially protected by the Antarctic Treaty Parties,[39] and discussions on designating other species, including the near-

---

[33] See, eg, IPCC, Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (2019); available at: https://www.ipcc.ch/srocc/

[34] LM Phillips, RI Leihy, SL Chown, "Improving species-based area protection in Antarctica", 36:4 *Conservation Biology*, Aug 2022, e13885; https://doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13885 . It is noted that species-based protections can be achieved by area-based protections; the Snow Hill Emperor penguin colony is an example.

[35] Such as, for example, under the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (A/CONF.232/2023/4 , 19 June 2023).

[36] See, eg, Jones, CD. Lockhart, SJ. Detecting Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems in the Southern Ocean using research trawls and underwater imagery, *Marine Policy*, 35:5, 2011, 732-736. Available at: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0308597X11000285 See also Gros, C. et al, Identifying vulnerable marine ecosystems: an image-based vulnerability index for the Southern Ocean seafloor, *ICES Journal of Marine Science*, 2023, 80:4, pp 972–986, DOI: 10.1093/icesjms/fsad021

[37] [See, eg, the CCAMLR report re the fish nests proposal.]

[38] [It is noted that it is also possible to designate geological and geomorphological area-based protections; it might be possible to use these to protect nature for its own sake as well as for natural landscape values.]

[39] *Ommatophoca rossii*, Ross Seal. See Appendix A to Annex II to the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty.

threatened Emperor penguin, have failed to reach consensus or to otherwise progress. The status of many species of Antarctic microfauna and flora have yet to be assessed against the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Urgent work is needed to better assess and update the protection needs of species, especially in the face of climate change.

The IUCN Red List of Ecosystems "measures the relative risks of ecosystem collapse for terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems at subnational, national, regional and global scales".[40] Antarctic and Southern Ocean ecosystems need to be assessed for inclusion on this Red List.

Research:
More extensive and consistent research is needed into monitoring the state of Antarctic and Southern Ocean ecosystems and species, identifying the effects of different pressures, and identifying what protection measures may be appropriate.

Greater funding and collaboration between states and organisations is needed for such research.

Addressing other human-induced pressures:

While there is a range of human-induced pressures, the most critical to address are currently those from fishing and tourism. Management of legal Antarctic **fisheries** through CCAMLR is supposed to be based on an ecosystem-wide approach to fisheries and, while almost universally recognized as one of the most-successful implementation systems of an ecosystem approach, there are many issues and problems with the CCAMLR system in practice. A particular concern relates to the spatial distribution of the growing krill fishery which has reached almost 500,000 tonnes each year in the South Atlantic, not least in the context of potential climate-change related impacts on the species.

There is a need for fisheries measures to reset the relation between conservation and use within the CCAMLR, through strengthening the requirements for approving fisheries measures, based on the precautionary principle. There is also a need to maintain precaution and increase scientific revisions for the management of all fisheries within CCAMLR. Catch limits will need to be decreased in order to support species and ecosystems, especially in a climate-changed future.

Stricter regulations for shipping and **tourism** activities need to be adopted to better manage, constrain or minimise their ecological impact. It is noted that Antarctic Treaty Parties recently established a Tourism Working Group with a mandate "to develop a comprehensive and consistent framework for the regulation of Antarctic tourism and other non-governmental activities".[41]

Other measures that could usefully be adopted include stronger measures to clean up legacy pollution, and stringent evaluations of any new activities before they can go ahead in such a sensitive and vulnerable environment.

In terms of governance of the area by the different Treaty bodies and their members, decision-making tools need to be fit for rapidly-changing and uncertain futures. This will best be achieved through the use of better spatial and scenario planning tools, and through the adoption of precaution as a decision-making tool in favour of the protection of nature.

[40] https://www.iucn.org/resources/conservation-tool/iucn-red-list-ecosystems

[41] Decision 5 (2024): Development of a Framework for the Regulation of Tourism and Other Non-Governmental Activities in Antarctica. See *Final Report of the Forty-sixth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting*, Kochi, India, 21-30 May 2024.

2 IUCN: Organisational analysis and existing relevant work

The IUCN is a union of more than 1400 member bodies from over 160 countries, as well as expert commissions and a central secretariat.[42] It is an Inter-Governmental Organisation (IGO) as per the term used by the United Nations, despite technically being composed of government and non-governmental members. These members include states and government agencies at national and subnational levels, large and small national and international non-governmental organisations, Indigenous Peoples' organisations, and scientific and academic institutions.

The IUCN governing Council is made up of members who are democratically elected every four years by IUCN members, based on regional groupings, along with the Chairs of the IUCN Commissions. The IUCN Secretariat is made up of approximately 1,000 employees in more than 50 countries; the Secretariat is managed by the Director-General, who is appointed by the Council. The expert Commissions are voluntary bodies of more than 17,000 individual expert members in total, who become members based on their academic, scientific, technical, legal, or practical expertise. The Commissions are supported in part by the IUCN budget, with workplans approved by the Council. Chairpersons of the commissions are elected by members every four years.

The different constituencies of IUCN (members, Commissions, Secretariat and Council) have played an important role in Antarctic and Southern Ocean science, governance and discussion of the issues over the years. Indeed, the IUCN has had a long engagement with the Antarctic Treaty System going back to 1960, when members adopted their first resolution on Antarctic flora and fauna.[43] IUCN is in a prime position to contribute to contemporary challenges that the Antarctic Treaty and CCAMLR parties are facing, and arguably has a special responsibility to do so, given the importance of the issues and IUCN's expertise and niche in this area.

2.1 IUCN Members and Commissions

Of the 58 state Parties to the Antarctic Treaty (as at the end of 2024), 30 are also State Members of IUCN. These State Members include 10 out of the original 12 Antarctic Treaty Parties,[44] and 11 out of the 17 other Consultative Parties.[45] All of these IUCN members conduct research in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean and most have done so for many years. It is also notable that IUCN members who are also Antarctic Treaty parties span a range of geopolitical groupings and are united by a commitment to conservation as well as peace in Antarctica.[46]

There is a long history of IUCN member interest in and involvement with Antarctic matters, both directly and with IUCN delegations, Commissions,[47] and/or the Secretariat. IUCN Members have consistently endorsed resolutions on conservation and sustainable development issues related to Antarctica at General Assemblies and World Conservation Congresses. There were 22 such resolutions and recommendations from 1960 to 2020.[48]

There are hundreds of IUCN Members located within Antarctic Treaty party states: Government Agencies, International NGOs, National NGOs, Affiliates, Indigenous People's Organisations, and

[42] See https://iucn.org/our-union.

[43] GA 7.6, Antarctic fauna and flora - Warsaw 1960: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/43456. See Appendix 1 of this document for a list of all past resolutions.

[44] Australia, Belgium, France, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, the Russian Federation, (formerly the USSR), the UK and the USA.

[45] China, Ecuador, Finland, Germany, India, Italy, the Netherlands, Peru, Republic of Korea, Spain, and Sweden.

[46] The 9 other Antarctic Treaty (non-consultative) parties who are IUCN members are: Canada, Denmark, Guatemala, Iceland, Malaysia, Monaco, Portugal, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates.

[47] See Appendix 4.

[48] See APPENDIX 1: IUCN RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON ANTARCTICA AND THE SOUTHERN OCEAN.

Subnational Governments, many of which have an interest in or engage with Antarctic issues.

Many of the IUCN NGO members are active on Antarctic issues. Notable Members of IUCN with significant and active Antarctic programmes include ASOC, WWF and the Pew Charitable Trusts (PCT); ASOC is the only environmental NGO observer in the Antarctic Treaty System. Other existing IUCN Members have a long-standing interest in, commitment to, and engagement in Antarctic conservation including WWF, Environment and Conservation Organisations of New Zealand, Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society (New Zealand), Australian Conservation Foundation, Friends of the Earth, and several South American and other groups. Some NGO members attend ATS meetings as members of state delegations, even if they do not have ATS observer or expert status of their own. There are also many IUCN member organisations that engaged with Antarctic matters in the past, that could likely be convinced to do so again.

IUCN Commissions include a number of experts on Antarctic matters within specialist groups and task forces, such as the Penguin Specialist Group (Species Survival Commission, SSC), Cetacean Specialist Group (SSC), High Seas and the BBNJ Agreement[49] (High Seas Specialist Group), Antarctic Tourism (through TAPAS - Tourism and Protected Areas Specialist Group) and marine protected areas through the marine theme of the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA). A new Working Group on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean is being established within the WCPA.

Other fisheries, oceans and climate change experts relevant to Antarctica and the Southern Ocean are represented within the WCPA, the Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), the Climate Crisis Commission (CCC), and the World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL). The WCEL Mandate explicitly addresses Antarctic Polar governance and the WCEL Ocean Law Specialist Group experts work on area-based protections in law, including MPAs and marine spatial planning, and on fisheries law, the BBNJ Agreement, and climate change law related to the marine environment, including in the polar regions.

Commission experts have attended Antarctic Treaty system meetings as part of IUCN delegations and contributed extensively to the understanding of the issues being discussed and to the furthering of the IUCN Strategy.

2.2 IUCN Secretariat

The IUCN Secretariat, currently through the Ocean Team, in collaboration with the experts across the different Commissions (above, II.1), maintains some activity with respect to Antarctica.[50] IUCN sent delegations to both ATS and CCAMLR meetings in 2023 and 2024, made up of Secretariat staff and/or Commission experts. However, it is noted that regular participation (virtual and/or in-person) to ATCM and CCAMLR meetings has been difficult to accommodate over the last twenty years, due to a lack of resourcing and prioritisation. Notably, IUCN has submitted Information Papers to ATCM and the Scientific Committee meetings of CCAMLR, primarily to inform Parties of IUCN efforts in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean regions.

IUCN has also raised Antarctic issues and used Antarctic examples in other fora (for example, to promote the establishment within an Antarctic context of marine protected areas within the Antarctic Treaty Area and also on the high seas outside of the Southern Ocean). Funding for Antarctica work

[49] The 'Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction' is officially shortened to the 'BBNJ Agreement'. It was adopted on 19 June 2023 by the Intergovernmental Conference on Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction convened under the auspices of the United Nations. The BBNJ Agreement becomes the third implementing agreement to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea but is yet to enter into force. See https://www.un.org/bbnjagreement/en

[50] The Conserved and Protected Areas Team of the Centre for Conservation Action has also participated in this Antarctic work.

has been difficult to obtain, which has restricted what the Secretariat can achieve.

2.3 Council

The Council's governance role includes the development of policy and strategy on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean; this may be in response to Congress decisions, or to develop new policy for approval by members. Through its Programme and Policy Committee the Council has guided this policy and strategy over its history. For example, in 1981 the Council called for the preparation of a conservation strategy for Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.[51] In 2009 it helped develop and approved the Strategy for IUCN's Programme and Policy on Antarctic Issues.[52] Most recently, in May 2023, the IUCN Council established the Taskforce on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean to revise and update the 2009 Strategy.[53] This draft Strategy document is the work of this Taskforce.

The Chair and members of the Taskforce have been part of delegations to the Antarctic Treaty bodies, and contributed to IUCN work on biodiversity protection in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean outside those bodies, such as with the One Planet Polar Summit (Paris, Nov 2023).

2.4 Relevant existing work of IUCN

The IUCN has extensive expertise, tools and a history of work relevant to addressing the threats faced in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. Some of these aspects focus specifically on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean; others are not specific but can provide relevant assistance. Most importantly, the key mission of IUCN is to retain and restore ecosystems, and to conserve and recover species. It has a long history in addressing these goals, and in safeguarding important biodiversity areas on land and in the oceans.

The focus in the following description is on the work of the Secretariat and Commissions more than of the members themselves. It is very clear that some members – such as the Antarctic Treaty and CCAMLR consultative parties and ASOC – have extensive experience and have undertaken extensive work on issues relevant to nature conservation in the areas under discussion. However, as this Strategy is focused on what the IUCN as a whole might do, the following description focuses on core IUCN work.

Protected areas

IUCN has decades of experience in the selection, designation and implementation of protected areas. The IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) has been producing Best Practice Guidelines on Protected and Conserved Areas since 1998, and is the global authority in guidelines for practitioners and managers of protected areas and other forms of area-based conservation.[54] Particularly through the WCPA, IUCN brings extensive global experience to any work towards an effective network of Antarctic protected areas, not least to assist with enhancing climate change resilience of species and ecosystems.

One area-based tool supported by IUCN is the establishment of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs).[55] Key Biodiversity Areas are "sites of global importance to the planet's overall health and the persistence of biodiversity".

> "The KBA Programme supports the identification, mapping, monitoring and conservation of KBAs to help safeguard the most critical sites for nature on our planet – from rainforests to reefs, mountains to marshes, deserts to grasslands and to the deepest parts of the oceans."

---

[51] [*reference needed*]

[52] At the 72nd Meeting of Council on 2-4 February 2009.

[53] Decision C109/28.

[54] The WCPA Best Practice Guidelines (BPG) are located at this link: https://iucn.org/our-union/commissions/world-commission-protected-areas/our-work/wcpa-publications/iucn-wcpa-good.

[55] See: https://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/working-with-kbas/programme/partnership

The current work undertaken by the IUCN KBA partnership does not (yet) include Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. There are independent and separate efforts underway on identifying Antarctic and Southern Ocean KBAs being undertaken by SCAR, IUCN and ASOC.

Wildlife corridors

Wildlife corridors are a spatial protection tool but a corridor is defined by the movements of species, more than being an area with fixed, unchanging boundaries. The IUCN WCPA established the Connectivity Conservation Specialist Group (CCSG) in 2016.[56] In 2020 the CCSG published formal Guidelines for conserving species connectivity through ecological networks and corridors.[57] Especially given their potential to be effective in the face of climate change, wildlife corridors could be an important tool for species conservation in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. It is significant that IUCN has established the global standard and thus its authority and expertise on this topic.

Marine Protected Areas

IUCN has significant expertise in supporting the establishment and implementation of MPAs and MPA networks and has developed extensive technical guidance relevant to MPAs and their effectiveness.[58]

A tool that the IUCN has supported is the identification of Important Marine Mammals Areas (IMMAs). Thirteen IMMAs have been identified in the Southern Ocean, due to the work led by the IUCN Task Force on Marine Mammal Protected Areas (the joint work of SSC and WCPA). IMMAs result from an independent, scientific, expert process that can help inform where to put protection for marine life. They focus simply on identifying the relevant science without explicitly talking about establishing MPAs or their potential rules and restrictions, thereby avoiding political debate over MPAs.

Another relevant IUCN tool is the identification of Important Shark and Ray Areas (ISRAs).[59] This is a project of the Species Survival Commission's Shark Specialist Group. ISRAs are "discrete, three-dimensional portions of habitat, important for one or more shark species, that are delineated and have the potential to be managed for conservation". The Southern Ocean has not yet been assessed but the potential for the application of this tool exists.

The Southern Ocean has not been assessed against the Convention on Biological Diversity criteria for Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs).

The FAO Deepwater guidelines set criteria for the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) including seamounts; a limited number of VMEs have been protected by CCAMLR.

The BBNJ Agreement[60] and its criteria for protected areas (Annex 1) is highly relevant to the high seas part of the CCAMLR area. WCEL experts have been involved in the negotiation and interpretation of these provisions.

---

[56] See https://conservationcorridor.org/ccsg/

[57] *IUCN Guidelines for Conserving Connectivity through Ecological Networks and Corridors*, 2020. WCPA Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series, No 30. Available at: https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/PAG-030-En.pdf

[58] The WCPA Best Practice Guidelines (BPG) are located at this link: https://iucn.org/our-union/commissions/world-commission-protected-areas/our-work/wcpa-publications/iucn-wcpa-good. 'Guidelines for Marine Protected Areas' were produced as early as 1999 (BPG No 3); in 2017 Guidelines for the design and management for Large-Scale Marine Protected Areas were added (BPG No 26). The current *Guidelines for applying the IUCN protected area management categories to marine protected areas: second edition* was released in 2019 (BPG No 19). See also BPG No 21.

[59] See https://sharkrayareas.org/

[60] See above, at note 44.

Protected Species

CCAMLR already uses the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species[61] to guide CCAMLR's species protection status for species in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. IUCN has significant expertise to be able to assist the better protection of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean species. IUCN, through its Global Species Program, Species Survival Commission and partner networks, brings global expertise to discussions on designation of specially protected species and to the development and implementation of pragmatic management plans for designated species.

Ecosystems protection

The IUCN Red List of Ecosystems[62] identifies different ecosystems worldwide and their conservation status. While this Red List of Ecosystems Database does not yet contain information on Antarctica or the Southern Ocean, it is proposed that this become a priority to establish. IUCN is ideally-positioned to assist the identification of Antarctic and Southern Ocean ecosystems and their conservation status.

CCAMLR uses an *ecosystem-based management* approach to the regulation of fisheries in the Southern Ocean. Article II(3)(b) of the Convention defines one of the conservation principles as "maintenance of the ecological relationships between harvested, dependent and related populations of Antarctic marine living resources and the restoration of depleted populations". Further, one of the functions of the Commission is to take into account the impacts of fishing on the wider ecosystems.[63] CCAMLR established an ecosystem monitoring program as early as 1989,and is frequently referred to as a "pioneer" in the adoption of an ecosystem approach.[64]

[Q: Are there any IUCN work/standards on EBM to mention here?]

Fisheries

IUCN's engagement with Antarctica has served to support and strengthen the ecosystem-based management approach of CCAMLR which includes climate change considerations and the management of bycatch.

IUCN is a partner in the Nature Crime Alliance (as are ASOC and several other IUCN Members); as part of this partnership IUCN can help bring attention to illegal fishing in the Southern Ocean. IUCN's presence in Antarctic fora can help maintain the strategies necessary to curtail IUU fishing in the Southern Ocean, while also drawing lessons from CCAMLR's management and control schemes for use in other fora.

Invasive Species

The Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty includes a prohibition on the introduction of any species of animal or plant not native to the Antarctic Treaty Area without a permit. IUCN was instrumental in getting this issue of invasive species on the agenda of the ATCM. The issue of non-native species is now a priority for the ATS Committee for Environmental Protection, which continues to review risks and prevention and response measures.

IUCN can play a key role in facilitating and providing knowledge and know-how to the discussions on this issue. The IUCN Species Survival Commission's Invasive Species Specialist Group plays a

[61] https://www.iucn.org/resources/conservation-tool/iucn-red-list-threatened-species
[62] See: www.iucnrle.org
[63] See, eg, Art IX(2)(i).
[64] See, eg, A Fabra, V Gascon, "International Ocean Governance in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law's Specialist Group on Oceans, Coasts and Coral Reefs*", International Journal of Marine and Coastal Law*, 23:3 (2008), 567-598.

leadership role through its Invasive Species Initiative and the Global Invasive Species Programme.[65]

Climate Change

In 2022 the IUCN established an expert Climate Crisis Commission, to ensure a focus on nature-positive climate solutions (among other aspects).[66] With its role as a voice for nature, IUCN is in the best position to ensure that a focus on species and ecosystems is maintained in international discussions. The impacts of climate change in Antarctica on humans globally is typically given the greatest attention, such as in discussions of Antarctic ice melt raising sea levels globally. IUCN's mandate and authority can and should ensure that species protection remains a focus. IUCN's global network approach allows information and expertise exchanges between Antarctica and the rest of the world. IUCN is in a position to make a significant contribution to ensure climate change (including ocean acidification) is taken as an urgent issue into the ATCM and the CCAMLR discussions while linking these discussions to the broader climate change debates in the UNFCCC or the CBD.

Tourism

IUCN works to achieve equitable and effective governance of natural resources at all levels to benefit people and nature. IUCN's increasing activities and past experience with the tourism industry can be applied to inform and facilitate the discussions on tourism in Antarctica and help to build a consensus on the issue. The WCPA Tourism and Protected Areas Specialist Group has already developed guidelines for tourism within protected areas, which can apply to Antarctica.[67] Experts from this Specialist Group are already taking part in the discussions of the Antarctic Treaty Tourism Working Group.

Summary

In summary, issues identified in sections 1.3 and 1.4 above that the IUCN has demonstrated experience and expertise in that it could utilise for the benefit of Antarctic and Southern Ocean nature conservation include:

1. area-based conservation measures, including KBAs, MPAs and OECMs, IMMAs, ISRAs, EBSAs, VMEs, and BBNJ Agreement MPAs;
2. species protections, including defining and assessing species threat status categories and appropriate measures to address threats to different species;
3. invasive species management;
4. ecosystem protection tools and their application, including ecosystem-based management tools;
5. fisheries management tools;
6. tourism management tools;
7. legal measures relevant to oceans and Antarctic and Southern Ocean governance tools, including the application of precautionary approaches and of other international laws including the BBNJ Agreement;
8. being the voice for nature in climate change discussions.

[65] See https://iucn.org/our-union/commissions/group/iucn-ssc-invasive-species-specialist-group
[66] See https://iucn.org/our-union/commissions/climate-crisis-commission
[67] See, eg, *Tourism and visitor management in protected areas: guidelines for sustainability* (2018), available at https://iucn.org/our-union/commissions/world-commission-protected-areas/our-work/specialist-groups-and-task-forces-4

3 Organisational Strategy

The Strategy for IUCN's policy and programme on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean must address the threats and pressures on the region, summarised above in section 1.3, while also identifying the particular role(s) that IUCN can appropriately play and which ones it can lead. It is not a strategy to address all threats at once, nor is it wise to try and do everything without prioritisation. This Strategy will thus outline a method for prioritising work that best aligns with the need, the opportunity, and IUCN's niche and ability to add value to any campaign and to achieve its goals. This section addresses how the IUCN can build on its existing work (identified above in 2.4) and strengths to address future priorities and thereby contribute to - and justify - work to address the identified threats to nature conservation in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

3.1 IUCN's Niche and Strengths

IUCN starts with the assumption that nature conservation is important both in its own right and because it underpins human well-being now and in the future. To achieve its mission, IUCN as a Union engages with its members and with constituencies beyond the nature conservation community, including those engaged in development, politics and the private sector. Antarctica is a special case in that a large area has been set aside by Treaty as a nature reserve dedicated to peace and science. In contrast, the living resources of the Southern Ocean that surrounds Antarctica can legally be exploited via fishing activities.

IUCN's strengths include the following.

1. IUCN provides credible, trusted knowledge
2. IUCN convenes and builds partnerships for action
3. IUCN has a global-to-local and local-to-global reach
4. IUCN influences practices and set standards
5. IUCN has the status of an Invited Expert within the ATS, as discussed above, one of only three conservation organisations to hold this status. IUCN is seen to bring experience and expertise in conservation management to the ATS.
6. IUCN is made up of its members that includes Antarctic Treaty and CCAMLR parties, as well as many other organisations within those countries. IUCN has the unique ability to convene these groups and leverage influence and impact for global priorities such as on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

These features make IUCN distinct from other inter-governmental or non-governmental organisations, groups and bodies in the conservation and sustainability arena. They enable the Union to demonstrate leadership and to ensure it has strategic influence at many levels.[68]

Utilising these strengths, IUCN's actions in Antarctica can support a more effective response to emerging conservation and natural resource management issues by:

1. being a respected and influential technical and scientific voice for nature in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean.
2. utilising existing expertise such as on species and area-based protections while also improving the ability to produce, synthesise and support the use of Antarctica-relevant cutting-

[68] See: https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2023-018-En.pdf

edge knowledge, know-how and tools that could assist the management and conservation of Antarctic and Southern Ocean ecosystems and species; engaging and/or coordinating the substantive research on Antarctic conservation issues of concern, noting the extensive relevant expertise among its members across the Union;

3. working as a Union, utilising the strengths of the Secretariat staff, Commission experts and members together to achieve nature conservation in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean;

4. increasing the capacity of members, commission members, partners and the Secretariat to network and connect their actions at the local level with policy advocacy in support of conserving the Antarctic environment and upholding Antarctica as a Nature Reserve devoted to peace and science;

5. actively participating in the CCAMLR and Antarctic Treaty bodies' meetings in order to assist the parties, and advocate for conservation action based on the precautionary principle, utilising IUCN's above strengths;

6. convening inter-sessional meetings of relevant Treaty parties and other organisations in order to focus on conservation issues that IUCN has the expertise to assist with and advise on;

7. connecting nature conservation issues and achievements to wider societal objectives such as peace, science and cooperation;

8. extending the Union's reach to new partners and promoting innovative solutions to conservation and natural resource management challenges that are unique to Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

It is noted that some IUCN members and commission experts have maintained a greater engagement and a wider and deeper focus on Antarctic and Southern Ocean nature conservation than the IUCN Secretariat or Council have over the years. Such members include many of the Antarctic Treaty and CCAMLR parties – particularly the consultative party members - as well as the NGO members ASOC, WWF and Pew CT. Some commission experts specialise in Antarctic and Southern Ocean nature conservation; they also have a long history of attending official Treaty meetings. The strengths of these members need to be recognised and utilised in any IUCN programmatic actions; this is envisaged as being entailed as part of the 8 actions identified above, and development of the Action Plan identified below.

***Challenges*:**

One challenge is that Antarctica and the Southern Ocean are not part of any region within IUCN. They are thus not a focus of regional offices, nor of any secretariat division or centre, and have not been a separate part of the Secretariat's work programme in at least the past ten years. The closest is that Southern Ocean issues come within the purview of the Secretariat's Ocean Team. As a result, ASO issues have been addressed only where they overlap with other work priorities (such as ocean conservation, protected areas, or priority species protections). The challenge of prioritisation and focus on Antarctic and Southern Ocean issues is something that needs to be remedied if these issues are to be addressed in the future. The Taskforce *suggests* that development and implementation of this overarching Strategy will be the best current way to address this.

The other significant challenge is funding. IUCN relies on donations; income is currently not self-generated.[69] A lot of effort goes into obtaining funds for IUCN work and there is never enough. For example, the Red List on Threatened Species is a key IUCN knowledge product and element of the IUCN public image and identity, yet not even the Red List has enough funds for its work and it relies largely on volunteer experts for assessments.

[69] Although it is recognised that this is beginning, such as with the trial of the Academy training programmes.

The lack of funding is both a cause and effect of the first challenge, the lack of focus and prioritisation. Approximately 85% of IUCN funding is via specific projects, and expertise gets hired specifically for these projects. If these projects are not on ASO then the Secretariat does not gain the relevant expertise on ASO issues. This in turn makes it more difficult to bid for relevant funding, whether core or project-based. It is noted that there is significant expertise on ASO within the Commissions and IUCN's members, as discussed above.

The Taskforce *recommends* that IUCN needs to identify ASO as a separate and focused part of the Secretariat's work programme. For this it will need to employ relevant expertise and devote more funding to this area, both as core funding and fundraising attention. In the short term, it should liaise with members and Commissions who have this expertise and should restart engagement in the ATS, based on its niche and strengths, as discussed above. This should be started with an appropriate – and likely relatively modest - amount of core funding necessary to achieve this. In the longer term, fundraising should be directed at growing a larger, specific program. It is this overarching vision that guides the following suggested priorities and goals.

3.2 Future IUCN strategic vision and work priorities

The IUCN is in the process of adopting a 20-year vision for its future work as the voice for nature. This 20-year vision is intended to establish an overarching framework of policy goals to guide the development of the work programme; then they will both in turn guide the development of more focused strategies for each year's and each quadrennium's work. It is expected that this 20-year vision will be adopted at the World Conservation Congress to be held in October 2025.

The IUCN work programme is adopted every four years by members at the World Conservation Congress. Thus, each work program runs for four years, and identifies the priorities over that four-year term. The next four-year work program is expected to be adopted at the World Conservation Congress to be held in October 2025, to run from the beginning of 2026 to the end of 2029. The work of the Commissions also runs on a four-year timescale, beginning with the election of Commission Chairs and approval of their mandate at each Congress.

Budgets are set annually, and priorities for each year's work and its associated spending is set toward the end of the previous year. The budget is prepared by the Secretariat and approved by Council. However, the Council Committees – particularly the Programme and Policy Committee and the Finance and Audit Committee – play a role in monitoring the current year's activities and spending, and assisting with the development of plans for the next year's ones.

It is sensible to approach the development of a policy and work program for Antarctica and the Southern Ocean with the same kind of structure:

- at the top, guiding level are the policies and goals that might be expected to run for 10 or 20 years, as part of the overarching 20-year vision;
- at the next level are the priorities for the work to be undertaken over the next four years, as part of the quadrennial work programme;
- and then end of each year, priorities are decided for the focus of next year's work and its budget.

3.2.1 Longer-term Policy goals

A possible vision/goal statement:

IUCN will work to protect biodiversity in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, using its networks, expertise and role as an independent expert observer to the Antarctic treaties, to advance science-based diplomacy, precautionary decision-making and international cooperation over the nature reserve for peace and science.

The IUCN 20-year vision contains…*[tbc]*

[*References to the 20-year vision will need to be included. It is likely to identify that oceans, protected areas, and species conservation will all be key priorities for IUCN's future work. Antarctica and the Southern Ocean are key to achieving goals for all of those priorities. For example, it is not possible to properly address ocean health without addressing the Southern Ocean. These future vision work priorities can be identified and summarised here. Check whether it has matters such as redefining the relationship between humans and nature that we could reference. Check whether it now refers to Antarctica and the Southern Ocean by name anywhere.*]

Important goals particular to the IUCN vision for Antarctica and the Southern Ocean include:

1- **Antarctic exceptionalism**: Emphasise the special nature of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean in a way that both requires and inspires humankind to protect and care for it:
   a. recognise that the Antarctic ecosystems are exceptionally unique with significance to humankind;
   b. recognise that Antarctica and the Southern Ocean are awe-inspiring
   c. recognise that Antarctica is the common heritage of humankind and a nature reserve devoted to peace and science;
   d. promote the recognition that the exceptionally unique Antarctic ecosystems require significant limits to be placed on human activity there;
   e. recognise that exploitation of nature in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean may not be appropriate scientifically or ethically due to its exceptionalism, especially where exploitation is for only short term economic benefit.

2- **Recapture the Antarctic spirit:** Improve international cooperation within the Antarctic Treaty and CCAMLR regimes:
   a. the current situation – 'business as usual' - cannot continue or else plants, animals, and fungi will die, and whole species of them disappear; ecosystems will collapse while we are tiptoeing around the edge, particularly around the edge of geopolitics. We need to change the debate, and influence the politics and decision-making.
   b. help reduce the divide between East and West in the politics over Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, and help parties find common goals and work together on them; e.g., help reset the scene to enable parties to cross the divide;
   c. promote the concept that consensus requires active negotiation between parties, rather than seeing consensus as indicating a state of affairs that enables single states to veto measures that other states agree to, for example;
   d. emphasise the successful history of peaceful use, scientific exploration and international cooperation, whereby political differences are put aside.

3- **Guardianship responsibilities**:
   a. promote the guardianship and stewardship responsibilities of humans rather than any rights over Antarctica;
   b. advocate for the interests of other species and ecosystems and their inherent right to exist; advocate for more limits on human activities that don't uphold the interests of all humankind;
   c. advocate for alternative sources to meet human needs where human activities and/or exploitation in Antarctica threaten ecological sustainability;
   d. promote the guardianship responsibilities extending to the rest of the world, given the important role that Antarctica and the Southern Ocean play in the world's

climate and ocean systems.

4- **Protection mechanisms**:

a. explore and support new innovative approaches for the protection of the Antarctica and Southern Ocean both within and outside the ATS;
b. promote the use of the wide range of existing area-based protections, on land, ice, and in the Southern Ocean, promote new sites to strengthen the protected areas network, while continuing to review the effectiveness of spatial protection measures and to advocate for new area-based conservation tools;[70]
c. promote the adoption of species-based protections and associated action plans, including providing evidence in support;
d. promote protection of habitat for breeding and feeding, even where species might move between different areas; note that whales and birds in particular can travel long distances and need protection over their whole range;
e. promote application of a precautionary approach for all exploited species, in particular krill, and promote continued investment in research, especially among fishing States, to inform spatially appropriate catch limits and measures to avoid impacts on dependent predator species (including penguins and marine mammals) and to avoid impacts on the wider ecosystem.
f. [promote the protection of geological or geomorphological heritage sites.]

-

5- [***Protect the sub-Antarctic***: (*tbc*)

a. Improve the protections offered to all subantarctic islands and associated marine areas;
b. work to define latitudinal protection bands in addition to longitudinal Domain groupings currently used; this will enable islands and associated marine areas on the same latitude with similar issues to be considered together rather than in separate domains.]

6- **Climate change**:

a. Promote the integration of climate change (including ocean acidification) information in every decision about Antarctica and the Southern Ocean including in non-ASO fora;
b. promote the connection between national, regional and international climate discussions and implications of any decisions for ASO;
c. promote the connection between the effects of climate change in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean with effects felt elsewhere around the globe, including in non-ASO fora;
d. promote the use of future climate predictions to assess risks to species and ecosystems in ASO;
e. promote the adoption of precautionary measures to enable species and ecosystems to be more resilient to the climate impacts that we cannot control;
f. develop a policy on geo-engineering in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean (as well as globally), that factors in the effects on nature.

7- **Tourism**:

a. advocate for strong, comprehensive, effective, and enforceable regulation of tourism in Antarctica based on the principle that visiting Antarctica is a privilege not a right, with clear land-based limits on both activities and numbers of tourists, and adoption of precautionary measures that protect biodiversity in a changing climate;
b. advocate for a tourism governance framework containing an effective system of

[70] See discussion in section 2.4, above.

compliance, monitoring and enforcement and which accounts for regional differences in environmental sensitivities and tourism pressures.

8- **Other substantive topics**:

There will be particular substantive ASO issues that arise as priorities for IUCN at different times. They will this need review each year, and certainly for the quadrennial work plans. At present, these include:

a. Advocate for ongoing review and strengthening of environmental impact assessment procedures and their oversight, including of cumulative effects;
b. promote consistent implementation of biosecurity measures among all Antarctic operators, regular risk assessments of pathways and vectors for the introduction of non-native species, and regular monitoring for non-native species establishments;
c. advocate for marine and terrestrial spatial planning;
d. advocate for stronger compliance, monitoring and enforcement throughout the ATS;
e. advocate for stronger pollution controls, including in relation to ballast water, both within ASO fora and in other fora such as the International Maritime Organization;
f. advocate for banning or implementing much stronger restrictions on any economic activity in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

9- **Methods of working – 'science diplomacy'**:

a. IUCN will work with its members and with the Antarctic and Southern Ocean treaty systems, including with treaty parties and relevant bodies such as SCAR, to promote a clear understanding of the relevant scientific and technical aspects on matters where IUCN has expertise, and on implications of this science for Antarctic and Southern Ocean policy and action;
b. IUCN will submit papers to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings and meetings of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living resources (CCAMLR) utilising their expertise on matters consistent with this Strategy, policy goals and the current work program;
c. IUCN will prepare position papers ahead of these meetings, send delegations to these meetings, and be involved in the discussions in order to be of assistance to the parties to these meetings;
d. IUCN will convene intersessional meetings between Treaty parties and other relevant organisations on topics where it can utilise its niche and strengths to achieve the policy and programme goals;
e. IUCN will work with and assist its members to achieve the policy and programme goals, both in the context of Antarctic Treaty and CCAMLR meetings, as well as in other relevant fora.

10- **Other methods of working**:

a. The different elements of the Union will work together, in line with this Strategy, with the secretariat providing coordination support to members and the commissions, in order to support each other's work and bring the most effective information and skills to the parties.
b. There needs to be a body within the Union established to coordinate this work; this may be a role for the Taskforce (discussed below);
c. The creation of inter-Commission working and specialist groups is encouraged, in order to address the various threats to Antarctica and the Southern Ocean in a more coordinated manner
d. The IUCN will revise its priorities for work on ASO regularly, so as to continue to

relevant and effective, including to better accommodate emerging/increasing risks (e.g. bioprospecting; geo-engineering, any mining in ASO);

11- **Funding**:

a. The ATS bodies make decisions for the regulation, management and protection of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. IUCN's engagement with these treaty bodies should be considered core business, and thus part of core funding; this includes relevant advocacy and attending meetings, particularly the Antarctic Treaty consultative meetings and meetings of CCAMLR.
b. Additional activities will need funds raised, such as for convening and wider intersessional advocacy. The details of this strategy are to be developed as part of the Action Plan.
c. There should be some support for any oversight body, such as a Taskforce.

3.2.2 4-year work program, 2026-2029

The elements of the proposed work programme that are relevant to Antarctica and the Southern Ocean are:

[*All the indented text below is provisional*; *to be confirmed/replaced once we have the next draft of the 2026-29 work programme; proprieties relevant to ASO issues as identified above will also be added/confirmed*:

IUCN sphere of action, influence and interest

- Shaping and influencing evidence-based policies, laws and governance at an international level in Antarctica;
- Generating, managing and disseminating state of the art knowledge and tools to inform and guide conservation efforts and addressing the drivers of biodiversity decline and loss.
- Strategic communications and awareness building – increasing public understanding and engagement in Antarctic and Southern Ocean.

IUCN catalytic roles:

- Convening and networking – bringing together a wide range of Antarctic actors of dialogue, discussion, and debate to identify, agree and address the necessary long-term transformational changes;
- Knowledge science and data: Guiding conservation in Antarctic and Southern Ocean with robust sciences, data, and multi-disciplinary evidence.

Impact areas

Impact 1: Biodiversity (ecosystem, species and genetic diversity) has been effectively conserved, protected and restored in Antarctic and Southern Ocean;

- Protection of biodiversity in Antarctic will implement the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework in 20% of the Planet.

Impact 2: Effective conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services [in Antarctica and Southern Ocean] has contributed significantly to addressing the biodiversity and climate nexus, including through nature-based solutions,

- Conservation in Antarctic and Southern Ocean is a key element to "averting risks on nature of climate responses".

Impact 3: Equitable, legal and sustainable use of nature and natural resources etc.
Antarctic and the Southern Ocean is an important area to rebuild or maintain natural capital.

Global transformation:

4. climate change adaption and mitigation;
6. Regenerative blue economy.

Nature at scale:
Ocean: halting and reversing the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem function in the ocean.
Climate:

IUCN Programme areas for global transformation:

1. ONE HEALTH
2. REALIGN FINACIAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS
3. SUSTAINABLE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SYSTEMS
4. SUSTAINABLE CITIES
5. WATER STEWARDSHIP AND SECURITY
6. REGENERATIVE BLUE ECONOMY
7. CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTION AND MITIGATION
8. GREEN, JUST ENERGY TRANSITION

⇨ *IUCN's ASO work will deliver in particular on transformations 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7.*

Composite outputs:
IUCNs Contributions

i. Nature Based solutions
ii. Biodiversity metrics for a nature positive transition
iii. Sustainable food and agriculture systems
iv. One health

- *Highly relevant to ASO re invasive diseases especially spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza, at the moment.*
-

viii) A regenerative blue economy
(x) Integrating nature into global climate policy and action

- *Highly relevant to ASO: climate changes are the biggest drivers of species and ecosystem changes and losses. These need attention. While other organiasations have the climate science expertise, very few are looking at implications for species; most attention is going on implicaiotns for humans. (Eg re ice loss, people ask about sea-level rise and climate implications for them, not for the ecosystems that depend on the ice… IUCN needs to be the voice for nature on ASO climate changes.)*

Composite actions
(iii) Assessing the status of biodiversity
(v) Conserving the outstanding universal value of natural world Heritage
- some sub-Antarctic Islands are World Heritage Areas
(vi) Recovery of threatened species (*Eg whales and seabirds)*
(vii) Preventing and reducing the spread and impact of invasive alien species
ix) Conserving the ocean and areas beyond national jurisdiction
- expanding MPAs in the Southern ocean is an important part of meeting the target 3 in the global biodiversity framework.
(x) Conserving and restoring terrestrial ecosystems]

IUCN Antarctic and Southern Ocean work over the next 5 years:

The aim is to integrate three aspects: IUCN niche & strengths, the 2026-29 program, and the ASO needs/issues.

Key biodiversity issues in the Antarctic region where IUCN could best provide guidance in line both with IUCN demonstrated experience and expertise (identified in section 2.4 above) and with the proposed 4-year Programme:

1. Strengthening and expanding protected areas, particularly marine protected areas but also land-based protected areas, including the various aspects discussed in Goal 4 above: IUCN composite action (ix);
2. developing tourism guidelines and policy briefs for Antarctica and the Southern Ocean; assisting with the ATCM Tourism Working Group: composite outputs (vii) and (ix);
3. preventing marine mammal and Emperor penguin extinctions and protecting food webs; this will likely include working on krill fisheries management measures: Composite output (ix), composite action (vi);
4. strengthening and updating the coverage of the Red List to more species and ecosystems in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, including terrestrial fauna and flora that have never been assessed against the Red List criteria: composite outputs (ix) and (vi), composite action (iii);[71]
5. adopting climate-smart spatial planning: composite output (x);
6. invasive species management: composite action (vii);
7. legal aspects relevant to the above matters, including the application of precautionary approaches and of other international laws including the BBNJ Agreement.

IUCN will build on its previous and existing work, including:

- Expert research on the key biodiversity needs, including regional planning and strategies;
- Providing advice and expertise from the various IUCN entities;
- Actively engaging in ATCM and CCAMLR annual and intersessional meetings;
- Providing expertise at the science–policy interface for decision-makers, using a range of fora and methods;
- Convening stakeholder events for policy development, diplomacy and international cooperation;
- Developing and ensuring adherence to protected area category classifications and guidelines, as well as species protection tools; and
- Collaborating with IUCN partners and members, including Treaty parties and the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition, in the development of a long-term regional strategy to protect polar biodiversity.

3.2.3 2025 priorities

For 2025, Council has agreed to the following work on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean:[72]

> "in 2025 IUCN, as part of its Antarctic work, will submit papers to both the Antarctic Treaty consultative meeting and Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living resources (CCAMLR) on several key topics including:
>
> 1. Bringing stronger tourism management to the continent (ATCM)
> 2. supporting the establishment of sub-Antarctica MPAs and
> 3. highlighting species status information in the context of fishing and climate change.

[71] Note that this was discussed and addressed at the CCAMLR meeting in October 2024, with a commitment from IUCN to revise some fish assessments, and from the CCAMLR secretariat to try to work more closely with species experts who conduct such assessments and need information from CCAMLR that is not publicly available.

[72] It is noted that the Ocean Team have a separate project on the BBNJ Agreement, and may be able to undertake some work on the synergies between that High Seas Treaty and the Antarctic Treaty and CCAMLR regimes, but this is not part of the 2025 Antarctic work agreed to by Council.

We will also ensure that protecting Southern Ocean biodiversity is part of the agenda at UNOC3.

In order to undertake this work:

- the Ocean Team will coordinate and provide secretariat support for the meeting papers, any policy position papers, and delegations to the Antarctic Treaty and CCAMLR meetings;
- small delegations will attend these meetings, composed of experts in the topics under discussion and/or the subject of any papers submitted;
- the Ocean Team will coordinate and provide secretariat support for the participation at UNOC3.

Participation at the World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi is also planned: the Taskforce plans to host a Forum event at Congress on this Strategy and the issues involved.

Additional work in 2025 will need to include fundraising for future IUCN work in line with this Strategy.

The Taskforce will continue to meet to finalise this Strategy and provide guidance to the Secretariat in its implementation.

3.3. Strategies:

Different elements will contribute to a set of strategies developed in order to implement the 11 identified goals above and to achieve the priorities over 2025, the next year quadrennium, and beyond. This Strategy document does not set out all the necessary detail, as at least some of the elements need to be consulted on, particularly in relation to staffing and budget. However, some suggested elements are:

3.3.1 Coordination

In terms of coordination of the IUCN work on ASO, it would be helpful and sensible to have someone who can:

- monitor the issues that will be arising at meetings and identify which ones we could be addressing;
- Monitor and/or receive advice on Antarctic issues that arise outside of meetings that need to be inserted into the meetings;
- Coordinate relevant experts in addressing issues, such as via preparation of meeting papers, position statements before meetings including responses to meeting papers from other Parties, and potential interventions at meetings;
- Coordinate delegations for attending regular and intersessional meetings;
- Act as the official IUCN contact person for each Treaty body;
- Liaise with IUCN staff to ensure internal coordination on Antarctic and Southern Ocean issues;
- coordinate liaison with IUCN members, including states, on Antarctic and Southern Ocean issues;
- coordinate – or at least assist the coordination of - IUCN fundraising efforts for Antarctic and Southern Ocean work.

3.3.2 Delegations to meetings

IUCN will:
- send a delegation to each Antarctic and CCAMLR treaty body meeting each year;
- prepare a policy position paper for each meeting
- liaise with IUCN members, treaty Parties and/or relevant observers and invited experts intercessionally;
- submit information and working papers, whether alone or jointly with other parties and/or invited experts.

Further details about delegations, their activities, and meeting papers need to be developed as part of the action plan.

IUCN will also prepare briefing papers on Antarctic and SO issues for other relevant international fora, and to assist IUCN delegations to these other meetings;[73]

3.3.3 Secretariat staff

To better enable the implementation of this Strategy, dedicated staff should be appointed, from a dedicated budget, as existing IUCN staff are already fully allocated to other work. It needs to be determined what are the criteria for the role(s) and where is the best location for this staff. They would ideally be part of the Secretariat so as to be able to take advantage of the strengths that the IUCN brings to this work. Finalising these details is part of the development of the Action Plan.

The Taskforce proposes that aims of such staff include:
- to coordinate the implementation of this Strategy, working in alignment with IUCN member organisations and Commission groups;
- to coordinate an Antarctic IUCN network;
- deliver a coherent and effective presence by IUCN staff and Commission representatives at Antarctic meetings;
- help fundraise for continued and increasing work on Antarctica.

3.3.4 New institutional structures/organisation

Because Antarctica and the Southern Ocean are outside of the IUCN regional structure, one issue is whether any new institutional structures should be established in order to progress the work needed on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

At present, the work is being progressed by a combination of Taskforce members, the Secretariat Ocean Team, and WCPA, with nearly all of it being on a voluntary basis. While the Treaty meetings have been managed by the Ocean Team, there has been no formal budget allocation for Secretariat work on these issues until 2025. Any work requiring budget (such as attending international meetings) has been able to be progressed via the Secretariat's Ocean Team (under other relevant projects) and with some funding for expenses from WCPA.

The Taskforce considers that it is *not* appropriate to add Antarctic and the Southern Ocean to an existing IUCN region. One of the aspects of its exceptionalism is that Antarctica is beyond national jurisdiction, as is most of the Southern Ocean (with the exception of some states' EEZs). Further, members who are interested and involved in ASO matters do not reside only in one region; IUCN's engagement on ASO matters has been of wide interest to state and NGO members.

[73] For example, the Taskforce Chair provided speaking notes and powerpoint slides about the work of the Taskforce and the ASO issues that needed to be addressed to 2 other Taskforce members who were speakers at events at the Biodiversity COP-16 in Cali, Nov 2024.

It is proposed that for 2025 and for the next 4-year work programme, the current Taskforce should be continued, including to work on the Action Plan and policy. This will provide helpful continuity as the Taskforce works on the issues and Taskforce members attend treaty meetings. The current Taskforce is not a large body but it already helpfully brings together key Secretariat staff, Councillors, Commission experts, and member representatives. It helps get around the issue that the Antarctic and Southern Ocean does not fit well into the IUCN regional structure.

The challenge with any coordination role resting with the Taskforce is that it is a voluntary body; all time spent on policy development is on a purely voluntary basis. It would be well-served with at least some administrative assistance if it was to continue to make progress in a timely manner. Some resourcing for the occasional in-person meetings would also be helpful (eg, aligned with a Council meeting so that additional travel costs are minimised).

It is noted that the Antarctic Advisory Committee that was established pursuant to the 2009 Policy was hampered by a lack of funding for its work. This historical body is discussed in Appendix 2.

3.3.5 Budget

It is suggested that effective work on these matters requires a budget for:

- Administrative staff time for coordination;
- Staff or consultant time for substantive work, such as preparation of briefing papers, IUCN meeting policy position papers, preparation of meeting information and working papers;
- Costs for participation in the international Treaty meetings on Antarctica by staff and/or experts;
- there will also be other meetings and work to participate in as our work becomes both more visible and more urgent;[74]
- It is anticipated that the work on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean will also be integrated with other work such as on climate change, WCPA, SSC, etc; this can be assisted by the staff member in their coordination role;
- any convening that IUCN might do as the need arises for particular policy diplomacy efforts;
- Taskforce work over the next 5 years.

Some of this work is part of the IUCN work programme, thus some budget should be allocated simply as part of normal work plans. Strategic fundraising will be needed specifically for more than just the basic work to do with meeting participation. A detailed budget and fundraising strategy needs to be part of the Action Plan, in coordination with the Secretariat/Director-General.

[insert one of Lou's pics here]

[74] For example, the participation in the French Government's One Planet Polar Summit in Paris in Nov 2023 required IUCN to pay for travel and accommodation, even if other venue costs were covered. Any 2025 Southern Ocean work at UNOC3 will need to be covered by the Ocean Team's budget.

4 Proposed next steps for Council and/or the Taskforce

Detailed recommendations for specific actions or measures, or for campaign priorities, are not for inclusion in this Strategy document; they are instead better placed in a more detailed Action Plan. Preparation of an Action Plan is proposed to be part of the next stage of the Taskforce's work.

1- Council approves the current draft Strategy prepared by the Taskforce, with suggestions for amendment as may be made after discussions by PPC at its 27th meeting and Council at its 112th meeting

2- The Taskforce finalises the draft Strategy in time for the opening of the Congress motions portal in March, incorporating the final text of the draft 20-year vision and 2026-29 work programme, and their implications for ASO work.

3- The Taskforce liaises with the Director-General about progressing the Action Plan with details for the strategies identified above in 3.3. This will likely include:

- a plan for implementation;
- a fundraising plan;
- a plan for how to engage members better in the development of the Antarctic Strategy and of suggestions for activities to further it;
- a wider engagement strategy with other stakeholders (in addition to members).

***

"*I watched the sky for a long time, concluding that such beauty was reserved for distant [treacherous?] places, and that nature has a good reason for exacting her own special sacrifices from those determined to witness them*."
Admiral Richard E Byrd, 1938

"…*There must be an intangible something that draws one back to the wild wastes of Antarctica*""
Sir Ernest Shackleton, *Endurance* expedition, April 24, 1915

[*insert one of Lou' pics here*]

****

APPENDIX 1:
IUCN RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON ANTARCTICA AND THE SOUTHERN OCEAN

WCC 7.107, Reducing the impact of fisheries on marine biodiversity - Marseilles 2020: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/49246

WCC 6.032, Achieving representative systems of protected areas in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean - Hawaii 2016: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/46449

WCC-2012-06,6 Antarctica and the Southern Ocean: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/44033

WCC 4.034, IUCN's engagement on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean - Barcelona 2008: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/44184

WCC 4.118, Antarctica and the Southern Ocean - Barcelona 2008: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/44268

WCC 3.036, Antarctica and the Southern Ocean – Bangkok 2004: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/44322

WCC 2.75, Southern Hemisphere albatross and petrel conservation - Amman 2000: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/44590

WCC 2.66, Pirate fishing and seabird mortality from longlining in the Southern Ocean and adjacent waters: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/44581

WCC 2.54, Antarctica and the Southern Ocean - Amman, 2000: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/44569

WCC 1.110, Antarctica and the Southern Ocean - Montreal, 1996: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/44514

GA 19.96, Antarctica and the Southern Ocean - Buenos Aires, 1994: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/43965

GA 19.95, Improved Protection for Wildlife in Sub-Antarctic Island Ecosystems - Buenos Aires, 1994: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/43964

GA 18.76, The Sub-Antarctic Islands of Australia - Perth, 1990: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/43869

GA 18.75, Antarctica - Perth, 1990: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/43868

GA 18.74, The Antarctic Conservation Strategy - Perth, 1990: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/43867

GA 17.52, Antarctica - San Jose, 1988: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/43781

GA 17.53, The Antarctic: minerals activity - San Jose, 1988: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/43782

GA 16/38, Airstrip at Pointe Geologie, Antarctica - Madrid 1984: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/43724

GA 16/8, Antarctica - Madrid, 1984: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/43694

GA 16/9, Antarctica II - Madrid, 1984: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/43695

GA 15/20, Antarctica environment and the Southern Ocean - Christchurch 1981: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/43677

GA 7.6, Antarctic fauna and flora - Warsaw 1960: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/43456

APPENDIX 2:
Historical Development of IUCN Policy on Antarctica

IUCN has had a long involvement with Antarctic conservation activities.

As part of the World Conservation Strategy developed by IUCN during the 1980s there was a felt need to develop a regional policy for Antarctica. The then IUCN Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA), at its 29th Working Session held at Wairakei, New Zealand, in August 1987 produced a publication entitled conserving the Natural Heritage of the Antarctic Realm.

In 1989, the Director General established a working group including representation from the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) and from NGOs such as the World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF) and ASOC to respond to the General Assembly's call for the preparation of a strategy for Antarctic conservation. The resulting document *Strategy for Antarctic Conservation* was published in 1991, after revision in the light of the discussions held at the General Assembly.

SCAR worked closely with IUCN on joint workshops and publications on Sub-Antarctic Island Conservation (1992), Antarctic education (1993), and development of the Antarctic Conservation Strategy (1991).

The IUCN established an Antarctic Advisory Committee in 1994– 1996 to support IUCN involvement in the Antarctic, sub-Antarctic islands and Southern Ocean issues. The IUCN Antarctic Advisory Committee was formed by 12 members appointed in their personal capacity, from diverse professional backgrounds, with the chair appointed by the DG.

This Committee undertook considerable early activities, including efforts focusing on ATCMs and CCAMLR meetings. However, by 2004 the Committee had reportedly not been able to achieve its full potential, due mainly to a lack of resources.

As conservation and environmental management are dynamic and developing fields, the policies embodied in the Strategy were updated from 2004. SCAR contacted IUCN to pursue this as a joint effort. In 2004, the IUCN DG tasked the Chair of IUCN's Antarctic Advisory Committee with a liaising role with SCAR on this matter. There was an initial Discussion and Drafting Workshop in May 2005 in Stellenbosch, South Africa. Resolution WCC 4.034 then made this work a priority.

In Feb 2009 the Strategy for IUCN's Programme and Policy on Antarctic and Southern Ocean Issues was approved by the 72nd Meeting of Council.

The IUCN Antarctic Advisory Committee was strengthened as part of the Strategy and resolution (CGR 4.034). The IUCN Membership as a whole, via Resolution 4.034, felt strongly that the Advisory Committee should be a focal point for IUCN's Antarctic work, and that it needed to be strengthened and given adequate resources.

Despite considerable early activities, and ongoing efforts focusing on ATCMs and CCAMLR meetings, the Committee was not able to achieve its full potential. Despite the 2009 Strategy then strengthening the role of the Antarctic Advisory Committee, the Committee ceased to operate [between 2009 and 2020], reportedly due to inadequate funding.

In May 2023, the 109th Council meeting established a Taskforce of the Council's Policy and Programmes Committee to revise and update the 2009 Strategy.

APPENDIX 3:
Relevant international environmental instruments

Other relevant environmental instruments for Antarctica and the Southern Ocean include, but are not limited to:

- The Convention on Migratory Species' Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP, 2001)
- The International Whaling Commission's establishment of the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary in 1994[75]
- The International Maritime Organization, (including the International Convention on the Protection of Pollution from Ships, 1973 and Protocol 1978 (Marpol)), whose regulations apply to many activities in the Antarctic, and which have established the Southern Ocean as a specially sensitive area.
- International Maritime Organization's International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code, 2017)[76]
- The Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer[77] and, its Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (1987)[78]
- The Convention on Biological Diversity (1992)
- The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992).
- The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982).
- The Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement). Adopted 19 June 2023; not yet in force.
- The 1995 United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement[79]
- WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, 2022.[80]

[75] See https://iwc.int/management-and-conservation/sanctuaries
[76] See https://www.imo.org/en/ourwork/safety/pages/polar-code.aspx
[77] See https://ozone.unep.org/treaties/vienna-convention
[78] See https://ozone.unep.org/treaties/montreal-protocol
[79] See https://www.un.org/oceancapacity/UNFSA
[80] See https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/rulesneg_e/fish_e/fish_e.htm

APPENDIX 4:
IUCN Commissions current mandates

Some IUCN Commissions have a specific mention of polar regions, Antarctica and/or the Southern Ocean in their current mandate.

- World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)
  One of the objectives defined in the WCPA mandate [2021-2024] is to:

  > 3. Advocate for management of all lands, freshwater and seas, including polar regions and areas beyond national jurisdiction, that support the conservation of biodiversity and the role of protected areas and OECMs in contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) especially SDG 3 Good Health and Well-Being; SDG 13 Climate Action; SDG 14 Life below Water and SDG 15 Life on Land

- World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL)
  Priorities stated in the WCEL mandate [2021-2025] include:

  > 5. (2) cross-cutting themes such as environmental ethics, environmental human rights, indigenous peoples, protected areas, Arctic and Antarctic polar governance, compliance and enforcement of environmental laws, sound environmental adjudication, access to justice in environmental matters, protection of whistle-blowers and environmental defenders, environmental justice, and national and international financial institutions, and requests made by the World Conservation Congress.

[any others?]

Action Plan - Potential detail on elements, for consultation

THIS WILL NOT BE PART OF THE STRATEGY DOC, BUT IS HERE FYI

1 Adopting a principled approach

IUCN will work to achieve the goals identified in this Strategy while operating under the following eight principles:

1. Focus on the issues and needs particular the the Focus on delivery of the IUCN work programme;
2. Promote transparency and integrity;
3. Ensure clear accountability and responsibility;
4. Ensure efficient and effective management systems;
5. Foster clear and regular communications and learn from experiences;
6. Build a rewarding, nurturing, ethical work environment;
7. Empower core and implementation group members to develop strong links with the IUCN constituency;
8. Innovate and adapt to change.

2 More detail about delegations

- IUCN could consider issuing an annual update to ATS meetings in the form of an Information Paper to highlight their work that is relevant to Antarctic conservation and management.
- IUCN should also consider co-authoring or co-sponsoring other WPs that are well aligned with the our strategies and goals.
- aim to have 4-6 delegates to each meeting, with at least 1 meeting paper submitted for each;
- until the funds are raised for this, start with only 2 funded delegates to each treaty meeting (?);
- send the same delegates for a few years in order for the Parties to build relationships with the IUCN delegation.

Delegations would ideally have native speakers in at least the Treaty languages (English, French, Russian, Spanish) and Chinese;
- delegates would assist and liaise especially with IUCN member parties;
- a networking and information event should be hosted at each Treaty meeting;
- delegations should display a small desk flag.

3 Secretariat staff detail

To better enable the implementation of this Strategy, dedicated staff should be appointed, from a dedicated budget, as existing IUCN staff are already fully allocated to other work.

Such staff should already be familiar with the substantive ASO issues. Aims of such staff include:

- to coordinate the implementation of this Strategy, working in alignment with IUCN member organisations and Commission groups;
- to coordinate an Antarctic IUCN network;
- deliver a coherent and effective presence by IUCN staff and Commission representatives at Antarctic meetings.
- help fundraise for continued and increasing work on Antarctica.

Such staff should ideally be fluent in more than one language of the Treaty bodies. (Note the goal to have meeting delegates who are native speakers in at least all of the four Treaty languages.)

It needs to be determined where is the best location for this staff and the criteria for the roles. It may be appropriate for them to be placed in a coordination unit such as the International Policy Centre,

although it is noted that most of the work on ASO is undertaken closer to Antarctica than Gland is, so such a closer office could be preferable. As an interim measure, if funding became available, staff could be based within a Commission, such as the WCPA

Suggested goals are that:

- IUCN staff dedicated to working on this Strategy should be established to provide the focal point for this work (as outlined above).
- They would ideally be part of the Secretariat so as to be able to take advantage of the strengths that the IUCN brings to this work.
- It would logically be based close to Antarctica and to most of the work that is undertaken in that region, as opposed to Gland; but this is not essential.

4 Fundraising

Quite a few IUCN members either fund ASO work or are funded philanthropically to do it. Some existing IUCN donors fund ASO work. There is a large community of Antarctic and Southern Ocean researchers that relies on external funding. Opportunities exist but need time to develop.

Some fundraising approaches are already in discussion, but mostly by WCPA and the Taskforce Chair. There are several opportunities for project-based funding on matters that fit within the proposed focus of future IUCN work on ASO.

5 Wider engagement:

1. The Taskforce notes that the 2009 Strategy included this statement: “Partnerships with minerals and oil companies and their associates should not be considered, given the agreement not to allow minerals activity that is embodied in the Antarctic Treaty Environmental Protocol.”

2. *Private sector*: The private sector is having a growing influence. Commercial fishing and tourism are both cited as important threats to Antarctic ecosystems

    - *Research organisations*: Some are already working both with IUCN and on Antarctic matters. In total, 11 scientific organisations actively linked to IUCN are working on Antarctic issues; policy organisations are also engaged.
    - Suggested groups include the British Antarctic Survey, the Institute of Antarctic and Southern Ocean Studies, the Antarctic Research Centre (Victoria University of Wellington), the Instituto Antárctico Argentino, the International Centre for Antarctic Information and Research, and the Wilson Centre Polar Institute.