



DRIVING CONSERVATION

RESULTS FOR PEOPLE AND NATURE





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WHY OUR WORK MATTERS

The world has more Protected and Conserved Areas than ever before, yet biodiversity is still declining at an alarming pace. Ecosystems are under mounting pressure from climate change, land-use change, and unsustainable resource use. This paradox makes one thing clear: simply expanding coverage is not enough. To truly safeguard nature and the people who depend on it, conservation must be effective, equitable, and fully integrated into broader landscapes and societies.

WHO WE ARE

With its dynamic, multidisciplinary team spanning natural and social sciences, policy and law, economics and finance, technology and data science, and communication, and representing +18 countries and +25 languages, IUCN's Protected and Conserved Areas Team is at the forefront of advancing this model of equitable and effective conservation by:

- Supporting governments and communities in +100 countries;
- Combining on-the-ground advancements in community engagement, technology and policy wins.

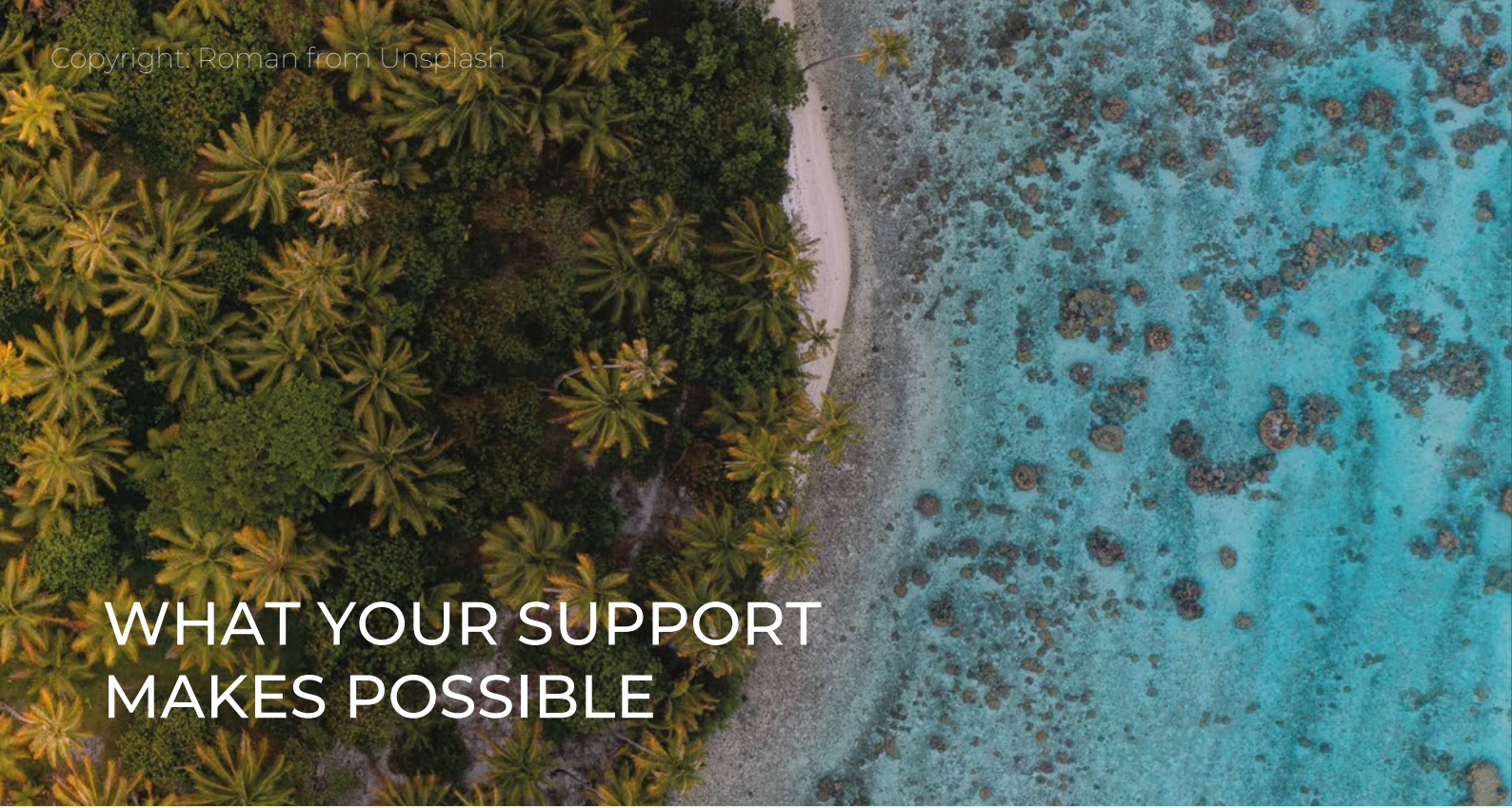


HOW WE DO IT

We work with governments, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, and leading researchers to channel funding and conservation expertise where it matters most. Together, we are protecting some of the planet's most ecologically and culturally treasured places, directly advancing Goal A and Target 3 of the Global Biodiversity Framework.

Our core contributions to advance conservation include:

- Support countries and communities to unlock and mobilise diverse sources of financing for conservation. This includes securing resources through blended finance, biodiversity credits, philanthropic and bilateral funding, and locally driven grants.
- Activate IUCN's Union-wide convening power to foster inclusive multi-stakeholder collaboration for the effective and equitable implementation of Target 3. These spaces enable the co-design of Protected and Conserved Areas strategies, accelerate the adoption of IUCN standards such as the IUCN Green List, and generate trust and legitimacy for systemic reforms.
- Support national policy development by facilitating inclusive dialogues, delivering technical assistance, and contributing evidence-based recommendations. Our work helps countries integrate global standards for effectiveness, equity, and spatial coherence into national strategies - such as National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), legal reforms, and Protected and Conserved Area legislation.
- Develop and promote global standards, applied research, and digital tools to strengthen system-level planning, site performance, and accountability. Our team co-develops data infrastructures such as the Green List Self-Assessment Tool, and supports countries in applying spatial analysis, governance diagnostics, and scenario modelling to inform an effective and optimised design of Protected and Conserved Area systems.



WHAT YOUR SUPPORT MAKES POSSIBLE

Our work creates real change on the ground. Journey with us through some examples of our work and impacts:

FRENCH POLYNESIA: The returning of Polynesian storm petrel to Kamaka island

It's March 2024 in Kamata Island in French Polynesia and solar-powered sound systems are broadcasting petrel calls across the island. Artificial burrows, monitored by motion-triggered cameras, have been set up in strategic locations. The island is ready for the endangered Polynesian storm-petrel to return. By April, Polynesian storm-petrels were detected on the island. By June, they had become regular visitors, exploring the nests that had been created for them. Today, Kamaka supports breeding populations of six seabird species, and the Near Threatened Tahiti petrel may soon join them. Camera data suggests at least five Polynesian storm-petrels are investigating the site, although confirmed nesting is yet to be observed.

LEBANON: How the country's ancient cedars are thriving again

In the Shouf Mountains of Lebanon, a hopeful story of recovery is underway, documented by IUCN's Green List Standard which assesses how effectively an area is being protected based on several parameters including good governance and whether ecosystem services are being retained. Despite the civil war, communities were making a concerted effort to protect their ancient cedar groves – some of which are more than 1,000 years old. Today, the Shouf Biosphere Reserve covers 5% of Lebanon's land area and is home to the country's largest cedar forests and one of the last remaining wetlands in the region. Sites on the Green List are periodically re-assessed and in December 2024, Shouf became the first site in the Middle East to be re-listed for another five years for its efforts to preserve cultural traditions like wild herb gathering and natural heritage.



MEXICO: Tech and tradition unite for the jaguar's return

Deep in Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula, jaguars are making a quiet comeback, funded by the Tech4Nature initiative led by Huawei and IUCN's Protected and Conserved Areas Team. A network of AI-powered camera traps and acoustic sensors has been deployed across the forest. In just one year, they recorded over 30,000 images and half a million audio clips. Powerful algorithms then scanned this data, identifying eight jaguars, including a mother and two cubs, and 119 other species, 34 of which are threatened. This high-speed, automated monitoring slashes research time from years to months, offering real-time insights into jaguar behaviour and habitat and the threats they face including illegal logging and hunting.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO: Indigenous stewardship keeps forests alive

In the Tshopo Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo, communities such as Bemili and Bembiteli are protecting 47,550 hectares of forest through the Bembiteli Indigenous and Community Conserved Area, recognised under Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs). For generations, these communities have managed the land using traditional hunting, gathering, and forest stewardship practices, sustaining both biodiversity and cultural traditions. The area is home to iconic species such as okapi, giant pangolin, and numerous threatened tree species. Guided by customary councils, communities enforce rules and resolve conflicts locally, ensuring strong ownership over natural resource use. The IUCN Protected and Conserved Areas Team supports this work by providing technical guidance, capacity building, and tools for monitoring biodiversity, helping to safeguard both ecosystems and the cultural heritage that underpins them.

One Health in Central Asia: Where nature, livelihoods and health intertwine

In the sweeping pastures and rugged mountains of Central Asia, people and animals have lived side by side for generations. Here, nature sustains life providing water, food, and income. But when ecosystems break down, so does the delicate balance between humans, livestock, and wildlife.

Across Central Asia, national experts are working together to build a future where healthy landscapes lead to healthier communities. It's not just about preventing the next outbreak - it's about ensuring that nature continues to protect, sustain, and inspire those who depend on it most.



WHAT WE STRIVE TO ACHIEVE TOGETHER

By supporting our work, you help to:

- Champion equitable, rights-based conservation that benefits both people and nature;
- Drive the creation of practical tools, integrated data, and global standards that makes conservation work more effective;
- Empower local communities, governments and partners to learn, share knowledge and take the ownership of landscapes, seascapes and cultural heritage;
- Enable conservation solutions that are sustainable, scalable and impactful, using innovative financing, policy engagement and strategic planning.

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