Consultation for an IUCN Strategy on Invasive Alien Species (IAS)

April 2026

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1 Executive summary

IUCN undertook a global consultation to gather feedback from across the Union and beyond on the need for an IUCN Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Strategy, priority actions, and partnerships required to scale up action on IAS in line with the draft IUCN Vision and Programme and the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) Target 6. The consultation was conducted via Microsoft Forms in English, Spanish, and French, and analysed responses from 397 participants representing 91 countries and territories, across all IUCN regions and constituencies.

Clear mandate for an IUCN IAS Strategy

The consultation demonstrates a strong and unambiguous mandate for the development of a Union-wide IAS Strategy. Nearly nine in ten respondents agreed that such a strategy is needed, and more than three-quarters expressed interest in contributing to its development and implementation. Respondents consistently characterised a strategy as necessary and overdue, given the accelerating scale, complexity, and impacts of invasive alien species globally.

Respondents emphasised that its value will depend on whether it moves beyond high-level vision to enable action, is adequately resourced, respects regional and contextual diversity, and adds clear value to existing national, regional, and sectoral efforts. Many stressed that the strategy should function primarily as an enabling framework, supporting Members, Commissions, and partners, rather than positioning IUCN Secretariat as a primary on-the-ground implementer.

Recognised strengths and persistent gaps

Respondents widely recognise IUCN's comparative advantages on IAS, particularly its global leadership in providing authoritative data, indicators, and standards such as EICAT (Environmental Impact Classification for Alien Taxa), GISD (Global Invasive Species Database), and GRIIS (Global Register of Introduced and Invasive Species); developing scientifically robust guidance and best practices; and convening expert networks, notably through the Species Survival Commission and its specialist groups. These strengths are seen as central to IUCN's credibility, reach, and ability to influence policy and practice at multiple scales.

At the same time, the consultation highlights systemic gaps that currently limit impact. Respondents pointed to a persistent implementation or "last-mile" gap, where global guidance and tools do not consistently translate into national and local action. There were repeated calls for stronger localisation and regional support, particularly in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Pacific, and in freshwater and marine systems. Respondents also highlighted the limited availability of practical, step-by-step operational tools, especially for low-capacity contexts, and noted that a minority of participants had limited awareness of IUCN's existing IAS-related work.

Across the consultation, respondents consistently stressed that knowledge is not the primary constraint to progress. Instead, action is most often limited by insufficient funding, shortages of trained personnel, weak institutional capacity, and lack of sustained follow-through.

Funding and capacity as the central constraint

Funding and capacity building emerged as the single most critical bottleneck to effective IAS action. Respondents described current financing as fragmented, short-term, and difficult to access, particularly for local authorities, practitioners, and community-based organisations. There is a strong expectation that IUCN could play a catalytic role by mobilising and coordinating resources, supporting

more predictable and longer-term financing, ensuring that funding reaches under-resourced regions and local implementers, and more directly linking financial support with capacity building and implementation.

Strategic priorities and partnerships

Respondents expressed strong and consistent support for an IAS Strategy that prioritises strengthening IAS data, indicators, and platforms and linking them more directly to decision-making and management; developing, adapting, and disseminating practical and localised guidance and best practices; reinforcing prevention and pathway management, including biosecurity and early warning systems; and investing in capacity building and training, with an emphasis on hands-on support rather than documentation alone. Resource mobilisation was identified as a cross-cutting priority, with respondents calling for greater collaboration to scale up funding for IAS action at global, regional, and national levels.

Partnerships were widely seen as essential to achieving impact at scale. While there is broad support for formal partnerships, respondents emphasised that these must be action-oriented, inclusive, clearly defined, and adequately resourced, and should avoid unnecessary administrative burden. Priority partners span international, regional, national, and local actors, including governments, non-governmental organisations, research institutions, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and private sector actors linked to IAS pathways.

Overall message

The consultation delivers a clear message: there is a strong appetite across the Union and beyond for an IUCN IAS Strategy that connects global leadership with local impact. Respondents expect IUCN to build on its strengths in convening, standard-setting, and knowledge, while placing greater emphasis on implementation support, capacity building, funding, and effective partnerships. A focused, enabling, and well-resourced strategy is widely seen as essential for scaling up effective responses to invasive alien species worldwide.

2 Introduction

This consultation aims to gather feedback from across the IUCN Union on the need for an IUCN Invasive Alien Species Strategy, possible priority actions, and partnerships needed in order to scale up action on invasive alien species (IAS) to deliver on the commitments made in the draft IUCN Vision and Programme.

IUCN has been working on IAS for many decades, including the adoption of 15 Resolutions on IAS, and the provision of key databases through its SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG) such as the IUCN Global Invasive Species Database (GISD), Environmental Impact Classification for Alien Taxa (EICAT), and the Global Register of Introduced and Invasive Species (GRIIS). In addition, IUCN was one of the member organisations of the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP), which aimed to coordinate and support global efforts on IAS. It was through GISP that a Global Strategy on IAS was published in 2001. However, GISP ended in c. 2014 and the IAS Strategy was never fully implemented nor updated. Since the end of GISP, IUCN and its ISSG have continued to work on IAS, primarily to support progress towards globally agreed IAS targets (e.g. Target 6 of the GBF), including through the provision of data, and technical and scientific support and guidance.

The IUCN 20-year Strategic Vision 'Unite for Nature' identifies that responding to IAS is one of IUCN's core existing conservation actions that needs scaling up. It states that "over the next 20 years, IUCN will continue to use its world-leading data, knowledge and guidance to support policies, plans and their implementation to prevent the introduction and manage the impacts of invasive alien species. The Union will also convene key stakeholders, including the private sector, at all geographical levels to advance integrated governance processes, improve policy coherence, and share data and best practices." In addition, IAS have their own contribution in the IUCN Programme (2026–2029) 'Nature 2030', which states that the IUCN Secretariat and Commissions will help governments, Members, partners and CSOs to plan and implement comprehensive programmes, to achieve the Global Biodiversity Framework Target 6 on IAS.

The recent IPBES assessment on IAS showed that IAS and their impacts can be prevented and mitigated, but it will require the scaling up of coordinated and sustained strategic actions, integrated governance approaches, and closer collaboration across sectors and countries.

IUCN, as the world's largest and most diverse environmental network, has an opportunity and a responsibility to play a key role in supporting global efforts to scale up action on IAS. To do this, IUCN as a Union will need to take a strategic approach, with partnerships across its constituents and beyond. This consultation is the first step in developing an IUCN strategy on IAS, and will help us identify potential partners, priority actions, opportunities, and challenges.

3 Methods

IUCN opened an online consultation to gather feedback from across the IUCN Union on the need for an IUCN Invasive Alien Species Strategy, possible priority actions, and partnerships needed in order to scale up action on IAS to deliver on the commitments made in the IUCN Vision and Programme. The consultation was conducted using Microsoft Forms, offered in three different languages (English, Spanish, and French), and open from October to December 2025. The consultation questionnaire is presented in Annex I.

To promote the consultation to IUCN constituents, emails were sent to all IUCN members, Commission experts and Secretariat, including via the IUCN Digest newsletter, a news story on the IUCN website, and events at IUCN Congress. It was also promoted to non-IUCN entities, including through the Aliens-L listserv.

The responses were then cleaned, analysed and the results are presented below. R Studio and Microsoft Excel were used to analyse the responses and create the graphs. The responses to all the comment questions, in all three languages, were summarised using AI (Artificial Intelligence) through Microsoft Co-Pilot and then reviewed by the IUCN Secretariat team, who checked the raw data to ensure consistency. In addition, AI (through Microsoft Co-pilot) was used to create a summary of all the responses for each consultation section, which again was reviewed by the team who checked the original data.

4 Results

4.1 Summary

IUCN received a total of 406 responses, however, through the data cleaning process nine responses were removed (see Annex II), resulting in 397 responses being analysed. The number of responses per language were: English, 278 responses (70%); Spanish, 68 responses (17%); and French, 51 responses (13%).

4.2 Results per consultation question

4.2.1 About you

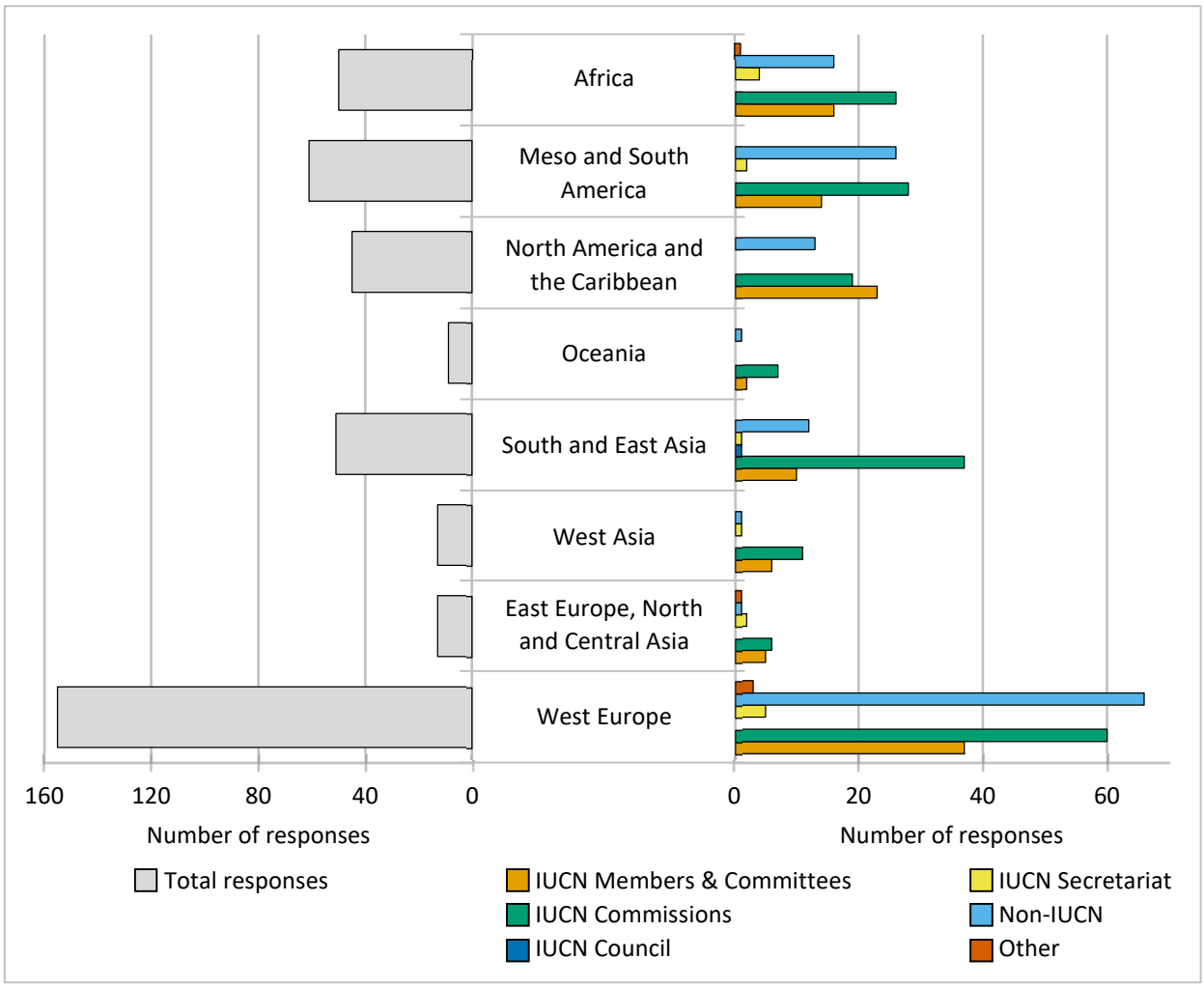
The consultation received responses from 91 countries and territories across all IUCN regions. The region with the most responses was West Europe (155 responses, 39%), followed by Meso and South America (61 responses, 15%), South and East Asia (51 responses, 13%), Africa (50 responses, 13%), and North America and the Caribbean (45 responses, 11%). The remaining regions West Asia (13 responses), East Europe, North and Central Asia (13 responses), and Oceania (9 responses) make up the final 9% of responses.

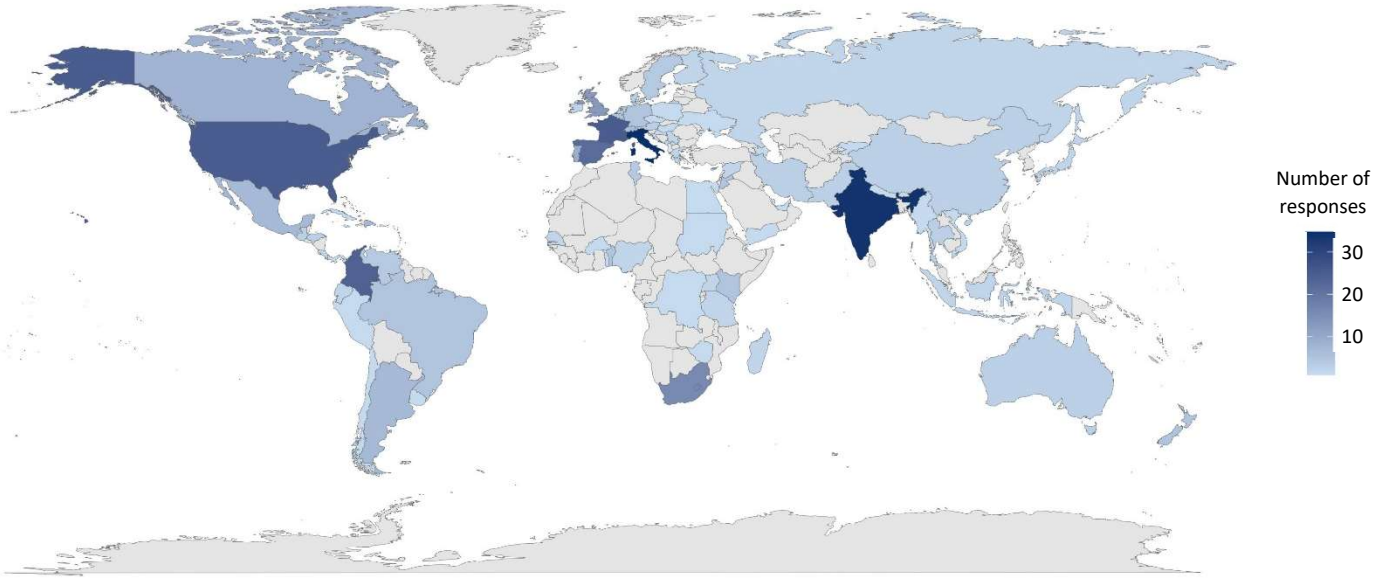
In terms of IUCN status, the consultation received responses from across the Union and beyond, with the number of respondents per affiliation[1] being: 104 IUCN Members, 194 IUCN Commission members, 23 IUCN National, Regional or Interregional Committees, 1 IUCN Council, 15 IUCN Secretariat, 136 not affiliated with IUCN, and 5 other (e.g. freelancers that are not affiliated with IUCN or working for an organisation). Within the IUCN Members, national and international non-governmental organisations provided the most responses (63), followed by state and government agencies (33 responses). Sub-national governments and Indigenous Peoples organisations had five and four responses, respectively. Within the Commissions, the Species Survival Commission (SSC) had the highest representation (135 responses), and the Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), Commission on Education and Communication (CEC), Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), and World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) each received 20-28 responses. The Climate Action Commission, and World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL) received the fewest responses (13 and 1 response(s), respectively). Of the non-IUCN constituent responses, the majority were non-governmental organisations (77 responses), followed by government agencies (29 responses), international organisations (24 responses), and business sector organisations (8 responses).

[1] Note that respondents can have more than one affiliation, e.g. represent an IUCN Member organisation and be a member of an IUCN Commission.

4.2.1.1 *Responses to consultation per region (total 397 responses)*

Total responses (left) and responses by region (right).

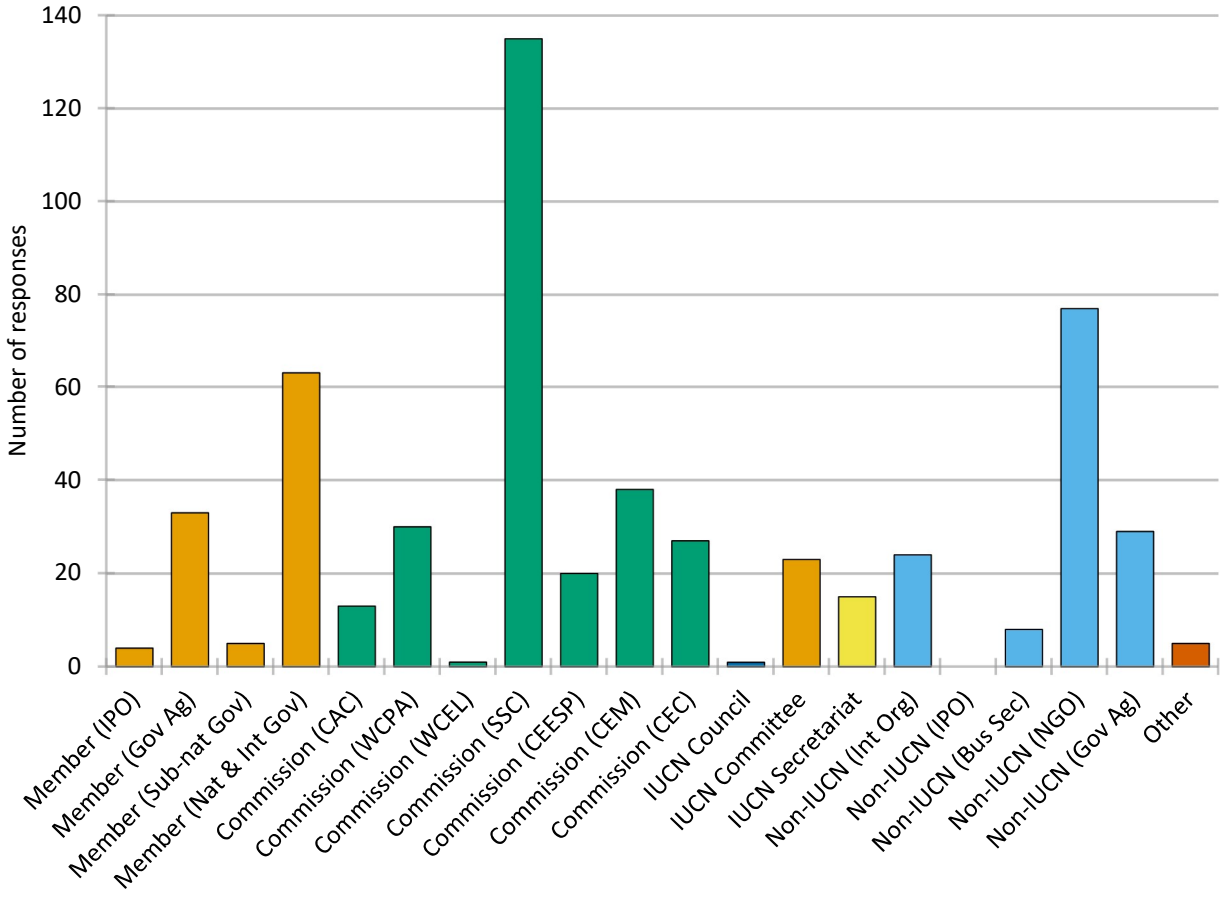




Number of responses per country. Countries with no responses are in grey.

4.2.1.2 *Responses to consultation by IUCN status (total 397 responses).*

Note: individuals can have more than one IUCN status[2].



4.2.2 Your work on invasive alien species

The majority of respondents work on IAS in some capacity, mostly to do with the '*Provision of data and indicators on IAS*' (226 responses) and the '*Development of guidance/best practices to support the prevention, monitoring, or management of IAS or pathways of introduction and spread*' (221 responses). Several respondents also work on '*Facilitating expert networks to share knowledge and information*' (197 responses) and '*Implementing IAS management action on the ground, such as for the eradication or control of IAS*' (195 responses).

Regarding future priorities, almost all respondents are working on IAS in some capacity, with only five respondents stating they will not be working on IAS in the future. The top four topics mentioned above in current work are the same in future priorities, just in a different order, with '*Development of guidance/best practices to support the prevention, monitoring, or management of IAS or pathways of introduction and spread*' having the most responses (257 responses), followed by '*Provision of data*

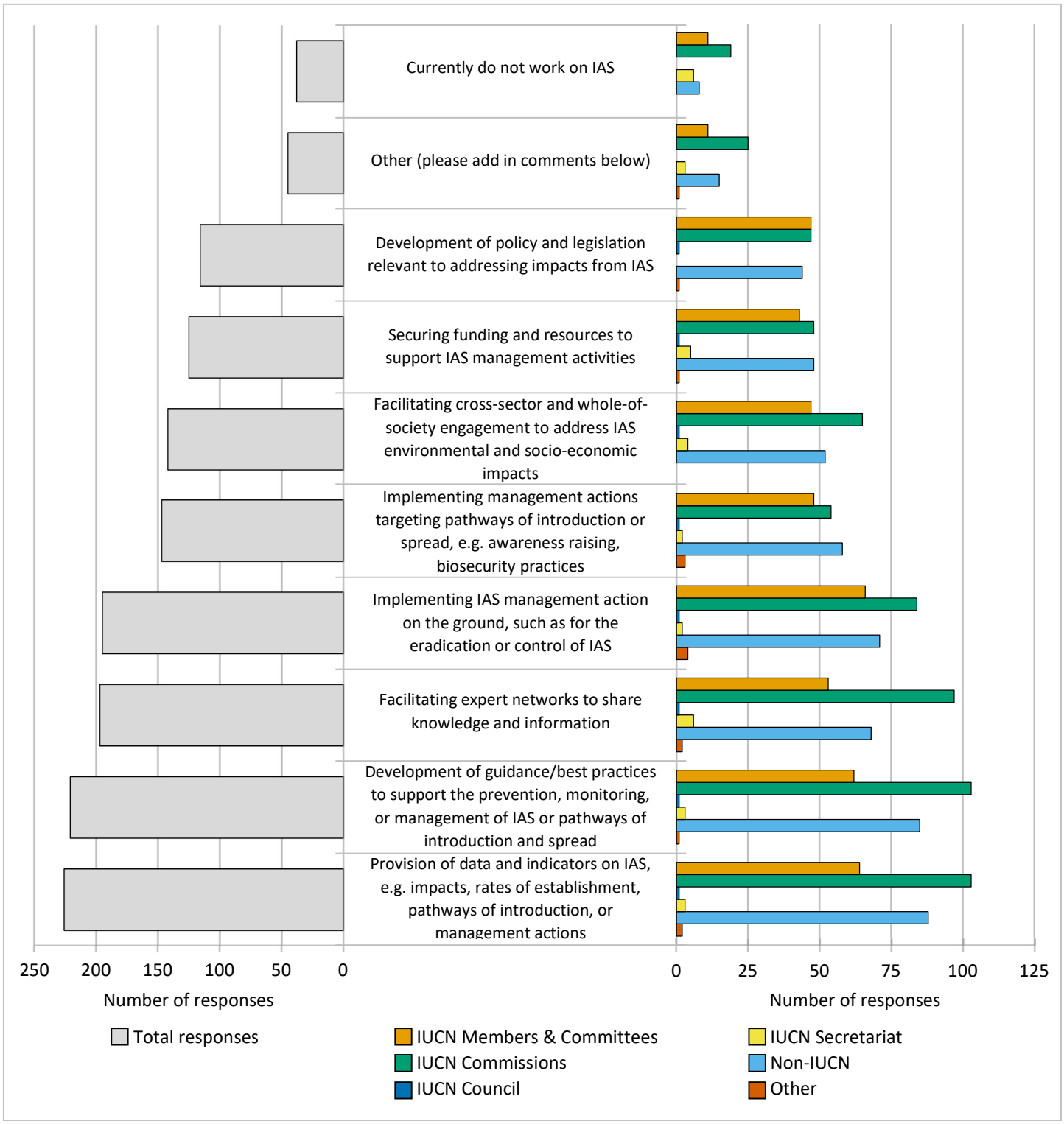
[2] Members: IPO = Indigenous Peoples organisation; Gov Ag = State and government agency; Sub-nat Gov = Sub-national Government; Nat & Int NGO = National and international non-governmental organisation. Commissions: CEC = Education and Communication; CEM = Ecosystem Management; CEESP = Environmental, Economic and Social Policy; SSC = Species Survival; WCEL = Environmental Law; WCPA = Protected Areas; CAC = Climate Action. Non-IUCN: Gov Ag = government agency; NGO = Non-governmental organisation; Bus Sec = Business sector; IPO = Indigenous Peoples organisation; Int Org = International organisation.

and indicators on IAS' (239 responses), '*Facilitating expert networks to share knowledge and information*' (236 responses), and '*Implementing IAS management action on the ground, such as for the eradication or control of IAS*' (210 responses).

In order to achieve these future priorities, most respondents (53%) ranked '*Finances/resources*' at the top of the list of essential requirements, while 21% ranked '*Scientific and technical capacity and expertise'* at the top of their list.

4.2.2.1 Current work on IAS

Questions 9 and 10: Respondents' current work on IAS by total responses (left) and by IUCN status (right). Note: individuals could have picked more than one option.



Comments:

What respondents said most often

- The comments show **very diverse engagement with IAS**, spanning research, policy support, implementation, education, and community-based action. Many respondents emphasised that their work is **multi-faceted**, even when only a subset of options was selected.

Key themes from comments

Respondents most commonly described current work involving:

- **Research, data generation, and monitoring**, including:
  - Species distribution mapping
  - Impact assessments
  - Pathway analysis (e.g. trade, transport, biofouling)
  - Use of genetic, molecular, or remote-sensing tools
- **On-the-ground management**, such as:
  - Eradication and control of invasive plants and animals
  - Habitat restoration following IAS removal
  - Biosecurity and early detection measures
- **Policy and advisory roles**, including:
  - Supporting national strategies and legislation
  - Advising ministries, protected area authorities, and local governments
- **Capacity building and awareness**, through:
  - Training practitioners and authorities
  - Education and outreach with communities, schools, and volunteers
- **Facilitating networks**, often informally, to share expertise and coordinate action

Constraints highlighted

Across comments, respondents frequently noted that:

- Work is often **project-based and short-term**
- Activities rely heavily on **personal commitment or voluntary effort**
- Many organisations contribute to IAS work **alongside other priorities**, rather than as a core mandate

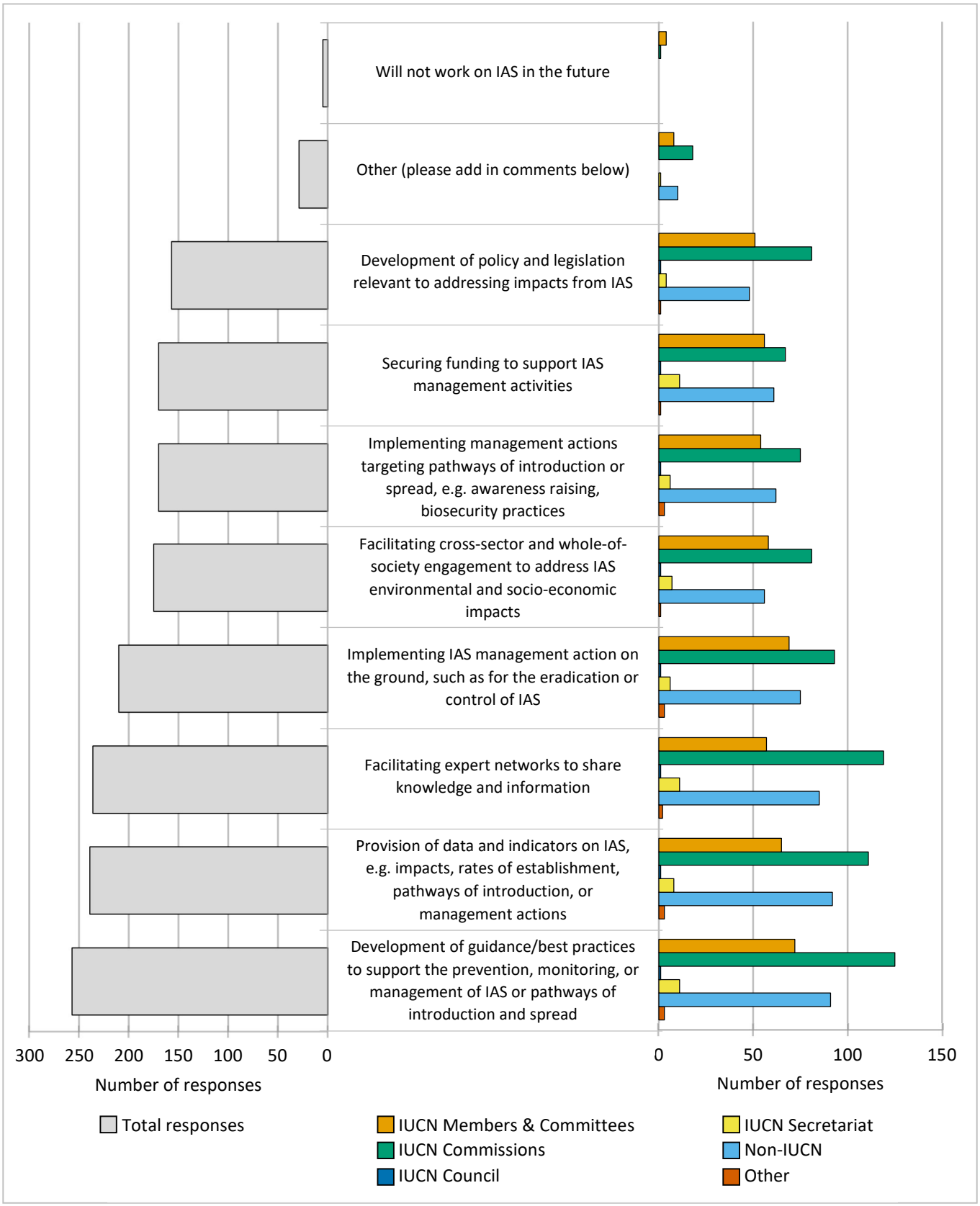
Several respondents who selected “currently do not work on IAS” still indicated **indirect or emerging involvement**, such as related biodiversity, restoration, or species monitoring work.

Overall synthesis

- Respondents’ current work on IAS is wide-ranging and often integrated into broader conservation, research, and policy activities, but is frequently constrained by limited resources, short-term funding, and reliance on individual initiative.

4.2.2.2 Future priorities on IAS to 2030

Questions 11 and 12: Respondents' future priorities on IAS to 2030 by total responses (left) and by IUCN status (right). Note: individuals could have picked more than one option.



Comments:

What respondents emphasised most strongly

Comments reveal strong ambition to **scale up and strengthen IAS action**, with many respondents outlining **clear, forward-looking priorities** for the coming years.

Commonly cited future priorities

Respondents most frequently highlighted:

- **Scaling up implementation**, including:
  - Larger-scale eradication and control programmes
  - Longer-term management beyond pilot projects
- **Strengthening prevention and pathway management**, especially:
  - Early detection and rapid response
  - Biosecurity at borders and along trade pathways
- **Improving data, evidence, and tools**, such as:
  - Filling geographic and taxonomic data gaps
  - Improving access to practical, decision-ready information
- **Policy uptake and enforcement**, with a focus on:
  - Translating strategies into enforceable action
  - Improving coordination across sectors and levels of government
- **Greater community and cross-sector engagement**, including:
  - Working more closely with Indigenous Peoples and local communities
  - Engaging private sector actors linked to pathways

Nuances and caveats

Several respondents noted that:

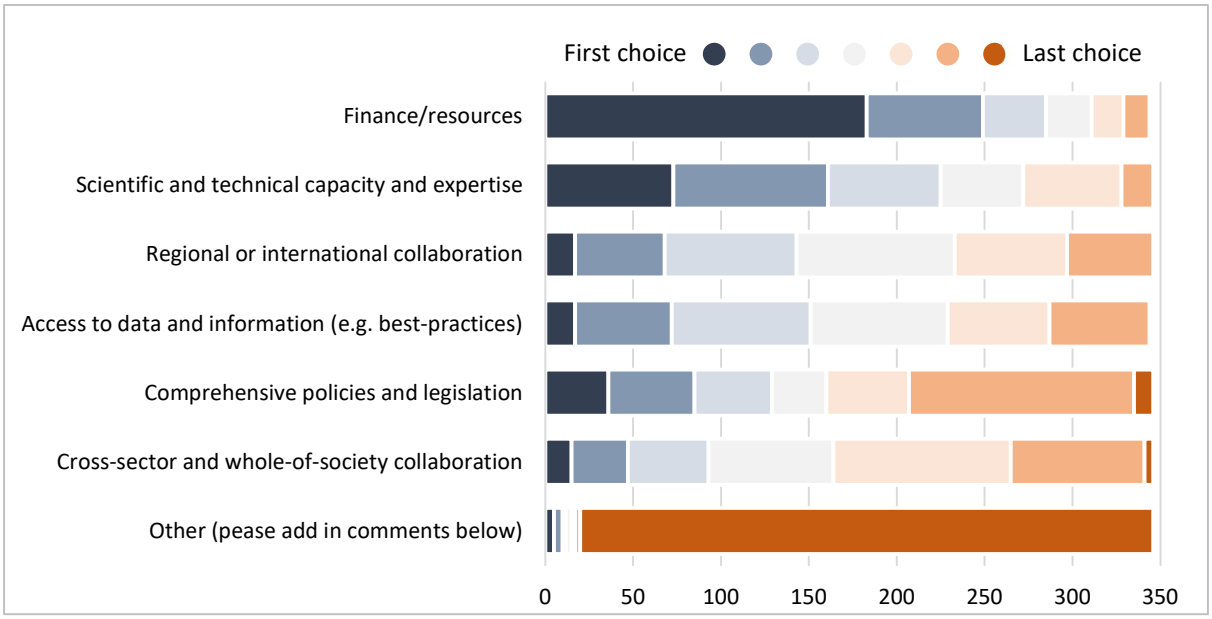
- Future priorities depend heavily on the **availability of funding**
- Some organisations expect their IAS engagement to remain **limited or indirect**, despite recognising the importance of the issue
- A minority explicitly stated they **do not expect to work on IAS in the future**, often due to mandate or capacity constraints

Overall synthesis

Respondents broadly aspire to expand and deepen IAS work by 2030, with priorities centred on implementation, prevention, and policy uptake, while recognising that progress will depend on sustained resources and institutional support.

4.2.2.3 Essential requirements to achieve future priorities

Questions 13 and 14: The respondents' essential requirements to achieve future priorities



Comments:

Strongest and most consistent message

Across comments, respondents were remarkably consistent in stressing that **resources and enabling conditions**, rather than new ideas or science, are the primary limiting factors.

Most frequently emphasised requirements

Respondents repeatedly highlighted the need for:

- **Sustained and predictable financing**
  - Long-term funding rather than short project cycles
  - Support for both research and implementation
- **Scientific and technical capacity**
  - Trained personnel
  - Access to specialist expertise and modern tools
- **Access to high-quality data and best practices**
  - Practical guidance that can be applied locally
  - Up-to-date and verified information
- **Strong policy and legislative frameworks**
  - Clear mandates
  - Enforcement mechanisms
  - Alignment across sectors and jurisdictions
- **Collaboration and coordination**
  - Regional and cross-border cooperation
  - Whole-of-society engagement to build legitimacy and buy-in

Additional points raised

Some respondents also stressed:

- The importance of **political will** and institutional backing
- The need to better integrate **local and Indigenous knowledge**

- Risks of focusing on strategy and coordination without **adequate operational support**

Overall synthesis
Respondents consistently emphasised that achieving future IAS priorities will depend less on defining what needs to be done and more on securing sustained funding, capacity, policy support, and effective collaboration to enable action at scale.

4.2.3 IUCN strengths and weaknesses

There were nine questions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of IUCN in relation to its work on IAS over the past decade. An executive summary and heatmap was initially produced using AI through Microsoft Co-Pilot (which included comments from all three languages, English, French, and Spanish) and then reviewed by the IUCN team. For the following nine strength and weakness questions, there were 732 individual comment entries. The most frequent themes were *policy/legislation* (264 mentions), references to *regional differences* (140 mentions), *localisation/translation* needs (111 mentions), *on-the-ground implementation* (104 mentions), *funding/capacity* (83 mentions), *expert networks* (77 mentions), and *awareness gaps* (75 mentions).

What respondents said most:

- **Global tools are valued but unevenly felt locally.** EICAT/GRIIS/GISD and IUCN's technical guidance are repeatedly praised as credible, useful global references; however, respondents often struggle to **translate them to national/sub-national implementation**, especially outside Europe and on marine/freshwater topics.
- **Policy influence: strong upstream, weaker downstream.** Many see IUCN as influential for **global frameworks** and providing solid evidence for lawmaking, but several note a **gap in turning guidance into enforceable national measures** and operational follow-through.
- **Networks exist but can be better leveraged.** ISSG/ALIENS-L and other expert platforms are appreciated; nonetheless, participants say **regional coverage is uneven,** and volunteer networks **lack resources to sustain momentum**.
- **Funding and capacity are recurring bottlenecks.** Calls for **sustained financing**, **practical toolkits**, and **hands-on capacity building**—especially for under-resourced regions and grassroots actors—are common.
- **Awareness/visibility gaps persist.** A noticeable minority across questions says they are **"not aware"** of IUCN activity in specific domains—signalling a **communication and reach challenge**, not just a delivery gap.
- **Cross-sector and societal engagement needs to deepen.** Respondents want **more collaboration with agriculture, forestry, customs/transport, health, the private sector, and local communities and Indigenous Peoples**; several ask for **localised materials** and translations.
- **Pathways/biosecurity and on-the-ground action:** good guidance exists, but stakeholders ask for **more operational support** (e.g., early-warning platforms, border procedures, practical eradication/control playbooks, biological control where appropriate).

AI generated heatmap showing counts of comments that mentioned a theme per questions	Q15 Data & indicators	Q17 Guidance	Q19 Policy & legislation	Q21 Expert networks	Q23 Cross-sector engagement	Q25 On-the-ground	Q27 Pathways/biosecurity	Q29 Funding & capacity	Q31 Other areas
Policy/legislation	31	30	42	34	25	26	14	36	26
Regional differences	17	15	18	15	14	15	11	27	8
Localisation/translation	19	18	21	12	12	6	10	5	8
On-the-ground implementation	8	17	8	6	6	32	10	6	11
Funding/capacity	9	9	5	6	1	12	5	34	2
Expert networks	11	3	7	35	8	4	3	1	5
Awareness/visibility gap	10	5	6	6	8	11	8	7	4
Marine/freshwater needs	16	11	8	9	5	6	8	4	5
Cross-sector/society	7	9	9	4	22	5	2	3	10
Training/capacity building	19	6	4	10	2	1	4	11	5
Data gaps/outdated	28	5	2	6	2	2	2	2	3

Cross-cutting observations:

- **Regional pattern:** repeated contrasts of **Europe vs. other regions** (Africa, Asia/APAC, Latin America/Caribbean, Pacific/Polynesia), with several calling for a **stronger presence** in under-represented regions. Country-level mentions include **Colombia, Peru, Yemen, Madagascar, Croatia**; several highlight **marine/freshwater** as under-served.
- **Awareness gap (visibility):** approx. **6–14%** of comments per question explicitly expressed **"not aware/unsure"** about IUCN activities in that area (e.g., Q15: 11/109; Q25: 11/80; Q29: 10/75).
- **What people want more of:**
    - **Practical, localised toolkits** and **operational playbooks** (EDRR, pathway controls, per-species management incl. freshwater/marine).
    - **Hands-on training and expert accompaniment**, not only documents.
    - **Sustained funding mechanisms** and easier access for smaller NGOs and community groups.
    - **Early-warning / alert platforms** and **cross-border coordination** (customs, transport, online trade).
    - **Deeper cross-sector engagement** (agriculture/forestry, health, trade) and **grassroots/Indigenous participation**; more **translations** and **plain-language** materials.

Suggested considerations for the strategy (from the comments)

1. **"Last mile" focus:** Pair global guidance with **country-ready, step-by-step operational kits** and **coaching** to help agencies implement, monitor, and enforce.
2. **Regional fair-balance:** Target **Africa, Asia, Caribbean/Latin America, and Pacific** with **localised content, languages, and training**, plus **freshwater/marine** modules.
3. **Pathways & biosecurity ops:** Work with **agriculture/forestry, customs/transport authorities** to convert guidance into **procedures**, **checklists**, and **IT integrations** (e.g., border systems).

4. **Network enablement:** Resource ISSG/ALIENS-L and regional nodes to **broker expertise quickly** (micro-grants for missions, clinics, or co-development sprints).
5. **Sustained financing:** Complement project calls with **multi-year facility** or **rapid-response windows** that grassroots actors can realistically access.
6. **Visibility & outreach:** Building **country pages with resources**, and **curating** per-sector entry points (agriculture, transport, health).

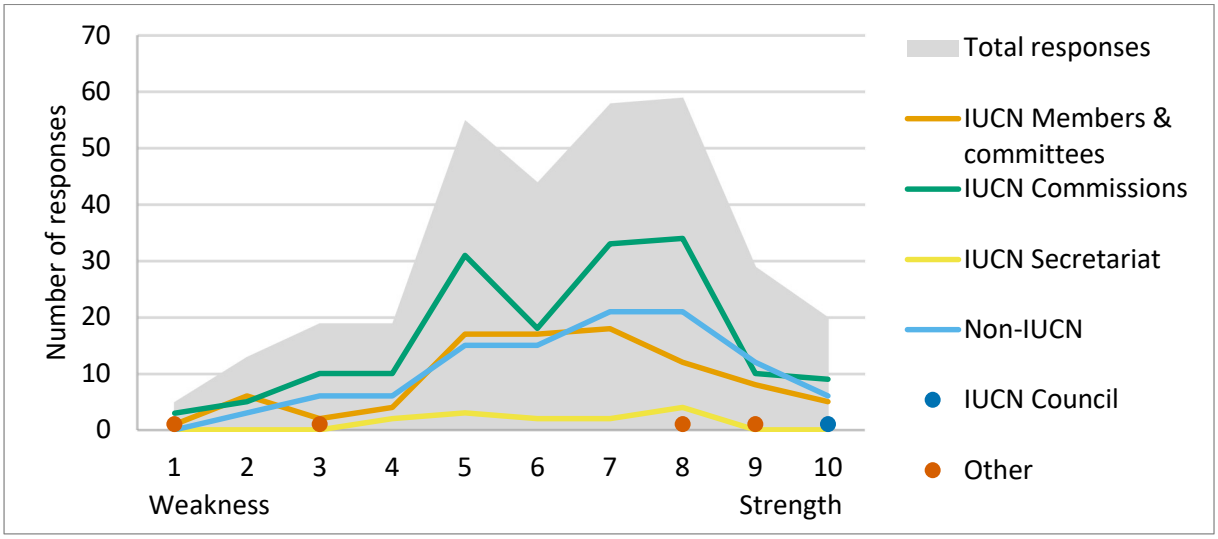
The graphs below present how respondents scored each statement, whether it was a weakness (0) or a strength (10) for IUCN. The grey area represents the total number of responses received, and the lines and dots represent the number of responses per IUCN status. As there was only one respondent for 'IUCN Council' and five respondents for 'Other', these are displayed as dots instead of lines to clearly show what the responses were. The respondents also had the opportunity to leave comments per question, which have been summarised using AI through Microsoft Co-pilot.

Average scores per question:

Question	**Average score** 0 = weakness 10 = strength
Q15 Provision of data and indicators on IAS , e.g. impacts, rates of establishment, pathways of introduction, or management actions (global/ regional/ national/ sub-national level)	6.32
Q17 Development of guidance/best practices to support the prevention, monitoring, or management of IAS or pathways of introduction and spread	6.50
Q19 Supporting the development of policy and legislation relevant to addressing impacts from IAS	6.04
Q21 Facilitating expert networks to share knowledge and information on IAS	6.54
Q23 Facilitating cross-sector and whole-of-society engagement to address IAS environmental and socio-economic impacts	5.45
Q25 Implementing IAS management action on the ground, such as for the eradication or control of IAS	4.85
Q27 Implementing management actions targeting pathways of introduction or spread, e.g., awareness raising, biosecurity practices	5.54
Q29 Supporting funding and capacity building for IAS activities at global, regional and national levels	4.93

4.2.3.1 Provision of data and indicators on IAS

Questions 15 and 16: Provision of data and indicators on IAS, e.g. impacts, rates of establishment, pathways of introduction, or management actions (global/ regional/ national/ sub-national level).



Comments (109 responses):

Main messages from comments

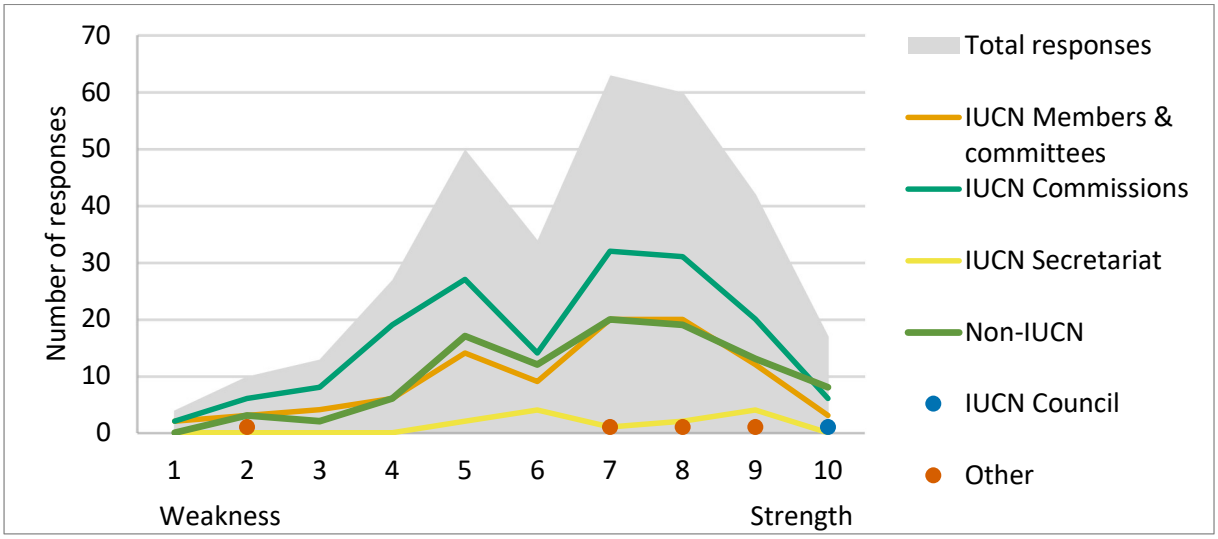
- Respondents widely recognised IUCN's **global leadership in data, indicators, and standards**, particularly through tools such as global databases and impact classification frameworks. These were frequently described as **essential reference points** for research, risk assessment, and policy discussions.
- However, many respondents highlighted **important gaps**:
    - **Uneven geographic coverage**, with under-representation of parts of Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and freshwater and marine systems
    - Limited availability of **sub-national and locally relevant data**
    - **Outdated or incomplete species information** in some databases
    - Data often **does not reach practitioners or local decision-makers** in usable form
- Several respondents emphasised the need to:
    - Improve **data verification and updating**
    - Better integrate **local and Indigenous knowledge**
    - **Strengthen interoperability** between global, regional, and national datasets

Overall synthesis

- IUCN is seen as a global authority on IAS data and indicators, but respondents consistently called for more complete, up-to-date, and locally relevant data that better supports action on the ground.

4.2.3.2 Development of guidance/best practices

Questions 17 and 18: Development of guidance/best practices to support the prevention, monitoring, or management of IAS or pathways of introduction and spread.



Comments (90 responses):

Main messages from comments

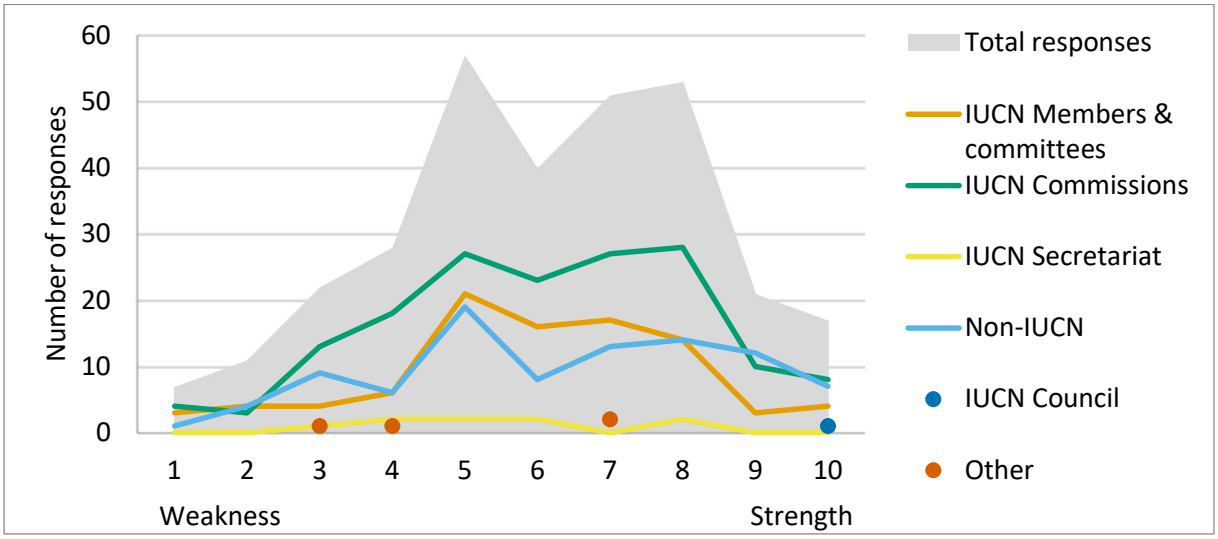
- Respondents generally viewed IUCN guidance as **high-quality, credible, and scientifically robust**, often serving as a first reference for IAS work.
- Recurring concerns included:
  - Guidance is often **too high-level or generic**, making it difficult to apply directly in specific national or local contexts
  - **Limited practical, step-by-step operational guidance**, especially for low-resource settings
  - Insufficient attention to **freshwater, marine, and socio-cultural dimensions**
  - Lack of translation into **local languages** and accessible formats
- Many stressed that:
  - Guidance alone is insufficient without **training, mentoring, and in-person knowledge transfer**
  - Best practices need to be **adaptable**, context-specific, and linked to implementation support

Overall synthesis

- IUCN's guidance is widely respected, but respondents highlighted a persistent gap between well-designed global guidance and its practical application at national and local levels.

4.2.3.3 Supporting the development of policy and legislation

Questions 19 and 20: Supporting the development of policy and legislation relevant to addressing impacts from IAS.



Comments (84 responses):

Main messages from comments

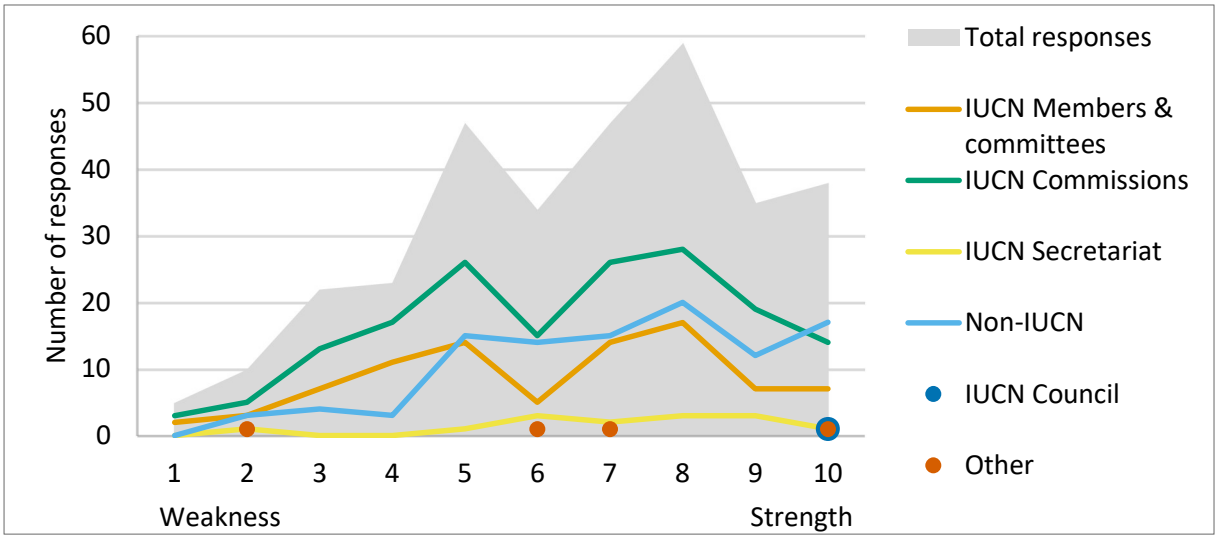
- Respondents frequently acknowledged IUCN's **strong influence on global and regional policy frameworks**, including its role in shaping international agreements and providing technical input to governments.
- At the same time, comments revealed several limitations:
  - IUCN's policy influence often **does not translate into enforceable national legislation**
  - Limited **follow-through and support** once laws or policies are drafted
  - Weak alignment between policy guidance and **local governance realities**
  - In some countries, IAS is **not treated as a political priority**
- Several respondents stressed the importance of:
  - Stronger engagement with **sectoral ministries** (agriculture, trade, transport)
  - More support for **implementation, enforcement, and monitoring**
  - Cross-border and regional policy coherence

Overall synthesis

- IUCN is seen as highly influential in policy design, but respondents highlighted a significant gap between policy guidance and real-world implementation and enforcement.

4.2.3.4 Facilitating expert networks

Questions 21 and 22: Facilitating expert networks to share knowledge and information on IAS.



Comments (87 responses):

Main messages from comments

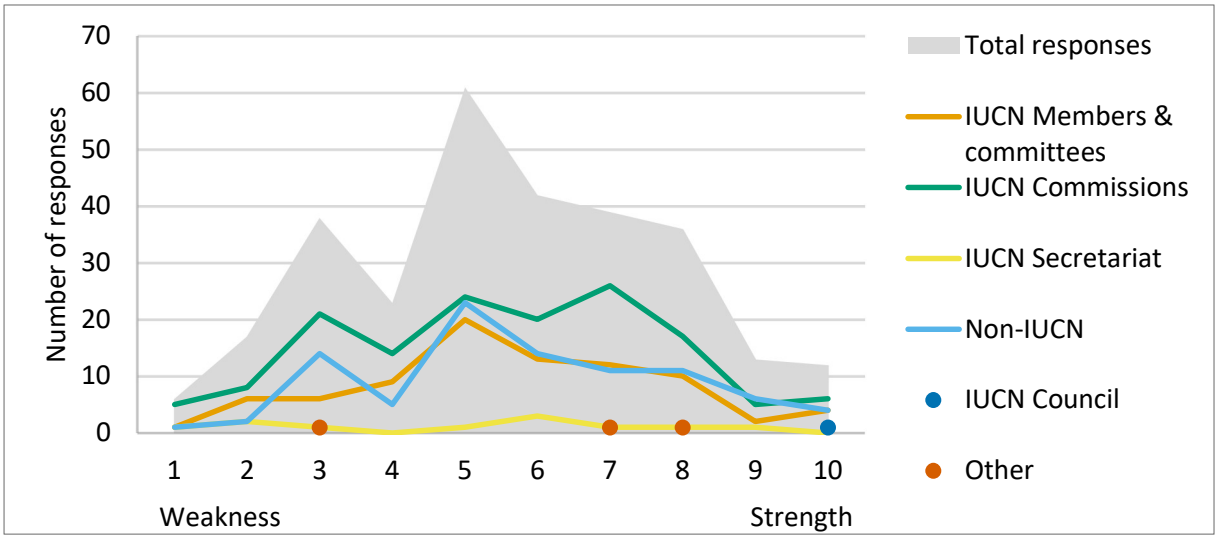
- This area was consistently described as **one of IUCN's greatest strengths**. Respondents praised:
- The value of global platforms for connecting researchers and practitioners
- However, several recurring challenges were noted:
    - **Uneven regional representation**, particularly from the Global South
    - Barriers to participation due to **funding, language, or voluntary workload**
    - Networks sometimes perceived as **insular or difficult to access**
    - Knowledge shared in networks does not always **translate into action**

Overall synthesis

- IUCN's expert networks are widely regarded as a core strength, but respondents called for more inclusive, better-resourced, and more action-oriented networking.

4.2.3.5 Facilitating cross-sector and whole-of-society engagement

Questions 23 and 24: Facilitating expert networks to share knowledge and information on IAS.



Comments (73 responses):

Main messages from comments

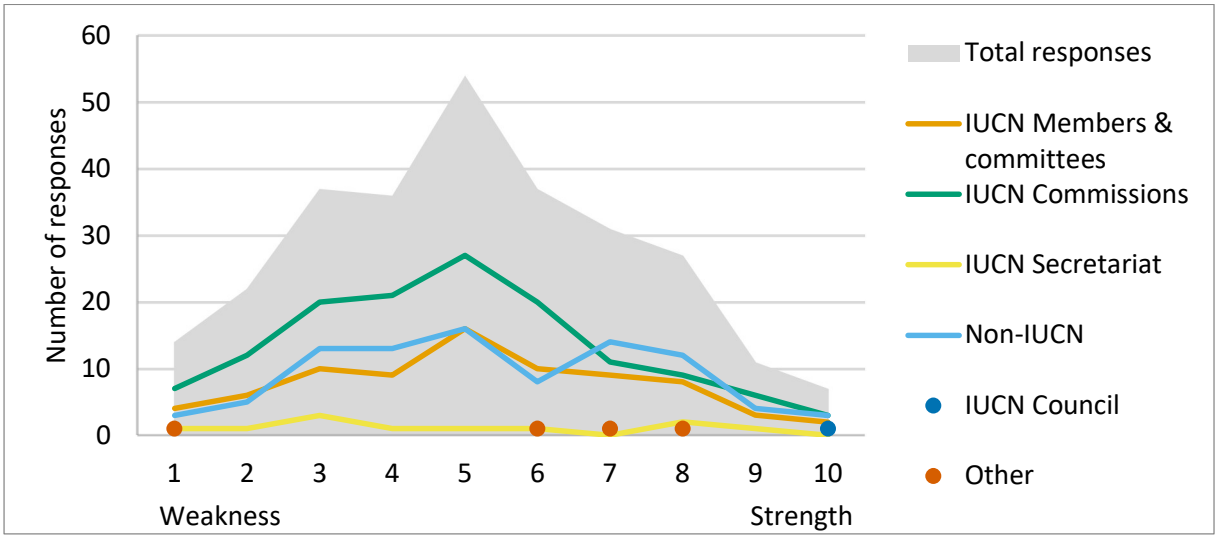
- Respondents generally felt that IUCN **promotes the concept** of whole-of-society engagement well, particularly at the global level.
- However, comments frequently highlighted:
  - Engagement is often **top-down** and remains theoretical
  - Limited involvement of **local communities, Indigenous Peoples, and practitioners**
  - Insufficient engagement with the **private sector and pathway-related industries**
  - Weak presence at **national and sub-national levels**
- Many respondents stressed the need for:
  - More **community-based and participatory approaches**
  - Better integration of **socio-economic realities and local perceptions**
  - Long-term engagement rather than project-based outreach

Overall synthesis

- Respondents see cross-sector engagement as a priority, but felt its practical delivery remains uneven and often fails to reach beyond traditional conservation actors.

4.2.3.6 Implementing IAS management action on the ground

Questions 25 and 26: Implementing IAS management action on the ground, such as for the eradication or control of IAS.



Comments (80 responses):

Main messages from comments

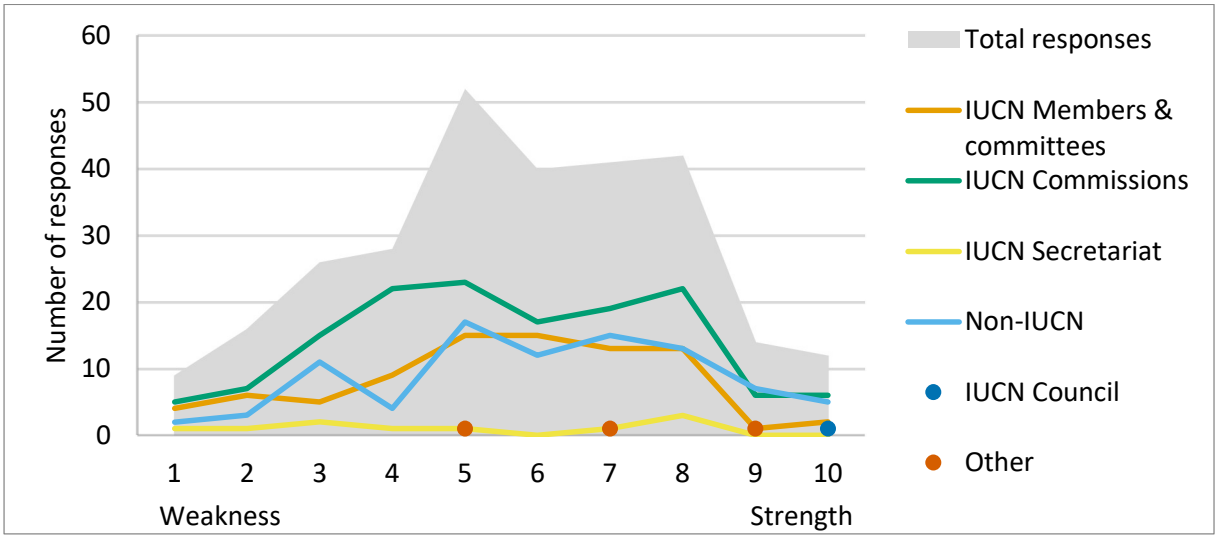
- Comments strongly reflected the view that **IUCN is not primarily an implementing agency**, which many respondents considered appropriate.
- Key themes included:
  - IUCN plays an important **advisory and enabling role**, but rarely leads on-the-ground eradication or control
  - Field implementation depends heavily on **members, governments, NGOs, and projects**
  - Actions are often **short-term and project-based**, with limited continuity
  - Major gaps exist in **freshwater, marine, and mainland systems**
- Several respondents emphasised:
  - The need for **long-term support and follow-up**
  - Better links between global guidance and **local operational capacity**
  - Recognition of practitioner-led and community-based implementation

Overall synthesis

- IUCN [Secretariat] is widely seen as a facilitator rather than a direct implementer, but respondents stressed the need for stronger, longer-term support to those delivering IAS management on the ground.

4.2.3.7 Implementing management actions targeting pathways of introduction or spread

Questions 27 and 28: Implementing management actions targeting pathways of introduction or spread, e.g., awareness raising, biosecurity practices.



Comments (66 responses):

Main messages from comments

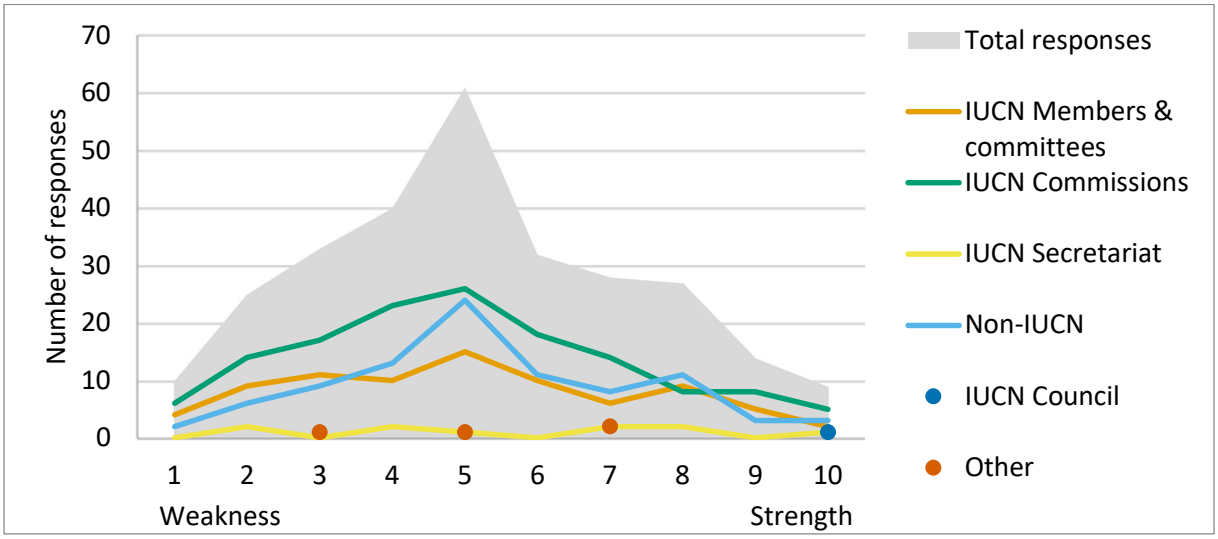
- Respondents recognised IUCN's strength in:
  - Identifying pathways of introduction
  - Developing global classifications and guidance
  - Raising awareness at the international level
- However, comments highlighted:
  - Limited influence over **actual enforcement of biosecurity measures**
  - Weak engagement with **customs, transport, trade, and border authorities**
  - Lack of **real-time data and early warning systems**
  - Insufficient attention to emerging pathways (e.g. online trade)
- Many respondents called for:
  - Stronger collaboration with **regulatory and enforcement bodies**
  - More operational support for **biosecurity and early detection**
  - Better integration of pathway management into national systems

Overall synthesis

- IUCN is seen as strong on pathway analysis and guidance, but respondents noted major constraints in translating this into operational prevention and enforcement.

4.2.3.8 Supporting funding and capacity building

Questions 29 and 30: Supporting funding and capacity building for IAS activities at global, regional and national levels.



Comments (75 responses):

Main messages from comments

- Comments consistently identified this as a **key weakness and bottleneck**.
- Respondents frequently stated that:
  - Funding is **insufficient, fragmented, and short-term**
  - Capacity building rarely reaches **grassroots practitioners and local institutions**
  - Access to funding is often **complex and uneven across regions**
  - Many respondents were **unaware of available IUCN funding mechanisms**
- There was strong demand for:
  - **Sustained, predictable financing** for IAS work
  - Greater support for **training, mentoring, and institutional capacity**
  - Better geographic balance in funding opportunities

Overall synthesis

- Respondents widely agreed that limited funding and capacity building severely constrain IAS action, and that stronger, more sustained support is essential for impact at scale.

4.2.3.9 Other area of work

Questions 31 and 32: Other area of work or action.

Comments (68 responses):

Main messages from comments

- Respondents highlighted several cross-cutting areas they felt deserve greater attention, including:
  - **Socio-economic and cultural dimensions** of IAS
  - Integration of IAS into **restoration, climate adaptation, and nature-based solutions**
  - **Early warning systems** and horizon scanning
  - Youth engagement, education, and citizen science
  - Better communication and visibility of IUCN IAS work

- Several respondents also noted **low awareness** of IUCN's activities, suggesting a need for clearer communication and outreach.

Overall synthesis

- Respondents identified multiple emerging and cross-cutting areas where IUCN could add value, particularly by integrating IAS more strongly into broader biodiversity, climate, and socio-economic agendas.

4.2.4 The need for an IUCN strategy on invasive alien species

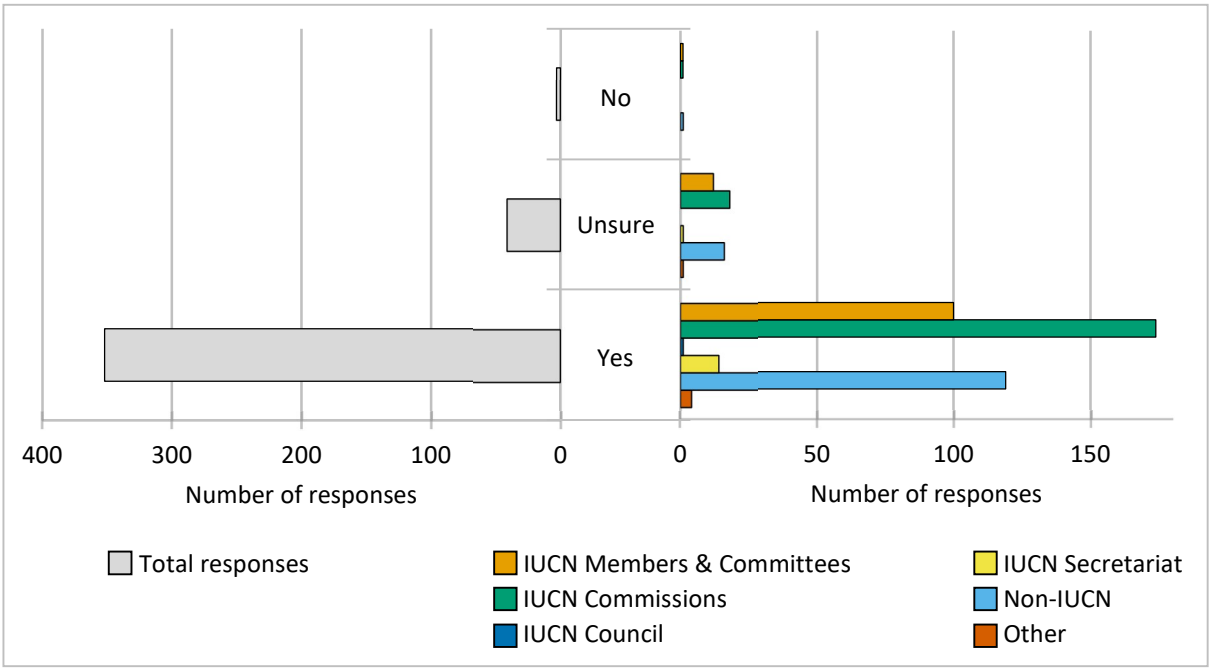
The majority of respondents (89%) agree that there is a need for a formal strategy to support a Union-wide effort to scale up action on IAS. In addition, the majority of respondents (78%) are interested in contributing to the development and implementation of an IUCN Union-wide strategy on IAS.

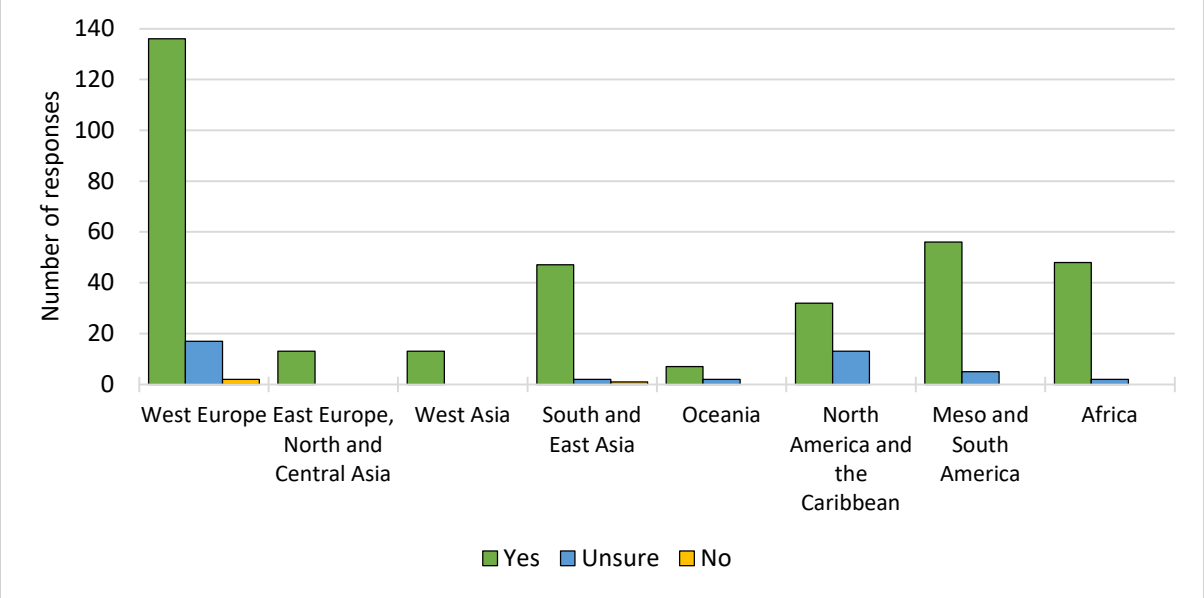
Cross-cutting message across both questions:
Across both comment sections, respondents repeatedly highlighted that:

- A strategy's success will depend on **implementation, funding, and capacity**, not just vision
- IUCN's comparative advantage lies in **convening, enabling, standard-setting, and mobilising**
- The strategy should **support and empower Members and partners**, rather than centralise delivery

4.2.4.1 Need for a formal strategy

Questions 33 and 34: Do you think IUCN needs a formal strategy to support a Union-wide effort to scale up action on IAS? Total responses (left), responses by IUCN status (right) and responses by IUCN region (below).





Comments:

What respondents said most often

The comments show **strong and widespread support** for the development of a formal IUCN IAS strategy. Most respondents view a strategy as **necessary and overdue**, particularly given the scale, speed, and complexity of IAS impacts globally.

Key reasons given for "Yes"

Respondents most frequently stated that a formal strategy would:

- Provide **coherence and direction** across IUCN Members, Commissions, and the Secretariat
- Help **move from knowledge to action**, building on IPBES assessments, risk analyses, and existing tools
- Strengthen **resource mobilisation and fundraising**, by clearly setting priorities and objectives
- Increase **policy influence and visibility**, especially in support of GBF Target 6
- Reduce **fragmentation and duplication** of effort across regions and sectors

Many emphasised that a strategy should act as an **enabling framework**, not a prescriptive blueprint, and should support national and regional action rather than replace it.

Key reasons given for "Unsure" or "No"

Respondents expressing hesitation or opposition raised several recurring concerns:

- Risk of a **one-size-fits-all approach** that does not reflect ecological, social, or regional diversity
- Fear that a strategy could become **too high-level**, slow, or disconnected from urgent on-the-ground needs
- View that **implementation, enforcement, and funding** are bigger gaps than strategic vision
- Concern that IAS may be treated in isolation from **other drivers of biodiversity loss**, such as climate change or land-use change

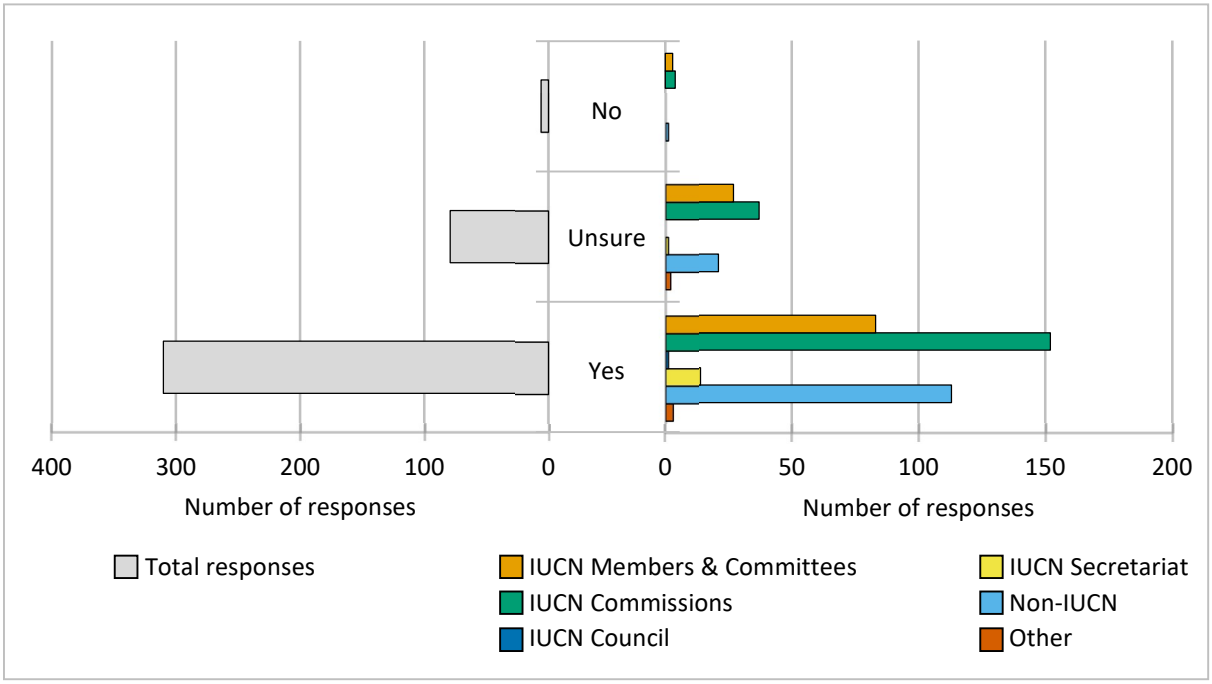
Opposition was generally **qualified and conditional**, rather than a rejection of strategic coordination per se.

Overall synthesis

Respondents largely agreed that IUCN needs a formal IAS strategy to coordinate action, mobilise resources, and scale impact, provided it is flexible, implementation-focused, and clearly adds value beyond existing national and regional frameworks.

4.2.4.2 Interest in contributing to a strategy?

Questions 35 and 36: Would you, or your organisation be interested in contributing to the development and implementation of an IUCN Union-wide strategy on IAS? Total responses (left) and responses by IUCN status (right).



Comments:

What respondents said most often

There was **very high interest in contributing**, with many respondents explicitly offering expertise, experience, and networks. However, this interest was frequently accompanied by **conditions related to capacity, mandate, and resourcing**.

Key themes among "Yes" responses

Respondents who expressed interest most commonly indicated they could contribute through:

- **Scientific expertise**, research, and monitoring
- **Policy and legislative support**
- **On-the-ground management experience**
- **Capacity building, training, and education**
- **Community engagement and Indigenous / local knowledge**
- Existing **IUCN Commissions, specialist groups, and projects**

Many respondents welcomed the strategy as a way to:

- Clarify **how and where to engage**
- Structure contributions across the Union

- Strengthen collaboration across regions and disciplines

Key themes among "Unsure" or "No" responses
Uncertainty was mainly driven by:

- **Lack of time, funding, or staff capacity**
- Need for **institutional approval or mandate**
- Unclear expectations regarding **level of effort or commitment**
- Concern about contributing without adequate **enablement or support**

Importantly, many "Unsure" responses still expressed **interest in principle**, pending clarity on scope and resourcing.

Overall synthesis
There is a strong willingness across the Union to contribute to an IUCN IAS strategy, but respondents consistently stressed that participation must be realistic, clearly defined, and supported by appropriate resources, particularly to enable engagement from under-represented regions and practitioners.

4.2.5 Priority actions for an IUCN strategy on invasive alien species

There were 11 questions regarding the priority actions for an IUCN strategy on invasive alien species. An executive summary and heatmap was initially produced using AI through Microsoft Co-pilot (which included comments from all three languages, English, French, and Spanish) and then reviewed by the team.

For the following 11 priority action questions, there were 607 individual comment entries. The most frequent themes were *funding/finance* (84 mentions), *implementation & enforcement gap* (68 mentions) and *Data quality/gaps/updating* (68 mentions). Across the consultation, respondents consistently emphasised that **implementation, capacity, and funding** are the critical constraints on effective action on IAS, rather than a lack of knowledge or policy intent.

Five messages came through most strongly:

- **Funding and capacity are the main bottlenecks.** Respondents repeatedly highlighted insufficient and unstable funding, limited trained personnel, and weak institutional capacity as the primary reasons IAS action fails on the ground. Many stressed the need for long-term, predictable financing rather than short project cycles.
- **Data, indicators, and guidance are essential—but only if they enable action.** There was strong support for IUCN's data platforms (e.g. EICAT, GISD, GRIIS), indicators, and best-practice guidance. However, respondents frequently noted that these tools must be:
    - Practical, simple, and locally relevant
    - Linked to decision making and management, not only reporting
    - Updated, accessible, and available in multiple languages
- **Prevention and pathway management should be prioritised**. Prevention was widely described as more cost-effective and feasible than control or eradication after establishment. Respondents stressed the importance of targeting key pathways such as trade, transport, shipping, pet and horticultural pathways, supported by biosecurity, regulation, and targeted awareness.

- **Implementation gaps outweigh policy gaps**. While support for national, regional, and global policies was strong, many respondents noted that policies already exist in many countries. The core problem is weak implementation due to limited resources, enforcement, coordination, and political prioritisation.
- **IUCN's strongest role is enabling, convening, and standard-setting**. Respondents consistently viewed IUCN's comparative advantage as:
    - Convening expert networks
    - Setting standards and guidance
    - Supporting members and partners
    - Mobilising resources and credibility

There was less consensus that IUCN [Secretariat] itself should directly implement on-the-ground management, except through demonstration, catalytic, or partner-led approaches. Across questions, respondents also repeatedly highlighted the importance of **cross-sector engagement**, **Indigenous and local knowledge**, **sharing success stories**, and **moving from awareness to action**.

AI generated heatmap showing counts of comments that mentioned a theme per questions	Q37 Data platforms & gaps	Q39 Indicators	Q41 Guidance & best practice	Q43 National policy & legislation	Q45 Regional/global policy	Q 47 Expert networks	Q49 Cross-sector / whole-of-society	Q51 On-the-ground management	Q53 Pathways & biosecurity	Q 55Funding & capacity	Q57 Other priorities
Funding / finance	5	5	5	11	3	3	6	11	2	28	5
Implementation & enforcement gap	5	4	6	13	6	4	5	12	6	5	2
Data quality / gaps / updating	29	8	5	2	4	5	4	1	2	1	7
Cross-sector / stakeholders / society	4	2	6	8	3	4	18	5	5	2	8
Capacity building / training	7	5	5	5	3	8	2	7	5	9	8
Prevention / pathways / biosecurity	5	1	8	3	9	3	4	1	17	3	6
Guidance / best practice / standards	4	6	20	8	3	1	1	6	3	1	5
On-the-ground eradication / control	4	1	6	3	2	3	1	14	4	6	8
Networks / knowledge exchange	1	1	4	1	2	22	2	7	1	2	4
Indicators & monitoring	4	22	3	2	1	1	0	1	1	3	4
Indigenous / TEK / inclusivity	2	0	2	0	1	2	6	3	0	0	8

Cross-cutting themes across all comments:

- Implementation gap: knowledge and policy often exist, but action lags
- Capacity and funding as systemic constraints
- Need for context-specific, locally adaptable solutions
- Importance of prevention over reaction
- Strong expectation that IUCN's role is primarily:
    - Convening
    - Standard-setting
    - Enabling and supporting members and partners

The graphs below present how respondents scored each statement, not a priority (1), important (3), or a high priority (5) for an IUCN strategy on IAS. The grey area represents the total number of

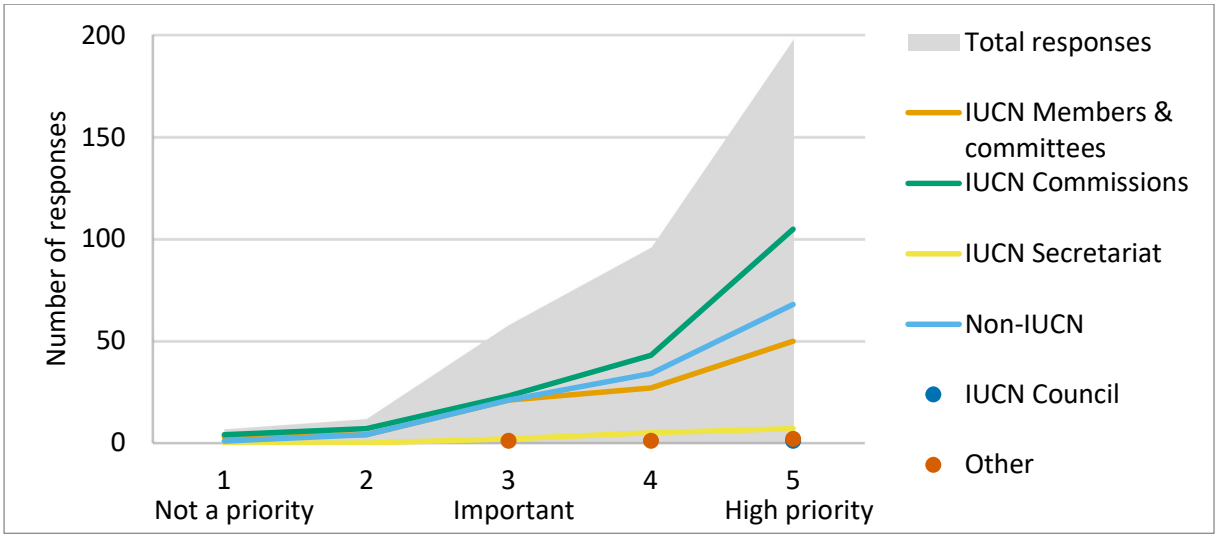
responses received, and the lines and dots represent the number of responses per IUCN status. As there was only one respondent for 'IUCN Council' and five respondents for 'Other', these are displayed as dots instead of lines to clearly show what the responses were. The respondents also had the opportunity to leave comments per question, and these were summarised using AI through Microsoft Co-Pilot.

Average scores per questions are:

Questions	**Average score** 1 = Not a priority 5 = High priority
Q37 Provision of IAS-related data through online platforms (e.g., on impacts using EICAT, IAS species accounts on GISD, country checklists and pathways information on GRIIS) and addressing known key data gaps (e.g., on management actions)	4.26
Q39 Development of indicators on IAS to support monitoring of progress towards global, regional and national targets	4.11
Q41 Development and maintenance of guidance/best practices to support the prevention, monitoring, or management of IAS or pathways of introduction and spread	4.40
Q43 Supporting the development of national policies and legislation relevant to IAS prevention and management	4.22
Q45 Supporting the development of regional and global policies relevant to IAS prevention and management	4.27
Q47 Facilitating expert networks to share knowledge and information on IAS and their management	4.28
Q49 Facilitating cross-sector and whole-of-society engagement to address IAS environmental and socio-economic impacts and co-benefits from their management	4.08
Q51 Implementing IAS management action on the ground, such as for the eradication or control of IAS	3.90
Q53 Implementing management actions targeting pathways of introduction or spread, e.g., awareness raising, biosecurity practices	4.16
Q55 Collaborating to raise funds that can build capacity for IAS activities at global, regional, and national levels	4.40

4.2.5.1 Provision of IAS-related data through online platforms

Questions 37 and 38: Provision of IAS-related data through online platforms (e.g., on impacts using EICAT, IAS species accounts on GISD, country checklists and pathways information on GRIIS) and addressing known key data gaps (e.g., on management actions).

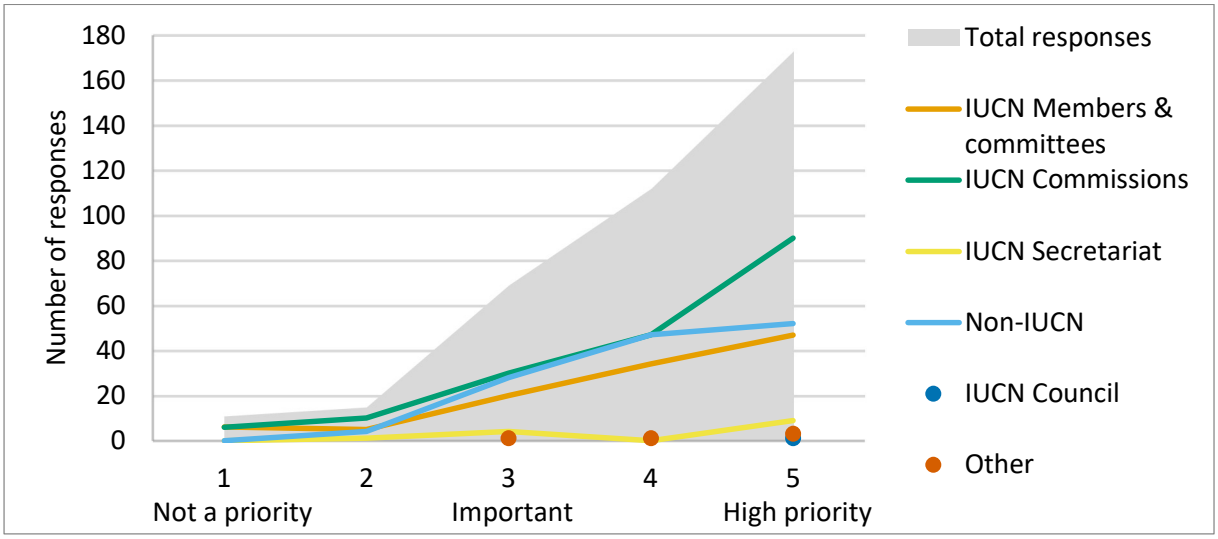


Comments (64 responses):

- **Overall sentiment:** Very strong support, with important caveats.
- **Key themes**
  - Strong consensus that **authoritative, standardised, and accessible data platforms** are foundational to all IAS action.
  - Frequent calls for **better standardisation and uptake** of EICAT, pathways classifications, and national lists.
  - Widespread concern about **data gaps**, especially:
    - Management effectiveness and costs
    - Sub-national, rural, island, and Indigenous territories
    - Marine and freshwater systems
  - Respondents emphasised the need to **link data to decision-making**, not only to research outputs.
  - Repeated calls for **better updating, quality control, and multilingual access**.
- **Nuance / concerns**
  - Some respondents questioned whether additional investment in platforms is justified **without evidence of real-world use**.
  - A minority cautioned against overly global classifications that may obscure **context-specific impacts**.

4.2.5.2 Development of indicators on IAS

Questions 39 and 40: Development of indicators on IAS to support monitoring of progress towards global, regional and national targets.

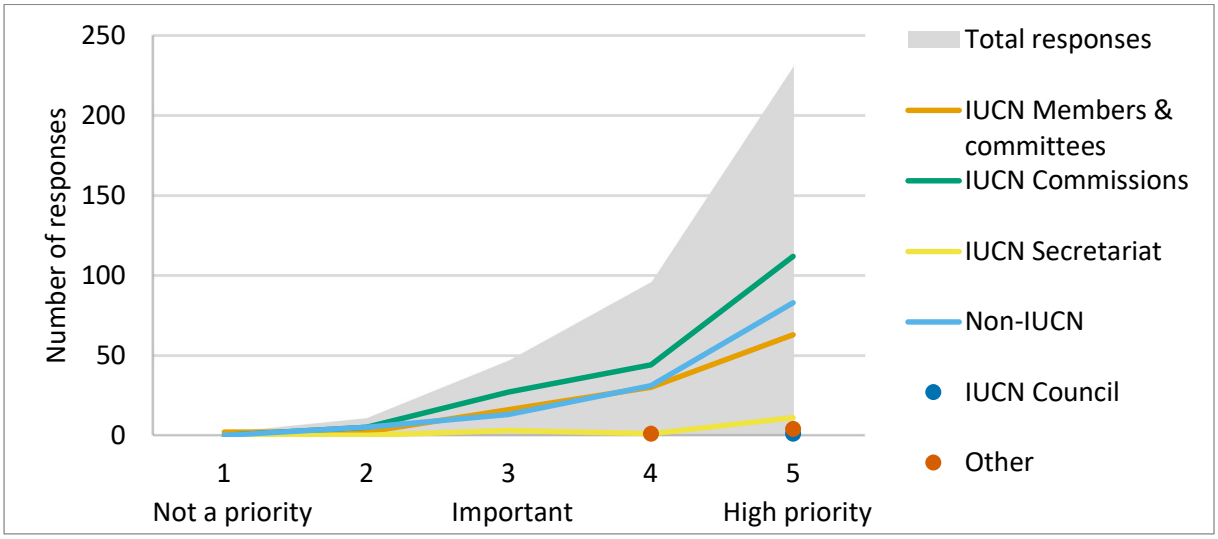


Comments (55 responses):

- **Overall sentiment:** Strong support, conditional on relevance and usability.
- **Key themes**
  - Indicators seen as **essential for accountability**, especially for:
    - GBF Target 6
    - National and regional reporting
  - Strong preference for **simple, practical, and scalable indicators**, usable at sub-national level.
  - Support for indicators that track:
    - Management outcomes (not only spread or failure)
    - Effectiveness and impact reduction
    - Early detection and rapid response
- **Nuance / concerns**
  - Many cautioned against indicators that:
    - Are too complex or resource-intensive
    - Fail to reflect local ecological and socio-economic realities
  - Some respondents argued monitoring must be paired with **capacity and funding**, or risks becoming symbolic.

4.2.5.3 Development and maintenance of guidance/best practices

Questions 41 and 42: Development and maintenance of guidance/best practices to support the prevention, monitoring, or management of IAS or pathways of introduction and spread.

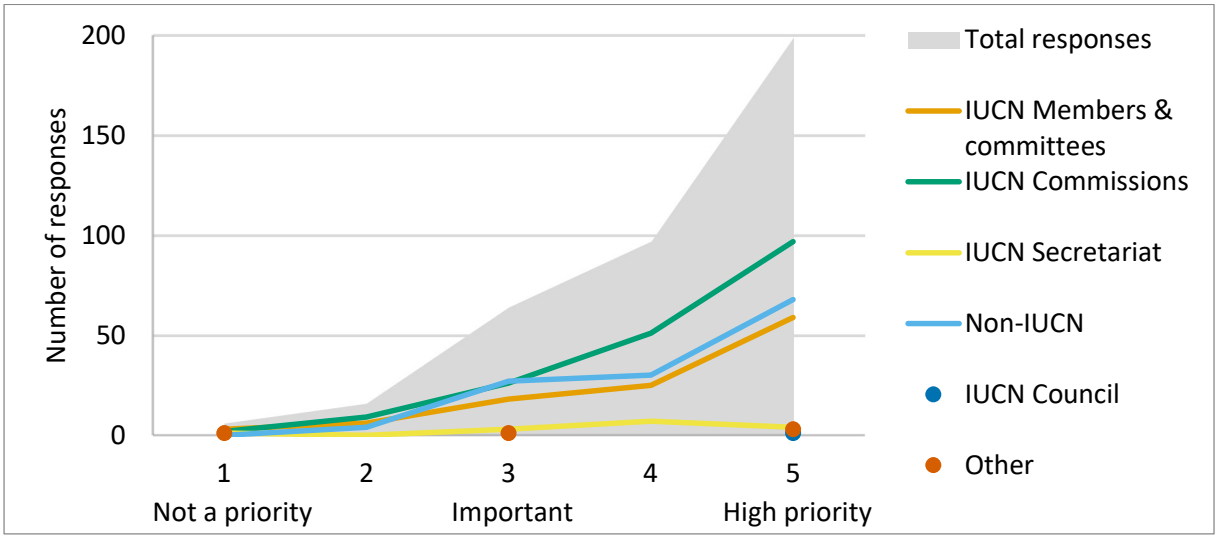


Comments (56 responses):

- **Overall sentiment:** One of the strongest areas of consensus.
- **Key themes**
  - Guidance seen as the **critical bridge between science and action**.
  - Strong demand for:
    - Regularly updated guidance
    - Species-, habitat-, and pathway-specific tools
    - Practical "how-to" materials for practitioners
  - Repeated calls for:
    - Guidance tailored to municipalities, local governments, and field staff
    - Translation into multiple languages
    - Inclusion of Indigenous and local knowledge
- **Nuance / concerns**
  - Some felt that **sufficient guidance already exists**, and the priority should be **implementation, adaptation, and dissemination** rather than new documents.

4.2.5.4 Supporting the development of national policies and legislation

Questions 42 and 44: Supporting the development of national policies and legislation relevant to IAS prevention and management.

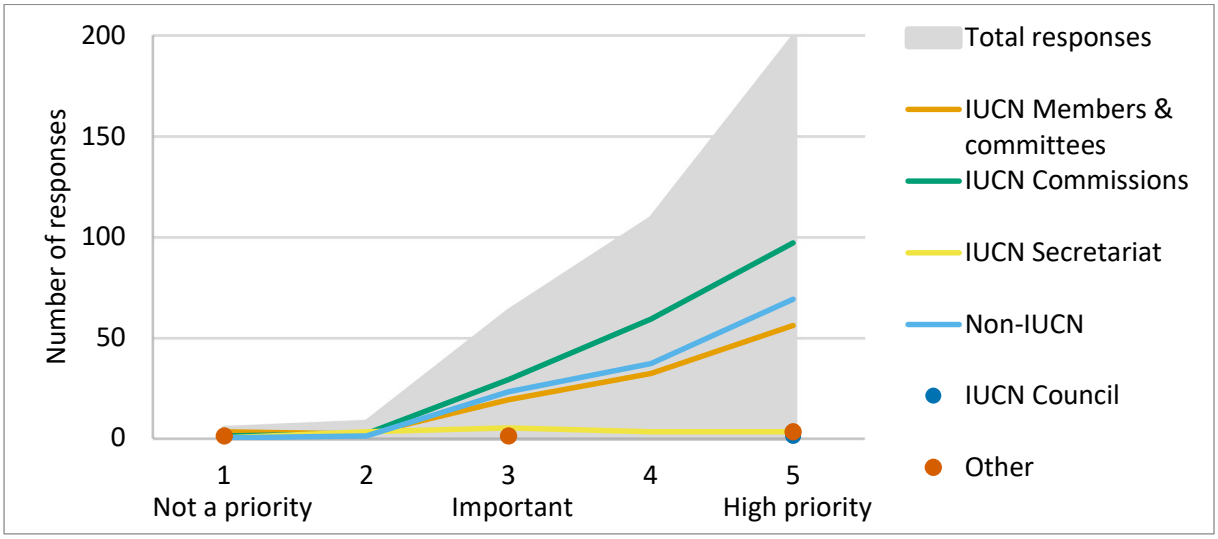


Comments (56 responses):

- **Overall sentiment:** High priority, but not sufficient on its own.
- **Key themes**
  - Strong agreement that **robust national frameworks** are essential for sustained IAS action.
  - IUCN is seen as well placed to:
    - Provide technical guidance and model frameworks
    - Support alignment with international commitments
  - Respondents stressed that policy should:
    - Enable implementation
    - Clarify mandates and responsibilities
    - Support prevention and rapid response
- **Nuance / concerns**
  - Many noted that **policy already exists in many countries**, but **implementation is weak** due to:
    - Lack of funding
    - Limited capacity
    - Low political priority

4.2.5.5 Supporting the development of regional and global policies

Questions 45 and 46: Supporting the development of regional and global policies relevant to IAS prevention and management.

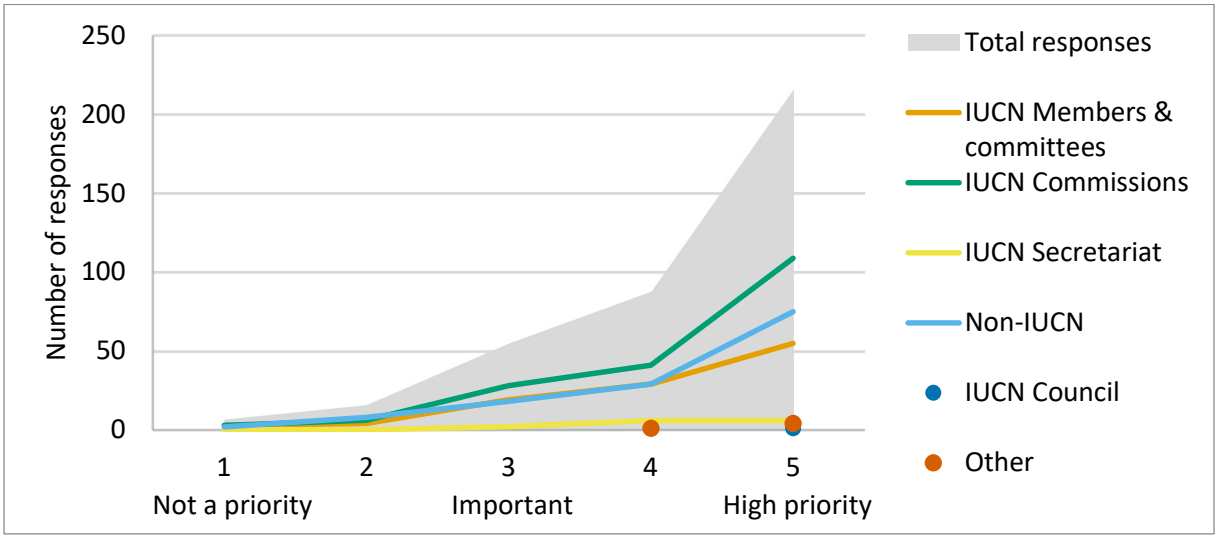


Comments (47 responses):

- **Overall sentiment:** Strong support, particularly for transboundary issues.
- **Key themes**
  - Regional and global policies viewed as essential because:
    - IAS do not respect borders
    - Key pathways (trade, shipping, transport) are international
  - Respondents highlighted the value of:
    - Harmonised standards
    - Common terminology
    - Regional coordination mechanisms
  - IUCN is widely seen as having a **legitimate convening role** at this level.
- **Nuance / concerns**
  - Some respondents cautioned that global policies must:
    - Complement, not replace, national action
    - Avoid being overly abstract or detached from implementation realities

4.2.5.6 Facilitating expert networks

Questions 47 and 48: Facilitating expert networks to share knowledge and information on IAS and their management.

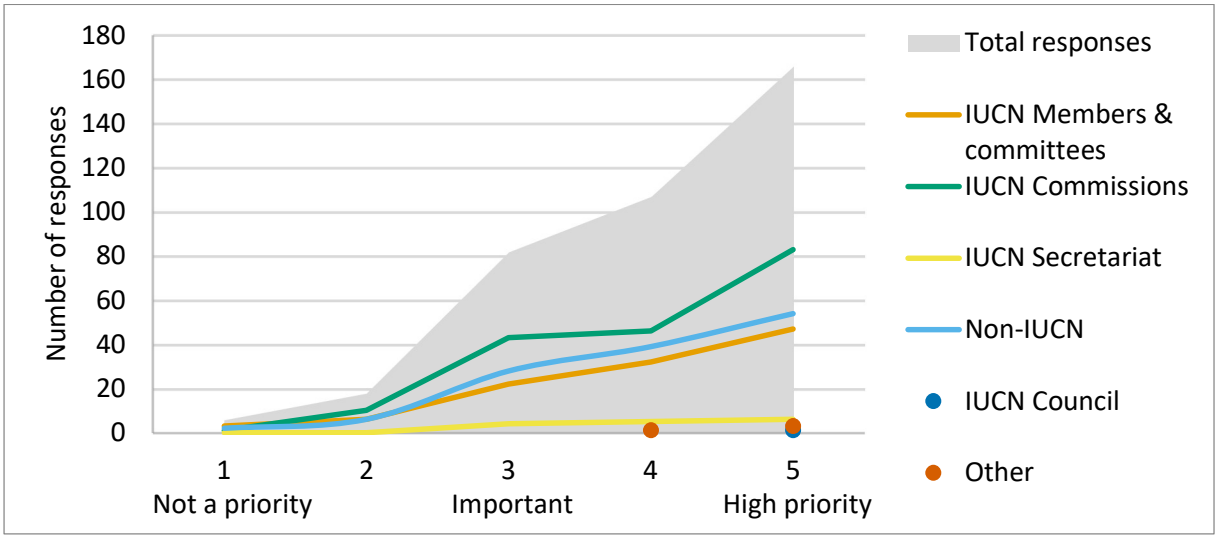


Comments (50 responses):

- **Overall sentiment:** Very strong support; seen as a core IUCN strength.
- **Key themes**
  - Expert networks described as:
    - One of IUCN's **greatest comparative advantages**
    - Essential for sharing lessons learned and avoiding duplication
  - Strong demand for:
    - Better visibility and accessibility of existing networks
    - Inclusion of practitioners, early-career experts, and under-represented regions
  - Networks seen as critical enablers of:
    - Guidance development
    - Policy advice
    - Capacity building
- **Nuance / concerns**
  - Some respondents noted that many networks already exist and urged IUCN to **strengthen and connect**, rather than duplicate, them.

4.2.5.7 Facilitating cross-sector and whole-of-society engagement

Questions 26 and 50: Facilitating cross-sector and whole-of-society engagement to address IAS environmental and socio-economic impacts and co-benefits from their management.

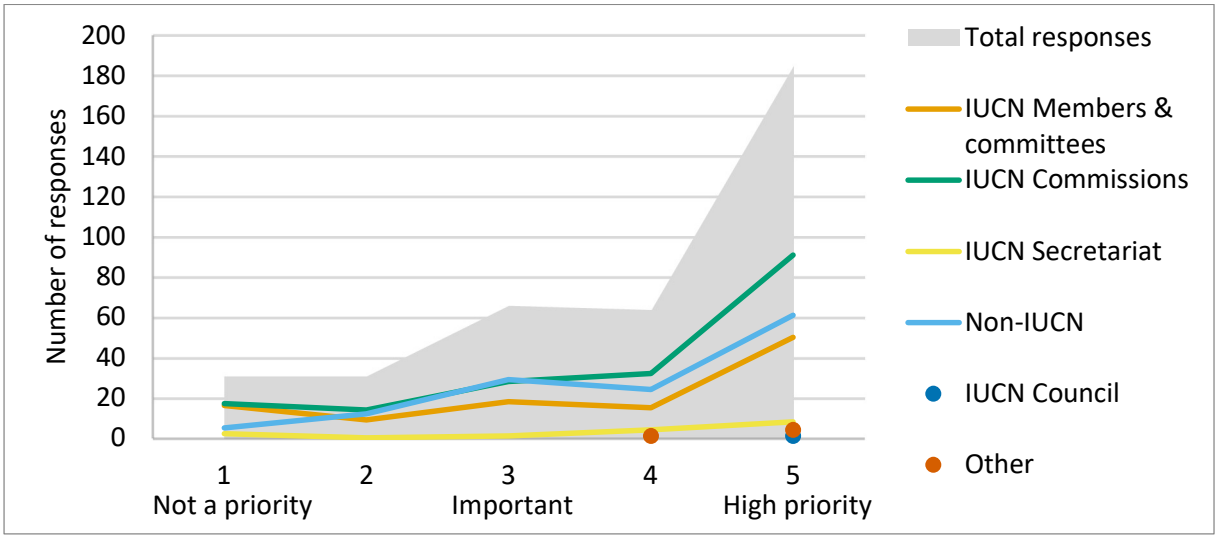


Comments (46 responses):

- **Overall sentiment:** High priority, but complex.
- **Key themes**
  - Strong recognition that IAS impacts cut across:
    - Environment, agriculture, fisheries, health, trade, and livelihoods
  - Respondents emphasised:
    - The importance of community buy-in
    - Engagement with private sector and trade pathways
    - Inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and local communities
  - Whole-of-society approaches seen as essential for:
    - Prevention
    - Behaviour change
    - Long-term sustainability
- **Nuance / concerns**
  - Some felt this work is **best led locally**, with IUCN acting as a **facilitator rather than implementer**.
  - Several warned against "awareness-raising" without concrete follow-up actions.

4.2.5.8 Implementing IAS management action on the ground

Questions 51 and 52: Implementing IAS management action on the ground, such as for the eradication or control of IAS.

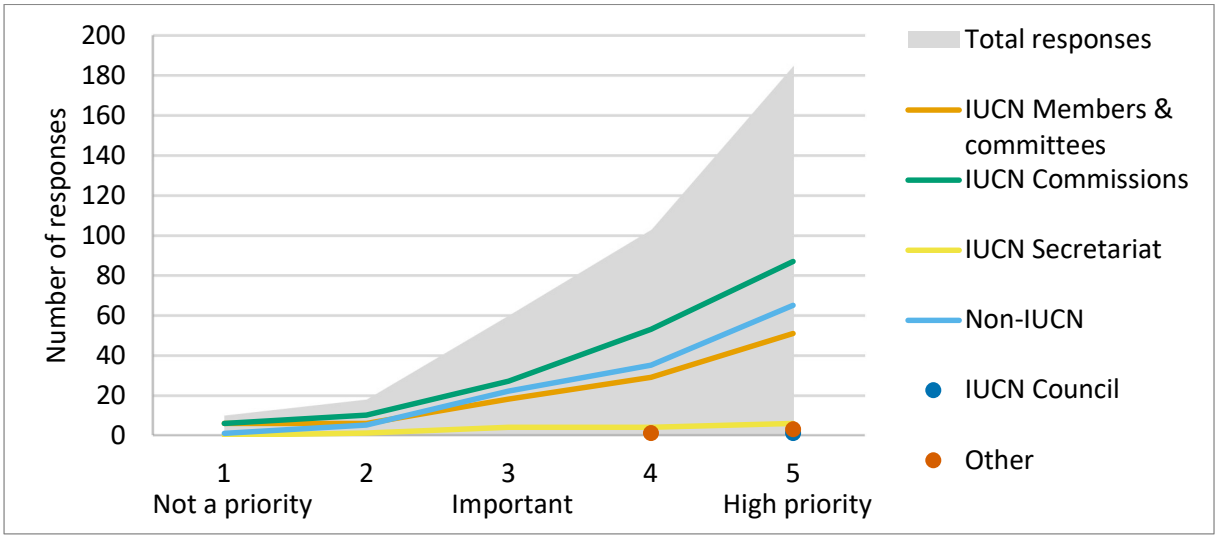


Comments (76 responses):

- **Overall sentiment:** Seen as essential, but with debate about IUCN's role.
- **Key themes**
  - Strong agreement that **on-the-ground action is where impacts are realised**.
  - Respondents stressed:
    - Urgency, particularly in biodiversity hotspots and islands
    - The importance of demonstration projects and learning-by-doing
  - Many highlighted the need for:
    - Low-cost, scalable, community-based models
    - Long-term commitment and monitoring
- **Nuance / concerns**
  - A significant number argued that **IUCN [Secretariat] should not be a primary implementer**, but should:
    - Enable members and partners
    - Provide technical support, coordination, and credibility

4.2.5.9 Implementing management actions targeting pathways of introduction or spread

Questions 52 and 54: Implementing management actions targeting pathways of introduction or spread, e.g., awareness raising, biosecurity practices.

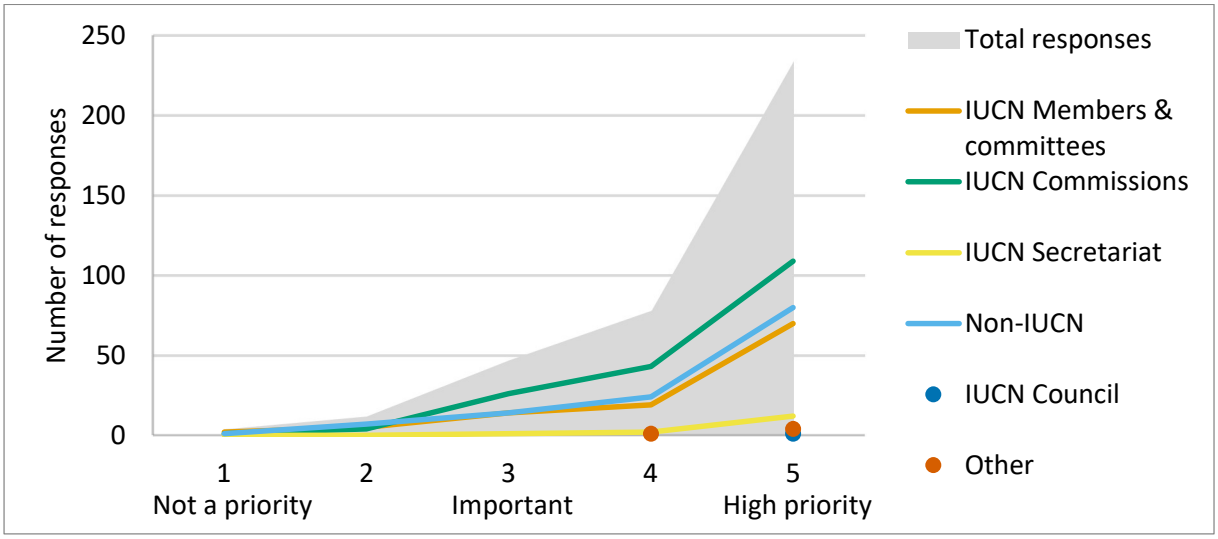


Comments (49 responses):

- **Overall sentiment:** Strong support, especially for prevention.
- **Key themes**
  - Prevention is repeatedly described as **more cost-effective than control**.
  - High priority pathways included:
    - Trade (including pet and horticulture trades)
    - Transport and shipping
    - Roads, rivers, and border areas
  - Strong calls for:
    - Biosecurity standards
    - Targeted awareness materials for high-risk sectors
    - Early warning and rapid response systems
- **Nuance / concerns**
  - Some felt awareness alone is insufficient without **enforcement and regulation**.

4.2.5.10 Raising funds to build capacity

Questions 55 and 56: Collaborating to raise funds that can build capacity for IAS activities at global, regional, and national levels.



Comments (49 responses):

- **Overall sentiment:** One of the clearest consensus areas.
- **Key themes**
  - Funding is identified almost universally as the **primary bottleneck**.
  - Strong support for IUCN playing a:
    - Convening
    - Credibility-building
    - Catalytic role in fundraising
  - Emphasis on:
    - Seed funding
    - Capacity building
    - Long-term and stable financing mechanisms
- **Nuance / concerns**
  - Respondents stressed that funds must:
    - Reach local implementers
    - Support sustained action, not short project cycles

4.2.5.11 Other area of work

Questions 57 and 58: Other area of work or action.

Comments (59 responses):

- **Common additional priorities raised**
  - Capacity building and training at all levels
  - Better communication of **success stories**
  - Integration of **Indigenous and traditional knowledge**
  - Socio-economic dimensions of IAS management
  - Development of economic incentives and value chains linked to IAS management
  - Improved biological control guidance and acceptance
  - Climate change interactions, including assisted migration considerations

4.2.6 Building partnerships to scale up action on invasive alien species

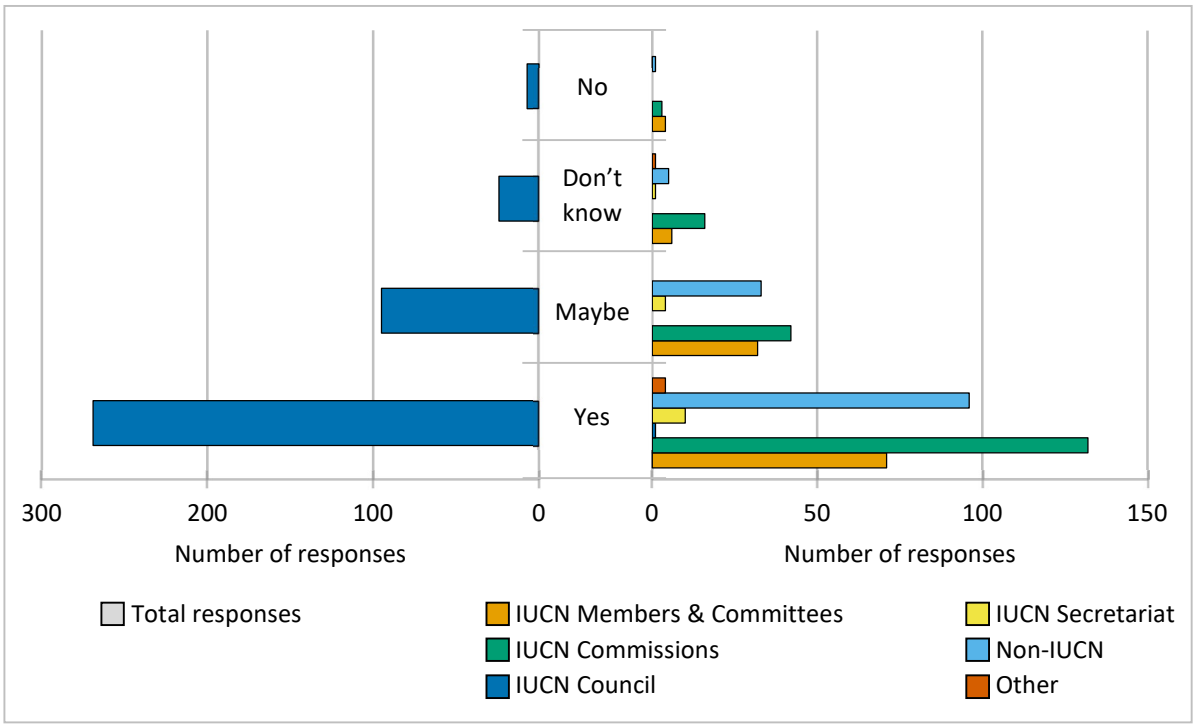
The majority of respondents (68%) answered '*Yes*' to whether they believe that a formal partnership(s) between organisations would benefit the scaling up of work needed to achieve the draft IUCN Programme ambition on IAS and 24% answered '*Maybe*'.

In terms of being a part of the partnership, respondents selected, on average, six elements of work on IAS that they would be interested in facilitating scaling up to achieve the IUCN Programme ambition. The element of work selected most often was '*Supporting the development of National Invasive species Strategies and Action Plans (NISSAPs)*' (230 responses), followed by '*Provision of guidance and best practises*' (193 responses) and '*Facilitating expert networks*' (191 responses). In contrast, only 15 respondents indicated that they would not be interested in being part of a partnership.

Cross-cutting observations:
Across all partnership-related questions, respondents strongly supported collaboration as essential to achieving impact at scale, while cautioning that partnerships must be purposeful, inclusive, and implementation-focused. IUCN is widely seen as uniquely placed to convene, align, and enable diverse actors—but success will depend on clarity of roles, adequate resourcing, and a strong focus on translating cooperation into action.

4.2.6.1 Need for a formal partnership(s)

Questions 59 and 60: Do you believe that a formal partnership(s) between organisations would benefit the scaling up of work needed to achieve the draft IUCN Programme ambition on IAS? Total responses (left) and responses by IUCN status (right).



Comments:

What respondents said most often
Comments show **broad support for partnerships**, with many respondents viewing collaboration as **essential** to achieving the scale and ambition required. However, views on **formalisation** were more nuanced.

Key themes from supportive comments
Respondents frequently stated that partnerships are needed to:

- **Reduce fragmentation and duplication**, particularly in data, standards, and on-the-ground action
- **Pool complementary expertise**, combining science, policy, implementation, and community engagement
- Strengthen **policy influence and legitimacy**, especially with governments and multilateral processes
- Enable **resource mobilisation**, including access to funding that single organisations cannot secure alone
- Coordinate action across **international, regional, and national levels**

Many noted that no single organisation—including IUCN—can address IAS effectively without structured collaboration.

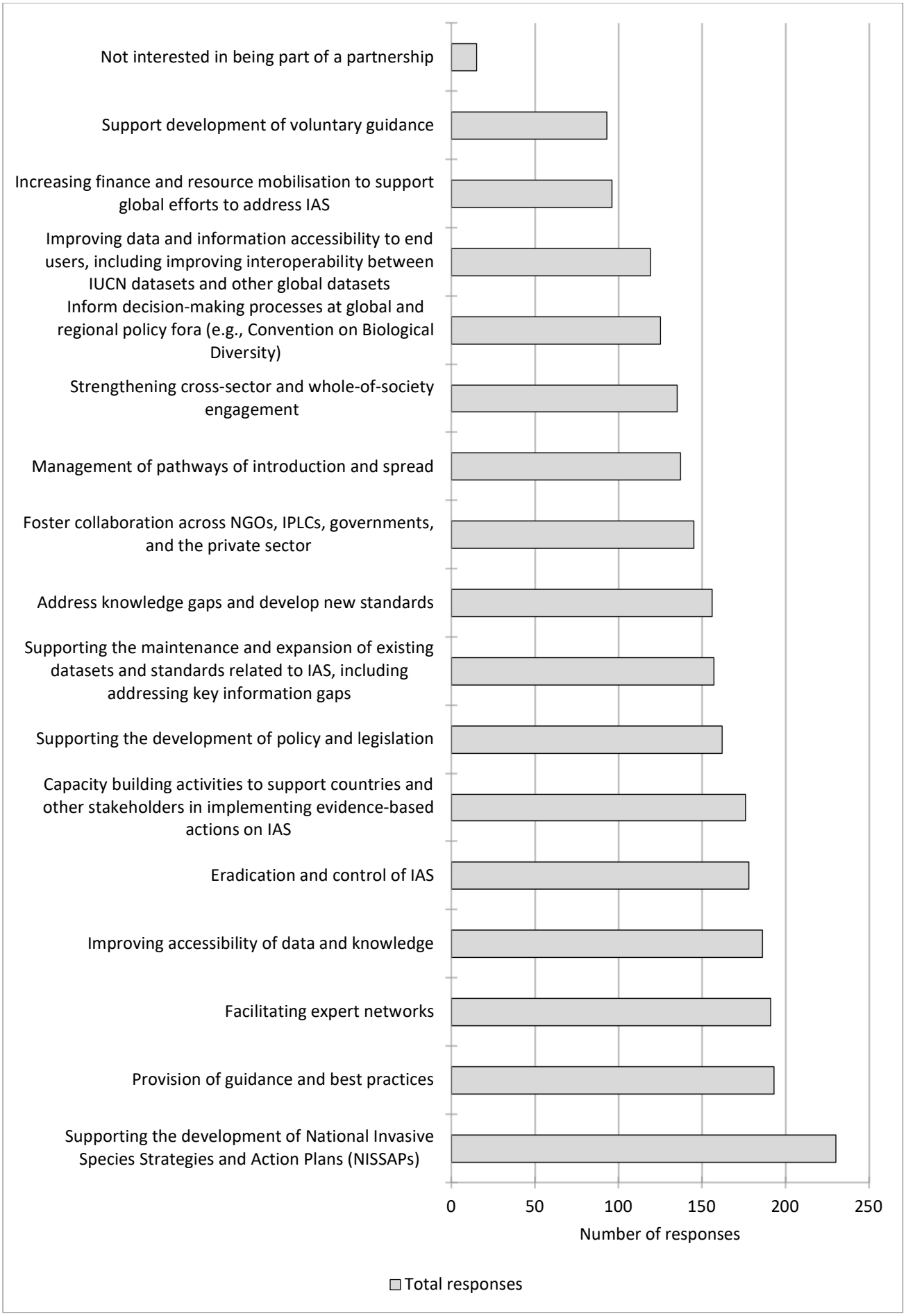
Cautions and conditions raised
Even among supportive respondents, several recurring cautions emerged:

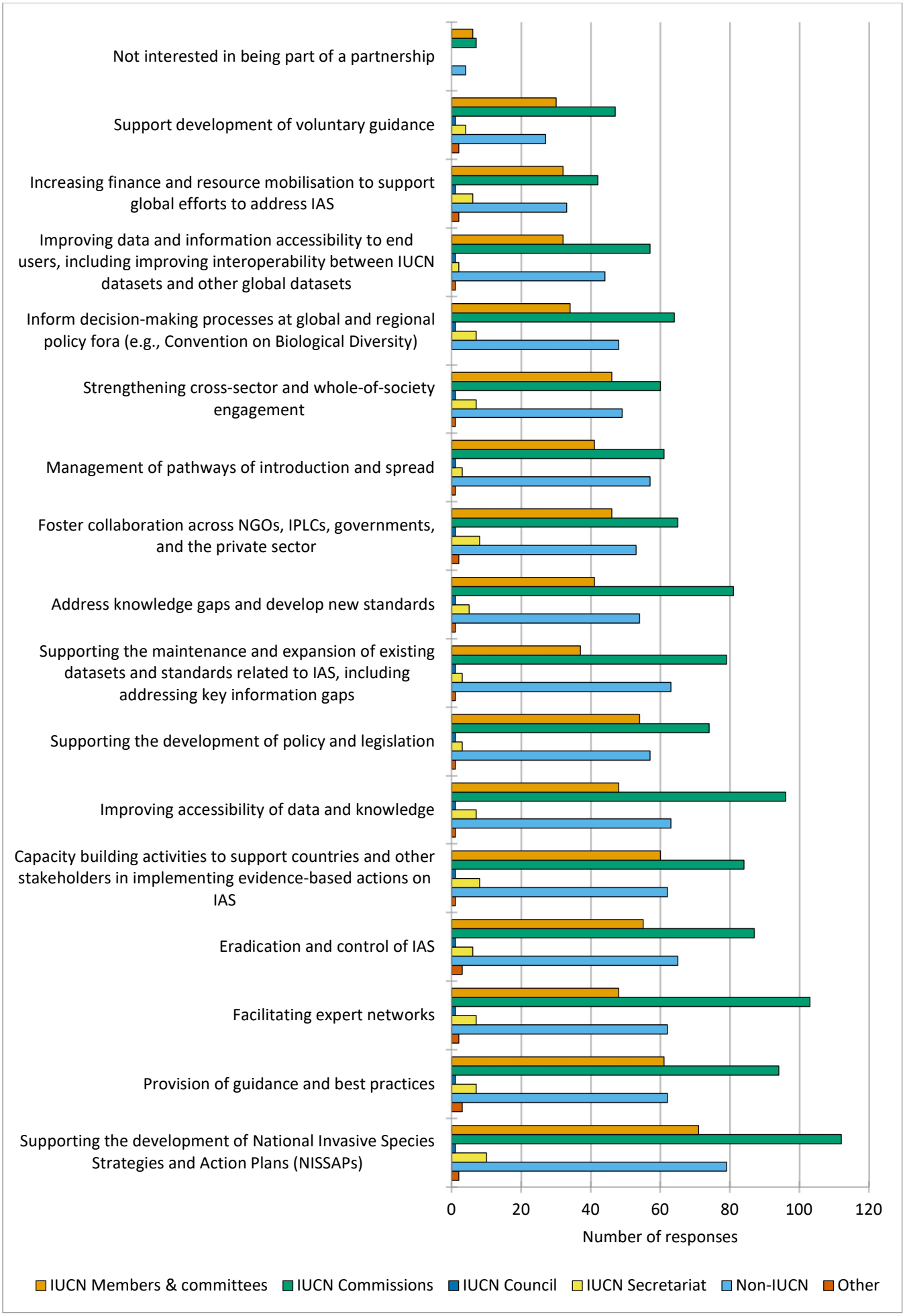
- Formal partnerships can be **administratively heavy** and risk becoming "paper exercises" without clear action plans
- Partnerships must be **purpose-driven**, with defined roles, responsibilities, and added value
- Over-formalisation could exclude:
    - Individual experts
    - Small NGOs
    - Local practitioners and community groups
- Some respondents emphasised that **informal or flexible partnerships** can sometimes be more effective than formal agreements, especially in low-capacity contexts

Overall synthesis
Respondents broadly agreed that partnerships are critical for scaling up IAS action, but stressed that formal partnerships should be selective, action-oriented, and designed to enable delivery rather than create additional bureaucracy.

4.2.6.2 Interest in being part of a partnership?

Questions 61 and 62: Are you, or your organisation, interested in potentially being part of a formal partnership to facilitate scaling up different elements of work on IAS to achieve the IUCN Programme ambition? Total responses (top) and responses by IUCN status (below). Note: individuals could have picked more than one option.


Not interested in being part of a partnership
Support development of voluntary guidance
Increasing finance and resource mobilisation to support global efforts to address IAS
Improving data and information accessibility to end users, including improving interoperability between IUCN datasets and other global datasets
Inform decision-making processes at global and regional policy fora (e.g., Convention on Biological Diversity)
Strengthening cross-sector and whole-of-society engagement
Management of pathways of introduction and spread
Foster collaboration across NGOs, IPLCs, governments, and the private sector
Address knowledge gaps and develop new standards
Supporting the maintenance and expansion of existing datasets and standards related to IAS, including addressing key information gaps
Supporting the development of policy and legislation
Capacity building activities to support countries and other stakeholders in implementing evidence-based actions on IAS
Eradication and control of IAS
Improving accessibility of data and knowledge
Facilitating expert networks
Provision of guidance and best practices
Supporting the development of National Invasive Species Strategies and Action Plans (NISSAPs)
0
50
100
150
200
250
Number of responses
Total responses


Not interested in being part of a partnership
Support development of voluntary guidance
Increasing finance and resource mobilisation to support global efforts to address IAS
Improving data and information accessibility to end users, including improving interoperability between IUCN datasets and other global datasets
Inform decision-making processes at global and regional policy fora (e.g., Convention on Biological Diversity)
Strengthening cross-sector and whole-of-society engagement
Management of pathways of introduction and spread
Foster collaboration across NGOs, IPLCs, governments, and the private sector
Address knowledge gaps and develop new standards
Supporting the maintenance and expansion of existing datasets and standards related to IAS, including addressing key information gaps
Supporting the development of policy and legislation
Improving accessibility of data and knowledge
Capacity building activities to support countries and other stakeholders in implementing evidence-based actions on IAS
Eradication and control of IAS
Facilitating expert networks
Provision of guidance and best practices
Supporting the development of National Invasive Species Strategies and Action Plans (NISSAPs)
0
20
40
60
80
100
120
Number of responses
IUCN Members & committees
IUCN Commissions
IUCN Council
IUCN Secretariat
Non-IUCN
Other

Comments:

What respondents highlighted most strongly
Across comments, respondents showed **strong interest in contributing**, particularly where partnerships would enable **practical outcomes**.

Most frequently emphasised areas
Respondents repeatedly highlighted interest in partnerships that support:

- **Data, information, and standards**
  - Improving accessibility and interoperability of datasets
  - Addressing data gaps and misclassification
  - Sharing species-level and pathway data
- **Policy and legislation**
  - Supporting national strategies and action plans (NISSAPs)
  - Influencing policy uptake at national, regional, and global levels
- **Capacity building**
  - Training practitioners, authorities, and local actors
  - Strengthening institutional and technical capacity, especially in under-resourced regions
- **Expert networks and knowledge exchange**
  - Facilitating collaboration between researchers, practitioners, and policymakers
- **Implementation and pathway management**
  - Eradication and control
  - Prevention and management of introduction pathways

Common conditions attached to interest
Many respondents noted that participation would depend on:

- **Availability of resources and funding**
- Clear expectations regarding **time and level of commitment**
- Recognition of **different capacities**, especially for small organisations and individuals
- Partnerships offering **more support than burden** to participants

Overall synthesis
Respondents are highly willing to engage in partnerships that deliver concrete outcomes, particularly in data, policy, capacity building, and implementation, provided expectations are realistic and participation is adequately supported.

4.2.6.3 Important partnerships and engagement IUCN needs to undertake with NON-IUCN entities in order to scale up global efforts on IAS

Question 63: What are the important partnerships and engagement IUCN needs to undertake with NON-IUCN entities in order to scale up global efforts on IAS? (International, Regional, National).

Comments:

Cross-cutting message

Responses to this question were rich and detailed, showing a strong consensus that **scaling up IAS action requires engagement well beyond the IUCN network**, across multiple sectors and governance levels.

International-level partnerships most frequently cited
Respondents repeatedly highlighted the importance of engagement with:

- **Multilateral environmental agreements and UN bodies** (e.g. CBD, IPBES, FAO, UNEP, CITES)
- **Global data and knowledge platforms** (e.g. GBIF, CABI and similar systems)
- **International finance and development actors** (e.g. GEF, multilateral banks, donors)
- **Trade- and transport-related bodies**, to address pathways of introduction

These partnerships were seen as critical for **policy alignment, standards, financing, and global coordination**.

Regional-level partnerships
At regional scale, respondents emphasised:

- Regional political and economic bodies (e.g. EU, ASEAN, CARICOM, African Union)
- Regional research and expert networks
- Cross-border cooperation for shared pathways and ecosystems
- Island and small-state regional groupings, where IAS impacts are often most acute

National and local-level partnerships
At national and sub-national levels, respondents stressed the importance of:

- **Government ministries and agencies** (environment, agriculture, trade, biosecurity)
- **Universities, research institutes, museums, and herbaria**
- **Indigenous Peoples and local communities**, including community-based organisations
- **NGOs and practitioners** delivering on-the-ground action
- **Private sector actors**, particularly those linked to pathways (trade, transport, horticulture, pet industry)

Many highlighted that **community-based and practitioner-led partnerships** are essential for early detection, implementation, and long-term sustainability.

Recurring principles for effective engagement
Across responses, respondents stressed that partnerships should:

- Be **inclusive and cross-sectoral**
- Bridge **science, policy, and practice**
- Respect and integrate **local and Indigenous knowledge**
- Be backed by **sustained financing**
- Focus on **implementation and impact**, not just coordination

Overall synthesis
Respondents consistently emphasised that scaling up IAS action requires IUCN to act as a convenor and enabler across international, regional, national, and local partnerships—linking global standards and policy processes with local knowledge, implementation capacity, and sustained financing.

Annex I – Consultation questions

1. About you	
1.1. Email address:	Free text
1.2. First name:	Free text
1.3. Family Name:	Free text
1.4. Organisation:	Free text
1.5. Country:	Free text
1.6. Status - IUCN constituents	• Member - Indigenous Peoples organisation • Member - State and government agency • Member - Sub-national Government • Member - National and international non-governmental organisation • Commission - Education and Communication (CEC) • Commission - Ecosystem Management (CEM) • Commission - Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP) • Commission - Species Survival (SSC) • Commission - Environmental Law (WCEL) • Commission - Protected Areas (WCPA) • Commission - Climate Crisis (CCC) • IUCN Council • IUCN National, Regional or Interregional Committee • IUCN Secretariat • Non-IUCN - government agency • Non-IUCN - NGO • Non-IUCN - business sector • Non-IUCN - Indigenous Peoples organisation • Non-IUCN - International organisation • Other
1.7. Commission group	Free text
1.8. Consent	Please indicate whether you consent to your personal data being shared with IUCN. This data will be solely stored in IUCN servers for six months after the end of the consultation and strategy development, and there after deleted. We may use your details to contact you in relation to the results of this consultation, and for the development of the resulting strategy. Your contact details will not be used for any other purpose than under the scope of the consultation and strategy development. All data will be handled in accordance with IUCN data protection policy (https://iucn.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/iucn-data-protection-policy_0.pdf) • I consent • I do not consent (can't go any further)

2. You/your organisation's work on IAS	
CURRENT WORK	- Provision of data and indicators on IAS, e.g. impacts, rates of establishment, pathways of introduction, or management actions - Development of guidance/best practices to support the prevention, monitoring, or management of IAS or pathways of introduction and spread - Development of policy and legislation relevant to addressing impacts from IAS - Facilitating expert networks to share knowledge and information

	- Facilitating cross-sector and whole-of-society engagement to address IAS environmental and socio-economic impacts - Implementing IAS management action on the ground, such as for the eradication or control of IAS - Implementing management actions targeting pathways of introduction or spread, e.g. awareness raising, biosecurity practices - Securing funding and resources to support IAS management activities - Other (please add in comments below) - Currently do not work on IAS
Comment for further details (optional)	
FUTURE PRIORITIES – to 2030	- Provision of data and indicators on IAS, e.g. impacts, rates of establishment, pathways of introduction, or management actions - Development of guidance/best practices to support the prevention, monitoring, or management of IAS or pathways of introduction and spread - Development of policy and legislation relevant to addressing impacts from IAS - Facilitating expert networks to share knowledge and information - Facilitating cross-sector and whole-of-society engagement to address IAS environmental and socio-economic impacts - Implementing IAS management action on the ground, such as for the eradication or control of IAS - Implementing management actions targeting pathways of introduction or spread, e.g. awareness raising, biosecurity practices - Securing funding to support IAS management activities - Other (please add in comments below) - Will not work on IAS in the future
Comment for further details (optional)	
ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS TO ACHIEVE FUTURE PRIORITIES	- Finance/resources - Capacity and expertise - Access to data/information - Regional or international collaboration - Cross-sector collaboration - Other
Comment for further details (optional)	

3. What have been the strengths and weaknesses of IUCN in relation to its work on IAS over the past decade?

	Strength 10		Neutral 5		Weakness 0	Don't know
Provision of data and indicators on IAS, pathways of introduction, or management actions (global/regional/national/sub-national level)						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Development of guidance/best practices to support the prevention, monitoring, or management of IAS or pathways of introduction and spread.						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Supporting the development of policy and legislation relevant to addressing impacts from IAS						
Comment for further details (optional)						

Facilitating expert networks to share knowledge and information on IAS						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Facilitating cross-sector and whole-of-society engagement to address IAS environmental and socio-economic impacts						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Implementing IAS management action on the ground, such as for the eradication or control of IAS						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Implementing management actions targeting pathways of introduction or spread, e.g., awareness raising, biosecurity practices						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Supporting funding and capacity building for IAS activities at global, regional and national levels.						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Other area of work						
Comment for further details (optional)						

4. The need for an IUCN Strategy	
Do you think IUCN needs a formal strategy to support a Union-wide effort to scale up action on IAS?	Yes / No / Unsure
Comment for further details (optional)	
Would you/your organisation be interested in contributing to the development of an IUCN Union-wide strategy on IAS?	Yes / No / Unsure
Comment for further details (optional)	

5. What are the priority actions IUCN as a Union should focus on within a Strategy to scale up action on IAS – in line with the draft IUCN Programme contribution on IAS.						
	High Priority 5	4	Important 3	2	Not a priority 1	Don't know
Provision of IAS-related data through online platforms (e.g. EICAT and GISD, GRIIS, Pathways) and addressing key data gaps (e.g. on management actions)						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Development of indicators on IAS to support monitoring of progress towards global, regional and national targets.						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Development and maintenance of guidance/best practices to support the prevention, monitoring, or management of IAS or pathways of introduction and spread						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Supporting the development of policy and legislation relevant to addressing impacts from IAS						
Comment for further details (optional)						

Supporting the development of regional and global policies relevant to IAS prevention and management						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Facilitating expert networks to share knowledge and information on IAS and their management						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Facilitating cross-sector and whole-of-society engagement to address IAS environmental and socio-economic impacts and co-benefits from their management?						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Implementing IAS management action on the ground, such as for the eradication or control of IAS						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Implementing management actions targeting pathways of introduction or spread, e.g., awareness raising, biosecurity practices						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Collaborating to raise funds that can build capacity for IAS activities at global, regional, and national levels						
Comment for further details (optional)						
Other area of work						
Comment for further details (optional)						

6. Building partnerships to scale up action on invasive alien species	
Do you believe that a formal partnership(s) between organisations would benefit the scaling up of work needed to achieve the draft IUCN Programme ambition on IAS?	Yes / No / Maybe / Don't know
Comment for further details (optional)	
Are you, or your organisation, interested in potentially being part of a formal partnership to facilitate scaling up different elements of work on IAS to achieve the IUCN Programme ambition? If so, what elements would be of interest to you? Please select all elements of work that you may be interested in contributing towards as part of a partnership.	- Not interested in being part of a partnership - Improving accessibility of data and knowledge - Supporting the maintenance and expansion of existing datasets and standards related to IAS, including addressing key information gaps - Improving data and information accessibility to end users, including improving interoperability between IUCN datasets and other global datasets - Provision of guidance and best practices - Supporting the development of National Invasive Species

	Strategies and Action Plans (NISSAPs) - Supporting the development of policy and legislation - Capacity building activities to support countries and other stakeholders in implementing evidence-based actions on IAS - Facilitating expert networks - Strengthening cross-sector and whole-of-society engagement - Eradication and control of IAS - Management of pathways of introduction and spread - Inform decision-making processes at global and regional policy fora (e.g., Convention on Biological Diversity) - Address knowledge gaps and develop new standards - Support development of voluntary guidance - Foster collaboration across NGOs, IPLCs, governments, and the private sector - Increasing finance and resource mobilisation to support global efforts to address IAS
Comment for further details (optional)	
What are the important partnerships and engagement IUCN needs to undertake with NON-IUCN entities in order to scale up global efforts on IAS? (International, Regional, National)	Free text

Annex II – Data preparation

IUCN received a total of 406 responses, comprising 405 submissions collected via Microsoft Forms and one late submission received directly by IUCN. Due to a technical issue with the form, response IDs were generated starting from ID3. As a result, the Microsoft Forms responses span ID3 to ID407 and the late submission was assigned ID408.

As part of the data cleaning process, a total of nine responses were removed from the dataset for the following reasons:

- One response was deemed irrelevant (ID25) and was therefore removed.
- Four respondents initially selected '*I do not consent*' in response to the consent question but proceeded to complete the remainder of the form. These individuals were contacted to confirm whether this selection was intentional or made in error. Three respondents confirmed that the selection was a mistake, therefore their responses were retained (ID312, ID328 and ID344; email confirmations saved on file). The remaining respondent did not reply, and thus their response was excluded from the analysis (ID287).
- Responses were reviewed for duplicate entries. Nine individuals appeared to have completed the form twice. In two cases, respondents completed the form in clearly distinct capacities (e.g. institutional and personal), and both responses were retained. In the remaining seven cases, the duplicates appeared to be inadvertent. For those respondents, one response per individual was retained and the duplicate response removed (resulting in the deletion of seven responses).

After applying these exclusions, a total of 397 responses were retained and included in the analysis. For analytical purposes, respondent countries were grouped according to IUCN regions to facilitate regional comparisons. Responses to the "IUCN Status" question were also aggregated into five categories: IUCN Members & National Committees, IUCN Commissions, IUCN Council, IUCN Secretariat, and Non-IUCN, to support comparative analysis across respondent groups.