

Regional Committee of West Asia 2nd Meeting March 30-31, 2009 Amman- Jordan

Minutes of Meeting

Welcoming Remarks:

Welcome notes were delivered by RCWA Chair Mr. Mohammad Shahbaz, followed by IUCN ROWA Regional Director Dr Odeh Al Jayyousi and IUCN Director General Ms Julia Marton-Lefevre.

The Chair informed the committee that the committee's Vice Chair Mr. Mohamed Sulayem from Saudi Arabia could not attend for unforeseen reasons. The treasurer was Ms Fatima Al Haj from Syria who has left her post, so the Syrian Ministry of Environment nominated Mr Osama Al Nouri to replace her as a representative to the Regional Committee for West Asia.

The Chair invited Javed Jabbar, Vice President, and Regional Councillor, West Asia and Ali Darwish, Regional Councillor, West Asia to join him at the head table and to address the participants.

Thanking the Chair for the invitation and expressing his pleasure at being back in Amman, the Vice President, IUCN said that it was a unique experience for him to have very recently attended the first election meeting of the Regional Committee for Asia held in Bangkok on 23-24 March 2009. Due to the unusual status of Pakistan, as a statutory member of the West Asian region of IUCN and as a programmatic member of the Asian region, Pakistan was able to participate in the meetings of both Regional Committees and was humbly proud to serve as a bridge of communication and facilitation between the two parts of Asia.

Election of Treasurer

Decision 2/1: Mr. Osama Al Nouri from Syria was unanimously elected as the Treasurer of the Regional Committee

Mr. Mohammad Shahbaz (RCWA Chair/ Regional Councilor for West Asia – Jordan)

Dr. Ali Darwish (IUCN Regional Councilor for West Asia – Lebanon)

Mr. Javed Jabbar (Vice President and Regional Councillor, West Asia, IUCN, Pakistan)

Dr. Hany Tatwany (on behave of RCWA vice chair, NCWCD- KSA)

Ms Mehrasa Mehrdadi (RCWA Secretary, Department of Environment – Iran)

Ms Meena Al Kadhimi (RCWA member, BWA – Bahrain)

Mr. Osama Al Nouri (RCWA Treasurer, Ministry of Local Administration and Environment – Syria)

Ms Mahnaz Kadhemi (BWA – Bahrain)

Mr. Imad Al Atrash (RCWA member, Palestine Wild Life Society – Palestine)

Mr. Yehya Khaled (RSCN – Jordan)

Mr. Maher Mahjoub (Vice Chair of WCPA for MENA Region – Tunisia)

Dr. Samira Omar (KISR – IUCN Kuwait National Committee Chair/ Commission on Species Survival)

Dr. Said Damhoureyeh (Commission on Ecosystem Management – Jordan)

Dr. Hassan Al Hosani (Friends of Environment – UAE)

Dr. Mohamed Subbarini (Commission on Education and Communication - Jordan)

Ms Razan Zuayter (APN – Jordan)

Ms Rima Ras (Jordan Badia Research and Development Centre – Jordan)

IUCN

Ms. Julia Marton-Lefevre, Director General

Dr. Odeh Al Jayyousi, ROWA Regional Director

Mr. Rami Abu Salman (IUCN Mediterranean Cooperation Center - Spain)

Mr. Peter Laban, ROWA Regional Programme Coordinator

Mr. Majdi Salameh, ROWA Business & Biodiversity Programme Officer

Mr. Khaldoun Al Omari, ROWA Protected Areas Programme Officer

Ms. Rania Faouri, ROWA Communications Officer

Ms. Ola Mallah, ROWA Membership Focal Point

Invitees who could not attend

Mr. Assad Serhal (RCWA member, SPNL, Lebanon)

Mr. Mohamed Sulayem (RCWA vice chair, NCWCD, KSA)

Dr. Talal Al Azimi (RCWA member EPA, Kuwait)

Prof. Abdulaziz Abu Zinada (Chair of IUCN West Asia Regional Advisory Committee – KSA)

Mr. Shahid Khan (RCWA member, C.E.O. & Chairman for PNC, Pakistan)

Approval of minutes of previous meeting

The minutes were earlier circulated to all members by e-mail prior to the meeting and uploaded to the ROWA website.

Dr. Ali Darwish proposed that operational guidelines be formulated for the Regional Committee.

The motion was approved unanimously. It was then decided to set up a task force for this purpose.

Operational Guidelines for the Regional Committee for West Asia

2/2 Decision: A taskforce is formed, headed by Dr Ali Darwish along with Mahnaz Kadhemi, Mehrasa Mehrdadi and Ola Mallah from the IUCN Secretariat. This taskforce will prepare a full document and circulate it among members to be presented in the next meeting within the next three months.

IUCN Congress Resolutions:

The RCWA Chair presented two resolutions; (1) War & Environment (2) the adoption of Arabic Language as an official IUCN language.

Ms Razan Zuayter delivered a presentation on War and Environment followed by a discussion. The following decision was adopted as an outcome:

War and Environment

2/3/2 Decision: Request the Secretariat to contact the IUCN Representative at the United Nations, New York, Mr. Narindar Kakar to ascertain the follow-up action taken on IUCN resolution 4.097 adopted in Barcelona.

2/3/3 Decision: To make the list of conflict zones around the world accurate and comprehensive, Kashmir region should be included as well as any other inadvertent omissions.

Proposal to make Palestine a full member

Representing Palestine, Mr. Imad Atrash proposed that Palestine should be given the status of a full State member of IUCN instead of its present status as an affiliate member.

Dr. Ali Darwish pointed out that certain UN agencies provide a precedent.

During the discussion it was pointed out that this would require an amendment to the IUCN statutes.

Mr. Javed Jabbar volunteered to draft a motion to be submitted by RCWA to the IUCN Council with a request for the Council to approve and recommend the same motion to the next IUCN Members' Assembly.

A Task Force was formed to follow through on this subject.

Palestine Taskforce

2/4/1 Decision: A taskforce is formed for Palestine membership issues in IUCN lead by Imad Al Atrash with Javed Jabbar and Razan Zuayter.

2/4/2 Decision: Request to submit a motion in the next congress in 2012 to amend the IUCN Statutes by members.

West Asia Regional Conservation Forum (RCF):

The Committee recorded its appreciation for the content and quality of the Regional Conservation Forum held in Tehran in 2007 and extended special thanks to the Government of Iran and to IUCN members in Iran for helping make the meeting a complete success.

After detailed discussion on the next avenue and theme for the Forum, the following decision was taken:

The Regional Conservation Forum (RCF):

2/5/1 Decision: The secretariat should explore the possibilities to host the RCF in one of those suggested venues: Bahrain, Kuwait, Palestine or Yemen. Date to be late 2010.

2/5/2 Decision: Form an organizing team lead by Imad Al Atrash with Mahnaz Kadhemi and Ola Mallah with a vacancy for the host country to follow up on the organization and logistical support of the RCF ASAP.

2/5/3 Decision: A technical team is formed lead by Dr Sameera Omar with Javed Jabbar, and Peter Laban from the secretariat to identify the technical issues, themes and report to the committee ASAP.

Suggested RCF Themes:

- 1- The Impact of the Global Financial Crisis on the Economy and the Ecology of West Asia.
- 2- Climate Change and Biodiversity.
- 3- Climate Change and Water & Drylands.
- 4- Conflict and Environment.

The secretariat will get back to members on a confirmed date, themes, and venue.

Governance:

The committee discussed the financial status and the fundraising activities that should be undertaken by the committee. Also discussed the possibility of creating a financial account within the secretariat and the following decision was announced:

Committee's Financial Account

2/6/1 Decision: Request the Secretariat for support with regards to the committee's financial account within the IUCN ROWA as an account in the regional office.

2/6/2 Decision: Form a fundraising taskforce to look at the functions of RCWA under article 8 to identify priority programmatic areas for future regional cooperation. The taskforce is headed by Osama Al Nouri with Rima Ras and Peter Laban from the secretariat. Deadline is three months from to date.

The Committee members discussed the proposed venues for the next RCWA meeting. The following decision was announced:

The Next Regional Committee Meeting

2/7 Decision: Subject to final decision after consultations with the Chairman, Pakistan National Committee of IUCN Members and the Acting Country Head of IUCN Pakistan as well as the Regional Director for Asia in Bangkok, Javed Jabbar conveyed that, in view of the fact that 2009 is being observed in Pakistan as the "Year of the Environment" it may be possible to make a formal offer to host a meeting of the Regional Committee for West Asia in the months of November-December 2009 at an appropriate venue.

He said that he would formally confirm one way or the other, in about 6 to 8 weeks.

The committee considered comments from the members with regards to the bylaw and requested all comments to be forwarded to the Chair for presentation in the next meeting in writing.

Commissions:

Three presentations were delivered by the Species Survival Commission represented by Dr Sameera Omar from Kuwait, Commission on Education and Communication represented by Dr Mohamed Subbarini from Jordan and World Commission on Protected Areas represented by Dr Maher Mahjoub, Vice Chair for MENA Region from Tunisia.

The following decision was announced:

Communication and Education

2/8/1 Decision: A taskforce is formed for the Education and Communication topic lead by Yehya Khaled along with Mahnaz Kadhemi, Dr Mohamed Subbarini and Imad Al Atrash, to follow up on the Communication and Education activities in the region in collaboration with IUCN ROWA to establish a node at the regional office.

Other Business

Ms. Mehrasa Mehrdadi from Iran delivered a Presentation on "Comprehensive Management Plan in IRAN (zoning, communication), focus on Arasbaran Protected Area as an example.

The members of the RCWA unanimously approved a point of order regarding motions:

motions

2/9 Decision: If a motion is introduced to the floor, to be accepted it has to be seconded by two other members for discussion, and a majority for approval.

Annex 1

Taskforce	Members	Task	Deadline
Operational Guidelines for the Regional Committee for West Asia Taskforce	headed by Dr Ali Darwish Mahnaz Kadhemi Ola Mallah	prepare a full document and circulate it among members to be presented in the next meeting	30 June 2009
Palestine Taskforce	lead by Imad Al Atrash Javed Jabbar Razan Zuayter	Palestine membership issues in IUCN	
RCF 2010 organizing team Taskforce	lead by Imad Al Atrash Mahnaz Kadhemi Ola Mallah	logistical support of the RCF	
RCF 2010 technical team Taskforce	lead by Sameera Omar Javed Jabbar Peter Laban	identify the technical issues, themes and report to the committee	
Fundraising taskforce	headed by Osama Al Nouri Rima Ras Peter Laban	look at the functions of RCWA under article 8 to identify priority programmatic areas for future regional cooperation	30 June 2009
Education and Communication topic taskforce	lead by Yehya Khaled Mahnaz Kadhemi Dr Mohamed Subbarini Imad Al Atrash	follow up on the Communication and Education activities in the region in collaboration with IUCN ROWA to establish a node at the regional office	