

THE PROMISE OF SYDNEY: AN EDITORIAL ESSAY

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ABSTRACT

The IUCN World Parks Congress is a once in a decade event that has traditionally been a major forum for advancing global protected area policy and practice. The Congress this November in Sydney Australia will be run along eight streams; addressing biodiversity, climate change, health, ecosystem services, development, governance, indigenous peoples issues and youth; cross-cutting themes address marine issues, capacity building, World Heritage and a New Social Compact. In the following extended editorial, the organisers of the various streams lay out their aims and hopes for the 2014 Congress.

Key words: World Parks Congress, climate change, health, governance, indigenous peoples issues, youth; marine issues, capacity building, protected areas

INTRODUCTION

The IUCN World Parks Congress (WPC), convened by resolution of the IUCN World Conservation Congress, has long been recognized as a harbinger of change: a unique, once-in-a-decade meeting in which protected area professionals come together to share practice, discuss policy and meet people from very different parts of the world, who are working towards a common goal and often face similar professional challenges. Importantly, each WPC has also created or reflected a groundswell of change; introducing new ideas, launching new commitments and signalling important

developments in policy. The Congresses stand out as a series of milestones in the development of the world's protected area system (Phillips, 2003).

In 2003, the 5th WPC in Durban effectively created the bulk of the text of the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) *Programme of Work on Protected Areas* (POWPA) (CBD, 2004), which remains a touchstone and key strategy for protected area development. But the Durban meeting also saw other very significant policy shifts: it witnessed the emergence into the mainstream of a more people-centred and



Uatumã Biological Reserve is part of the Amazon Region Protected Areas (ARPA) © WWF-US / Ricardo Lisboa

community-based approach to protected area establishment, management and governance, particularly involving indigenous peoples, local communities and ethnic minorities. It occurred during a period when discussion about the IUCN definition of a protected area was just beginning, leading eventually to a new definition five years later. That Congress also marked the start of a decade-long debate with the extractive industry sector, which initially proved hugely controversial amongst IUCN members.

But there were also many things that did not get much attention in Durban. Climate change occupied one small session at the Congress. Discussion of ecosystem services was virtually confined to the role of protected areas in providing high quality water. Young people introduced the Congress through traditional South African dance but there was little focus on engagement with youth during the subsequent discussions. The question of wildlife crime was scarcely mentioned.

By their nature, global policies quickly become dated, as we learn more and as conditions change: yesterday's preoccupations quickly fade away and new issues emerge into the mainstream. The CBD POWPA is now a decade old and while continuing to set the agenda for the effective management of protected area systems, cannot reflect all the emerging issues of importance to protected areas; the phrase 'climate change' only appears once in a 5,000 word document for example, limited to a concern with integrating considerations of climate change into planning. Recognition of a much broader range of issues is reflected in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 agreed at the 10th Conference of the Parties to the CBD in Nagoya, Japan in 2010 (CBD, 2010) where a new

target for protected areas is juxtaposed with targets for many other critical issues for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. Aichi Target 11 on Protected Areas reads: "*By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscape and seascape*". The Nagoya decision therefore substantially increased the target for area under protection and requires responses that go far beyond spatial coverage.

Later this year another of these important milestones will take place; the IUCN WPC 2014 in Sydney, Australia¹. It will, once again, celebrate achievements of the past decade, highlight areas of policy and practice that have emerged as priorities over the last few years, seek consensus on divisive issues and launch a range of new publications, tools and policy initiatives.

With its theme '*Parks, people, planet: inspiring solutions*', the Congress aims to:

- Find better and fairer ways to conserve natural and cultural diversity, involving governments, businesses and citizens in establishing and managing **parks**²;
- Inspire **people** around the world and across generations to reconnect with nature; and
- Demonstrate nature's solutions to our **planet's** challenges such as climate change, health, food and water security.

Most importantly, it will position protected areas firmly within the broader goals of sustainable development and community well-being through the next decade and beyond. The ambitions of the Congress will be to accelerate implementation of the important unfinished business created in Durban and to embrace innovative and transformative approaches that address new challenges in the decades to come. This statement will be agreed in Sydney and published as the *Promise of Sydney*, offering a broad constituency the opportunity to make their own promise of commitments both during and after the Congress towards achieving the outcomes.

The eight streams of the Congress, and some important cross cutting themes, provide a guide to the range of issues preoccupying protected area practitioners at the moment. We believe that the discussions in Sydney will be critical in setting priorities for protected area agencies, managers and supporters for the coming decade. But the Congress itself is only a single meeting, and the majority of people involved in protected areas will not be able to attend. Discussions before and after the week in Sydney will help shape thinking: events such as the Asia Parks Congress in Sendai, Japan and the 9th Pacific Island Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in Suva, Fiji, both in late 2013, are examples. In order to facilitate as broad a discussion as possible in the lead up to the Congress, we outline the themes of the Congress below, and highlight preliminary thoughts about policy messages, aims and outcomes.

REACHING CONSERVATION GOALS

In the decade since the last WPC, the science of conservation has advanced rapidly, but so too have the pressures on protected areas and the requirements for a scaling up of responses. Critics have claimed that protected areas are not the most effective tool for conservation, citing their limited size and relative isolation and proposing instead less well-defined approaches for ecosystem management, regulations and best practices. There have been a number of responses to the critique of protected areas. The IUCN WCPA has been working with the Species Survival Commission (SSC) to build up long-term data on the survival of species inside and outside protected areas, to show the efficacy of protected areas as a tool and to work out the circumstances that can lead to success or failure within protected area strategies. Concurrently, WCPA and SSC have also been working together on the development and standardisation of key biodiversity areas as a tool to identify the sites contributing significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity. The stream will also address many of the key challenges facing protected area

managers including alien invasive species, wildlife crime and the recent explosion of poaching. Responses including evaluation and enhancement of management effectiveness, connectivity conservation and the IUCN Green List of Protected Areas will be examined. Progress with establishment of formal, privately and indigenous and community conserved areas will be analysed, reviewed and gaps identified. More broadly, a more complete integration of conservation science and protected area management is recognized as being an important priority.

Key policy aims for and beyond the IUCN WPC

2014: Through the CBD, the world's countries have agreed on an enlightened plan for halting biodiversity loss, made real by agreement on the 20 Aichi Targets. The 'Reaching Conservation Goals' stream of the WPC will be a global discussion on how to fully use protected areas to meet the Aichi Targets, in particular Target 11. 2014 is a pivotal year to focus global attention on protected areas in achieving conservation goals, halting biodiversity loss, and creating connected ecosystems that are best able to adapt to global stresses, while providing benefits for people. There will be a focus on marine, freshwater and terrestrial systems.

The main outcome of 'Reaching Conservation Goals' will be commitments to accelerate achievement of Aichi Target 11 and to facilitate achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. Innovative methods to achieve systems of protected areas that reach all of the elements of Target 11, to celebrate, inspire and replicate success in implementation, and to counter the progressive downgrading of protected areas in a number of countries will be at the heart of the discussion. The Congress will launch and encourage application of a new standard for the effective and equitable management and governance of protected areas (the IUCN Green List of Protected Areas) and present for final review a new standard for the identification of sites contributing significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity (Key Biodiversity Areas). The stream will provide an in-depth focus on assessing biodiversity outcomes, dealing with the global poaching crisis, ensuring ecological connectivity and many other current challenges.

The stream will conclude with a look at the future. If the Aichi Targets are meant to be interim targets for 2020, what should the ultimate targets for nature conservation look like? What does a truly sustainable protected planet look like? What science is available to inform this question? There is a need to start thinking now about a future beyond the Aichi Targets.



Skaftafellsjökull, in the Skaftafell National Park, like all Iceland's glaciers is receding due to climate change. Scientists predict that all Iceland's glaciers will have disappeared within 100 years © Global Warming Images / WWF-Canon

RESPONDING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Since 2003, climate change has come to occupy centre stage in both development and conservation debates, sometimes threatening to eclipse more immediate problems for protected area managers. Protected areas are now viewed as a potential instrument for mitigating climate change by securing carbon-rich habitats in new and enhanced protected areas and facilitating adaptation through the provision of ecosystem services and cultural benefits that enable society to cope. But at the same time climate change is increasingly being viewed as a major threat to protected areas, because plant and animal ranges may shift outside the borders of the areas set aside for their survival, by climate extremes adding to everyday stress on the ecosystem and in some instances because changing climate will virtually or completely eliminate suitable habitat for some species or increase the threat of invasive alien species. The spectre of ocean acidification hangs over many coastal and marine protected areas and predicted sea-level rise and increased intensity of storm surges may inundate vulnerable habitats. Immediate priorities at a field level include developing better guidance for protected area agencies and their staff on how to manage in the face of climate change, including options for ecosystem-based mitigation and adaptation.

At a wider policy level there is an urgent need to build an understanding amongst governments and industry about the critical role that protected area systems can play in climate change response strategies, following integrated and landscape approaches. Adaptation actions have been developed by people and societies through history with different levels of success, and the promotion of culturally diverse approaches enhances adaptive capacity to face climate change impacts. However, adaptation is not possible where impacts go beyond the resilience capacity of ecosystems and societies, and need for transformative change is being increasingly recognized.

Key policy aims for and beyond the IUCN WPC

2014: This stream will position protected areas in relation to climate change policy discussions and solutions. The stream will contribute to society's understanding and acceptance that climate change is already affecting ecosystems and protected areas through altered water supplies, habitats, infrastructure, and subsistence activities of communities and will enhance protected area managers' ability to communicate about and cope with these changes. A major goal of the Congress is the implementation of an integrated and dynamic network of healthy, well-managed protected areas that anticipates climate and ecosystem change, and

that contributes to the solutions that the world needs to face up to this crisis, such as reducing human vulnerability to disasters.

IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

One major new strand of protected area policy and practice that has emerged in the last decade is a more comprehensive understanding of the wide variety of health benefits of protected areas.

Previous links between health benefits of parks and protected areas tended to focus on ecosystem services such as providing medicines and fresh water. The 2010 International *Healthy Parks Healthy People* Congress in Melbourne, Australia, launched a movement that has started to spread around the world. The recent advent of the Healthy Parks Healthy People approach has established broader understanding of the diverse health benefits of nature. These include regulating disease, climate, floods and pollination, as well as the bio-cultural benefits of nature and nature experience in delivering physical, mental, and spiritual health, cultural heritage and diversity, supporting livelihoods, and fostering social well-being to sustain life. As a philosophy and an emerging community of practice for parks and protected areas, Healthy Parks Healthy People resonates with developed and developing countries, including urban and wildlands alike based on the fundamental value proposition that parks and protected areas provide ecosystem services that are vital for sustaining all life. At its essence Healthy Parks Healthy People addresses the interconnection of people and parks (ecosystems) for health co-benefits.

In 2012, human well-being ranked second among the top themes by percentage distribution of resolutions at the IUCN World Conservation Congress. Among the resolutions, a Healthy Parks Healthy People motion was passed unanimously, recommending members “*to protect the earth’s two most important assets – nature and people*” and “*to promote the benefits of enhancing healthy ecosystems and human health and well-being synergistically*”. This emerging context for valuing nature for its life-sustaining role in promoting health and well-being is also evident in the formation of new alliances to address Aichi Biodiversity Targets. In 2012 and 2013, the World Health Organization and the Secretariat of the CBD joined forces to run regionally-based biodiversity and health capacity-development workshops, and in 2014 they are leading the development of a new, authoritative, interdisciplinary state of knowledge review on the inter-linkages between human health and biodiversity (and related ecosystem services) in the context of the post-2015 development

agenda. This technical volume will be widely distributed in the international community and across different sectors, including the WPC, just after its launch at the Conference of the Parties to the CBD in South Korea in October, 2014.

The ‘Improving Health and Well-being’ stream of the WPC is expected to further support the value of parks and protected areas in contributing to Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, and place increasing emphasis on the importance of activities that support achievement of Target 14, given the contribution of parks and protected areas to human health, well-being, and livelihoods. The stream will further build on the Healthy Parks Healthy People movement by sharing scientific knowledge and traditional knowledge on the health benefits – mental, physical, social, economic and spiritual – of nature. It will also identify knowledge gaps in research, highlight practical experiences, generate useful key policy messages and bring together sectors for collaborative, inspiring solutions.

Key policy aims for and beyond the IUCN WPC

2014: This stream will further harness support for the global movement involving protected areas and health sectors, resulting in concerted global actions to sustain protected areas and improve the health of individuals and communities around the world. A significant result of the stream will be the 2nd International Healthy Parks Healthy People Congress and EXPO in Atlanta, USA in July 2015.

The stream will also further contribute to the Healthy Parks Healthy People global research agenda by bolstering the body of evidence and influencing key policy directions of global and regional authorities, such as the CBD and the World Health Assembly. With the support of these authorities, the Healthy People Healthy People approach will be a guiding factor in advancing the development of relevant Sustainable Development Goals. The Congress will be an opportunity to launch a draft and consult on the IUCN *Healthy Parks Healthy People Best Practice Guidelines*, which will be finalised in 2015 and launched at the 2nd International Healthy Parks Healthy People Congress and EXPO.

SUPPORTING HUMAN LIFE

The last ten years has seen an explosion of interest in the wider benefits of protected areas, from links with faith groups and sacred natural sites to the role of parks in stabilising soils and protecting coastlines. IUCN has identified three benefits as especially critical: disaster risk reduction, provision of freshwater and contributions to the maintenance of food security. Each has multiple



The fish market in Pasar Sapowatu, Wakatobi island Kaledupa. Wakatobi Marine National Park, Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia
© Jikkie Jonkman / WWF-Canon

facets. Natural ecosystems in protected areas can help mitigate natural disasters by stabilising soils, protecting coastlines, providing spillover for floods and preventing avalanches and landslip. Forests and natural wetlands help to supply downstream communities with pure water. Marine protected areas maintain fish stocks and terrestrial reserves preserve the crop wild relatives critical for agricultural breeding programmes. Since Durban, not only have the benefits been recognized but there have been increasing efforts to quantify these and feed their economic values back into protected area management. The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) studies have provided a baseline of information, and a variety of tools for measuring values *in situ* are starting to emerge, some working with local communities to agree key costs and benefits. Priorities now include helping managers, who are often trained principally as biologists, to understand and manage for multiple benefits, as increasingly demanded by governments and other stakeholders. Getting proper recognition for these wider values is also still a challenge amongst state governments and other beneficiaries of these ecosystem services; most governments gain an order of magnitude or more from their protected areas in terms of benefits than they invest, yet even the limited funding available continues to decline in many countries.

Key policy aims for and beyond the IUCN WPC 2014: As an outcome of the Congress, this stream expects that people and institutions will perceive and

understand protected areas in a wider sense and at the scale of landscapes, providing basic physical services such as food and wild living resources, water, and disaster risk reduction functions. The stream will aim for the adoption of compelling evidence on the role of protected areas for disaster risk reduction in global policy (Hyogo Framework for Action 2), as well as national policies and local practices. It will also assert and reinforce the role of protected areas in food and water and the management of genetic resources and tailor these perspectives for introduction into national and international policy.

RECONCILING DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

Sustainable development is about increasing human well-being without compromising nature or future development prospects. While governments struggle to maintain food and water security, and ensure jobs and sustainable livelihoods, they are often faced with hard choices and trade-offs. Nature-based solutions can help the world deal with some of the challenges of the 21st Century and protected areas deliver significant environmental, social and economic benefits to society, for instance the freshwater supply of major cities. The stream will focus on the intersection between protected areas, and the many development goals and challenges facing national governments. The mission of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the World Bank, the world's largest development finance institution, is to support countries to achieve sustainable

development, while maintaining key ecosystem services and promoting climate resilient natural and human communities. The stream involving UNDP, World Bank, Conservation International and IUCN's Business and Biodiversity Programme presents solutions and tools on how protected areas can be integrated in development planning and economic decision-making, and provides sector-specific experience and guidance in managing the intersection between protected areas and development. There is a need to make protected areas part of the economy, and to place protected areas within national development strategies and frameworks. There is a need to transform how the world measures and accounts for development and to change the business-as-usual trajectory. The stream will discuss important steps to develop a better understanding of and provide the means for wider benefits that protected area systems bring to societies and development.

Key policy aims for and beyond the IUCN WPC 2014: This stream will deliver guidance, aimed at protected area practitioners and planners, as well as managers and policy makers of productive sectors and development, on how protected areas can be designed, managed and utilised to achieve development goals and meet development challenges. It will also disseminate cases where protected areas have been intimately embedded within development plans, natural capital accounting, sectoral practices, poverty reduction strategies or other participatory mechanisms driving development. A major component of this stream's efforts will be the establishment of the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans Forum, with an anticipated membership of over 2,500 participants from biodiversity, protection, restoration, production and mainstreaming sectors. The stream will use this Forum to disseminate lessons learned to be adopted in the development of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans in more than 140 countries, and being recognized and adopted by all stakeholders including relevant civil society and private sector partners around the world.

ENHANCING DIVERSITY AND QUALITY OF GOVERNANCE

Two trends emerged directly from the WPC 2003 and associated actions: the increasing recognition of indigenous peoples' and community conserved territories and areas (ICCAs) by governments and a rapid increase in self-declared protected areas by indigenous peoples or local communities, most notably in Australia where over 20 million hectares have been declared as Indigenous Protected Areas in little more than a decade. While still

not free of controversy, with some analysts believing that they do not contain sufficient safeguards against degradation and others saying this is also true of government protected areas, the movement is gathering speed and the ICCA Consortium, recently established, is providing global policy guidance. However, wider issues of governance still remain under-developed. The governance element of the CBD POWPA remains poorly implemented compared with other parts of the Programme, with many governments lagging behind in applying good governance principles to existing or new protected areas, or in recognising ICCAs, rights of communities, or privately protected areas (PPAs). The global policy focus on ICCAs needs to be complemented by a focus on shared governance and PPAs; in the case of the latter, countries like South Africa and Colombia have shown the way by recognizing PPAs as another form of bottom up conservation that can both fill important gaps in national protected area systems and sometimes be created faster than is possible with state systems. Aichi Target 11 can only be realistically achieved with the contribution of all the different governance types and other effective area-based conservation measures.

Key policy aims for and beyond the IUCN WPC 2014: A first and crucial long-term impact of the Governance stream will be a world where diversity and quality of governance of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, in full synergy with 'management effectiveness', are widely understood, acted upon and made useful to conservation. A second ambition will be to advance the governance frontiers through substantial steps in understanding and action and, therefore, to make sure that the concept and practice of effective and equitable governance influence policies beyond the conservation realm. Improved and more diverse governance can and should become one of the pillars of the post-2015 development agenda. Drawing from the experience of protected areas, well-governed landscapes and seascapes will thus develop as 'models for sustainable living'.

RESPECTING INDIGENOUS AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND CULTURE

Several of the representatives of indigenous people came to the WPC 2003 with the specific aim of eliminating protected areas from their countries: two groups who frequently want the same result, protection of natural ecosystems, had drifted dangerously apart. People wanting to eliminate any remaining blocks on unrestrained development have been happy to encourage such divisions. Hopefully in the years since Durban there have been important steps taken towards healing the rifts

between some indigenous peoples' groups and protected area authorities, as demonstrated by an increased number of collaboratively managed protected areas, indigenous protected areas (Australia), self-declared protected areas, officially recognized ICCAs and other partnerships between local communities and protected areas. Adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; development of agreements such as the *Akwe Kon* guidelines, facilitated by the CBD; better understanding of issues of governance quality within protected areas; and the wider application of Free, Prior and Informed Consent, together helped to build safeguards and new attitudes. But there is still a long way to go in terms of developing and disseminating best practice: governments who treat minorities badly are unlikely to make an exception within their protected area management. In particular, more case studies of successful collaborations are needed to build skills and confidence, and attitudes still need to change within many government departments and NGOs.

Key policy aims for and beyond the IUCN WPC

2014: The stream aims to address the need to deliver on-the-ground benefits to indigenous peoples and local communities managing their landscapes, seascapes and resources by highlighting the acceptance and recognition of multiple, innovative and culturally-driven approaches that contribute to conservation and livelihoods locally and globally, and that will lead to increased understanding, respect and support for the role of traditional management systems in protected areas and beyond. Securing long-term international funding commitments and improving national and international policies to support indigenous peoples and local communities in managing their landscapes and seascapes will also be developed. A specific ambition is to develop a capacity-building programme for indigenous managers, including community exchange networks and invigorating pathways to engage two-way learning between scientists and traditional knowledge holders.

INSPIRING A NEW GENERATION

For the first time ever, the majority of the world's population lives in cities and the proportion continues to grow. By 2030, it is estimated that 60 per cent of the world's population will live in cities. People in developed countries are spending more time indoors than in any point in history and society has shifted towards emphasizing safety over experience. A growing body of empirical evidence demonstrates that deepening the relationship with nature, by fostering and enabling direct and meaningful experiences, has a positive impact on every facet of our society.

Today, young people (35 years old and under) represent more than half of the world's population, making them a significant group of people, not just as the future generation, but as a living and breathing force of great potential here and now, whose voices must be heard, stories told and experiences shared. The 'Inspiring a New Generation' stream will launch an enduring global initiative to inspire a new generation to connect with nature. The WPC will explore and share motivators, experiences, best practise and stories related to:

- Connecting a new generation: focusing on exciting and inclusive ways to invite people who have not had opportunities to engage with nature to connect with nature in safe but transformative ways, engendering respect and supporting action for nature and its conservation among future generations.
- Investing in children: addressing school age children, in particular, and the challenges of connecting them with nature in a world where nature is increasingly scarce, exploring the benefits of and examining innovative ways in which children can be supported to experience nature through exposure to parks; and
- Empowering inspired young people: developing an inspiring process and empowered forum for young people to engage in collective actions, networking, co-learning, experience-sharing, and capacity-building/raising to inspire people across all generations of the broader public to connect and engage for Parks, People and Planet.

Key policy aims for and beyond the IUCN WPC

2014: A renewed and enhanced focus on connecting young people with nature as a key global priority for addressing the underlying causes of biodiversity loss (Strategic Goal A of the CBD Strategic Plan 2011-2020 and Aichi Target 1) and building support for protected areas (Aichi Target 11). The stream will launch a global initiative to inspire a new generation to connect with nature by bringing together key partners – young people, park agencies, conservation organizations, corporate and social leaders that share an interest in supporting a new generation's discovery, love and stewardship of nature. The stream will also support the growth of a dynamic alliance of young people across the world and its initiatives will include: a new toolkit to support protected area managers in the development of strategies and programmes to inspire a new generation to connect with nature; a Young Peoples' Media Coalition, technological solutions for sharing young peoples' ideas and experiences, open-source capacity-building workshops, on-the-ground projects and a Young Peoples' Pact for Parks, People and Planet. The stream will inspire and empower young people to take actions for nature



Fijian men celebrating the creation of a new Marine Protected Area, Vanua Levu, Fiji © Brent Stirton / Getty Images

conservation and building leadership and engagement by young people and through intergenerational partnerships for protected areas.

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

The huge growth in protected areas during the latter half of the 20th century was almost entirely on land, with protection in the marine realm falling far behind. Oceans and coasts face a wide range of threats, some of which are similar to threats facing land ecosystems (e.g. invasive alien species, pollution, habitat loss, exploration for mineral resources) while some others are specific to marine habitats (e.g., ocean acidification and warming, land-based run-off, unsustainable and/or illegal fishing, and dredging/sea dumping). Although the ocean is a critical source of food and livelihoods for millions in coastal communities, many fish stocks have collapsed, or are collapsing. Cooperation with the fisheries sector to ensure sustainability needs improvement and overfishing and illegal fishing still remain major threats in many marine areas. While several parts of the world have a long history of proactive action in coastal and marine protection, even iconic sites like Australia's Great Barrier Reef have been assessed as deteriorating, the result of cumulative effects from both global and local pressures.

The coming decade is likely to be decisive in respect of whether or not the world retains a series of vibrant marine ecosystems or sees a worldwide collapse in biodiversity and functionality. Because the sea is traditionally and legally viewed as a commons, privately protected areas are much less relevant than in terrestrial environments. This means that policy priorities must continue to focus on persuading those with decision-making power – communities, nations and international organizations – of the need for urgent and increasingly ambitious action, and providing the tools and advice to manage marine protected areas effectively under rapidly changing conditions. The recent trend of establishing very large marine protected areas (MPAs) that encompass whole ecosystems, and community-based MPAs that support local livelihoods, are two approaches that will help us meet our marine conservation goals.

Key policy aims for and beyond the IUCN WPC

2014: The ambition of the marine cross-cutting theme will be to expand and strengthen management effectiveness of existing MPAs and networks for the 21st Century. The specific outcomes sought will be:

- Protect More: Achieving the target of conserving 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas around the world;



Parcs Gabon eco guard departs on a two week anti-poaching patrol mission, Makokou, Gabon © WWF-Canon / James Morgan

- **Involve More:** Connecting people and protected areas by creating a Global Protected Area Network for future generations;
- **Invest More:** Appreciating ocean wealth by recognizing the true value of marine resources.

These ambitions will build on and complement the outcomes of the Third International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC3), connecting terrestrial, coastal and marine protected areas into an effective global network of people and places.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The pace at which new protected areas have been established has often outstripped the ability to manage them effectively; there are simply not enough well-trained staff available, particularly as management needs and priorities are changing so rapidly. IUCN's WCPA has a long history of providing technical advice, through its Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines series, provision of experts and individualized training sessions, but it is generally recognized that this is no longer sufficient. Field rangers in particular often miss out on training, through lack of basic educational opportunities in many countries, inability to read English, French or Spanish and lack of access to materials. IUCN has been working to fill this gap, through development of online training materials based around minimum competency standards, by developing an accreditation system for courses offered on protected areas in tertiary educational establishments and through focused courses and teaching. There remain many gaps and priorities in order to ensure that the curriculum is comprehensive and is

adopted by the premier education and training institutions and authorities for a new generation of qualified and competent professionals.

Key policy aims for and beyond the IUCN WPC

2014: This cross-cutting theme will promote a new approach for capacity development containing three broad components which will form the basis of the Congress outcome: (i) the development of standards for education and training of protected area professionals and higher level government decision-makers; (ii) the production of learning resources and knowledge products such as books, Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines, technical briefs, electronic-learning modules, and the development of tools to support achievement of competent professionals; and (iii) a Global Partnership for Professionalising Protected Areas Management based on competency-based curriculum and courses and the development and promotion of guidelines for the certification of core competences and a body of knowledge that codifies how to achieve competence. Activities promoted by the streams to build capacity at the societal, organisational and individual levels will continue well beyond the Congress as part of the implementation of this partnership.

WORLD HERITAGE

As the official Advisory Body to UNESCO's World Heritage Convention, IUCN has for many years provided technical advice with respect to natural World Heritage sites, organizing evaluations of nominated sites, undertaking reactive monitoring missions for sites facing challenges, and providing a range of support to UNESCO

and to individual site managers. The task keeps growing as more sites are added to the list, and as the World Heritage Committee grows in political importance (and as a result becomes increasingly politicised itself). World Heritage Sites, which cover more than 10 per cent of the area of all protected areas globally, also need to change their role to provide leadership to global efforts on protected areas. Another major aim is to bring natural World Heritage closer, philosophically and in practice, to the conservation of the larger number of cultural sites on the World Heritage list. Both face similar challenges in terms of development, the need to maintain naturalness or authenticity, and their key role in educating and inspiring present and future generations about our common heritage.

Key policy aims for and beyond the IUCN WPC

2014: The World Heritage cross-cutting theme will create conditions for all natural World Heritage sites to fulfil their leadership role in demonstrating best practice for protected area management. This will be made possible by enabling better capacity within State actors, increasing commitment by all partners – including key threat sectors such as the extractive industry, and encouraging more international support for World Heritage performance, such as funding of community-based management. Another major part of this impact will be the raised profile of the World Heritage Convention in civil society and the conservation community and better understanding of its unique leverage on key issues affecting protected areas. This also implies increased commitment to recognize and respect indigenous people's rights in World Heritage areas, particularly to ensure effective participation in site nomination, management and monitoring.

A NEW SOCIAL COMPACT FOR EFFECTIVE AND JUST CONSERVATION

Finally, protected areas will only work, and continue to work in the future, if they are supported by a broad range of people; the pressures ranged against conservation are too great for protected areas to survive in the hands of a few enthusiasts. The New Social Compact process, to be run throughout the Congress, will bring together people from very different backgrounds to work together, following a particular Congress theme, to agree some common understanding about its values, challenges and opportunities. An inspirational platform will be created across the themes of the Congress where diverse rights holders, stakeholders and interest groups are able to enter into dialogue and commit to building solidarity in human networks and a shared understanding of the intrinsic and functional value of nature.

Key policy aims for and beyond the IUCN WPC

2014: A process of speaking to each other and listening to one another with a new sense of urgency is part of the outcome of this cross-cutting theme. Professional facilitators associated with each stream will convene dialogues with delegates from diverse constituencies to speak frankly about ethical, social, cultural, economic and political relationships between humans and what is required to find a shared commitment to address and reverse the anthropogenic drivers of climate change and biodiversity loss. Out of each dialogue, there will be opportunities for projects, processes, and policies, expressed as a *New Social Compact for Effective and Just Conservation of Biological and Cultural Diversity*. The New Social Compact will build on the foundation of the Earth Charter, of Agenda 21 and the Durban Accord, signalling a new era of a global commitment to saving the planet now.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of large congresses are not all foreseeable. Regardless of how much preparation is in place, the results depend on the chemistry between individuals at the time, who happens to talk together in corridors or between meetings, who gets inspired, other global events and circumstances of the day, and so on. The IUCN WPC 2014 will bring people and circumstances together to prepare for a promising future, building on its predecessors, and engaging with new issues and partners. It will probe the experience of its many participants and contributors to determine what is innovative, inspiring and above all, promising for the next decade, and what kinds of commitments and partnerships will implement these new approaches. Its outcome document, the *Promise of Sydney* will integrate and describe the essential synergies of all of the streams and cross-cutting themes described in this paper, by the end of the Congress. It will not result in a new action plan, but in new ways to accelerate implementation of those approaches that work. It will inspire confidence that the investment that the world has made in protected areas will come to fruition in the decades ahead as the world grapples with existing and new challenges. What that means depends eventually on IUCN's membership, friends and collaborators, and their ability to engage the participation of many actors from relevant sectors. IUCN WCPA is looking for input on the themes identified, and about other issues that may have been omitted, understated or ignored. The floor is open for debate.

ENDNOTES

¹ www.worldparkscongress.org

² The term 'park' here refers to the full range of protected areas encompassed by the IUCN definition of a protected area



Rainbow over the Australian Bush Australia © Martin Harvey / WWF-Canon

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RESUMEN

El Congreso Mundial de Parques de la UICN, un evento que tiene lugar cada diez años, ha sido tradicionalmente un foro importante para el avance de las políticas globales de manejo y gestión de áreas protegidas. El Congreso que se celebrará en noviembre de este año en Sydney, Australia, girará en torno a ocho corrientes: ciencia, cambio climático, salud, servicios de los ecosistemas, desarrollo, gobernanza, pueblos indígenas y jóvenes; los temas transversales abordan cuestiones relacionadas con el medio marino, la creación de capacidades, el Patrimonio de la Humanidad y un nuevo pacto social. En el siguiente editorial ampliado, los organizadores de las distintas corrientes trazan sus objetivos y esperanzas para el Congreso de 2014.

RÉSUMÉ

Le Congrès mondial des Parcs est une manifestation décennale qui constitue traditionnellement un forum majeur pour faire avancer les politiques mondiales sur les aires protégées. Le Congrès qui se déroulera en novembre à Sydney, Australie, sera classé en huit thèmes, dont le changement climatique, la santé, les services écosystémiques, le développement, la gouvernance, le cas des peuples autochtones et des jeunes, et des thèmes transversaux portent sur des questions maritimes, le renforcement des capacités, le Patrimoine Mondial et un nouveau pacte social. Dans l'éditorial suivant, les organisateurs des différents thèmes énoncent leurs objectifs et leurs espoirs pour le Congrès 2014.