



IUCN in Asia

2008



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Asia is the largest regional programme of IUCN. With over 350 staff, IUCN operates 11 country and liaison offices across the region, two regional Ecosystems and Livelihoods Groups (ELGs), and a regional office in Bangkok. IUCN is implementing nearly 100 conservation initiatives in the region together with its partners and members. In 2008, IUCN Asia had 170 active members from 20 of the 23 countries in the region, including 12 IUCN State members, 23 government agency members, three affiliates, five international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and 115 national NGO members. Out of the 10,000 members of IUCN's six specialized commissions, 1,700 are based in Asia.



Aban Marker Kabraji
IUCN Asia Regional Director

FROM THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Asia, a region of vibrant culture and rapid growth, is on the cutting edge of so many of the world's innovations and trends. 2008 was a challenging year for Asia as the world witnessed the oil crisis, the food crisis and now the economic and financial crisis. A number of countries in which we work presented security concerns, and continue to do so. IUCN continues its long-term commitment to support the conservation of nature across the region, informed by changing paradigms of sustainable development.

Our membership and its networks; our connectedness, are an opportunity for dynamic and productive partnerships that can address the environmental challenges of Asia that are fundamental to many of the issues we face today.

The new IUCN Programme (2009-2012) is committed to a renewed era of conservation for sustainable development. We can no longer approach environmental issues solely country by country but must seek to build partnerships that transcend geographic and political boundaries. When we consider the gravest threats confronting us – habitat degradation, loss of biodiversity, food and water security during a time of rapidly changing climate – it is clear that these threats do not stop at national borders. We will need to work together to address the complex transboundary threats we now face.

The IUCN World Conservation Congress in Barcelona provided the needed impetus for addressing conservation challenges by bringing together nearly 8,000 people from 174 different countries and walks of life in an unprecedented gathering to debate and discuss the future of sustainability. We listened to the pledges and ideas of our valued Commissions and Members who guide our work as we move ahead. It also marked the election of new Council members (six from Asia) and a new IUCN President, Dr. Ashok Khosla from India. This will provide a unique opportunity for Asia to help shape the global conservation agenda.

IUCN continues its work from 11 country offices in Asia from Pakistan to China with plans to establish a Secretariat presence in additional countries, such as Japan and South Korea. In 2008, IUCN Asia welcomed as four new Government Agency Members and six new NGO Members including the first member from the Kingdom of Bhutan.

IUCN Commission members are increasingly involved in Asia and bring valuable technical support to conservation initiatives. Commissions work through focal points that have been established in the Secretariat at regional and national levels.

This 2008 profile provides an overview of the IUCN Asia programme and details on some of the cross regional

initiatives, including the Mangroves for the Future (MFF), a regional partnership platform to promote investments in coastal ecosystems; the Livelihoods and Landscapes Strategy (LLS), a global learning programme of innovative hands-on approaches for sustainable forest management; and the Mekong Region Water Dialogues (MRWD), a multi-stakeholder platform to promote informed and shared decision-making on transboundary water issues.

Looking ahead, IUCN's increasing outreach to its membership and commission networks, and our growing programme provides a unique opportunity to enable the countries in Asia to address their conservation challenges. We need, however, multiple engines working together to reignite sustainable regional development and many more of the diverse partnerships and country coalitions that present models for the future. We look forward to working with our IUCN members, commissions, partners and friends to demonstrate the region's capacity for leadership on social, economic and environmental issues.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aban Marker Kabraji". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Aban Marker Kabraji
IUCN Asia Regional Director

THE IUCN ASIA PROGRAMME



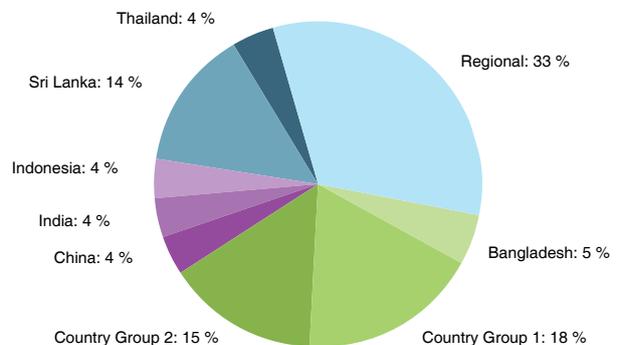
● IUCN country and liaison offices in the Asia Region

Geographic Focus

IUCN has 11 country or liaison offices in the Asia region. They include Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam.

There are also two country clusters which have been created to streamline management. Country Group 1 cluster includes Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam and sub-regional initiatives. Country Group 2 includes Afghanistan, Bhutan, Nepal and Pakistan and corresponding sub-regional initiatives. The chart to the right provides a geographic breakdown of programmatic activities in Asia.

IUCN ASIA PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES BY GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD



Regional Activities

IUCN works at the regional level by spearheading innovative and challenging initiatives such as Mangroves for the Future, the Mekong Region Water Dialogues, Livelihoods and Landscape Strategy and piloting cutting edge protected area management models.

Mangroves for the Future (MFF) is a unique partner-led initiative to promote investment in coastal ecosystem which builds on a history of coastal management interventions before and after the 2004 tsunami, as well as extensive consultations with over 200 individuals and 160 institutions involved in coastal zone management. It focuses on the countries worst-affected by the tsunami; India, Indonesia,

Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, as well as dialogue countries in the region that face similar issues. MFF uses mangroves as a flagship ecosystem but is inclusive of all coastal ecosystems.

MFF provides a collaborative platform among the many different agencies, sectors and countries who are addressing challenges to coastal ecosystem and livelihood issues, to work towards a common goal. Through generating knowledge, empowering institutions and individuals to promote good governance in coastal ecosystem management, MFF seeks to achieve demonstrable results in influencing regional cooperation, national programme support, private sector engagement and community action.

The Mekong Region Water Dialogues (MRWD) works to improve cross-sector water governance of the Mekong River and its tributaries, with a view to improve livelihood security, human and ecosystem health in the region. The Mekong Region geographically spans the fast-growing economies of Southeast Asia. Industries such as mining, agriculture, fisheries and renewable energy are dependant on the river systems. The Mekong Region Water Dialogues are a step towards a collaborative process of decision making that will ensure the equitable and sustainable use of water resources so crucial to livelihoods and economic development in the Mekong Basin.

Livelihoods and Landscapes Strategy (LLS) is an approach to achieving poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management goals through landscape level planning and action. Such planning and action includes those that enable the rural poor to expand their economic opportunities while restoring the productive and other values of forests across the landscape.

By working with all stakeholder representatives in a landscape, a shared vision of the role of forests in supporting local livelihoods and providing watershed and other ecosystems services can be negotiated and implemented. Ultimately, such experience at landscape levels can be used to influence policies and programmes nationally. LLS is a global initiative with project sites in South America, Central America, Africa and Asia. In Asia, LLS is working in Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Viet Nam and Thailand.

Strengthening Voices for Better Choices (SVBC) is a global project that aims to test and promote improved governance arrangements that will engender more sustainable and equitable forest management. Financed mainly by the European Union, SVBC began in 2005 and will end in July 2009. In Asia, SVBC has been working in Sri Lanka and Viet Nam, two countries with differing forest governance needs and challenges.

In Sri Lanka, the project has helped to establish a local multi-stakeholder forum with community representation in the Knuckles Environment Protection Area, an important protected forest in the country's Central Highlands. In Viet Nam, SVBC has been helping private and public stakeholders in the country's furniture industry to learn about growing international market demands for legality and sustainability.

The HKKH Partnership Project aims at consolidation of institutional capacity for systemic planning and ecosystem management in the Hindu Kush-Karakoram-Himalaya region. As a multi-scale initiative, HKKH works together with local, national and regional stakeholders on capacity building and decision support tools for ecosystem management on different temporal and spatial scales.

Activities support the exchange of data, knowledge and experiences across the region and the development of a management-oriented research framework.

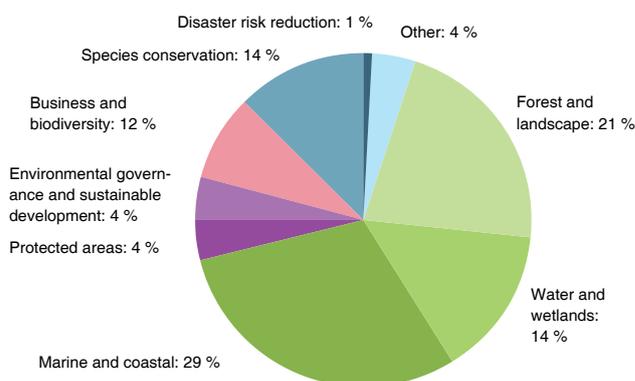
Thematic Focus

The programme in Asia in 2008 integrated ecosystem conservation with human well-being, consistent with IUCN Intersessional priorities for 2005-2008. Biodiversity conservation continued to provide the foundation for all our work, with about 30 percent of our activities focused on coastal areas, followed by forest and landscape management (21 percent) and water and wetlands (14 percent).

The graph below shows an analysis of IUCN Asia's involvement in its key thematic areas. While the different thematic areas are indicative of IUCN's contribution in different sectors, they do not illustrate the integrated ways that our projects and programmes function. For example a project focusing on water and wetlands, could include interventions on Climate Change, protected areas, etc. In 2008 IUCN's work in Asia on business and biodiversity and Climate Change has considerably increased.

The following pages provide more detail on the key issues for each thematic area and some examples of initiatives and activities.

IUCN ASIA PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES BY THEMATIC FOCUS



Thematic Priority Areas for 2009-2012

At the World Conservation Congress in Barcelona, IUCN adopted its new four-year Intersessional Programme focusing on the following Thematic Priority Areas:

- Conserving the Biodiversity of Life
- Changing the Climate Forecast
- Naturally Energizing the Future
- Managing Ecosystems for Human Wellbeing
- Greening the Economy

The Thematic Priority Area's guide IUCN's Members, Commissions and Secretariat in their conservation work. IUCN Asia is well positioned to deliver on the new Intersessional Programme. Both biodiversity conservation and ecosystem and human well being build on core areas of IUCN's past work. Significant momentum has already been achieved on Climate Change and Greening the Economy.



Traffic in Karachi, Pakistan © IUCN

ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Environmental governance includes law, institutions and processes that all components of a society use to exercise powers and responsibilities to make and implement decisions affecting biodiversity and other natural resources. Asia faces many environmental governance challenges across the region. While many states have established laws defining control of natural resources, they are often misused and abused, either intentionally or unintentionally. IUCN works to clarify what type of legal support is needed in countries and in the region, to determine specific issues related to the elements of governance, including transparency, rule of law, accountability, public participation and access to justice. Additionally, IUCN works to provide solid guidelines for states to follow when drafting environmental legislation.

Every citizen
has the right
to a clean
environment,
pollution-free
air and a decent
quality of life

Influencing Sustainable Public Transport Availability and Development Goals in Pakistan

At the “A Different Vision for Urban Development and Mobility”, a seminar jointly organized by IUCN Pakistan, the Clinton Climate Initiative and the Pakistan Clean Air Network, the former mayor of Bogota, Enrique Peñalosa, addressed the future of Pakistan’s transportation network.

“Every citizen has the right to a clean environment, pollution-free air and a decent quality of life. It is crucial to designate spaces for parks to be developed in the future,” said Mr. Peñalosa. Furthermore, he urged city planners throughout Pakistan to provide bus-ways and sidewalks, while emphasizing that this decision is not just an engineering one, but a political one as well.

He suggested that there is an opportunity in Pakistan to implement the best available sustainable transport policies. By citing his own experiences as mayor of Bogota, Mr. Peñalosa was able to make connections between the two vastly different geographical locations while simultaneously highlighting their commonalities, in an effort to make good transportation and development policy possible.

Exploring Ways to Equitable Benefit Sharing in Nepal

Reducing poverty by promoting the use of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) and Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) in combination with indigenous and traditional knowledge is a pertinent topic in relation to sustainable development concerns. This issue was discussed at a multi-

stakeholder workshop in Nepal, which sought to find paths towards equitable benefit sharing of natural resources in the context of national and international obligations.

During the workshop, leading experts delivered thought provoking presentations from diverse perspectives, including managing NTFPs and MAPs for sustainable livelihoods, micro-enterprise promotion and sustainable management and harvesting.

Millions of people living in poverty depend heavily on NTFPs as a major contributor to their livelihoods. Practical innovations for inclusive conservation of natural resources can only be achieved if poverty reduction is at the core of the conservation approach. This workshop highlighted the need for adequate discussion concerning topics such as NTFPs and their contribution to poverty alleviation.

Visualizing the Law

The Regional Environmental Law Programme Asia (RELPA) and the Thailand Country Programme piloted an initiative to “map the law” in a coastal district of southern Thailand.

Interns from Chulalongkorn University Law Faculty in Thailand and the University of Colorado Law School in the United States researched laws and regulations, surveyed communities and government authorities in Kuraburi district, and provided their data to GIS mapping specialists.

Results of their efforts produced visual images of how government laws and regulations, the jurisdictions of government authorities and community-made rules for natural resource management overlap and in some cases conflict with each other. Products produced from this pilot project are two booklets – one targeted at government authorities and NGOs and another targeted at communities. By relying on the maps, the booklets make clear the relationships between rules and authorities in one area of coastal Thailand. Additionally, they show how those relationships impact livelihoods and sustainable resource use. Methodology used in this project will be applied to a different ecosystem type in another part of Thailand and eventually, will be tested in other parts of the region as well.

ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Support to the Phasing Out of the Danish Assisted Programmes
Location: Thailand. Partner: DANIDA

Improving livelihoods in Shigar through integrated planning and development of cultural, natural and built environments
Location: Pakistan. Partner: DGCS

Support Local Level Policies Favouring Livelihoods Sustainability
Location: Pakistan. Partner: SDC

Sumernet Research
Location: Lao PDR. Partner: Sumernet

World Bank Civil Society Small Grant
Location: Lao PDR.
Partner: World Bank

Biodiversity Corridors Decree
Location: Viet Nam. Partner: MONRE

Secretariat support and coordination of activities for the Technical Advisory Panel of the GMS-CEP
Location: Asia Region. Partner: ADB

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Asia’s key issues surrounding forest management include reducing deforestation, forest degradation, illegal logging and trade, promoting healthy ecosystems, sustainable forest management for conservation and to improve livelihoods on a gender sensitive and inclusive basis. The Regional Forest Programme (RFP) addresses these issues by promoting appropriate levels of participation to ensure sustainable forest management for countries with a diverse amount of forest coverage, ranging from, for example, three percent in Pakistan to 72 percent in Bhutan.

The current RFP comprises two global initiatives: Strengthening Voices for Better Choices (SVBC), with a governance and policy focus, and Livelihoods and Landscapes Strategy (LLS) with an integrated landscape approach. Additional focus lies in strengthening Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) in Southeast Asia and the Pacific through a programme that seeks to provide NGOs with information and skills to enhance their participation in FLEG-related policy-making and implementation.

In 2008 the RFP has been redesigned to build a strong thematic programme with strategic links to Climate Change and water.

Reforestation
and establishing
tree plantations
are not absolute
solutions to
rehabilitating
forests

Forest Landscape Restoration and Biodiversity in China

Going beyond just planting trees, the benefits of forest restoration include addressing Climate Change, conserving biodiversity and protecting the world's water supplies. Recently, Asia has exhibited an annual gain in tree cover, which can be attributed to China's reforestation effort. Surely this is a noteworthy phenomenon when considering that much of the world is undergoing a decrease in tree cover.

"China is a key nation for forest landscape restoration efforts with a wealth of experience to share and opportunities on a scale rarely found elsewhere," said Stewart Maginnis, Head of IUCN's Forest Conservation Programme.

For example, the Green for Grain project subsidizes farmers to convert farmland on steep slopes into forests and grasslands on upper Changjiang, and upper and middle Yellow River. In another effort Beijing introduced a carbon sequestration campaign that allows the public to buy back the carbon they have emitted into the air.

Although China has made great strides in countering forest loss, the strategies themselves often need further revision. Regenerated forests in China, usually monoculture plantations, tend to have low biodiversity. IUCN's Livelihoods and Landscapes Strategy presented work at a pilot

site in the Miyun Watershed, a major source of Beijing's water. The project incorporates strategic logging of certain conifer trees to accommodate other species' growth and in turn, biodiversity.

Stewart Maginnis, stressed that a balance between the well-being of humans and that of the forest must be reached, and reforestation and establishing tree plantations should not be the absolute solutions to rehabilitating forests.

Common understanding creates successful forest governance in Sri Lanka

For decades, the government of Sri Lanka has been concerned about degradation in the Knuckles forest, a mountainous area of central Sri Lanka. Its answer was to create the Knuckles Conservation Forest (KCF) in 2000. The declaration of the KCF was rightly seen as a major victory for conservation, however, it also had a negative impact on the livelihoods of local villagers, reducing their incomes by up to 40 percent.

In 2006 IUCN chose the KCF as a pilot site for its project Strengthening Voices for Better Choices (SVBC) to address forest governance issues. After three years, the Knuckles pilot site shows promising improvements in governance. By using IUCN Sri Lanka's broad network, support was

mobilized throughout the country, villagers formed marketing societies, private land owners established an NGO called Eco-Friends and information flows have influenced decision makers.

In 2008, communities in the KCF have started reaping the benefits of proactive participation in local governance processes. SVBC has helped to promote adaptive management, build confidence and create transparency. The voices emerging are increasingly clear and strategic, promising a better future for forests in Sri Lanka.

Forest law enforcement and governance and civil society

In a ground breaking meeting of civil society and governments, representatives from 25 NGOs and institutions, working in 11 countries in Southeast Asia and the Pacific met to explore the role for NGOs in forest monitoring and law enforcement. Participants analyzed current national timber tracking systems, identifying strengths and weaknesses and considered what national and international NGOs, as well as regional organizations such as ASEAN can do to strengthen timber tracking systems in the region.

The meeting coincided with the launch of the ASEAN Regional Knowledge Network on FLEG, an information-sharing network for individuals and institutions on FLEG.



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FOREST MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES

Livelihoods and Landscape Strategy (Asia Component)

Location: Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam. Partner: DGIS

Strengthening Voices for Better Choices

Location: Sri Lanka, Viet Nam, Ghana, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Brazil and global component. Partner: EC

Enhancing Civil Society Participation in FLEG-related processes in the Asia Pacific Region

Location: Asia Region. Partner: IUCN Netherlands Members Committee

China-Africa FLEGT Project

Location: China. Partner: DFID

Practical Innovations for Inclusive Conservation and Sustainable Livelihoods

Location: Nepal. Partner: SDC

ADB BCI Lao Corridors Component

Location: Lao PDR. Partner: WWF



On the Ganges, India © Ganesh Pangare

WATER AND WETLANDS

Asia's wetlands sustain millions of communities. These resources are experiencing rapid degradation due to over-extraction of fresh water, drainage, pollution and numerous other human activities and natural events. The transboundary nature of our water resources requires a management response that addresses the needs of multiple nations and a diverse range of stakeholders. To address this, IUCN focuses on conducting multi-stakeholder dialogues among government agencies, civil society leaders, the private sector and other actors in an effort to develop better water governance for transboundary rivers in the region. An example of this process is the Mekong Region Water Dialogues project, which successfully entered its second stage in 2008. It is a prime example of the broader application of dialogues, tools and concepts that the water programme seeks to implement across the region, to ensure our water resources are shared equitably and managed wisely.

First fish harvest since 2004 in Tanguar Haor

After a four year hiatus, the people of Tanguar Haor can fish again thanks to the 'Community Based Sustainable Management of Tanguar Haor' project, launched by the Deputy Commissioner of Sunamganj. With support from IUCN Bangladesh and its partners this project has led to clear policy results at the local level in the foothills of Meghalaya. Implemented in 2006, in both the Tahipur and Dharmapasha upazilas of the Sunamganj district, the project promotes local rural community capacity building in an effort to share

management responsibilities in regards to water, fisheries, forest and other resources. The overarching strategy is two pronged, aimed at generating income while simultaneously keeping long-term conservation as a primary goal.

Women's Society restores small tank, pond and smiles in Kammandahaluwa

Under a small grant scheme in IUCN Sri Lanka the Wilpotha Kantha Ithurum Parishramaya (Women's Saving Effort-Wilpotha), a small NGO from Wilpotha in Puttalam, was able to restore a village tank and a pond used

IUCN focuses on conducting multi-stakeholder dialogues to develop better water governance for transboundary rivers in the region

for bathing in Kadjuwatte village in the Kammandhaluwa Grama Niladhari Division of the Pallama Divisional Secretariat.

With assistance from the Community Conservation Support Fund, a new project emerged called Dilena Tharu or ‘Sparking Stars’. The project helped to irrigate 23 hectares of uncultivated paddy lands – bringing additional income to 60 families. It has generated additional income through the formation of 40 sustainable home gardens and in addition, 25 women received assistance on the production of handicrafts made from reeds surrounding the tank.

Water for Food and Ecosystem Framework Strategy underway for Viet Nam

Over 30 representatives from various Vietnamese ministries, institutes

and development centres attended a study tour focused on understanding priority issues of the Water for Food and Ecosystem (WFE) and strengthening relationships between sectors and organizations involved in the projects implementation.

The partnership aims to facilitate cross-sector collaboration for Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in Viet Nam, enabling both food production and ecosystems to thrive.

Two sites were visited during the case study tour, both North Duong River Irrigation System and the Xuan Thuy National Park, in order to enable participants to discuss water resource utilization and management practices and to learn about the biodiversity value of the park. With the first phase of the project complete, further WFE initiatives will commence.

WATER AND WETLANDS INITIATIVES

Mekong Region Water Dialogues
Location: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam. Partner: Finland

Community Based Sustainable Management of Tanguar Haor
Location: Bangladesh. Partner: SDC

Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetlands in Nepal
Location: Nepal. Partner: UNDP/GEF

Balochistan Partnership for Sustainable Development
Location: Pakistan. Partner: RNE

Developing a National Wetlands Policy
Location: Pakistan. Partner: UNDP

The Development and Implementation of the Water Partnership “Water for Food and Ecosystems” Viet Nam
Location: Viet Nam.
Partner: Netherlands

PROTECTED AREAS

Protected Areas are special places created to conserve the richness and variety of life, natural processes and associated cultural values, usually termed as national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, nature reserves and game reserves. IUCN’s Protected Areas Programme aims to strengthen capacity for protected area establishment and management across the Asia region by enhancing the knowledge, skills and competence of managers, planners and decision-makers. In recent years, Asia has shown an impressive energy to create Protected Areas and many countries have rallied behind the idea of them but problems persist, including legislative and institutional frameworks that are out of step with current thinking, poor human and financial capacity, denial of community access to natural resources and a failure to mainstream Protected Areas across other socioeconomic sectors. With active participation from Members, Commissions and partners, IUCN Asia’s work ranges from assessing the status of coastal protection within marine and coastal Protected Areas, developing new management plans in mountainous regions, working with conservationists and governments to protect grasslands, preparing new laws on biodiversity and supporting the inscription of new World Heritage sites throughout Asia. Our approach is to generate, integrate, and disseminate information and knowledge on the most appropriate responses to emerging protected area issues in the region.

Evaluating the effectiveness of Korea’s Protected Areas system

The landscape of the Republic of Korea is dominated by hills and rugged mountains separated by wide valleys and contains a wide diversity of forest types, wetlands and coastal areas. The Government of South Korea has long recognized the importance of protection of the environment especially its rare species and important biological sites. The national protected area

system was established in 1967 with the creation of Jirisan National Park and there are now 20 national parks across the country supplemented by a range of other Protected Areas managed at provincial and local levels. IUCN is working with the Ministry of Environment and Korea National Park Service to evaluate in a comprehensive, systematic and participatory way the effectiveness of the protected area system.

The work draws on IUCN’s and the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA’s) global expertise in protected area management effectiveness evaluation to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in the system so that an adaptive management approach can be developed. This will ensure that Korea’s national protected area system is better placed to cope with the pressures of increased threats but also capitalize on the emerging op-



Flowing out of the Central Karakoram National Park in Northern Pakistan, the Hoper Glacier, brings essential water supplies to sustain valley communities © IUCN

portunities to improve conservation. The project is allowing South Korea to benchmark its practices against international protected area best practice.

Using traditional Protected Areas, and other community-based natural resource management tools in Nepal, Pakistan and Tibet

The Hindu Kush-Karakoram-Himalaya (HKKH) regional project supports developing capacity to better understand and manage high altitude ecosystems from a systems perspective and is focused on three Protected Areas: Sagarmatha National Park in Nepal, the Central Karakoram National Park (CKNP) in Pakistan and Qomolangma Nature Preserve in the Tibet Autonomous Region of China.

This multi-country, multi-partner initiative is aimed at improving the planning and management of mountain resources at local, national and regional levels. Much of the initiative has centred on adding value to finding a more flexible conservation model using traditional Protected Areas, community run Protected Areas and other community based natural

resource management tools through the development of a management planning framework.

Work with HKKH will continue and IUCN's long standing presence in Northern Areas of Pakistan will ensure continuity and sustainability for the work being done.

Living in Protected Areas

Safeguarding Biodiversity for Poverty Reduction Project (SBPRP) worked with community, government and partners in pilot sites located next to or within Protected Areas in Lao PDR, Cambodia and Viet Nam, supporting co-management to reduce poverty and enhance conservation.

The project found that the primary agents of ecological degradation are not local communities, but external commercial interests illegally extracting natural resources to maximize short-term profits. The poorer sections of local communities are becoming increasingly vulnerable as a result; to date there is no clear evidence that they will be able to find alternative livelihoods when Protected Areas natural resources become exhausted.

PROTECTED AREAS INITIATIVES

East Asian Protected Areas Phase I

Location: East Asia Partner: NCB-Japan

Hin Nam No Protected Area Management

Location: Lao PDR.

Partner: Government of Lao

Institutional Consolidation for the Coordinated and Integrated Monitoring of Natural Resources towards Sustainable Development and Environmental Conservation in the HKKH Complex

Location: China, Nepal, Pakistan. Partner: DGIS

Korean NP Service PA evaluation

Location: Korea (RK). Partner: KNPS

Promote PA comanagement initiatives in Bangladesh

Location: Bangladesh.

Partner: USAID/IRG

Protected Areas Legislation Guidelines

Location: Regional. Partner: IUCN-ELC

Temperate Grassland Conservation

Location: Asia Region.

Partner: Kaplan Fund



Fishermen, Sri Lanka © IUCN

MARINE AND COASTAL

The demand for coastal and marine products and services is rapidly increasing in the Asia region. This has led to unsustainable practices that steadily undermine the capacity of these ecosystems. The Regional Coastal and Marine Programme supports sound policy and integrated coastal management interventions as a balanced response to coastal ecosystem issues and to help meet the long-term needs of their users. A key area of focus for IUCN has been building local capacity to strengthen marine and coastal management in Asia.

Providing Equitable Access to Coastal Resources in Indonesia

Thousands of poor people live along and depend upon resources from the Tomini Bay on Sulawesi Island for their livelihoods. This dependency is increasingly threatened by diminishing catches due to decreasing stocks of fish and other marine resources caused by destructive fishing habits and degradation of the marine and coastal environment. A major obstacle to sustainable management of the resources is attributed to a lack of appropriate inclusive comanagement institutional mechanisms.

Operating in three provinces, the Tomini Bay Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods and Management (SUSCLAM) project works to establish improved ecosystem governance mechanisms and to protect and create sustainable livelihoods through equitable access to, and sustainable management of, coastal and marine resources.

The project reached full-scale implementation in 2008. Activities surrounding SUSCLAM include stakeholder meetings and training sessions, initiation of collaborative

management mechanisms, collection of secondary and primary data of Tomini Bay's ecosystem and development of community action plans.

Green Coast: for nature and people after the tsunami

Green Coast, focusing on five tsunami-affected countries including India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Malaysia released its final results in 2008. It was implemented by Wetland's International and other IUCN Netherland's Members with support from the IUCN Secretariat in Thailand and Sri Lanka.

Green Coast undertook environmental and socio-economic assessments, with the aim to influence policies and strategies for coastal rehabilitation and management. Implementation of community based rehabilitation projects was through a small grants facility working with community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations and universities.

Key lessons learned from Green Coast included: community participation leads to sustainable results; women form the backbone of group

activities; good planning, coordination and leadership leads to visible results; clearance from donors to self-sustaining operations is necessary; and that collaboration with local authorities is vital to programmatic success.

Coastal ecosystem rehabilitation in Tsunami-affected countries

The Ecologically and Socio-economically Sound Coastal Ecosystem Rehabilitation and Conservation in Tsunami Affected Countries of the Indian Ocean, is a three year project under the MFF umbrella.

With investment in severely damaged and degraded ecosystems, the project aims to restore coastal biodiversity and provision of ecological services and operates in two pilot sites, one in southern Thailand and in northwest Sri Lanka.

The project's activities develop a sound understanding of ecological and socio-economic conditions and needs, in addition to promoting participation and partnership building among coastal stakeholders for planning and long-term management of these ecosystems.

MARINE AND COASTAL INITIATIVES

Ecologically and socio-economically sound coastal ecosystem rehabilitation and conservation in Tsunami-affected countries of the Indian Ocean

Location: Sri Lanka, Thailand. Partner: BMZ

Mangroves for the Future Initiative

Location: India, Indonesia, Maldives,

Sri Lanka, Seychelles, Thailand.

Partner: SIDA, NORAD, AUSAID

Rehabilitating Coastal Ecosystems in a Post-Tsunami Context

Location: Asia Region. Partner: OAPN

Management of Climate Change impacts on coral reefs and coastal ecosystems in Tsunami affected areas of the Andaman Sea

Location: Asia Region. Partner: Finland

Development of MCPA toolkit for managers

Location: Asia Region. Partner: UNEP

Development of database for EU MCPA project

Location: Asia Region. Partner: UNEP-WCMC

Demonstrate and quantify value of Biodiversity atoll ecosystem conservation to the Maldives:

Location: Maldives. Partner: UNDP

Tomini Bay Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods and Management Project

Location: Indonesia. Partner: CIDA

Promoting monitoring and evaluation support for the TEI project on sustainable management of mangrove resources through local community action

Location: Thailand. Partner:

Chevron/Unocal Foundation

Capacity Development for the Waste Water Management Authority – Rehabilitation for

Environmental Effects of the Tsunami

Location: Thailand. Partner: DANIDA

Green Coast Project

Location: Sri Lanka.

Partner: Wetlands International

Post Tsunami Ecosystem Restoration Project – Ampara

Location: Sri Lanka. Partner: CIDA

Participatory Coastal Zone Restoration in the Eastern Province of post-tsunami Sri Lanka - PDFB Design of GEF Project

Location: Sri Lanka. Partner: IFAD

Supporting the implementation of the Marine Turtle Conservation Action Plan

Location: Viet Nam. Partner: DANIDA

Building Capacity for ICM in Viet Nam

Location: Viet Nam. Partner: NOAA

Community based marine turtle nesting beach conservation in Quang Tri province, Central Viet Nam

Location: Viet Nam. Partner: DANIDA, USFWS

Ha Long Bay Management Institutional Strengthening

Location: Viet Nam. Partner: UNESCO

BIODIVERSITY AND SPECIES CONSERVATION

The Asian Continent is home to a third of the world's recognized biodiversity hotspots and 60 percent of the world's human population. Conserving the rich biodiversity of Asia, while catering to the needs of an ever increasing human population has become a major challenge for the conservation biologists. The Regional Species and Biodiversity Programme (RSBP) strives to address this challenge through promotion of best practices that maximize positive links between sustainable ecosystem management and the livelihoods of people that depend on these biological resources. We provide technical support to countries in Asia to assess the conservation status of their species and to develop species specific conservation management plans for threatened species. RSBP also provides technical support to countries in Asia to implement multilateral environmental agreements such as Convention on Biological Diversity and Ramsar Convention. RSBP is also involved in capacity building within countries in Asia through production and dissemination of knowledge tools and providing training.

More Species Endangered in Viet Nam, says the Red Data Book

Nearly 900 species are threatened with extinction and at least 10 more have vanished from Viet Nam, according to the latest Viet Nam Red Data Book of endangered plants and animals released in June by the Viet Nam Academy of Science and Technology and IUCN.

The book revealed an alarming picture of Viet Nam's fauna and flora richness. A large number of species previously listed as vulnerable are now endangered and a high percentage of this group is now critically endangered.

From 1992-1996, the most severe threatened status for species in Viet

Nam was endangered. Now the most serious status is extinct.

Yet the current Red Data Book also contains encouraging information for the status of biodiversity in the area. A number of species that were considered either extinct in the wild or extinct in Viet Nam have been found in neighbouring countries.

Furthermore, there are highly valuable, yet critically endangered species that have exhibited population recovery and are no longer seriously threatened, thanks to conservation efforts.

The Red Data Book is a tool to assist Viet Nam's conservation efforts by providing a threatened status assessment of species as well as solutions for recovering the community

Conserving the rich biodiversity of Asia, while catering to the needs of an ever increasing human population is a major challenge

size of species experiencing significant individual loss. The Viet Nam Red List and the Viet Nam Red Data Book were developed over five years by a team of more than 70 scientists from 10 national and international organizations, using the IUCN criteria for categorizing species.

Japan joins Countdown 2010 declaration to halt or reduce the loss of biodiversity

Japan commits to implement the “Kobe Call for Action for Biodiversity”, agreed at G8 Environment Ministers Meeting 2008.

As host of the 10th CBD Conference of Parties (CoP 10) in 2010 it will also undertake every possible effort to profile the 2010 target through its activities, such as the Satoyama Initiative to collect and disseminate information on traditional and local knowledge and practices for living in harmony with nature.

“Biodiversity loss is a global issue that calls for local solutions,” says Sebastian Winkler, Head of Countdown 2010. “Today’s signing ceremony bridges the local to the global. We’re inviting others to follow suit.”

In 2010, all 191 Parties of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity will gather in Nagoya to review the international achievements to reduce biodiversity loss and agree on new targets. The city of Nagoya also



122 amphibian species have become extinct in the last 25 years. 38 species of those are indigenous to Asia. D'Arny's Shrub Frog, Sri Lanka © Vimukthi Weerathunghe, IUCN

contributes its achievements to the global cities network Local Action for Biodiversity.

India's wild medicinal plants threatened by over-exploitation

Key species of wild medicinal plants in India have declined due to over-collection to supply domestic and foreign medicinal markets, IUCN and TRAFFIC researchers report. The report focuses on seven plant species of conservation concern protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Wild plant species form the foundation of traditional health care such as Chinese medicine, Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Tibetan medicines, which are practiced throughout much

of Asia, Europe and North America. Many of the medicinal plants in trade in India thrive on the plants collected in alpine regions of Nepal, where hundreds of tonnes of rhizomes, are harvested by thousands of collectors who supply middlemen to large-scale wholesalers in Nepal and India.

Researchers found that all seven medicinal plants species in the study are declining through over-harvesting. Cultivation is routinely promoted as the answer to dwindling supplies and over-collection of wild medicinal plants. Some species are difficult to grow and others take years before they can be commercially harvested. Promotion of sustainable wild collection practices and *ex-situ* cultivation may be the only way to save some of these threatened species.

BIODIVERSITY AND SPECIES CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

Agrobiodiversity Project

Location: Cambodia, Laos, Viet Nam. Partner: DANIDA

Asia Regional Biodiversity Conservation Programme

Location: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Viet Nam. Partner: Winrock

Countdown 2010 Initiative

Location: China, Viet Nam. Partner: EC

Building awareness and partnerships for implementing the Amphibian Conservation Action Plan

Location: Asia Region. Partner: KNCF

ECBP Medicinal Plants Project

Location: China. Partner: EC

Conservation of Asian Elephants in Bangladesh

Location: Bangladesh. Partner: USFWS

Access and Benefit Sharing Regime in Bangladesh

Location: Bangladesh. Partner: ICIMOD

One Stop Service – Facilitating conservation of medicinal plant and traditional health service to ethnic communities of Chittagong Hills Tract

Location: Bangladesh. Partner: KNCF

Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation into the Juniper Forest Ecosystem Production Landscape

Location: Pakistan. Partners: UNDP/GEF

Mountain Areas Conservancy Project

Location: Pakistan. Partners: UNDP/GEF

Capacity Building on CITES

Location: Lao PDR. Partner: SDC

CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas

Location: Lao PDR. Partners: GEF

Organizing Resource Generation and Nutritional Support (ORGANS)

Location: Bangladesh. Partner: CARE

BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND NATURE

In Asia, the private sector is the engine of growth that propels countries forward. The combination of sustaining high economic growth rates while not compromising on environmental conservation and restoration is one of the biggest challenges facing the region. Guided by a clear set of principles that respects mutual roles, Asia's Business and Biodiversity Programme established in 2008 has made steady steps forward in its influence and performance over the year with more and more Asian businesses seeking to collaborate with IUCN on conservation and sustainable development issues. This major shift in business thinking has been pioneered by several leading companies that recognize sustainability as a core requirement for success.

Sri Lanka 2048 looks at Business As Unusual: How can companies do well while doing good?

The private sector is acknowledged as the engine of our economic growth. Although, how long can this 'engine' keep running without addressing its impacts on society and the natural environment? With rising global public concern for a more clean and safe environment, how best can businesses respond to environmental challenges while finding new opportunities to grow and innovate?

These and related questions were raised in Sri Lanka 2048, the series of TV debates exploring Sri Lanka's prospects for a sustainable future in the 21st Century. Business As Unusual, looked at both domestic and international markets across a range of industries and found that many companies already address not just financial but also social and environmental bottom lines. Adopting cleaner production practices have helped increase profits by being conscious of available resources and careful with waste.

The debate explores the results of corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies and practices. It revealed that a significant number of companies are actively applying CSR principles, with slightly over half (53 percent) having environmental components already in their CSR. The survey also found that local companies were stronger on CSR than the local operations of multinational companies.

Can large infrastructure projects be environmentally sustainable?

The Dhamra Port project in Orissa has attracted considerable attention due to its proximity to vulnerable Olive



Holcim quarry, Sri Lanka © Vimukthi Weerathunghe, IUCN

Ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), nesting grounds of Gahirmatha. IUCN has been advising port developer Dhamra Port Company Ltd. (DPCL), a joint venture between TATA Steel and Larsen and Toubro (L&T), on how to mitigate the impact of the development on the Olive Ridley turtle, which is categorised as Vulnerable on The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Several major mitigation recommendations of IUCN are currently being implemented by DPCL, including use of turtle protective deflectors on dredgers and on lighting strategies to reduce sky glow that can confuse newborn turtles as they make their way from the beach to the sea. An urgent need for a comprehensive environmental management plan for the port facility has been identified.

IUCN's work in the area may have wider implications. This project has shown that trawler fishing, which often inadvertently traps and kills turtles in nets, is the most serious threat to turtle populations in the area. This can be dramatically reduced by use of Turtle Excluder Devices on nets but more work is needed before this practice becomes common.

Rapid Trade and Environment Assessment for Lao PDR

The Committee for Planning and Investment worked with IUCN and other partners to lead a multi-sector and multi-stakeholder analysis of the potential environmental implications of current and potential trade negotiations in Lao PDR.

The analysis found that trade liberalization will have vast impacts on Lao

PDR's natural environment. Trade led economic growth is likely to result in an increased burden on the natural resource base and the environment. At the same time, there is real potential for the private sector in Lao PDR to harness environmentally friendly technologies and best practices and to develop "green" niche exports.

These impacts need to be identified, understood and well-managed to ensure the best development outcomes for the country.

As Lao PDR continues down the road of trade liberalization and economic integration, the institutional and regulatory setting will be an important variable in determining whether the outcome is positive or negative on the economy as well as, the environment.

BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND BIODIVERSITY INITIATIVES

Ecosystem services and poverty alleviation research programme – situational analysis

Location: South Asia. Partner: DFID

IUCN-DPCL Partnership - Promoting Sustainable Environmental Alliances

Location: India. Partner: DPCL

Environmental monitoring service

Location: Bangladesh. Partner: Chevron

Raising Environmental Consciousness in Society Project

Location: Sri Lanka. Partner: RNE

Holcim Partnership Programme

Location: Sri Lanka. Partner: Holcim

SANDEE

Location: Nepal. Partner: SIDA, NORAD

Building Coalitions for Change to implement Pro-Poor Environmental Fiscal Reforms

Location: Pakistan. Partner: SDC

Stora Enso Study

Location: Lao PDR. Partner: Burapha

IUCN Holcim Cooperation Programme – Viet Nam

Location: Viet Nam. Partner: Holcim

CLIMATE CHANGE

Asia has highly variable climates and ecosystems ranging from tropical rain forests to deserts. Multiple stresses make most Asian countries highly vulnerable to environmental changes and Climate Change is likely to reduce their resilience and adaptive capacity even further. These stresses include floods, drought, sea-level rise, cyclones, desertification, deforestation, forest degradation, coral bleaching, the spread of diseases and impacts on food security. Asia has three of the world's top five emitters of greenhouse gases. It also contains the most flood prone countries in the world, as well as some of the most drought prone. The vast Tibetan plateau has the largest body of ice outside polar caps and these glaciers are retreating at the fastest rate of any in the world. Scientists predict that 80 percent of these glaciers will disappear within 30 years if current warming rates are maintained. This will undoubtedly affect water, food and energy supplies for billions of people. Climate observation in the region is poor, with the IPCC calling the greater Himalaya a data "white spot". There is a great need to link initiatives across the region in order to share information for better Climate Change policies.

There is a great need to link initiatives across the region in order to share information for better Climate Change policies

Climate Change and conflict in Pakistan

Pakistan is a relatively low emitter of carbon, yet 11 of the last 12 years rank among the warmest years since 1850. Glaciers and snow cover is declining and heat waves have become more frequent over most land areas. This will lead to dramatic declines in water quantity and quality affecting food production. It is widely agreed that Climate Change will worsen the living conditions of millions of farmers, fisher folk and forest dependent communities. Crop failure and loss of livestock will lead to food insecurity. This will potentially induce serious conflicts over access to natural resources.

Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan are also very vulnerable to the impacts of Climate Change. These impacts are likely to affect the agriculture, forestry and water resources of the region as well as human settlements, energy use and industrial growth. IUCN sees Climate Change as a cross cutting issue that requires a coordinated and prioritized research program that feeds directly into policy. Recommended actions include policy review, assessments of impacts on ecosystem goods and services, awareness and capacity building programmes to ensure Climate Change is mainstreamed into development planning and initiatives.

Mr. Hameed Ullah Jan Afridi, Federal Minister for Environment noted that Pakistan is taking the issue very seriously and is working urgently to mitigate the negative impacts and adapt to the realities of this phenomenon. He called for assistance by IUCN and other organizations to help the government develop robust adaptation strategies so that negative impacts of Climate Change can be minimized. He expressed his commitment to meet national and international obligations for combating Climate Change.

Rana the frog: Climate Change adaptation ambassador in Bangladesh

IUCN Bangladesh has created a character called Rana, a clever frog who can convey positive Climate Change adaptation messages to primary, secondary and madrasa students in Noakhali District. Rana appears on stickers, posters, in community theatre and in a video presentation.

Focused discussions with school children in the district revealed that many had basic levels of awareness of Climate Change but were confused about appropriate adaptation actions and were overwhelmed by the sense that the situation is hopeless. Rana has been introduced to address these sentiments.

The goal of the initiative is to raise awareness on climate variability and its impacts so that vulnerable people in these areas are able to adapt. The students are envisaged as disseminators of new information into the community. Reactions have been highly positive, giving Rana an extended stay as ambassador for Climate Change adaptation throughout Bangladesh.

Regional Climate Change Training Course

Government officials and climate experts from seven Asian nations gathered in Ha Noi for an IUCN supported training programme on Climate Change impacts and solutions. Participants learned methods for identifying vulnerable sectors in their respective nations and on an international scale. The course covered community and

national planning, preventive action plans, the potential effect of Climate Change on specific industries and resources, strategic planning to counteract the causes of Climate Change and ways to increase public participation and education.

The Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation programme, organised by the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute (SMHI), aspires to communicate Swedish and European knowledge of methods for assessing and counteracting the consequences of a changed climate to developing nations.

The international training programmes are designed for persons qualified to participate in reform processes of strategic importance at different levels and who hold a position in their home organisation with a mandate to run processes of change. The Asia regional session included participants from China, Malaysia, North Korea, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam.

CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVES

Promotion of adaptability to Climate Change and climate variability in Bangladesh
Location: Bangladesh. Partner: NCAP

Climate Change Adaptation Targets Initiative
Location: Bangladesh. Partner: NCAP

Awareness and education on the impacts of Climate Change
Location: Bangladesh. Partner: Euroconsult

Community Based Implementation and compliance of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA's) – Biodiversity related issues in linking to climate variability
Location: Bangladesh. Partner: UNU

Removing barriers to capacity building in LDC's
Location: ELG-2 Sri Lanka. Partner: APN

Institution of Technical Advisory Panel on Climate Change
Location: Pakistan. Development Partners: DFID, NORAD

Climate Proofing Toolkits for MFF
Location: Regional. Partner: UNEP

Global Climate Change Adaptation Center Scoping Survey
Location: Regional. Partner: Macarthur Foundation



DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Environmental facets are essential components of human well-being and contribute positively to human security, providing basic materials for good life, good health and good social relations. Yet, these are being damaged and overexploited, ultimately to the detriment of humans. In addition, increasing incidence and intensity of natural disasters and Climate Change are having overarching impacts on the environment. Sustainable development, often of the most vulnerable sectors of society, is thus being undermined. One of the key reasons why this damage continues is that an integrated approach is not adopted in disaster risk management. Very often ecological services and their indirect economic values are omitted completely from assessments. Therefore, mainstreaming both ecological and economical concerns into the development agenda and integrating them into disaster management is essential.

After the 2004 Asian Tsunami, IUCN acted promptly and undertook many initiatives, including rapid environmental assessments, development of guidelines, awareness raising, training programmes and secondment of staff for environmental integration into post-tsunami recovery plans. Similarly, after the 2005 Pakistan earthquake IUCN actively supported initiatives in order to integrate an environmental component into post disaster response.



After the earthquake in Pakistan © IUCN

IUCN recognizes the critical necessity for integrating environmental considerations into disaster management

Environmental Safeguards in Disaster Management

During the Tsunami response, IUCN recognized the critical necessity for integrating environmental considerations into disaster management interventions. While working with other partners, in particular humanitarian and development agencies, trends like preparedness, emergency response, recovery and rebuilding phases were actualized. This work was further enhanced through IUCN's partnership with CARE International.

Through the lessons learned, IUCN developed a manual, "Incorporating environmental safeguards into disaster risk management" made possible with financial support from OAPN, Ministry of Environment, Spain. This three-volume manual details ecosystem linkage with human well-being. Approaches to incorporate environment into mainstream disaster management programmes and tools, such as worksheets for planning and implementation of environmentally-infused disaster risk management initiatives, are outlined in the document. Two out of the three volumes are currently available with the third due to be released shortly.

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION INITIATIVES

Rehabilitating Coastal Ecosystems
In A Post-Tsunami Context:
Reinforcement and Extension Phase

Location: Sri Lanka, Thailand, Indonesia, Maldives. Partner: Organismo Autónomo Parques Nacionales – (OAPN) Ministry of Environment, Spain

Relief Sector Partnerships
Location: Sri Lanka. Partner: WWF

Vulnerability and Resilience: Learning Lessons and Integrating Ecosystems into Assessment and Response

Location: Asia Region, Central America

Third party Monitoring for Environmental assessments of projects supported by Asian Development Bank in Earthquake Affected Areas of AJK and NWFP
Location: Pakistan. Partner: ADB

Post-Earthquake Reconstruction and Revitalisation of Extension Services Management Academy

Location: Pakistan. Partner: Autonomous Province of Bolzano, Italy

Support to "Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods in Post-tsunami South Sri Lanka"

Location: Sri Lanka. Partner: CARE International, Sri Lanka

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BILATERAL

AusAID, Australian Government
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KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

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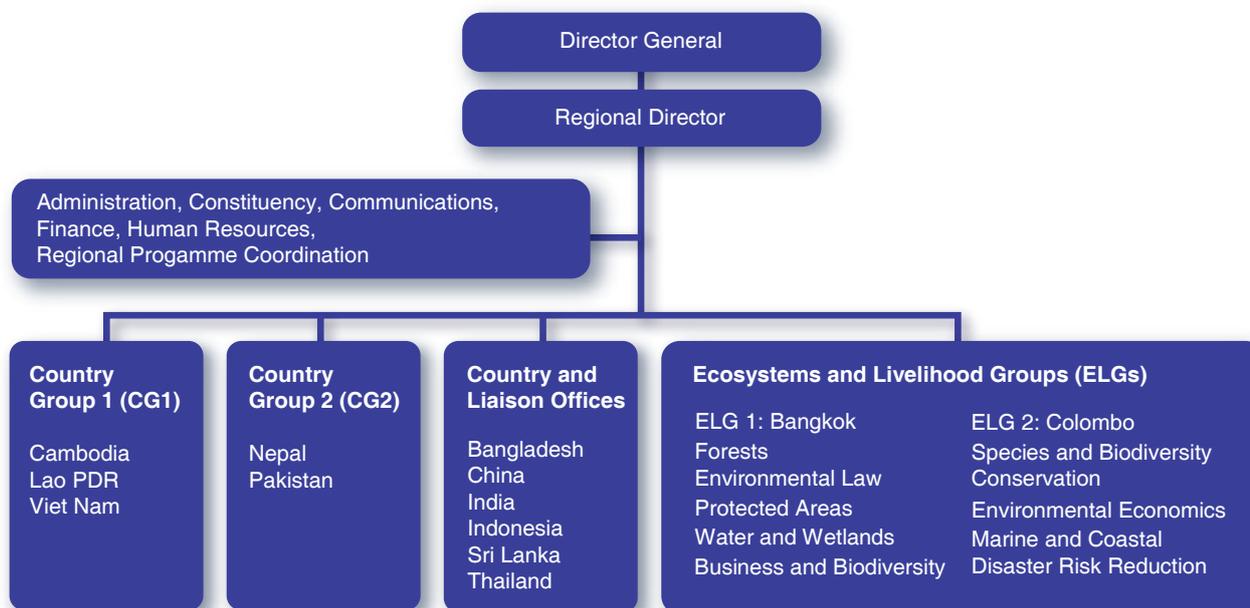
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The organization chart below represents the current structure of IUCN in Asia. IUCN's Asia Regional Office (ARO) oversees 10 country offices and is home to the thematic Ecosystems and Livelihoods Group. Regional and global initiatives are also coordinated from the ARO including Mangroves for the Future (MFF), The Mekong Region Water Dialogues (MRWD) and Livelihoods and Landscapes Strategy (LLS).



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