



# IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management annual report 2023



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## 01

# Foreword from Angela Andrade



PHOTO BY SEAN SOUTHEY

Angela Andrade  
Chair, IUCN Commission on  
Ecosystem Management

2023 was a very significant year in which we continued to position the work carried out by the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management and contribute with knowledge and good practices to Conservation and Sustainable Development. Our membership has been increasing globally, and gradually we have been consolidating a team of volunteers of the highest level, committed and eager to contribute with their experience and knowledge to the work of the IUCN. We are a network of 1,761 members across the world and celebrate the continuous increase of young professionals, who represent the future of our Commission.

This year, we held two steering committees with broad participation, in Kerala, India, and in Sydney, Australia. These were wonderful opportunities to advance our work plan and interact with new regional members.

We had significant participation in the processes associated with COP28, held in Dubai, where several of us had the opportunity to contribute to the core working group established by the Council, to enhance the visibility of the Union, especially related to Nature-based Solutions and the IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions™.

We also highlighted the progress made on the framework of the Red List of Ecosystems, recognized as Headline indicator of Goal A and several targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). Similarly, the Global Ecosystem Typology was formally recommended for adoption into the International Family of Statistical classifications by UN. The UN Group on Earth Observations (GEO) initiated the development of a Global Ecosystem Atlas and has invited the RLE group to engage in the process.

Ecosystem Restoration has been another pillar of our work. The Commission has been very much involved in different processes related to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. The partnership with FAO and SER developed the Standards of Practice to guide Ecosystem Restoration.

All our achievements presented in this publication are only possible with the commitment and conviction of our members. Special thanks to all our Technical Group leaders and Regional Chairs, to our colleagues from the Secretariat, especially Stewart Magginis, the focal point of CEM in the Secretariat, and the CSU who are present every day supporting our work.

Thank you, and we continue forward with our work. The well-being of the planet demands it.

Sincerely,

Angela Andrade,  
IUCN CEM Chair

# 02

## Introduction

Ecosystems worldwide are under increasing pressure due to unsustainable use, overdemand of resources, climate change, degradation, and conversion to other forms of use, such as farmland, plantation forests, and biofuels. Healthy ecosystems are the base off all life on Earth, and it is our responsibility to make efforts to reduce the impact of our actions and ensure a future where ecosystemsthive for all life, including us as humans, to thrive as well.

Since its establishment of the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management in 1996, CEM has contributed to promoting the Ecosystem Approach and developing Ecosystem-based Approaches for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that place human needs at their centre.

The Commission on Ecosystem Management is a diverse, international network of scientists, academics, and practitioners from around the globe. With more than 1,700 members (around 20% being young professionals), we aim to work together to find solutions to local and global issues related to ecosystems and their relationship with people and cultures. We encourage diversity in terms of experience, disciplines, cultures, languages, ages and gender.

The aim of the Commission is to support best practice ecosystem management, both at field and policy levels, and to help realise IUCN's vision of a just world that values and conserves nature.

Every year, CEM's Regional, Thematic and Specialist Groups, and Task Forces submit their reports providing a compilation of their annual highlights, activities and achievements throughout the year. In this publication, you will have the opportunity to learn about the main goals of each region, group and task force, and grasp the most relevant achievements, without overlooking at all the other contributions which could not be mentioned here, of the work led by CEM in 2023, reflecting the efforts of our volunteers to contribute to ecosystem conservation around the globe. You will also have access to latest publications, webinars and relevant websites related to our work. We hope you enjoy and feel inspired to continue working for the protection of our ecosystems!

# 03

## Our Mission

Provide expert guidance on integrated approaches to managing natural and modified ecosystems to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

## Our Goal

Promote and provide guidance for ecosystem-based approaches to landscape and seascape management and enhance the resilience of socio-ecological systems to address global changes.



## 04

## Our Work

In pursuit of our goals and objectives, CEM addresses three substantive objectives that are congruent with and contribute to IUCN's current Programme:

1

Knowledge products that respond to needs related to risk assessment, management, restoration, and sustainable use of ecosystems will be developed and shared as a contribution to the development of Nature-based Solutions.

2

Advice, guidance, and tools will be provided to indigenous peoples and local communities to empower their management, restoration, and sustainable use of ecosystems which will meet local needs and foster their well-being.

3

Science-based authoritative advice and guidance will be made available to policymakers and implementing authorities from local to global levels that pertain to the governance, management, restoration, and sustainable use of ecosystems.

CEM  
Priority  
Areas

The priorities for the current period, 2021–2025, are framed around six priority areas that contribute to the IUCN Programme. Around these main areas, the Commission includes specific relevant themes that have worked previously and where the Commission has expert knowledge.

The six main priority areas for 2021–2025 are:



- Ecosystem Risk Assessment
- Ecosystem Restoration
- Nature-based Solutions (NbS)
- Cultural Practices and Ecosystem Management
- Ecosystem Governance
- Socio-ecological Resilience and Transformation.



# 05

## Our Structure

We have over 30 groups divided into Thematic Groups, Specialist Groups and Task Forces. Each network is focused on building and strengthening communities to achieve specific goals in the different regions worldwide.

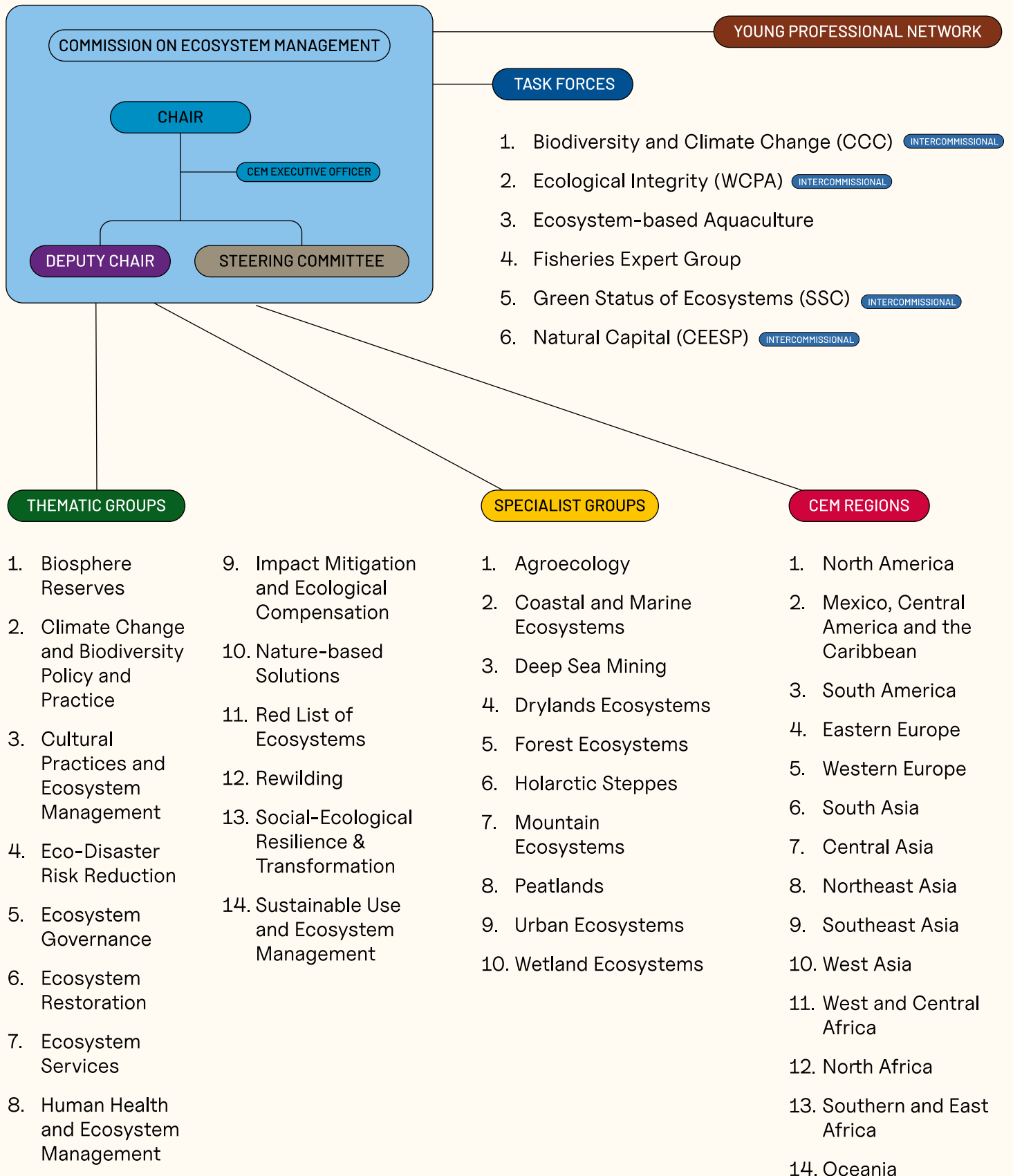
Our Groups are under the leadership of Leads and Co-Leads, and are the main constituent units of the Commission, gathering members with similar expertise and concerns. They provide leadership and promote the capacity to address the IUCN's mission regarding specific topics within the Commission's mandate and they determine and review the status and needs of such topics, develop strategies, and promote specific initiatives to be carried out by Commission members.

CEM's six priority areas were established through the Commission mandate to ensure meaningful contributions to IUCN's 2021–25 Programme. They are CEM's flagship projects and have a significant influence on global decisions engaged by IUCN.

CEM is composed of 14 regions across the world, under the leadership of Regional Chairs and Co-Chairs who, along with members, develop region-specific conservation plans. Regions also collaborate closely with thematic and specialist groups, and task forces to implement specific projects on a local/national and regional level.



# CEM Structure



## 06

# Our Steering Committee

The CEM Steering Committee provides leadership and guides the development and implementation of CEM's work. It also works to facilitate the establishment of CEM's Thematic and Specialist Groups, Task Forces, identify and initiate fundraising opportunities, strengthen partnerships, and promote membership.



Liette Vasseur  
CEM Deputy Chair  
Vice Chair for North America



Pete Smith  
CEM Vice Chair for  
Oceania



Jonathan Hughes  
CEM Vice Chair  
for Europe



Angela Andrade  
CEM Chair



Shalini Dhyani  
CEM Vice Chair  
for Asia



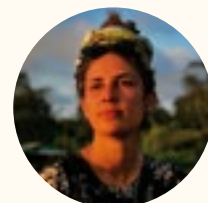
Doris Mutta  
CEM Vice Chair  
for Africa



Bernal Herrera  
CEM Vice Chair  
for Latin America  
and the Caribbean



Stewart Maginnis  
IUCN Deputy Director  
General Programme &  
CEM focal point



Mariana Rivera  
CEM Executive Officer

## 07

# High-level policy events

During 2023, CEM hosted and participated in several important events globally where some of the most relevant topics for the Commission were addressed, and the work of the groups and regions was highlighted to advance and seek collaborations with organisations and governments worldwide.



WATCH CEM COP28  
EVENTS HERE



SCREENSHOTS BY IUCN

## COP28

During COP28 in Dubai, CEM participated in several important panels and side events regarding Nature-based Solutions, the Red List of Ecosystems and Climate Change and Biodiversity. Some relevant panels included the Earth Information Day 2023 hosted by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change panel, which included many international speakers, including CEM Chair Angela Andrade, who spoke on Ecosystem monitoring and interlinkages between climate and the biodiversity crisis. Side events included Nature-based Solutions to Achieve Net-Zero Targets: from Supply Chains to Carbon Markets, hosted at the IUCN Pavilion, where speakers addressed how the NbS Standard™ can contribute to improving carbon market approaches and carbon accounting, a panel hosted at the IUCN Pavilion where IUCN Commission Chairs came together to discuss how working together is fundamental to addressing climate and biodiversity outcomes through NbS, a panel organised by CEM where several participants shared their expertise on insights from the Red List of Ecosystems into mangrove conservation, and a panel on the history and development of the Ecosystem-based Approach launched in 2009 and how Nature-based Solutions may serve as a tool to address the ecosystem crisis.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Global Forum of Ecosystem Restoration

In 2023, CEM supported the development of the 4th Global Forum on Ecosystem Restoration, launched as part of the 10th Society for Ecological Restoration Congress 2023 in Darwin, Australia. During the forum, several CEM members participated on different panels on the important, and often neglected connection between culture and nature, including the role of restoration in enhancing and rebuilding that connection.



PHOTO BY CARA NELSON

## Forest and Livelihoods: Assessment, Research, and Engagement meeting

Several CEM members from Africa, in collaboration with the African Forest Forum AFF, organised the session “Building Resilient Forest-based livelihoods through sustainable ecosystem management approaches” at the Forest and Livelihoods: Assessment, Research, and Engagement FLARE 2023 meeting at CIFOR-ICRAF in Nairobi, Kenya. The session focused on ecosystem management tools and approaches to support the functionality of forests with emphasis on the role of CEM in sustainable forest-based livelihoods including, Nature-based Solutions, cultural practices and traditional knowledge, and the Red List of Ecosystems.



PHOTO BY DORIS MUTTA

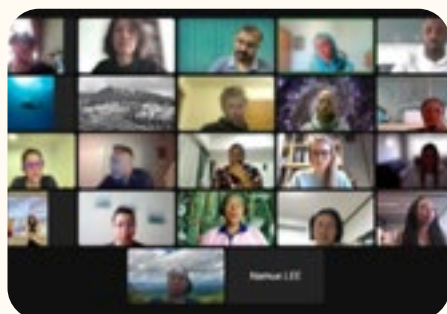
## Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) at the Convention on Biological Diversity



PHOTO BY ANGELA ANDRADE

The Convention on Biological Diversity held the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) in Nairobi last October, where highly relevant topics for CEM were discussed, such as strategies on biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation, NbS and Ecosystem-based Approaches. Some key messages of the event included the need to focus on priority areas for investment and urgent scaling up and there is a need for increasing funding, as well as strengthening monitoring and evaluation; Indigenous and Science-based knowledge should be mainstreamed and robust standards such as IUCN's NbS Global Standard™ should be employed to create impact while adhering to social and ecological safeguards.

## 1<sup>st</sup> CEM Regional Chair Forum



SCREENSHOT BY CEM

In 2023, CEM held its first virtual CEM Regional Chair Forum. This was an excellent opportunity for all CEM Regional Chairs, Co-Chairs, and Steering Committee members to share their experiences, challenges and doubts in their regions, get to know other members, better understand the IUCN tools and platforms, and find potential collaborations that strengthen the bonds and impacts of the Commission.

## 08

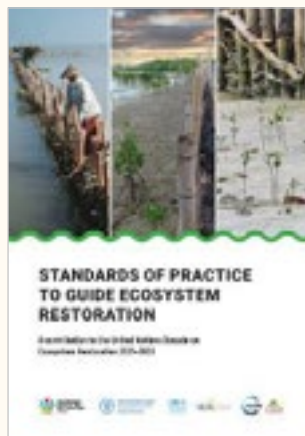
## Highlights



CEM RESOURCES

## Publications

Throughout 2023, we published over 60 publications ranging from scientific publications to guidelines and standards of practice.



ACCESS OUR PAST NEWSLETTERS HERE

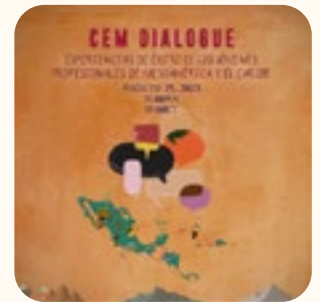
## CEM Newsletter

Every three months we release a new issue of our newsletter, highlighting some of the most relevant projects, publications, and events where CEM members have participated.

WATCH ALL OUR PAST  
DIALOGUES HERE

## CEM Dialogues

CEM hosts a series of webinars on specific topics and initiatives led by CEM groups. Each dialogue is an opportunity to enrich the work of CEM members, promote constructive discussions and encourage other members to participate in developing initiatives. During 2023, we had eight CEM dialogues on different topics, regions and groups, with some of the most relevant sessions being the discussion of the behind-the-scenes process of publishing the books *Wetlands and people at risk* and *What can communities teach us?*, and a dialogue run by the Young Professional Network of Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean which highlighted the work and experience of young professionals in the region.

CEM ERTG YOUTUBE  
CHANNELSERT BLOCKCHAINS  
FOR CONSERVATIONNATURE-POSITIVE  
FOR BUSINESS

## Webinars

Several CEM groups and regions have developed their own webinar series during throughout the years to showcase the work being led by their members. During 2023, the Ecosystem Restoration Thematic Group, the Impact Mitigation and Ecological Compensation Thematic Group, and the Social-Ecological Resilience and Transformation Group held a number of webinars for their members and the work being developed.



## 09

## 2023 Steering Committee Meetings

Each year, the CEM Steering Committee gather twice a year to discuss CEM priorities for the upcoming period.

In March, the 55th Steering Committee meeting was held in the city of Thrissur, Kerala, India. During three days, several topics were addressed, including the revision and approval of group and regional reports, the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) targets approved, how CEM can contribute to the achievement of these goals, as well as CEM's potential contributions to the COP28.

Along with the meeting, a three-day workshop - "Asia Consultative Seminar on Ecosystems, RLE and Nature-based Solutions" - was held in collaboration with the Kerala Forest Research Institute. The first day was hosted and presented by the Young Professional Network of Asia, who shared some of their works and case studies in the region and allowed us to have an insight into the context, issues and potential solutions led by the youth. The second and third days were dedicated to the exposition of the Red List of Ecosystems and Nature-based Solutions.

In September, the 56th Steering Committee meeting was held in Sydney, Australia, where the members, along with several group leaders, Regional Chairs, IUCN Secretariat and CSU staff, and members from Australian organizations came together to review the progress of CEM's technical groups and regions. In addition, there were discussions on CEM's priorities for the upcoming month such as potential contributions to the 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework, and the application of the Global NbS Standard™, among others.

As part of the meeting, the team was invited to visit the Sydney Institute of Marine Sciences where they were introduced to the installations, labs and current projects which are being developed in the Institute. These included several NbS case studies, seagrass restoration and seahorse conservation initiatives, as well as several engagement and citizen science projects to address the impacts of coastal and marine degradation and mitigate the impacts of growing industries and developments in the country.



PHOTOS BY ANGELA ANDRADE



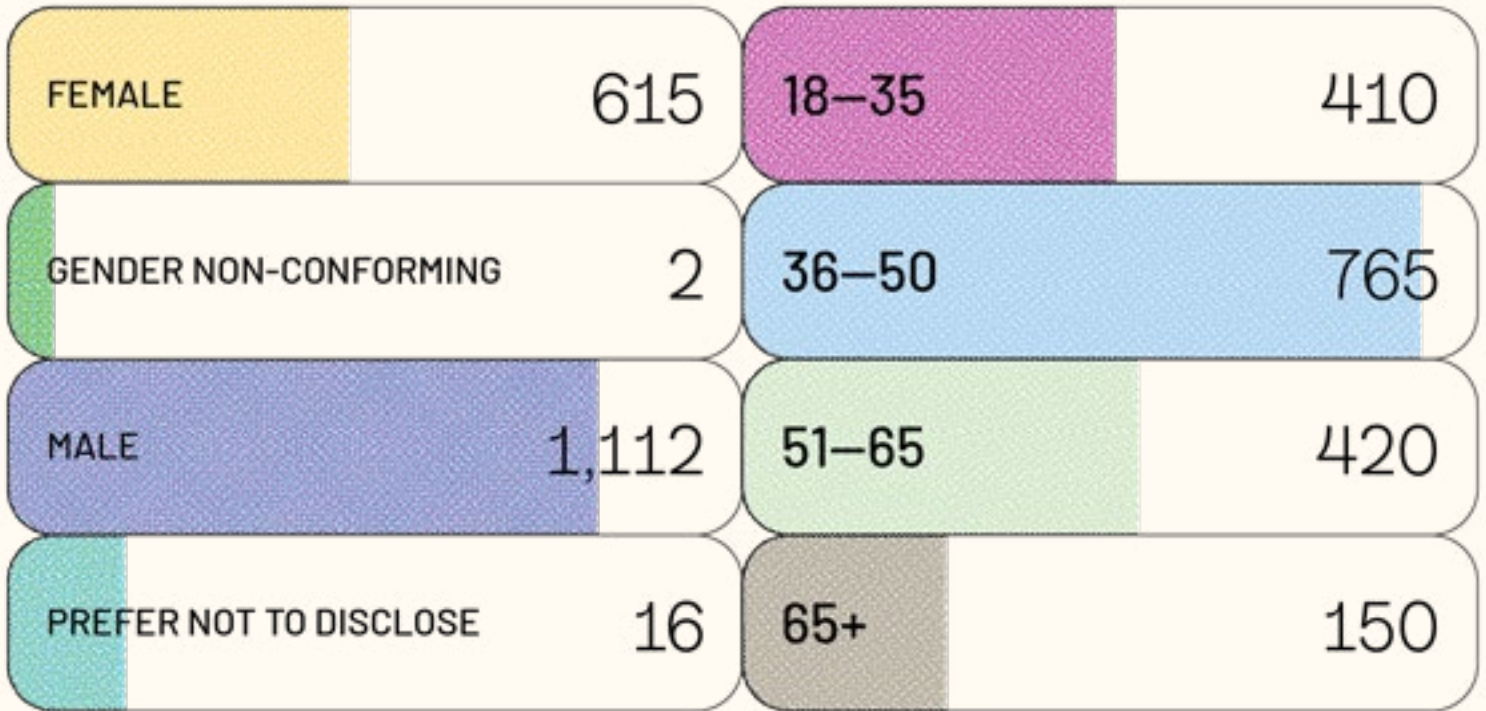
PHOTO BY ANGELA ANDRADE

# 10

## CEM by numbers

BY GENDER ↘

BY AGE ↘

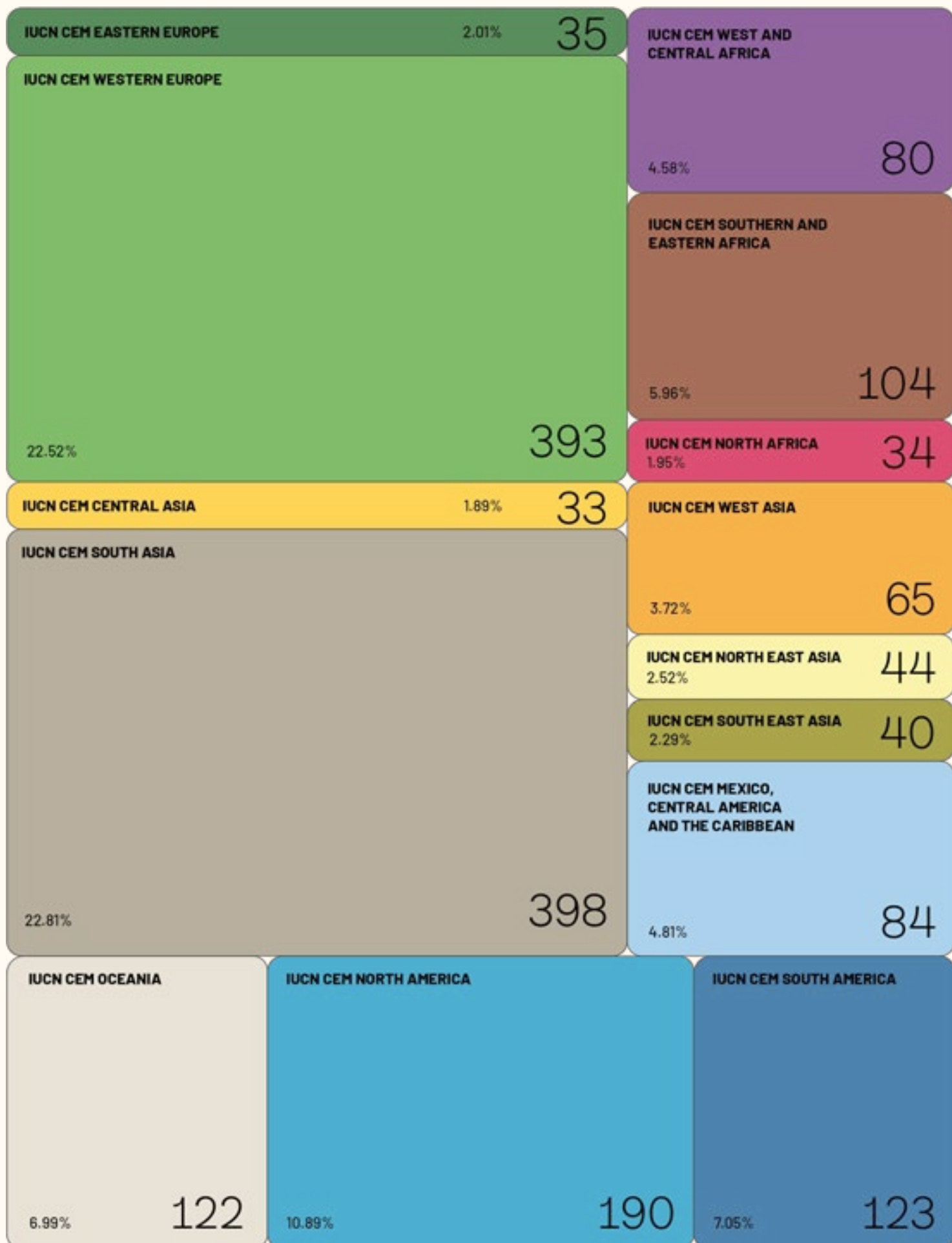


BY REGION ↘



NUMBER OF MEMBERS **1,761**

COMMISSION REGION ↘



Follow us  
& become  
a member

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Become an IUCN Commission member [HERE](#)

# Thematic Groups



# Biosphere Reserves




The Thematic Group on Biosphere Reserves aims to foster stronger connections between the Commission's work on ecosystem-based assessment, ecosystem governance, and resilience, and the activities within biosphere reserves. Additionally, the group seeks to enhance collaborations between UNESCO and IUCN. Recognizing biosphere reserves as ideal settings, the group aims to examine the practical implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Aichi Targets, and other international agreements on the ground. By focusing on these reserves, the thematic group endeavours to provide valuable insights into the effective realization of global conservation and sustainability objectives, thereby contributing to the broader efforts to address environmental challenges and promote resilient ecosystems.

 LEAD



Sara  
Burbi

 CO-LEAD



Esperanza  
Arnes

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

257

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Climate Change and Biodiversity Policy and Practice



The Climate Change and Biodiversity Policy and Practice Thematic Group is dedicated to guiding and providing expert knowledge and guidance in various critical areas. Firstly, the group strives to formulate an innovative research agenda across multiple scales, responding promptly to contemporary environmental, economic, social, and policy challenges. Secondly, it endeavours to identify best practices for integrating Nature-based Solutions into policies and practices, specifically focusing on climate change adaptation and mitigation for diverse social-ecological systems. Moreover, the group plays a crucial role in offering recommendations to policy documents proposed by prominent international conventions such as UNFCCC, CBD, IPBES, and others. Lastly, the group contributes to establishing standards for carbon markets to ensure the delivery of sustainable net gains in biodiversity, emphasizing the protection of Indigenous rights and knowledge. This commitment arises from the increasing concern about large corporations enticing Indigenous communities with inadequate compensation for their lands, often resulting in unsustainable practices over the long term.

LEAD



Angela  
Andrade

CO-LEAD



Liette  
Vasseur

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

633

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Main Results

CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY  
POLICY AND PRACTICE



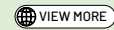
Publication of *Nature-based Solutions for corporate climate targets* provides insights into the corporate utilization of NbS to achieve net-zero goals.



Participation in the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Nairobi, focusing on Climate Change and Biodiversity, with a specific emphasis on Nature-based Solutions (NbS).



Development of technical briefs for COP 28 on “Contributing to Climate Action through Restoration” and “Climate mitigation and biodiversity conservation.”



Publication of *Using the Red List of Ecosystems and Nature-based Solutions Global Standards as an integrated process for climate change adaptation in Andean high mountains* (Royal Society, in press).



Publication of *Supporting climate change adaptation of social-ecological systems at risk of collapse through the use of Nature-based Solutions*.



Latornell Conservation Symposium: “Changing Climates: Our Watershed Moment” Workshop #1: Current State of Nature Based Solutions on the Global and Local Scale: A Panel Discussion. Royal Botanical Gardens, Burlington, Canada.





# Main Results

CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY  
POLICY AND PRACTICE



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## Side events at COP28:

- Nature-based Solutions to achieve Net Zero Targets: from supply chains to Carbon Markets. [▶ VIEW VIDEO](#)
- Thriving in Tandem with Nature: Balancing Human Activities with Development”. Pakistan Pavilion.
- Exploring Law as an enabler of Nature-based Solutions for Action: IUCN Pavilion.
- Moving forward on NbS and EbA for adaptation: Lessons learned and promising practices. IUCN Pavilion. [▶ VIEW VIDEO](#)
- Innovative Finance Approaches for Nature-based Solutions: Strategic Implementation of NbS. Asian Development Bank Pavilion.
- Climate Crisis and Biodiversity in Mangroves: The GET and RLE assessment in Mangroves. IUCN pavilion. [▶ VIEW VIDEO](#)
- Climate Crisis and Biodiversity crisis: 7 Commission Chairs event. IUCN Pavilion. [▶ VIEW VIDEO](#)
- Earth Information Day: Ecosystem Monitoring - Interlinkages between climate change and biodiversity crisis. [▶ VIEW MORE](#)

# Cultural Practices and Ecosystem Management


[THEMATIC GROUP WEBSITE](#)

© MARIANA RIVERA

The mission of the Cultural Practices and Ecosystem Management Thematic Group is to offer expert knowledge and guidance on various aspects. Firstly, the group aims to explore the values and roles of culture and cultural practices in supporting biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services, and ecosystem management. Additionally, it focuses on identifying best practices for integrating, maintaining, and enhancing cultural diversity concerning ecosystem management. The group also delves into understanding the interplay between cultures and climate change, including the impacts of climate change on cultural knowledge and practices. Furthermore, it seeks ways to incorporate cultural practices into solutions for managing ecosystems under climate change. The overarching objective is to share knowledge about biocultural diversity and practices with ecosystem managers and policymakers, contributing to a holistic and culturally informed approach to biodiversity conservation and sustainable ecosystem management.

## Main Results

- ➔ Development of the 2nd edition of the *Routledge Handbook of Cultural Ecosystem Services*. The Handbook is scheduled to be published in May 2024.
- ➔ Participation in the inaugural IUCN Science Colloquium on “IUCN standards for measuring biodiversity and conservation for sustainable development”.

LEAD



Pam  
McElwee

CO-LEAD



Minna  
Hsu

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

278

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Eco-Disaster Risk Reduction

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[THEMATIC GROUP WEBSITE](#)


The Disaster Risk Reduction Thematic Group aims to support the sustainable management, conservation, and restoration of ecosystems to reduce disaster risk in diverse ecosystems, with the aim to achieve sustainable and resilient development. This approach includes engaging a growing “community of practice” for educational and scientific exchanges in the field of ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction, and collecting and disseminating lessons learned about projects and processes that integrate ecosystem management, sustainable livelihoods, and disaster risk reduction at the regional level.

LEAD



Fabrice  
Renaud

CO-LEAD



Simone  
Sandholz

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

228

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



## Main Results

- ➔ Several group members participated in the 5th Science and Policy Workshop hosted by the Partnership on Eco-Disaster Risk Reduction workshop on “Nature as a connector between disaster risk reduction, climate, land, and biodiversity”, held in Bonn, Germany in September. [VIEW MORE](#)
- ➔ EDRR Chair Fabrice Renaud participated as a panellist at the “Global Risk Dialogue: Hazards with escalation potential – Implications for risk research” webinar held on 13 November. [VIEW MORE](#)


# Ecosystem Governance



The Ecosystem Governance Thematic Group focuses on the effective management of the environment and the sustainable conduct of activities. Its primary goal is to investigate strategies that can enhance ecosystem governance, and lead to a more sustainable utilization of resources while concurrently preserving biodiversity and promoting ecosystem services. The group actively contributes to this discourse by delving into case studies, developing innovative ideas, and initiating projects that align with and support the sustainable approach to ecosystem governance. Through its efforts, the thematic group strives to offer valuable insights and practical solutions to promote responsible environmental stewardship and resource utilization.

 LEAD



 CO-LEAD



Carolina  
Del Lama  
Marques

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

387

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Ecosystem Restoration




The Ecosystem Restoration Thematic Group (ERTG) plays a crucial role in enhancing local-to-global ecosystem restoration efforts by providing technical guidance and translating restoration science into practical applications. The group focuses on improving the capacity for high-quality ecosystem restoration by offering technical guidance to various entities, including CEM Thematic and Specialist Groups, Task Forces, Partners, IUCN programmes, members and the wider global restoration community. Additionally, the ERTG takes an active role in hosting and promoting activities and events that facilitate the translation of ecological restoration science into effective, on-the-ground practices. Through these initiatives, the thematic group aims to strengthen the understanding and implementation of ecosystem restoration, contributing to the broader goal of ecological conservation and sustainable environmental management.

 LEAD



Cara  
Nelson

 CO-LEAD

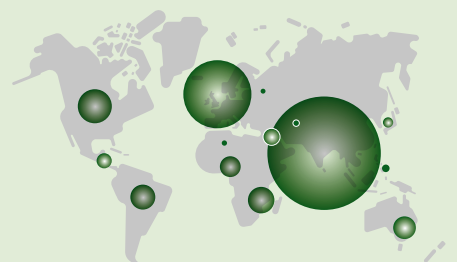


Emanuela  
Weidlich

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

701

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Main Results ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

➔ [VIEW VIDEO](#)

Hosted a Restoration webinar series with approximately 150 participants per session.

➔

Participation in the UN CBD Global Framework on Biodiversity comments, and engagement with global restoration initiatives further solidify the group's commitment to advancing restoration science and policy.

➔ [VIEW MORE](#)

The release of an early version of the Standards of Practice for the UN Decade at SER's 2023 World Conference.



➔ [VIEW MORE](#)

Organized the 4th Global Forum on Ecosystem Restoration, launched at SER2023 in Australia.

➔ [VIEW MORE](#)

A Keynote presentation on the Standards of Practice was delivered at the VI Congreso Iberoamericano y del Caribe de Restauración Ecológica in Colombia.

➔

At SER2023 in Australia, the ERTG organized a Symposium on Standards of Practice, fostering in-depth discussions and collaboration within the global ecological restoration community.



# Ecosystem Services


[THEMATIC GROUP WEBSITE](#)

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The overarching goal of the Ecosystem Service Thematic Group is to enhance the understanding of ecosystem services and their values, promoting the integration of this knowledge into planning and decision-making processes for sustainable ecosystem management. To realize these objectives, the group is committed to establishing a global network encompassing knowledge bases and case studies. Through this collaborative effort, the aim is to formulate best practice guidelines for the sustainable management of ecosystems. Additionally, the group seeks to showcase real-life applications of the 'ecosystem services concept,' emphasizing that investing in nature conservation and restoration benefits the environment and yields tangible returns. The thematic group thus plays a vital role in advancing the practical implementation of ecosystem services principles for the broader goal of achieving sustainable and responsible ecosystem management.

LEAD



Simone  
Maynard

CO-LEAD



Ruchi  
Badola

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

796

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



## Main Results

- ➔ In 2023, the Ecosystem Service Thematic Group secured funding for a project on "Ecosystem-Based Adaptation to Climate Change of Indigenous Women Groups in coastal Indonesia (Sumatra) and Australia (Queensland)." The project began in July 2023, with interviews conducted with Indigenous women in Sumatra.

# Human Health and Ecosystem Management


[THEMATIC GROUP WEBSITE](#)

The Human Health and Ecosystem Management Thematic Group addresses the ongoing transformation of Earth's natural systems due to human activities. Focused on understanding intricate relationships, the group explores the interconnections between human health, well-being, and biodiversity in their complex forms. By integrating human health objectives into natural resource management, the group advocates for positive feedback and co-benefits between ecosystem health and biodiversity conservation, offering programmatic advantages for organizations seeking public support. The key priorities include identifying the relationships between disease emergence and its potential drivers and applying these insights to models for ecological restoration and rewilding. Additionally, the group aims to determine essential epidemiological, ecological, and socio-economic indicators crucial for protecting and reducing disease risks in protected areas. Emphasizing the importance of biodiversity and protected areas in mitigating disease outbreaks, the group addresses both ecological and political factors. Lastly, the group evaluates indicators involved in the bidirectional transmission, outbreak, and maintenance of diseases, contributing to a holistic approach to human health within the context of ecosystem management.

LEAD



Paula  
Prist

CO-LEAD

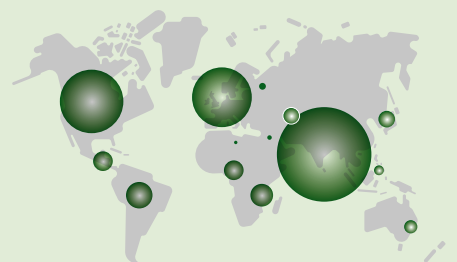


Renata  
Muylaert

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

113

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION





# Main Results

HUMAN HEALTH AND  
ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT



The group provided crucial support for producing and curating an educational game highlighting the paramount importance of the Amazon forest, engaging audiences in understanding its significance for ecosystem health.



[VIEW VIDEO](#)

Production of three impactful videos addressing the intricate relationship between environmental degradation and human health, thereby raising awareness on pressing ecological issues.

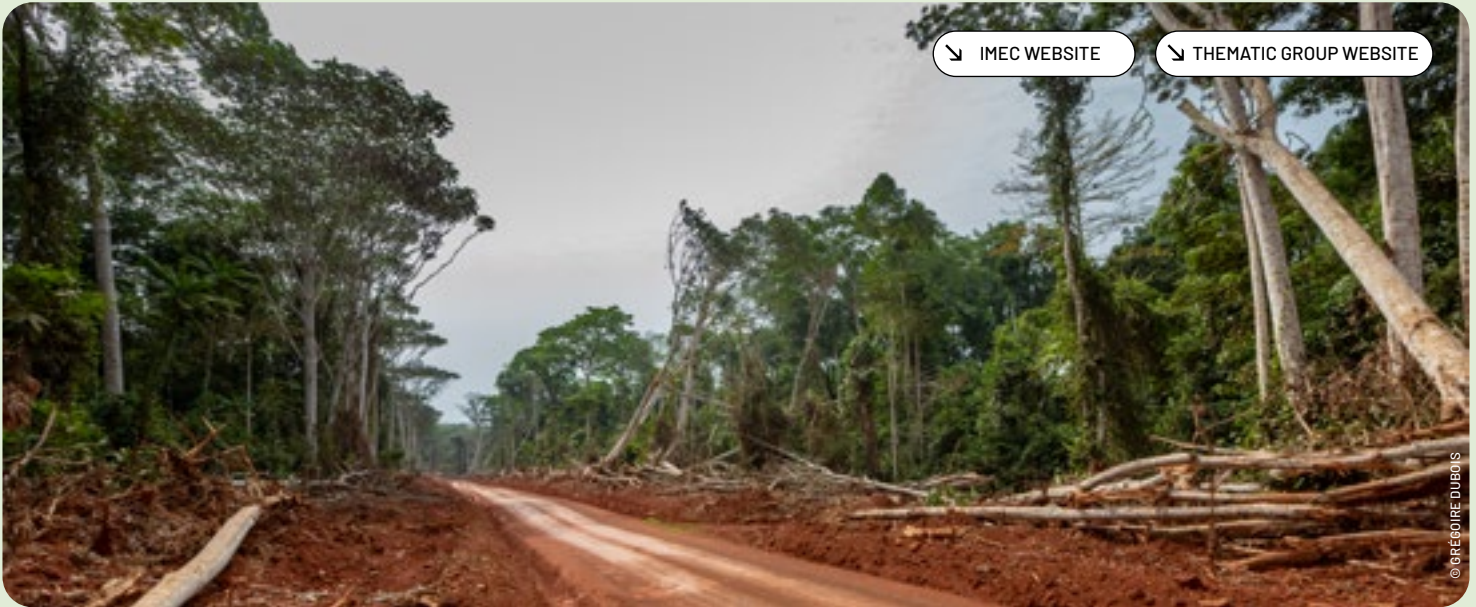


The group began developing a human health indicator, with the aim of potentially integrating it into the Red List of Ecosystems. This milestone was attained through collaborative efforts with the Red List Thematic group.



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# Impact Mitigation and Ecological Compensation



The Impact Mitigation and Ecological Compensation Thematic Group is dedicated to developing guidance for effectively implementing the mitigation hierarchy and ecological compensation. This involves a comprehensive approach based on an ongoing review of case studies related to policy and practice concerning the design, governance, financing, and implementation of mitigation and compensation measures. Leveraging substantial existing experience and lessons learned from diverse stakeholders, the group aims to contribute to continuous improvement and establish best practices in applying the mitigation hierarchy. This includes exploring optimal ways to link mitigation and compensation efforts to global and jurisdiction-level biodiversity targets, as well as other environmental and social science-based targets such as zero deforestation, carbon neutrality, biodiversity net gain, land degradation neutrality, nature-based solutions, ecosystem-based adaptation, and the empowerment of indigenous peoples and vulnerable groups. Ultimately, the group strives to facilitate a holistic and integrated approach to impact mitigation and ecological compensation, promoting sustainability and biodiversity conservation.

## LEAD



Martine Maron

## CO-LEAD



Amrei Von Hase



Fabien Quétier

## NUMBER OF MEMBERS

195

## MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Main Results

IMPACT MITIGATION AND  
ECOLOGICAL COMPENSATION

➔ [VIEW MORE](#)

Completion and publication of *Nature positive for business*, a key resource outlining the foundations and principles around nature positive for business. This publication was written and produced by over 70 IMEC members.



➔

Newsletters were produced and sent to approximately 200 IMEC members on a quarterly basis. These newsletters include information contributed by IMEC members on new publications, initiatives, tools, conferences, and opportunities to contribute to policy processes on impact mitigation, offsets, and positive nature globally.

➔ [VIEW MORE](#)

The group members collaborated on a paper "Nature positive' must incorporate, not undermine, the mitigation hierarchy" (*Nature Ecology & Evolution*).

➔ [VIEW MORE](#)

Collaboration on the article on "'Nature positive' isn't just planting a few trees - it's actually stopping the damage we do" (*The Conversation*).

➔ [VIEW MORE](#)

IMEC organized two webinars and two thematic online discussion sessions (focused on CoP15 observations and results, and implications for IMEC's work) during 2023. The webinars included spatial analysis to inform the mitigation hierarchy. Habitat banking implementation: a South American perspective.

➔

Members of the group made presentations at the ICCB and IAIA conferences.



# Nature-based Solutions




The Nature-based Solutions Thematic Group focuses on enhancing the knowledge base related to Nature-based Solutions (NbS). The group is actively involved in developing and refining this knowledge to ensure improved integration of NbS in planning and decision-making processes. A key aspect of their work involves the creation of practical tools that can be effectively implemented on the ground to address various global societal challenges. Additionally, the group is dedicated to promoting good practices in NbS and raising awareness. Notably, it actively supports the ongoing development of the Global Standard for NbS, contributing to the collective effort in addressing global societal challenges through the application of Nature-based Solutions.

 LEAD



Emmanuelle  
Cohen-  
Shacham

 CO-LEAD



Edna  
Cabecinha

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

647

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Main Results

NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

➔ [VIEW MORE](#)

The thematic group contributed significantly to the field with several publications. One such publication titled *Towards Nature-based Solutions at scale: 10 case studies from China*, presents insightful case studies highlighting the implementation of Nature-based Solutions at scale in China.



➔ [VIEW MORE](#)

“The Evolution and Future of Research on Nature-based Solutions to Address Societal Challenges” was published in *Communications Earth & Environment*.

➔ [VIEW MORE](#)

“Nature-based solutions for natural hazards and climate change” in *Frontiers in Environmental Science*.

➔ [VIEW MORE](#)

“The IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions™ as a tool for enhancing the sustainable development of marine aquaculture” was featured in *Frontiers in Marine Science*.

➔ [VIEW MORE](#)

The thematic group’s contributed to the exploration of Nature-based Solutions in specific contexts in the publication “Delta Challenges and Nature-based Solutions in Dialogue” in the *Journal of Delta Urbanism*.



# Red List of Ecosystems




The IUCN Red List of Ecosystems (RLE) aims to evaluate the health and threat levels of each ecosystem and identify effective management pathways to reduce risks and loss of biodiversity. In the current environmental context, the RLE group is vital for understanding ecosystem dynamics, recognizing healthy and at-risk ecosystems, identifying main threats, and proposing ways to mitigate or eliminate their impact. Furthermore, the RLE helps monitor the effectiveness of conservation measures to identify the most efficient ones amidst the ongoing environmental challenges.

 LEAD



David  
Keith

 CO-LEAD

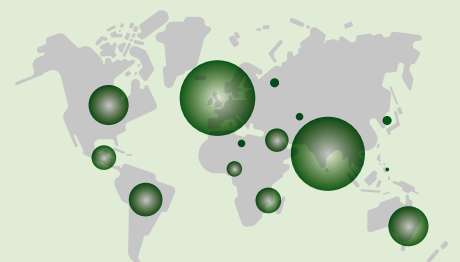


Emily  
Nicholson

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

289

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Main Results

RED LIST OF  
ECOSYSTEMS



Paper review on the status of Himalayan ecosystems across six countries.



Paper on lessons learnt from six contrasting case studies across Africa: “Contributions of Red Lists of Ecosystems to risk-based design and Management of Protected and conserved areas in Africa”.



The IUCN Global Ecosystem Typology recommended as an International Statistical Classification by the United Nations Committee of Experts on International Statistical Classifications.



RLE Thematic Group’s research and policy activity on ecosystem indicators, joined the UN Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators to help operationalize the monitoring framework for the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).



Workshop held in Sydney in August 2023, where representatives from the RLE team collaborated with the IBAT team to strategize the integration of ecosystem data into IBAT. This development aimed to enhance the ecosystem component of data, surpassing previous capabilities.



Revision of the RLE guidelines. The text was completed by early December 2023, and the publication is scheduled for 2024.



A review of the impact of RLE across Africa was published in the Conservation Biology journal.



The UN Group on Earth Observations (GEO) initiated the development of a Global Ecosystem Atlas and invited members of the RLE Thematic Group to engage in discussions on the scope and design of the Atlas.



# Main Results

RED LIST OF  
ECOSYSTEMS



- ➔ Workshop organized by the Kerala Forest Research Institute, India on the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems and sharing ongoing research on ecosystems in India.
  - ➔ The RLE Mangrove Working Group made significant progress toward creating the first global Red List of mangrove ecosystems. The completion of this project is expected in 2024.
  - ➔ Phase 1 planning for a Global RLE of coral reef ecosystems is nearing completion, with ongoing discussions to secure resources for Phase 2.
  - ➔ Contribution to biodiversity and conservation efforts with a published review on the status of Himalayan ecosystems across six countries. This comprehensive assessment lays a crucial foundation for Red List assessments in the sensitive Himalayan region, where climate change and land use intensification are significant concerns.
  - ➔ A new classification and detailed map of ice-free terrestrial Antarctic ecosystems was completed and submitted for publication. This accomplishment lays the foundations for an RLE in Earth's largest wilderness.
  - ➔ Progress was made on assessments of various ecosystems, including tropical Andean paramo ecosystems, Australian alpine ecosystems and tropical glacier ecosystems.
- ➔ [VIEW MORE](#)
- Completion of the RLE for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, accomplished with the support of RLE partner Provita.



# Rewilding



The concept of rewilding, although promising for revitalizing conservation efforts, is currently characterized by diverse definitions and approaches. This variability poses challenges in its application for ecological conservation and functional restoration. The Rewilding Thematic Group (RTG) is dedicated to addressing this issue by striving to synthesize and streamline the theory and practice of rewilding on an international scale, considering perspectives from all regions. The group aims to achieve this goal by fostering a collaborative exchange of experiences within the expanding rewilding community and disseminating valuable information to IUCN members and beyond. Through these efforts, the RTG seeks to create a unified understanding of rewilding, facilitating more effective and consistent implementation of rewilding practices to benefit global ecological conservation and restoration initiatives.

## Main Results

➔ Launch of the Rewilding Handbook.

[VIEW MORE](#)



➔ Development of the Guiding Principles for Rewilding.

[VIEW MORE](#)

➔ Invited to present their work in the podcast Wildland: A Rewilding Podcast.

[LISTEN](#)

CO-LEAD



Ian Convery

CO-LEAD



Stephen Carver

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

101

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Social-Ecological Resilience & Transformation



The Social-Ecological Resilience and Transformation Thematic Group acknowledges the interconnected nature of the global crises involving biodiversity loss, social injustice, and climate change. In response, this group supports conservationists by integrating systems science into their efforts. This involves the assessment and enhancement of social-ecological resilience, with a focus on fostering adaptation or, when needed, actively catalysing and guiding system transformation processes. By addressing these crises comprehensively and leveraging systems science, the group aims to empower conservationists in navigating the complex web of challenges posed by the interlinked issues of biodiversity loss, social injustice, and climate change.

**LEAD**



Dorian Fougères

**CO-LEAD**

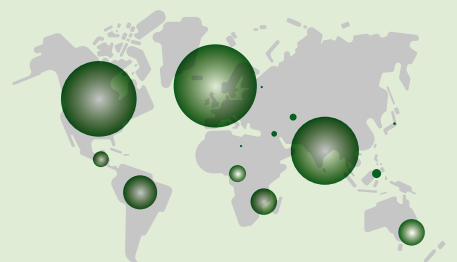


Manuela Ruiz

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

**330**

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



## Main Results

- ➔ Social-ecological Resilience and Transformation webinar series: [VIEW VIDEO](#)

# Sustainable Use and Ecosystem Management




The mission of the Thematic Group on Sustainable Use and Management of Ecosystems (SUME) is to delve into the ways in which sustainable use can be effectively employed as a tool for managing and, when necessary, restoring ecosystems. The group is dedicated to exploring practices and strategies that ensure the responsible utilization of natural resources in a manner that supports ecological health and resilience. Importantly, the aim is to disseminate this knowledge widely, reaching ecosystem managers and policymakers. By sharing insights on sustainable use, the thematic group seeks to contribute to developing informed and effective approaches to ecosystem management that balance human needs with the conservation and restoration of vital ecological systems.

 LEAD



Adrian  
Lombard

 CO-LEAD



Keiya  
Nakajima

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

789

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Main Results

SUSTAINABLE USE AND  
ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT



VIEW MORE

The Cape Town Conference, “The Role of Falconers and Local Communities in Conservation and Sustainable Use”, was successfully held from 23 to 26 June. The Renosterveld ecosystem was recognized by the conference as a focus of conservation efforts, and the endangered black harrier (*Circus maurus*) was considered a flagship species of this ecosystem.



The IAF/SUME Joint Conference was held in Abu Dhabi in September 2023 and covered a wide range of topics, including the management of raptor breeding populations for conservation and biodiversity management in marginal ecosystems.



The STF has proposed the use of the portal [www.sakernet.org](http://www.sakernet.org) to conduct a survey of saker falcon users in saker falcon range States to establish current attitudes towards the conservation status and use of this species, as well as perceptions regarding raptor electrocution. The portal is now accessible in all regional languages (14) and the survey is currently under development prior to translation.



The SUME Lead (Dr Adrian Lombard) attended the IUCN Conference: Human and Wildlife Conflict and Coexistence Conference held in Oxford, UK, in March 2023, and presented on the work of SUME in respect to this topic.



SUME has been active in the meetings of the Saker Task Force (STF) where there has been fruitful discussion related to the development of an Adaptive Management Framework that will address potential future sustainable use of this species.



# Main Results

SUSTAINABLE USE AND  
ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

➔  VIEW MORE

During his stay in the UK, the head of SUME participated in a meeting with the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (UKCEH). The basis was laid for collaboration in the development of a geoplanning service to be incorporated into the joint IAF-SUME portal: [www.perdixnet.org](http://www.perdixnet.org). Other developments following this meeting include collaboration with the UK Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust, the European Sustainable Use Group and the IAF. These organizations will participate in a European Union conservation project that includes the development of a geographic planning application.

➔  VIEW MORE

The main SUME project: [www.naturalliance.org](http://www.naturalliance.org) has undergone further enhancements during this year. These include the addition of Belorussian so that the portal is now available in 43 languages across 55 national and regional sites.

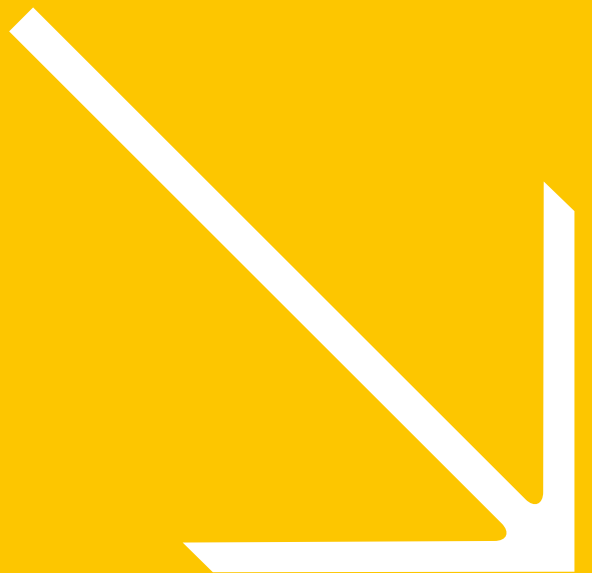
➔

The SUME Leader has actively participated in the development of the IUCN Guidelines on the making of Non-detriment Findings (NDFs) for CITES, and acted as Leader of the Working Group responsible for the development of the Guidance on Non-detriment Findings for Migratory and Transboundary Species.





# Specialist Groups



# Agroecology




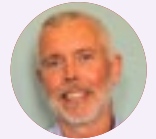
The Agroecology Specialist Group promotes sustainable agricultural practices and agrobiodiversity management under changing climatic conditions and encourages ecosystem-based approaches and resource conservation technologies for transforming agriculture as a sustainable enterprise, and acts as a platform for bringing together various stakeholders in the field to share their knowledge and experience, as well as supporting IUCN for framing suitable strategies for the adaptive management of agroecosystems under climate change.

 LEAD



PC  
Abhilash

 CO-LEAD

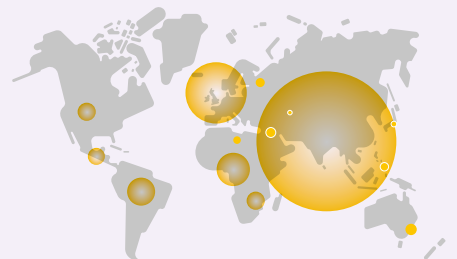


Terry  
Dawson

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

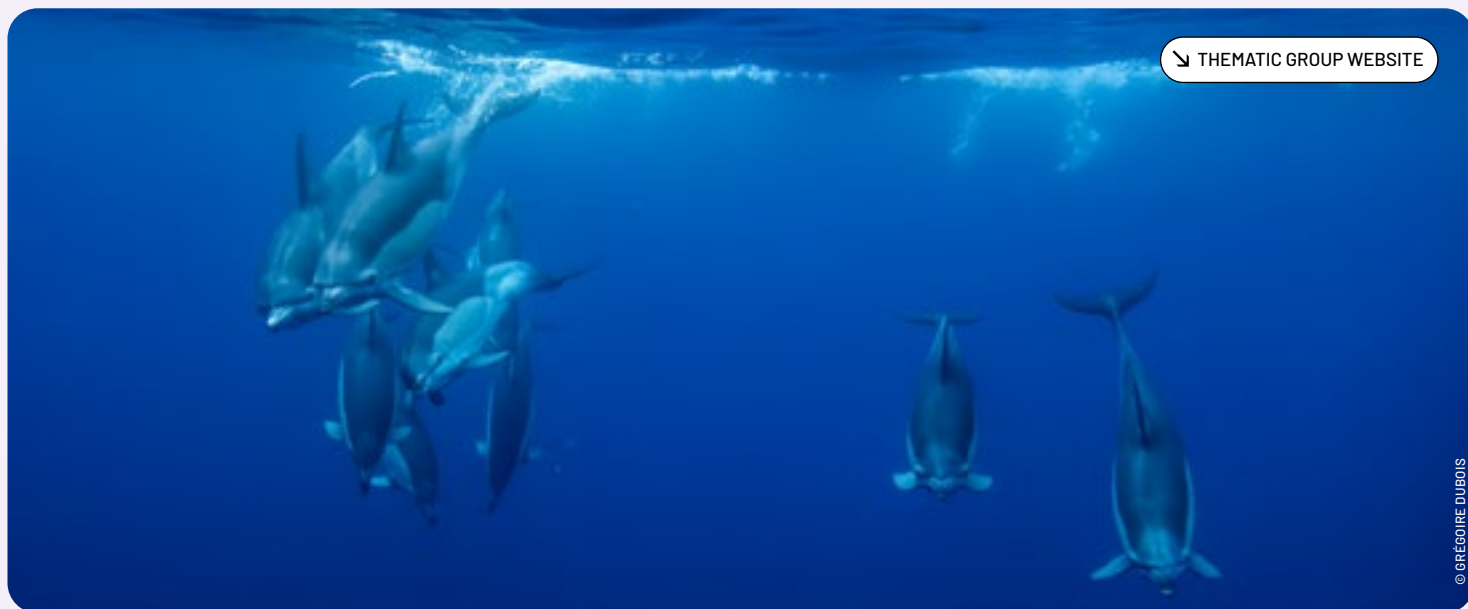
394

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



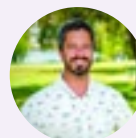


# Coastal and Marine Ecosystems



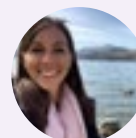
The Coastal and Marine Specialist Group seeks to develop and enhance regional adaptive ecosystem-based management for coastal catchments and territorial seas through regional members and with regional, national, and international offices.

LEAD



Ben  
Fitzpatrick

CO-LEAD



Athena  
Tzivanopoulous

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

396

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



## Main Results

- ➡ The CEM Coastal and Marine Group has begun composing a guide to implementing best practices for mangrove NbS projects and compiling a position statement, and pursuing funding to draft environmental and socio-economic guidelines for deep sea mining along with collaboration from the CEM Deep Sea Mining Specialist Group. These are planned to be released in 2024.

# Deep-Sea Mining



The overall goal of the Deep-Sea Mining Specialist Group is to provide a basis for managing the effects of human use to ensure the continued flow of ecosystem products and services. The group aims to determine and describe the main impacts of deep-sea mining on ecosystem structure and function, identify and provide advice on the main aspects of scientific research needed to improve our understanding of the effects of deep-sea mining and provide advice on management options and measures to mitigate the main impacts of deep-sea mining on ecosystem structure and function.

## Main Results

- ➔ Attended some of the negotiations at the International Seabed Authority to advance IUCN WCC Resolution 122 and advise IUCN Members to promote calls for a moratorium on deep-sea mining. Resolution: [VIEW MORE](#)
- ➔ Collaboration with the IUCN Secretariat in organizing webinars, as well as to co-host a session on deep seabed mining recently at the Marine Regions Forum in Tanzania (7-9 November) together with the IUCN Ocean Team.

LEAD



Pradeep  
Singh

CO-LEAD

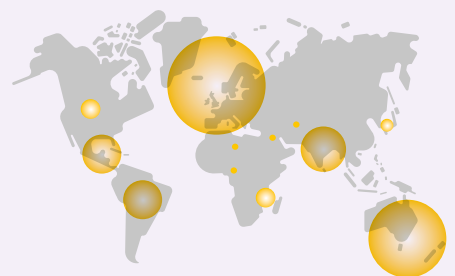


Kerstin  
Kroger

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

58

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Dryland Ecosystems



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The Dryland Ecosystems Specialist Group has been working over the last five years closely with and in support of the Global Dryland Initiative, part of the IUCN Global Ecosystem Management Programme. During these 5 years, rangelands have gotten much attention, which has materialized in several IUCN CEM Technical Briefs and reports.

LEAD



Peter  
Laban

CO-LEAD



NUMBER OF MEMBERS

187

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Forest Ecosystems




The Forest Ecosystems Specialist Group aims to improve the knowledge base and highlight the role of forests as essential element in all SDGs by exploring sustainable landscape as a crosscutting SDG, in which forests are key component. The specialist group stimulates research on the role of forest ecosystems in both, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and biodiversity conservation, highlighting the contribution of forests to renewable energy, livelihoods, food, water, and other ecosystem services, and communicate the fundamental role of forest ecosystems to wide range of stakeholders from decision makers at all scales.

 LEAD



Himlal  
Baral

 CO-LEAD



Rajiv  
Kumar

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

555

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Main Results FOREST ECOSYSTEMS



Participation at the regional training workshop on forest planning and forest management in different forest types in Eastern and Southern Africa in Arusha, Tanzania. Organized by the African Forest Forum and Nelson Mandela Institute of Innovation, Science, and technology.



Regional Workshop ‘Towards Implementation of the Southern African Development Community Great Green Wall Initiative’ in Johannesburg/Pretoria, South Africa.



Regional workshop on sharing of information and experiences on climate change, forest and tree-based ecosystem services and socio-ecological resilience in Africa in Nairobi, Kenya. Organized by African Forest Forum.



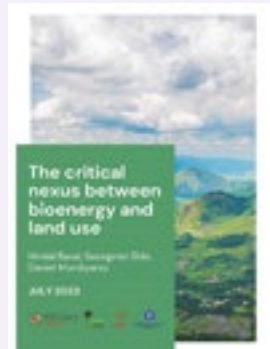
Publication “Detection and mapping of vegetation stress using AVIRIS-NG hyperspectral imagery in coal mining sites”, in *Advances in Space Science*.



Publication “Differential loss of glacier stored water in the Indus River basin”, in *Current Science*.



“The Critical Nexus Between Bioenergy and Land Use.” Centre for Global Sustainability, Centre for International Forestry Research-World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF), and IPB University.



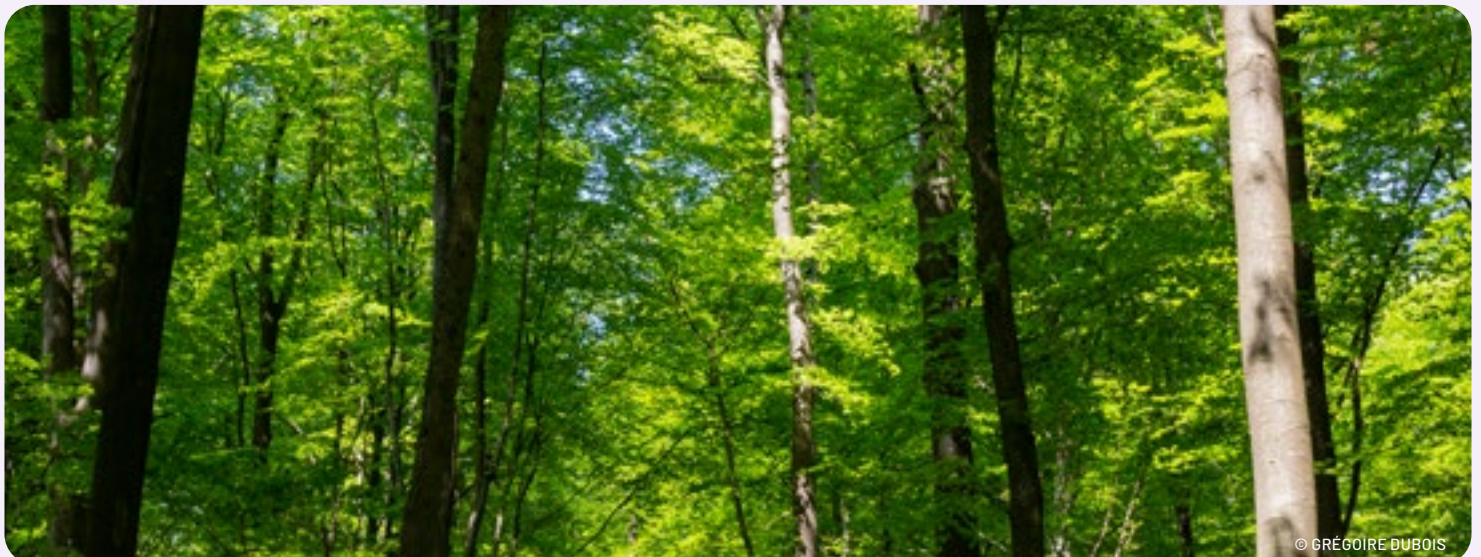
Two sessions at the 2023 Forests & Livelihoods Assessment, Research, and Engagement (FLARE) Annual Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya: ‘Building resilient forest-based livelihoods through sustainable ecosystem management approaches’ and ‘Africa’s forests contribution to livelihoods in the transition to sustainable economies’.



Publication “Forest Ecosystem Modeling for Policy Planning: A Review”, in *Ecosystem and Species Habitat Modeling for Conservation and Restoration*.



Review of a systematic protocol for carbon dynamics and ecosystem services of species associated with land-use and land-cover change in mangrove ecosystems. EGU General Assembly Conference 2023.



# Main Results

FOREST  
ECOSYSTEMS



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VIEW VIDEO

Organized the International Consultative Workshop on ‘Role of Forestry, Agroforestry, and Land Restoration in Achieving Net Zero in the Asian Region’.



Conducted one day workshop on “Understanding Forest Phenology using PhenoCAMs” at EMPRI, Govt. of Karnataka for forest officers and Researchers, India.



VIEW MORE

Participation at the Climate Action Now workshop series at Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar.



VIEW VIDEO

Halesworth Climate Action Conference – Q&A panel with UK Environment minister; “climate mitigation & nature recovery”; paper presented on “environmental ethics to policy.”



Workshop held in Quito, Ecuador, to follow up on WCC Resolution 006 co-organized by CEM, the IUCN Regional Office in South America, and the Fundación para la Conservación del Bosque Chiquitano. Resolution: [VIEW MORE](#)



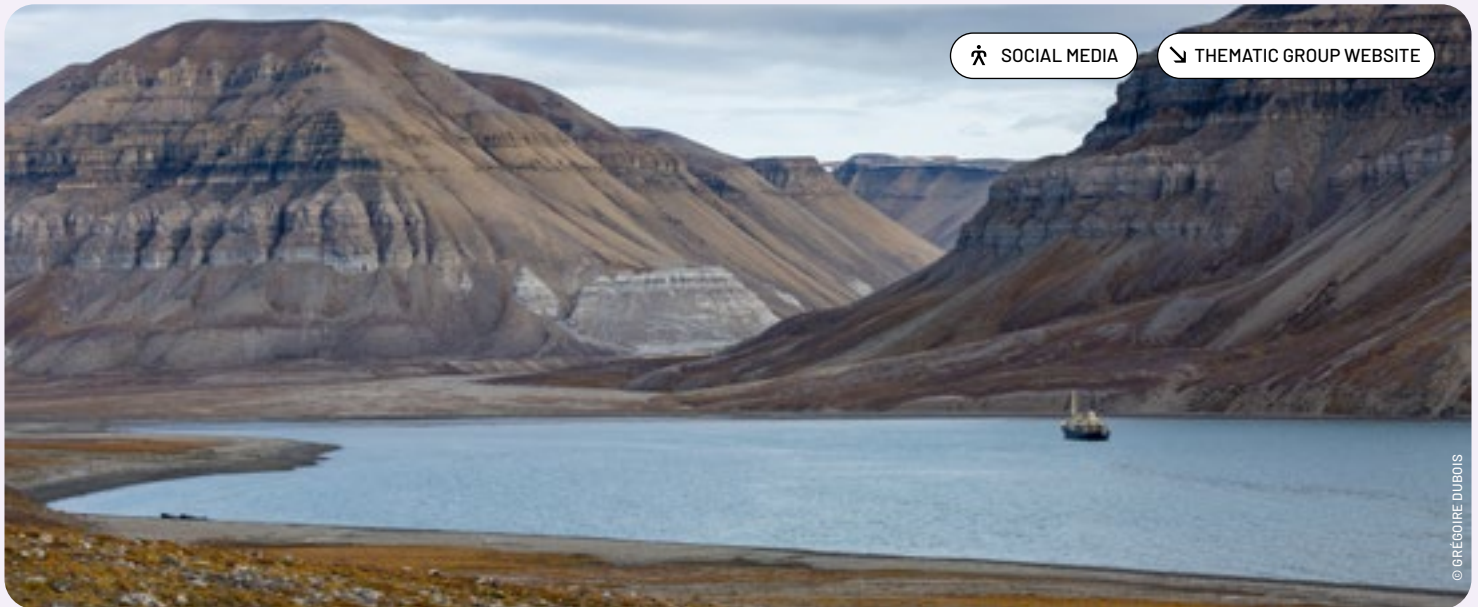
Participation at the 77th Standing Committee of CITES in Geneva, in charge of issue on IPLC engagement, livelihoods, CITES & Forests.



VIEW MORE

Participation at the joint meeting of the Intercessional working groups on livelihoods and engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities in Cusco, Peru.

# Holarctic Steppes




The Holarctic Steppes Specialist Group aims to improve the management and conservation of steppe ecosystems, and to harmonize this with the needs of human society (“Golden Steppe Chain Network”) based on the principles Nature-based Solutions. Therefore, we seek to raise awareness on wise use of steppe ecosystems worldwide and promote sustainable use, conservation, and restoration of steppe ecosystems through knowledge transfer, increasing awareness, and facilitating networking among experts and decision-makers.

 LEAD



Viktoria  
Wagner

 CO-LEAD

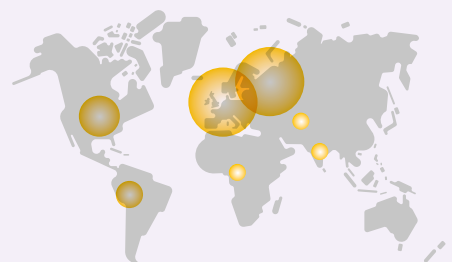


Karsten  
Wesche

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

18

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



## Main Results

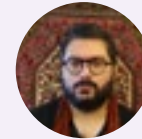
- ➔ Published 11 papers and reports on steppe conservation and restoration.
- ➔ Organized the Eurasian Grassland Conference in Tolosa, Spain, from 25th September to 1st October 2023. [VIEW MORE](#)
- ➔ Several HSTG members participated in the International Association of Vegetation Science (IAVS) conference in Coffs Harbour, Australia (3–8 September, 2023). [VIEW MORE](#)
- ➔ Members from Ukraine have assessed the environmental impacts of the invasion by Russia on steppe habitat in protected areas.

# Mountain Ecosystems




The Mountain Ecosystem Specialist Group provides expert knowledge and guidance on integrated approaches to managing natural and modified ecosystems to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in mountain areas for the well-being of all those who depend on them. We are respectful towards traditional ecological knowledge systems and recognize the role of communities as being central to effective ecosystem management and generate knowledge on the unique challenges faced by mountain ecosystems and the communities who rely on them, sharing inter and transdisciplinary guidance for policymakers and ecosystem managers.

 LEAD



Omer  
Aijazi

 CO-LEAD



Sejuti  
Basu

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

272

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION





# Main Results MOUNTAIN ECOSYSTEMS

➔ [VIEW MORE](#)

The group launched the IUCN CEM publication *What Can Communities Teach Us? Indigenous and Local Knowledge for Mountain Ecosystems* in November.



➔ [VIEW VIDEO](#)

CEM Dialogue on the “What Can Communities Teach Us? Indigenous and Local Knowledge for Mountain Ecosystems” held in December.

➔ [VIEW VIDEO](#)

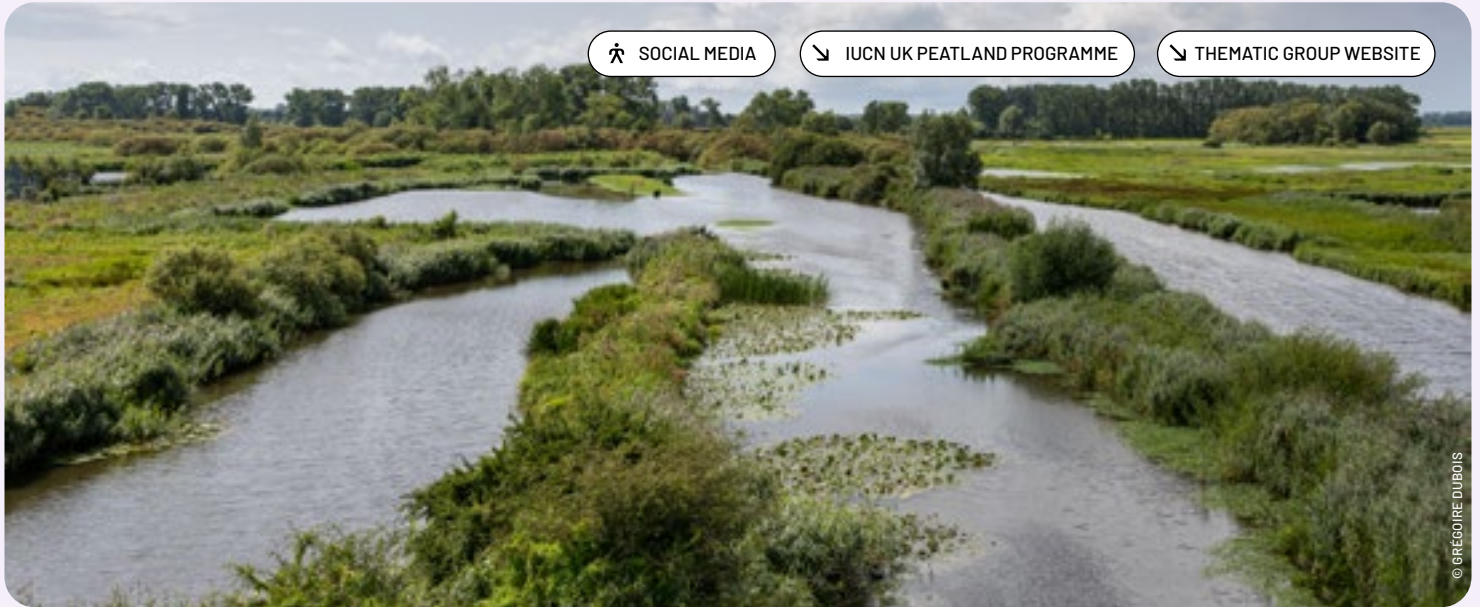
Omer Aijazi, MESG spoke at the Bridging the Gender Gap in Rural Mountainous Regions session, organized by the United Nations Environment Programme at the NGO Committee on the Status of Women Forum in New York, USA.

➔

Final revisions were made to “People and Nature on the Move: Human and Wildlife Migrations at the Intersection of Environmental Change and Conflict”, which is awaiting approval for launch, which is planned for 2024.

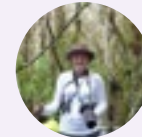


# Peatlands




The Peatland Specialist Group's work aims to bring together an international network to share good practices, build consensus on science and encourage national strategies for action to deliver peatland conservation and restoration. In addition, the specialist group aims to highlight the benefits of peatlands ecosystems to a wider and influential audience, and explore new funding opportunities for peatlands based on ecosystem services. To deliver on these aims, the group works closely with other international peatlands initiatives (e.g. IMCG, UN FAO) to ensure synergy and provide added value.

 LEAD



Emma  
Goodyer

 CO-LEAD



Jane  
Akerman

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

47

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Main Results PEATLANDS



Development of a new Virtual Peatland Pavilion containing diverse resources and interactive, immersive displays of peatlands around the world.



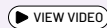
Supported the development of the world's first-ever Global Peatlands Assessment, including lead authorship roles and drafting inputs to the summary for policymakers, helping shape the policy recommendations of the assessment.



The Peatland Code was updated and the development of a similar standard for the Republic of Ireland is being supported by the Peatland Code team, and this work will continue throughout 2024.



Participation at the IUCN UK Peatland Programme's 2023 Conference.



Participation in multiple events, including a UN Innovation Lab, an EU Commission expert group workshop on carbon farming and an international carbon markets summit.



Coordination of an international initiative to influence the Science-Based Targets Initiative on emissions from peatlands and peatland carbon markets, which brought together private sector representatives to seek solutions for funding peatland restoration and sustainable management.



Supported the International Mire Conservation Group, providing much-needed capacity to edit and disseminate the IMCG Bulletin, which features global peatland updates and research highlights.



# Main Results PEATLANDS



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Publication of the addendum to 'Peat-free Horticulture: Demonstrating Success', which includes case studies showcasing positive action being taken to utilise peat-free growing media.



Quarterly newsletters resumed in 2023, promoting GPI's Global Peatlands Assessment and featuring links to open-access peatland research highlights.



Publication of the series of briefings: 'Peatlands and Development'.



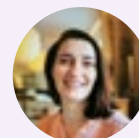
'Accounting for the Lost Peatlands' and 'Principles for Sustainable Peatland Paludiculture'.

# Urban Ecosystems



The Urban Ecosystems Specialist Group aims to promote and provide guidance for ecosystem approaches to the planning and management of urban ecosystems to enhance the ecosystem services provided by urban ecosystems and, thereby, human well-being. It also aims to build a network and platform to bring scientists, practitioners, and policy and decision-makers together to advance our ecological understanding of urban areas, and to better plan and design urban ecosystems to increase their sustainability and resilience.

**LEAD**



Jennifer Rae Pierce

**CO-LEAD**



Soule Moussa

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

**282**

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



## Main Results

- ➔ The Urban Ecosystems Specialist Group are under restructuring occurring with the IUCN Urban Alliance and plans to align with the upcoming objectives of the new Urban Alliance Director once they are appointed.
- ➔ The group is currently looking to develop a membership list with expertise in various areas, such as coordinating with the Urban Biodiversity Hub and further strengthening its work with the IUCN Urban Alliance.

# Wetland Ecosystems



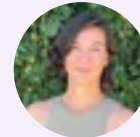
The Wetland Ecosystems Specialist Group aims to develop a global network of experts dedicated to promoting the preservation and restoration of wetlands and sustainable use of their resources by maintaining their ecosystem services, enhancing their biodiversity, ecological processes, resilience, livelihoods and water, food, and health security for local communities. Through focusing on how sustainable use of renewable natural resources can foster more resilient wetlands and promote an ecosystem-based approach to support wetlands management and planning policies, including stakeholder participation and suitable governance processes, we provide guidance and technical skills to managers and stakeholders interested in assessing and monitoring wetlands and their resources.

## Main Results

- CEM Dialogue on the launch of the publication *Wetlands and people at risk*. [▶ VIEW VIDEO](#)



LEAD



Tatiana Lobato

CO-LEAD



NUMBER OF MEMBERS

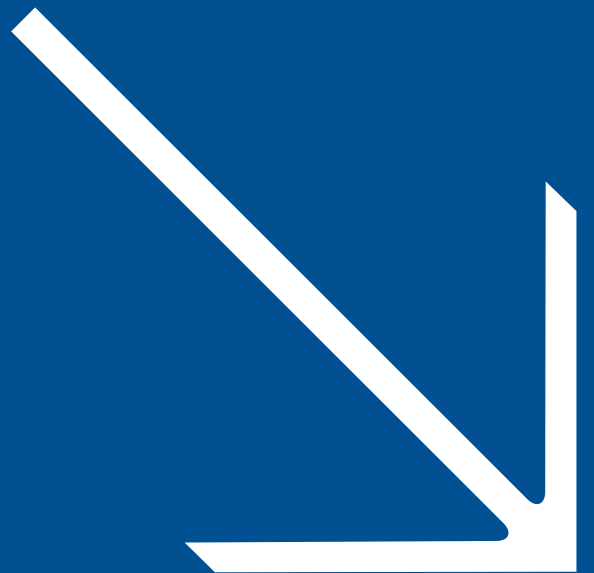
386

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION





# Task Forces





# Ecosystem-based Aquaculture


[THEMATIC GROUP WEBSITE](#)

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The Ecosystem-based Aquaculture Task Force aims to foster the sustainable development of aquaculture and to promote the conservation of related marine and freshwater biodiversity. To fulfil this mission, the group seeks to influence aquaculture policy and related conservation strategies as well as to propose responsible management methods and tools, and build bridges between stakeholders by offering guidance to managers and practitioners, and developing an integrated approach between institutions and environmental organizations, both governmental and non-governmental.

LEAD



Inba Kandan  
Dhinakarasamy

CO-LEAD



Imaddedin  
Albaba

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

46

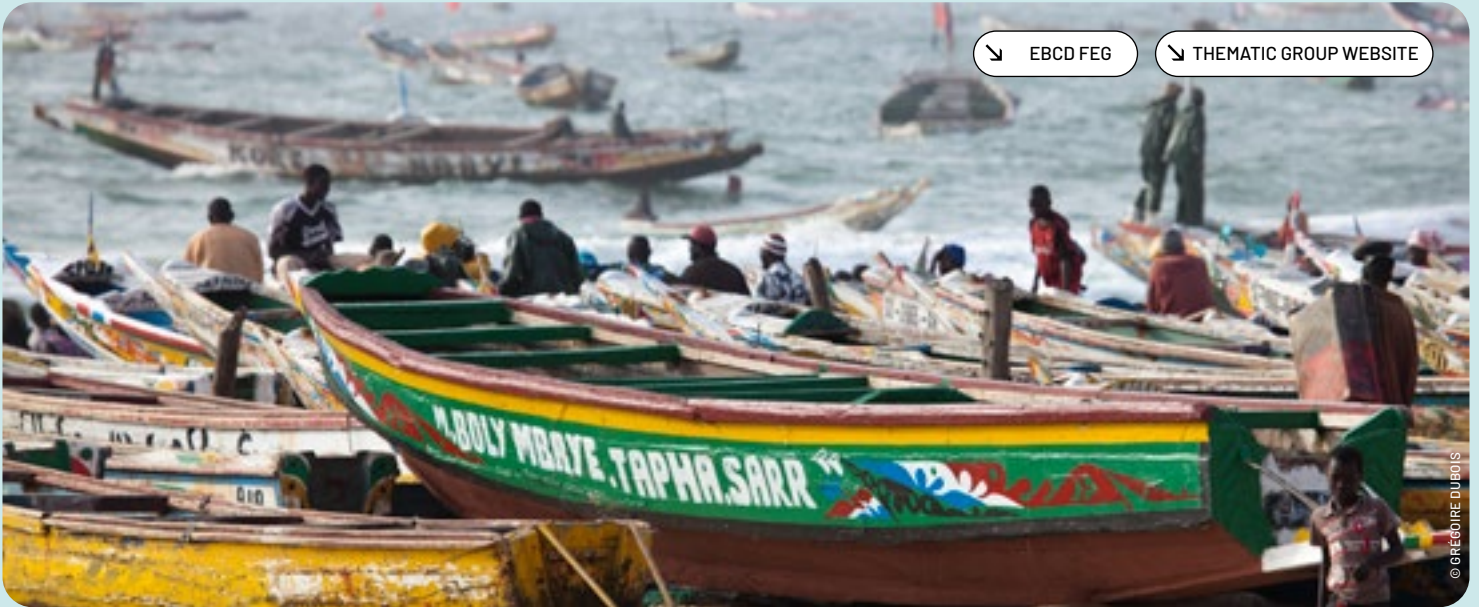
MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



## Main Results

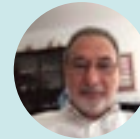
- ➔ The paper “Understanding and Adapting Ocean Decade Action” was published in the *Anthropocene Science*, which was led by the Ecosystem-Based Aquaculture Specialist Group. [VIEW MORE](#)
- ➔ A CEM Dialogue titled Exploring Ways to Effectively Adopt Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries and Aquaculture was hosted by the Ecosystem Based Aquaculture Specialist Group and Dr. E. Vivekanandan, the National Consultant & Fisheries Expert and Senior Scientific Consultant, ICAR - Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, India on 7 August. [VIEW VIDEO](#)

# Fisheries Expert Group




The Fisheries Expert Group Task Force aims to foster the sustainable development of fisheries, promote the conservation of the related marine ecosystems, inform fisheries policy and related conservation strategies, propose management methods and tools, and seek to provide a link between the fishery and biodiversity communities worldwide.

 LEAD



Ernesto Peñas

 CO-LEAD

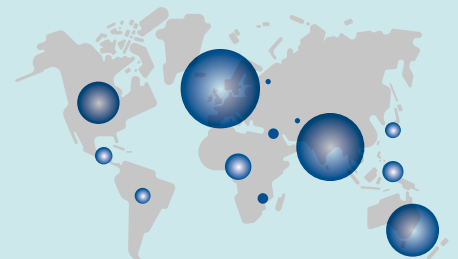


Despina Symons

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

72

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Main Results

FISHERIES EXPERT GROUP  
TASK FORCE



At IMPAC 5, FEG members contributed to discussions around MPAs and OECMs, the main objective being to push for the implementation of GBF Target 3 and the BBNJ agreement.



Participation in the Sustainable Oceans Initiative (SOI) Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies.

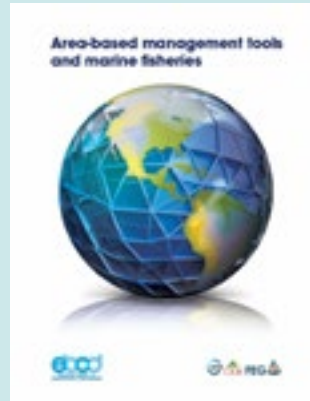


Attendance at the SOI regional capacity-building workshop for East, South and South-East Asia



[VIEW MORE](#)

Publication: *Area-based management tools and marine fisheries:*



Contributed to a workshop on Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) in Oslo



Drafting a report for the FAO on the opportunities and challenges small-scale fisheries might face in relation to the GBF.



Support at a CBD workshop for Jamaica on other effective area-based conservation measures in the marine fishery sector.



# Green Status of Ecosystems



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The Green Status of Ecosystems Task Force complements the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems, which aims to provide an assessment of past, current and future recovery of ecosystems. The main goals of the Green Status of Ecosystems Task Force are to develop a method to assess the current recovery status of an ecosystem, as well as to assess past conservation success and recovery potential for ecosystems, which will form the basis for the IUCN GSE guidelines and test and refine the proposed approach with 20+ case study ecosystems across terrestrial, freshwater and marine realms, from a spectrum of data-rich to data-limited examples.

LEAD



Jessica  
Walsh

CO-LEAD



NUMBER OF MEMBERS

3

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION



# Main Results

GREEN STATUS OF  
ECOSYSTEMS TASK FORCE



The task force led nine online workshops from February-July with Task Force members and other ecosystem experts to develop GSE methods. As a result, the team is currently working on the draft GSE guidelines on how to assess the recovery status of an ecosystem, outlining objectives, guiding principles, and methods of the GSE.



The group also held multiple meetings with other ecosystem experts to test GSE methods with case study ecosystems. Case study GSE assessments in progress.



[VIEW VIDEO](#)

The group participated in a CEM Ecosystem Restoration Thematic Group Webinar in February 2023 to introduce the concept of Green Status methods.



[VIEW MORE](#)

The group also held an open workshop at the Society of Ecological Restoration conference in Darwin in September 2023, where they presented the initial GSE framework and gathered feedback from the restoration community.





# Young Professional Network



# Young Professional Network



The goal of the CEM YPN is to increase the proactive and meaningful participation of emerging young leaders (below 35) in ecosystem management for conserving and restoring nature, developing capacity, and ensuring the future quality of nature-based management of natural resources. Our vision is an intergenerational community of young leaders worldwide who work together within and through IUCN for a world where ecosystems are managed in such a way as to provide their products and services to nature and mankind sustainably. Intergenerational exchange, learning, and collaboration are integral to how IUCN delivers its vision of “a just world that values and conserves nature.” We aim to integrate “youth” contributions throughout the CEM network, facilitating skills interchange, harnessing talent at all levels, and raising awareness of CEM activities more widely.

LEAD



Salima Medouar

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

400

MEMBER DISTRIBUTION





# Main Results

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL  
NETWORK



YPN first regional (Latin America) CEM Dialogue “20th CEM Dialogue: Experiencias de éxito de jóvenes profesionales de Centroamérica y el Caribe”. Developed by the Region of Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. [▶ VIEW VIDEO](#)



A workshop, in collaboration with the Kerala Forest Research Institute, was hosted by the South Asia YPN in Kerala, India, who shared some of their works and case studies in the region as well as issues and potential solutions.



[VIEW MORE](#)

3rd Local Youth Conference on Climate Change in Colombia. The Local Youth Conference on Climate Change - Colombia (LCOYCO3). This event, which took place from 28 to 30 September in Bogota, Colombia, offered a valuable space for reflection, collaboration, and the formulation of innovative solutions. Participants from the YPN in Latin America attended meaningful discussions and workshops, sharing their perspectives and knowledge to drive concrete climate action.





# CEM Regions



# North America



## Main Results


In 2023, the North American regional group:

- ➔ Presented “IUCN and the benefits of Commission membership” to a group of interested members of the American Society of Landscape Architects (19 September).
- ➔ Represented CEM at the IUCN National Committee Annual Meeting in the USA, session “Fireside chat: engaging with IUCN Commissions + Q&A” (3 October).
- ➔ Connected with all regional chairs and various thematic group leaders to align efforts and discuss collaborative opportunities for greater peer-to-peer learning in the region (SERT, NbS).
- ➔ Develop a series of webinars based on the themes that emerged from the regional survey and align with the CEM YPN in terms of knowledge sharing.
- ➔ Follow-up with NbS management to refine a webinar/training programme was delayed, but the aim is to resume it.

 CHAIR



Brock  
Blevins

 CO-CHAIR



Salima  
Medouar

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

194

# Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean



## Main Results

In 2023, the Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean regional group participated in:

- ➔ Training course on the IUCN NbS Global Standard™ together with ORMACC in Guatemala (“Resilient Altiplano Project”).
- ➔ A webinar on “Descriptive Profiles for Biomes and Ecosystem Functional Groups of the IUCN Global Ecosystem Typology 2.0” in Spanish together with ORMACC in Spanish.
- ➔ Participation in two meetings of the Mesoamerican Committee of IUCN Members Participation in the Forum of the Mexican Members Committee in October.
- ➔ Presentation on TG Restoration in the framework of the “II National Meeting on Ecological Restoration, Costa Rica 2023”: Applied Experiences.

## Regional YPN

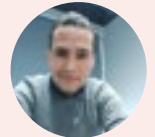
- ➔ El Salvador Young Scientists Webinar
- ➔ First YPN (Latin America) Regional Dialogue: Successful experiences of young professionals from Central America and the Caribbean. [▶ VIEW VIDEO](#)
- ➔ YPN Multiple publications have been made in social networks on: protected areas, the importance of youth participation in ecosystem management and the dissemination projects of YPN members.

CHAIR



Rocío  
Córdoba

CO-CHAIR



Oswaldo  
Flores

YPN



Dariana  
Avila-Velasquez

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

90

OTHER MEDIA ASSETS

Regional Dialogue YPN: [▶ VIEW VIDEO](#)

# South America

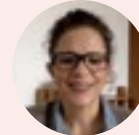


## Main Results


In 2023, the South America regional group participated in:

- ➔ Tropical Dry Forest Workshop (15 November, Quito, Ecuador).
- ➔ Participation in the IUCN Regional Office podcast series - Voices of IUCN: a space for interviews: to talk about the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems and the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™.

 CHAIR



Doris  
Cordero

 CO-CHAIR



NUMBER OF MEMBERS

127

# Western Europe

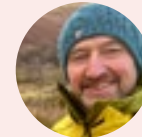


## Main Results


In 2023, the Western Europe regional group participated in:

- ➔ Analysed CEM membership survey results and developed 'outreach/engagement' activities accordingly.
- ➔ Valuing Nature edited collection – drawn largely from CEM work/ collaborators to include NbS, Natural Capital, Life Framework of Values, etc.
- ➔ IUCN CEM/RTG and collaboration with IASNR. IASNR Europe Conference, Berlin, Germany, to promote IUCN and explore potential collaborations.
- ➔ Member Survey completed and analysed.

 CHAIR



Ian  
Convery

 CO-CHAIR



NUMBER OF MEMBERS

**393**

# South Asia



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## Main Results


The South Asia regional group undertook various activities during 2023:

- ➔ Collaborated on localizing climate actions for resilient cities and raised awareness among local self-government officials about the role of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in resilient cities.
- ➔ Organized workshops on Red List Ecosystems and Nature-based Solutions.
- ➔ Maintaining a blog and magazine named *Harnessing Nature* to showcase the activities of the regional network and other contributions from Commission members. [VIEW MORE](#)
- ➔ Regularly hosted webinars to showcase the conservation actions in the region and other activities of the Commission members. [VIEW VIDEO](#)
- ➔ Commission members published more than 30 research articles related to conservation.
- ➔ Translation of the *IUCN Global Standard on Nature-based Solutions* into different regional languages (to be published in 2024).

 CHAIR



Deepu  
Sivadas

 CO-CHAIR



Sushila  
Nepali

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

400



# Central Asia



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## Main Results


The Central Asia regional group stood out for carrying out the following activities:

- ➔ Translation of the *IUCN Global Standard™ on Nature-based Solutions* into Persian (to be published in 2024).
- ➔ Participation in national meetings and webinars on ecosystem restoration.
- ➔ Organization of training courses for ecosystem restoration.

 CHAIR



Saima  
Siddiqui

 CO-CHAIR



Mahdi  
Kolah

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

90

# Northeast Asia



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## Main Results


The Northeast Asia regional group participated in several activities:

- ➔ Delivered a course training on Integrated Ecosystem Services Assessment in Taiwan.
- ➔ Participated in giving a keynote speech at the International Forum on Sustainable Development of Ecology and Environment in the Silk Road Economic Belt held in Xinjiang, China, and the International conference on resilience of grassland social-ecological systems, including the book launching in Beijing.

 CHAIR




Dong  
Shikui

 CO-CHAIR



Lu  
Wen

 CO-CHAIR



Namue  
Lee

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

49

# Southeast Asia



## Main Results


The Central Asia regional group conducted the following activities during 2023:

- ➔ Organization of a workshop on introduction to hospitality and ecotourism for the Jerai Geopark Community in Malaysia.
- ➔ Organization of community activities such as “Greening Malaysia: Love Our Forest I and II”.

 CHAIR



Siti Suriawati  
Binti Isa

 CO-CHAIR



Ronnakorn  
Triragaron

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

45

# West and Central Africa



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## Main Results


In 2023, the West and Central Africa regional group played key roles:

- ➔ Moderated a forum on forests organized by COMIFAC, IUCN, and UNEP in Yaoundé, Cameroon.
- ➔ Co-organized a conference on improving environmental management systems in Congo Brazzaville with NGO TUNGA.
- ➔ Participated in Zoom capacity-building sessions on ecosystem restoration organized by SER and CEM.
- ➔ Led a panel session on resilient forest-based livelihoods at the FLARE forum in Nairobi, Kenya, organized by ICRAF.

 CHAIR



Parfatit  
Teto

 CO-CHAIR



NUMBER OF MEMBERS

84

# North Africa



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## Main Results


In 2023, the North Africa regional group achieved the following results:

- ➔ Published a collaborative work on the contributions of IUCN Red List of Ecosystems to protected area management in Africa.
- ➔ Organized and presented at the Red List of Ecosystem symposium during ICCB 2023 in Kigali, Rwanda.
- ➔ Presented on the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems at FLARE 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya.

 CHAIR



Somaya  
Ghoraba

 CO-CHAIR



NUMBER OF MEMBERS

38

# Southern and East Africa



## Main Results


In 2023, the Southern and East Africa regional group achieved the following results:

- ➔ Participation at the GSSA Geoheritage Conference.
- ➔ Participation ASSAF virtual stakeholder workshop to consult on the draft South African open science policy.
- ➔ Participation ASSAF science diplomacy workshop.
- ➔ Revision and update of South Africa's RLE (for terrestrial ecosystems) has been approved for implementation through the National Environmental Management Act: Biodiversity Act (2004), replacing the 2011 list.
- ➔ The SBAPP Regional Project (Building Biodiversity Knowledge for Action in Southern Africa: Spatial Biodiversity Assessment, Prioritization and Planning in South Africa, Namibia, Mozambique and Malawi) was launched was launched in Mozambique in November. [VIEW MORE](#)
- ➔ “Exploring strategies for management of disasters associated with illegal gold mining in abandoned mines: A case study of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality” was published in the Journal of Disaster Risk Studies. [VIEW MORE](#)

 CHAIR



Joyce  
Jefwa

 CO-CHAIR



NUMBER OF MEMBERS

108

# Oceania



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## Main Results


In 2023, the Oceania regional group:

- ➔ Developed outreach materials.
- ➔ Created a dedicated webpage.
- ➔ Prepared an initial proposal for the ORC case study project.

 CHAIR



Shane  
Orchard

 CO-CHAIR



Toni  
Hay

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

127







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FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE**

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