



WCPA impact report 2023



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FOREWORD



Razan Al Mubarak
President, IUCN

As President of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), it gives me immense pride to address the global conservation community through this foreword for the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) impact report 2023. The WCPA stands at the forefront of our collective efforts to counter the accelerating loss of nature and biodiversity, and to confront the challenges posed by climate change.

Through its rigorous scientific approach and unwavering commitment, WCPA has been instrumental in guiding the establishment and effective management of protected and conserved areas across the globe. These areas are not just havens of biodiversity; they are the cornerstones upon which we build our strategies to mitigate climate impacts, protect endangered species, and preserve the ecosystems that sustain life on Earth.

As we navigate the decisive decade for our planet's future, the work of WCPA is more critical than ever. It embodies the essence of IUCN's mission—uniting the world's best scientific knowledge with the dedicated efforts of our members and partners. Together, we are making strides towards achieving the global biodiversity targets, including the ambitious '30x30' goal to conserve at least 30 percent of the Earth's land and sea by 2030.

This report not only highlights the achievements and the impact of the WCPA's work over the past year but also serves as a clarion call to strengthen our resolve and enhance our actions. Let us draw inspiration from the successes detailed in this report and recommit ourselves to the urgent and vital work of preserving our natural world for present and future generations.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Madhu Rao
Chair, WCPA

The past year has been an incredibly busy yet productive year for the Commission. With less than six years remaining to reach the ambitious biodiversity targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), a deep sense of urgency has triggered visible momentum and significant financial investment toward implementation. The Commission has been a part of this global effort, supporting implementation by delivering on its core mandate to provide technical guidance and policy advice.

It has been a year of learning for the Commission. We have been reminded of the importance of recognising and using all the tools in the area-based conservation toolbox—including different forms of governance and management regimes and innovative financing mechanisms—and of building new tools when necessary. The past year reinforced the need to develop new guidance for protected area planning and management that reflects the most recent science and experience, but also increasing accessibility and use of existing technical guidance, knowledge, and tools.

Forging partnerships and alliances is essential to achieving ambitious goals. Catalysing aligned, collective action through building a community of practice for Target 3, working alongside the Secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the High-Ambition Coalition, is critical for impact at the scale necessary to bend the curve toward effective and lasting conservation.

We must be strategic in our efforts. This means meeting countries where they are and building a bottom-up approach toward advancing not just the 30x30 target, but also other related GBF targets.

A strategic approach also means investing resources where there are critical gaps, such as freshwater ecosystems, while thinking across entire river basins and mosaics of large landscapes and seascapes. Bringing conservation to scale in this way demands integrated spatial planning for well-connected ecological networks of protected areas, other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) and ecological corridors, habitat and restoration, and food production.

This past year also saw progress toward new ways of thinking about the broad role of protected and conserved areas (PCAs) beyond the conservation of biological diversity. We took important steps that will begin to place PCAs on the climate and human health agendas.

It has never been more important than it is now, for us, as the global conservation community to advocate for healthy systems of protected and conserved areas as central to slowing and eventually halting biodiversity loss and as natural solutions to global challenges, providing benefits to human well-being.

As we forge ahead, we are grateful to the extraordinary network of volunteers and members. The influence and impact of the Commission is largely due to their tireless energy and commitment. We hope you will enjoy reading this report about Commission's extensive scope of work.





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OUR MISSION

To develop and provide scientific and technical advice and policy that promotes a representative, effectively managed, and equitably governed global system of marine and terrestrial protected and conserved areas, with a focus on areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services.



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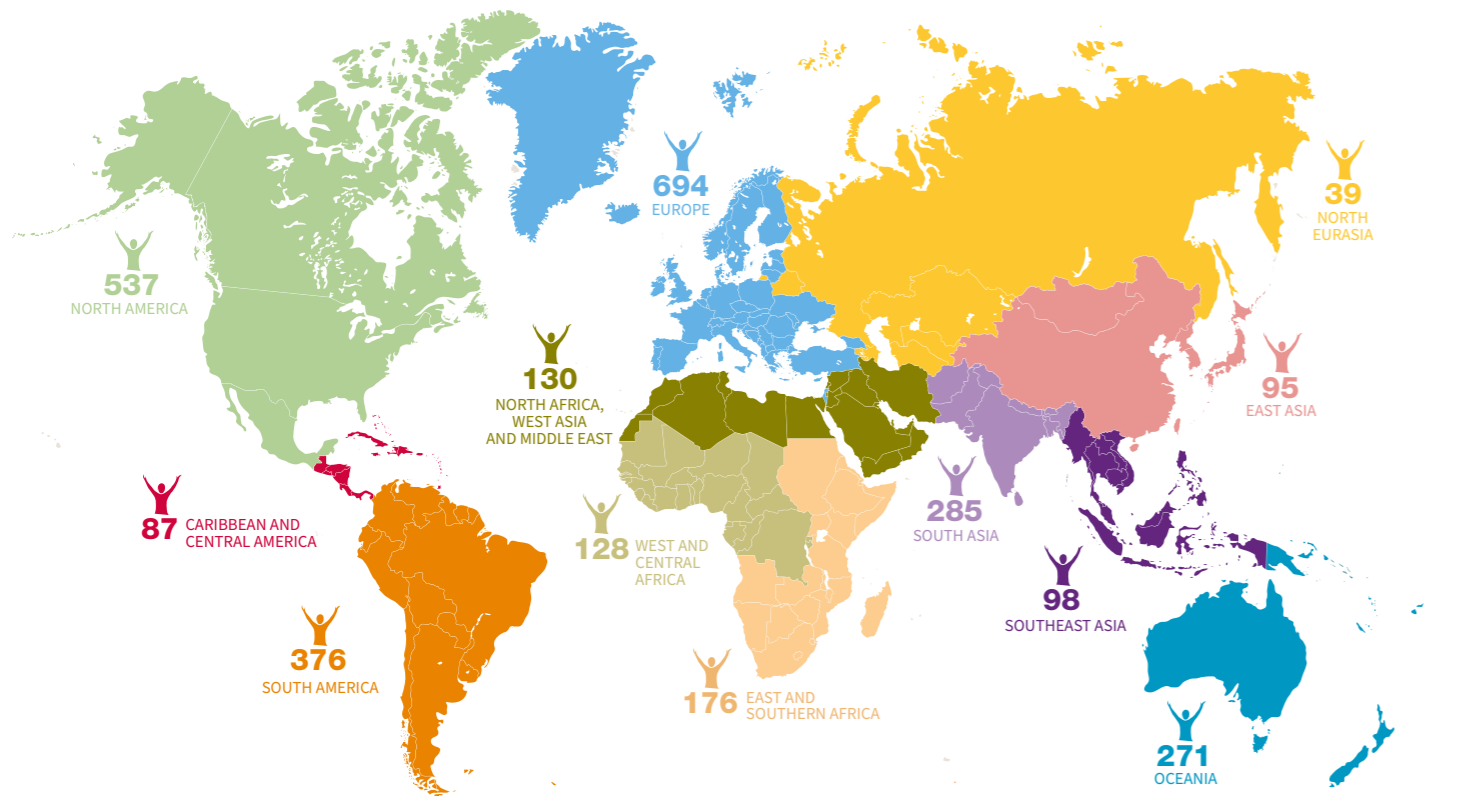
OUR VISION

Systems of protected and conserved areas are effective in conserving nature, and as such, are recognised and valued both as cornerstones for conserving biodiversity and as natural solutions to global challenges, providing benefits to human health, livelihoods, and well-being.

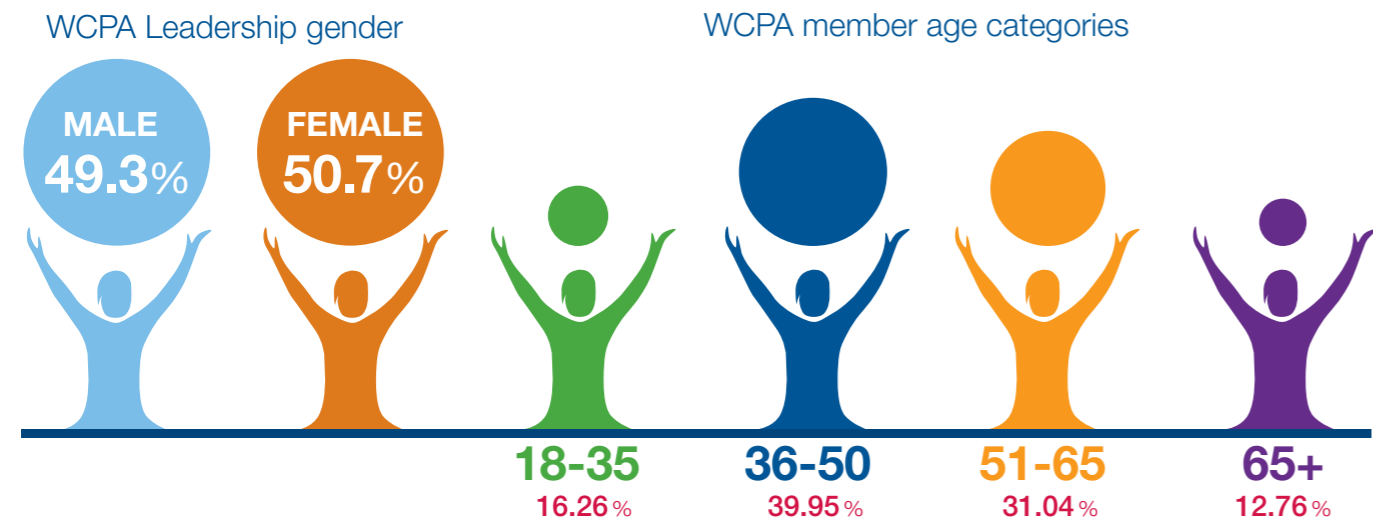
2023 BY THE NUMBERS

Thanks to the vital efforts of our Commission's expert members and partners, WCPA contributed to significant gains in high quality protected and conserved areas in 2023. As our membership continues to grow and diversify, WCPA's network is becoming even better equipped to provide strategic advice to policymakers and to strengthen capacity and investment for protected and conserved areas establishment and effective management. By developing and disseminating conservation standards, science, and policy guidance, we are actively providing direction on a full suite of issues surrounding protected and conserved landscapes and seascapes with the highest conservation value and the greatest potential for impact.

Members by WCPA region (Updated 01.01.2024)



Membership demographics



19 papers
from a total
of **70** authors
from **26**
countries



7 WCPA supported
the execution of
major global events
and hosted
15 side events
at policy events
around the world



WCPA ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

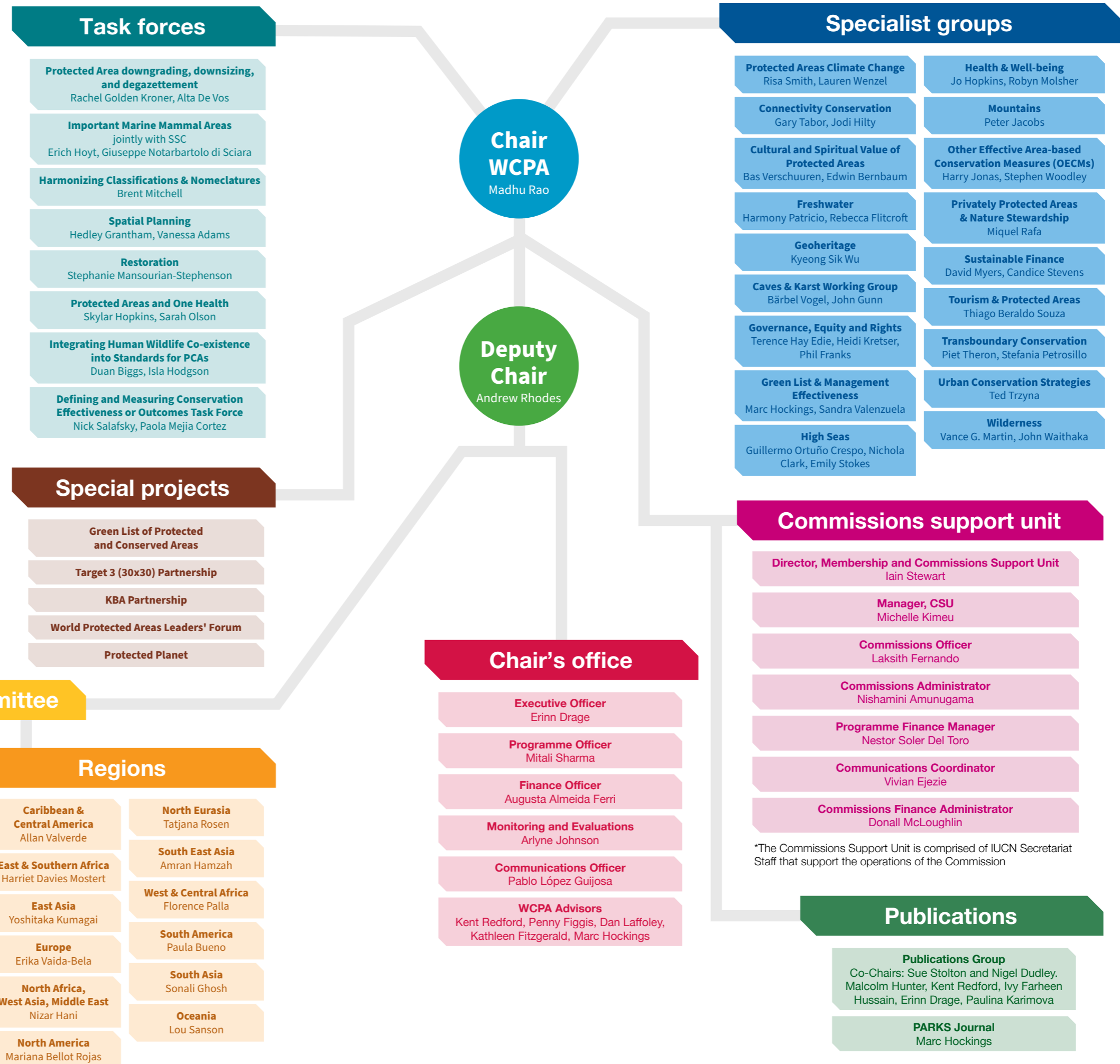
WCPA is divided into 12 operational regions. WCPA members are linked to a Commission region according to their registered country of residence.

WCPA currently has nine Themes, each with a Thematic Vice Chair who sits on the WCPA Steering Committee. Themes work on broad areas of enquiry and key strategic directions towards meeting the WCPA mandate.

WCPA Specialist Groups work on long term thematic activities relating to specific topics of study addressed by the Commission mandate.

WCPA Task Forces work on a specific issue, within a determined time period.

Special projects are crafted around cross-cutting priority topics within the Commission and can be either short-term or long-term in nature.



ADVANCING GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY POLICY AND ACTION

In December 2022, more than 190 countries sealed a landmark environmental agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), which calls upon governments to take urgent action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. WCPA is committed to supporting governments, NGOs, Indigenous peoples, local communities, and other stakeholders in achieving the ambitious and crucial goals of the agreement.

Protected and conserved areas (PCAs) will play a key role in the GBF. Currently, only 17 percent of terrestrial areas and 8 percent of marine areas are protected, and many of these areas are managed ineffectively or in ways that do not embody equity and human rights, or are not situated well enough to achieve lasting and effective biodiversity conservation. As a global leader on protected and conserved areas, WCPA is working closely with parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, of which the GBF is a key part.

Target 3: Bending the curve

Nature is in a steep decline, both in species and plenitude. WCPA recognizes the significance of all 23 of the GBF's ambitious targets, as each is important if we are to reverse this trend and restore nature to abundance. Global attention and resources, however, are particularly focused on Target 3, the best-known of the targets, often called the push for "30x30." Target 3 aims for effective and equitable protection and conservation of at least 30 percent of the planet by 2030. Its success or failure will be a barometer of whether multilateralism can be effective in addressing the decline of species and the wealth of nature.

30x30

WCPA is a global leader in the collective effort to protect 30% of land and waters by 2030


WHAT & WHERE

HOW

WHILE ENSURING


TARGET 3 - HOW

Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.




PROTECTED AREAS

[READ MORE >](#)



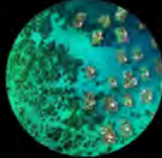
OTHER EFFECTIVE AREA-BASED CONSERVATION MEASURES

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RECOGNISING INDIGENOUS & TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES

[READ MORE >](#)



INTEGRATED INTO LANDSCAPES, SEASCAPES AND OCEAN

[READ MORE >](#)

Over the past years, WCPA and its partners have developed detailed technical guidance on many aspects relevant to the target, including rights-based approaches, inland water protection, privately protected areas, connectivity, and areas of particular importance to biodiversity. Notably, WCPA, World Wildlife Fund US (WWF-US) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) produced a comprehensive [Target 3 Guide](#) that explains how to plan and implement the target, delves into each of the target's elements, and explores overarching concepts that should guide implementation. The Guide also provides links to resources for multi-stakeholder/multi-rightsholder approaches, and discusses options for developing and implementing effective monitoring plans.

WCPA, along with The Nature Conservancy and the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, developed a detailed, online [30x30 Solutions toolkit](#), a curated web-resource providing guidance and information to support implementation of Target 3. Connectivity is an essential element of Target 3. WCPA'S Connectivity Specialist Group (SG) has developed an [overview](#) of opportunities for connectivity conservation in the GBF and alignment with financing as well as [guidance](#) for addressing connectivity in revised National Biodiversity and Strategic Action Plans (NBSAPs) and implementation of the GBF. SG members are also holding workshops to refine application of the IUCN [Guidelines](#) for conserving connectivity through ecological networks and corridors, addressing ecological connectivity in the development of [roads, railways, and canals](#), and co-created the animated short film "[Animals move to survive: Wildlife Connect Initiative](#)."

Many governments, organisations, and donors are mobilising to support implementation of 30x30. WCPA has sought to share knowledge and learning among these actors, and to bring rigour to the pursuit of the Target 3 ambition, so that by 2030 all stakeholders can be confident that the spirit and not just the letter of the agreement has been fulfilled. An important part of that process is helping governments build better understanding of how to govern their protected areas and how to honour their commitments to equitable, rights-based approaches to humanity's shared goals to protect the nature that sustains us. WCPA has been active in facilitating discussion on these essential topics over the past year.

The conservation community needs to know whether all its efforts and investments are truly reversing the curve. A key aspect of WCPA's work in 2023 was forging alliances and partnerships that position the Commission to provide technical support and guidance to the T3 Partnership, the Secretariat of the CBD, and the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People.

While concentrating on Target 3, WCPA has also been building capacity regarding the other two area-based conservation targets of the GBF: spatial planning (Target 1); and restoration (Target 2). The new [Task Force on Restoration](#) aims to strengthen knowledge and develop guidance to improve restoration implementation in the framework of the GBF targets and will carry out research, provide evidence-based technical tools, and policy documents to support improved integration of restoration in the context of protected and conserved areas.

WCPA's [Spatial Planning Task Force](#) is working to ensure that biodiversity considerations are considered through a typical process of analysing and allocating the spatial and temporal distribution of human activities in areas to achieve ecological, economic, and social objectives. Such biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning is not well defined by the GBF, and the Task Force is helping to address this gap and provide guidance on how Parties to the CBD can meet their commitments toward biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning in ways that lead to real benefits for biodiversity are equitable, inclusive, representative, realistic, and feasible with limited time and resources.

Target 3 and the GBF Box 1

Adopted in December 2022 at the 15th meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP15), the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework is an urgent seven-year plan to reverse alarming declines of nature by 2030, as a step toward living in harmony by 2050.

Target 3 calls for terrestrial, inland water, and marine areas to be "effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected, and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable." Target 3 thus falls squarely within WCPA's mandate and work programme.



RECOGNIZING DIVERSE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT REGIMES ACHIEVING CONSERVATION OUTCOMES

Protected areas that fall under the six management categories of the IUCN classification system are fundamental to global biodiversity conservation. The vast majority of these protected areas are government-designated and managed; other forms of governance, such as governance shared by diverse rights holders and stakeholders together, by private entities, or by indigenous peoples and/or local communities remain uncommon.

Government-owned and managed protected areas will not by themselves enable countries to reach the Target 3 goals under the Global Biodiversity Framework. That will require diversifying governance and management and bringing into the fold areas that could or do achieve biodiversity outcomes but are beyond government-designated parks and reserves.

Important examples of the kinds of diverse governance and management that will be needed to achieve global ambitions include privately protected areas, other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), and recognition of indigenous and traditional territories. WCPA has been engaged heavily in advancing the first two over the past year and remains committed to supporting the third.

Privately protected areas

While the 30x30 target features the quantity of land, waters, and sea protected, the location and effectiveness of PCAs are among vital quantitative requirements in judging how much the target contributes to stemming the biodiversity crisis. Some areas that are crucial to halting or reversing biodiversity loss are privately owned by non-profit organisations, for-profit organisations, or individual landowners. These landowners can play a key role in not only achieving the 30x30 target but ensuring its long-term success by choosing to manage their lands and waters to deliver conservation outcomes. WCPA provides the expertise needed to seize this opportunity.

Few governments recognize privately protected and conserved areas when reporting their progress on the 30x30 target. WCPA's Privately Protected Areas & Nature Stewardship Specialist Group improves understanding and recognition of the role of private approaches to nature conservation, and helps enhance the effectiveness of privately protected and conserved areas by gathering information and sharing it at the global level.

Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs)

The commitment to the 30x30 objective of Target 3 has sparked significant interest in OECMs. As implementation unfolds, there has been huge demand for conceptual clarity and knowledge regarding how to recognize and report on OECMs.

WCPA has also been deeply involved in exploring the role of OECMs through the OECMs Specialist Group. OECMs will figure prominently in the expansion of protected and conserved areas under Target 3, and the WCPA OECMs Specialist Group has developed a detailed online toolkit for identifying them.



The Specialist Group published a clear, criteria-based tool that governments, private entities, NGOs, and Indigenous and community groups can use to identify site-level OECMs.

WCPA, through the OECMs Specialist Group, also aimed to broaden the effective global expertise on OECMs to promote IUCN guidance. To that end it established

regional expert groups for Latin America, Europe, and Africa and thematic groups for marine and freshwater

Defining OECMs ^{Box 2}

The Convention on Biological Diversity defines 'other effective area-based conservation measures' as:

A geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in situ conservation of biodiversity with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values. (CBD Decision 14/8)

In November 2018, Parties to the Convention adopted this definition of OECMs, as well as guiding principles, common characteristics, and criteria for their identification.

While protected areas must have a primary conservation objective, this is not necessary for OECMs. OECMs may be managed for many different objectives but they must deliver effective conservation. They may be managed with conservation as a primary or secondary objective or long-term conservation may simply be the ancillary result of management activities.

ecosystems. The Specialist Group has engaged in extensive outreach to support the interpretation of the OECMs criteria, recognition of potential OECMs, and advancing knowledge sharing and exchange of experiences on OECMs globally.

Governance, equity, and rights

Governance of protected and conserved areas is now clearly understood as a main element in the legal, policy, institutional, and practical framework of conservation around the world. Governance that advances equity, human rights, and approaches that elevate shared governance practices are needed to navigate the growing complexities of PCA management. The GBF has begun to move the needle in terms of recognizing the critical importance of rights-based approaches to PCA governance across all governance types, yet these concepts and their application remain a challenge for many countries and agencies.

WCPA has a unique leadership role in providing guidance related to the governance of protected and conserved areas. WCPA fosters, coordinates, and actively engages in a set of initiatives to bring governance practices that reflect equity and human rights to the centre of protected and conserved area management discourse, and develops concrete recommendations for practice. Working closely with key allies, including the Commission on Environmental, Economic, and Social Policy (CEESP), the WCPA Theme and Specialist Group on Governance, Equity, and Rights elevates this dialogue and provides practical tools that enable countries, agencies, and their counterparts to integrate such practices into

protected and conserved area management. In 2023, under the WCPA Theme, a joint working group was established between CEESP and WCPA to explore and reduce barriers to expanding governance by Indigenous peoples and local communities in PCAs to further diversify governance and management regimes, and to develop guidance and tools to support improved recognition of their roles and contributions.

New Best Practice Guidelines Forthcoming ^{Box 3}

The forthcoming WCPA Protected Areas Best Practice Guidelines, Recognising and Respecting the Territories and Areas Conserved by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (ICCAs) Overlapped by Protected Areas, identifies six key approaches and 20 good practices through which overlapped ICCAs can be recognised and respected. Much of the guidance will also apply to recognising and respecting ICCAs overlapped by OECMs governed by governments and private entities that do not represent or include indigenous peoples and local communities.



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GUIDING THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHT PLACES FOR BIODIVERSITY

The bold ambition of Target 3 has been widely celebrated and its implementation seen as pivotal for the overall success of the GBF. The expansion agenda that CBD signatory nations have committed to is a challenge but also a unique opportunity to rapidly extend conservation efforts globally in an equitable and representative manner.

While expanding the quantity (e.g., area) of PCAs will be important, it will also be critical to focus on the “quality” of those areas: are signatory nations protecting those terrestrial, inland waters, and marine areas that have the best chance of halting and reversing biodiversity loss?

WCPA has been working on tools and data to help countries focus on the areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services. Effectively conserving and managing these areas through ecologically representative, well-connected, and equitably governed systems will help meet the broad intention of Target 3.¹

To ensure PCAs are placed in areas of importance for biodiversity, WCPA has broken down the components of Target 3 into 12 related biodiversity elements, such as rare or threatened species and habitats, and threatened and/or collapsing ecosystems. These elements can be made into clear objectives for spatial planning, targets can be set against these objectives, and the targets can be incorporated into conservation plans.

One of the critical datasets available to support this process is the *World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs)*, developed by IUCN, Birdlife International, and the 11 other members of the KBA Partnership. KBAs are among the most diverse places on Earth, contribute significantly to the planet’s biodiversity and overall health, and have proven to be a key tool for guiding decisions on conservation and sustainable management. WCPA supports the KBA Partnership, which seeks to enhance global conservation efforts by systematically mapping internationally important sites and ensuring that scarce resources are directed to the most important places for nature.

WCPA also recognises the need to pay attention to realms and ecosystems that are under-represented in the current protected area estate such as freshwater and mountain ecosystems.

¹ Watson, J. E. M., Venegas-Li, R., Grantham, H., Dudley, N., Stolton, S., Rao, M. et al. 2023. Priorities for protected area expansion so nations can meet their Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework commitments. *Integrative Conservation* 2: 140–155. <https://doi.org/10.1002/inc3.24>

Figure 1: Six broad principles that can guide planning and ensure protected and conserved areas are well sited, as in Watson et al. 2023.



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Freshwater

The WCPA Freshwater Specialist Group addresses urgent issues related to conservation of freshwater/inland water habitats within protected areas. Group members conduct research, conservation activities, and outreach to help ensure that the complete diversity of the world’s freshwater ecosystems are adequately represented in the global network of protected areas and OECMs. Working closely with the Ramsar Secretariat, the Freshwater Specialist Group is focused on the development of guidance that supports Target 3 in freshwater settings, particularly working to better define OECMs in freshwater environments.

Group members participated in development and implementation of the *Freshwater Challenge*. This country-led initiative aims to substantiate, integrate, and accelerate targeted interventions for rivers and wetlands, connecting these with national plans and strategies. It will increase the overall investment into the restoration and conservation of freshwater ecosystems and substantially increase the social and economic returns on those investments, including the goal of restoring 300,000 km of rivers and 350 million hectares of wetlands by 2030.



Mountains

Members of WCPA’s Mountains Specialist Group have developed a strategic decision-support tool for identifying and prioritising which candidate mountain areas most urgently require protection.¹ The six-step algorithm harnesses multiple datasets including mountain Key Biodiversity Areas, World Terrestrial Ecosystems, Biodiversity Hotspots, and Red List species and ecosystems. The algorithm makes use of other key attributes including opportunities for disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, developing mountain tourism, maintaining elevational gradients and natural ecological corridors, and conserving flagship species. This rapid-assessment tool enables regional teams with sufficient local knowledge and country-specific values to finalise lists of priority mountain areas for protection and ensures a repeatable, unbiased, and scientifically credible method for allocating resources and priorities to safeguard the world’s most biodiverse mountain areas facing myriad threats.

¹ Jacobs, P., Carbutt, C., Beaver, E.A., Foggin, J.M., Martin, M., Orchard, S. and Sayre, R. (2023). A Decision-Support Tool to Augment Global Mountain Protection and Conservation, including a Case Study from Western Himalaya. *Land* 12: 1323.



Over **1/3** of all shark species and **3/4** of oceanic shark species are threatened with extinction

Important shark and ray areas

Current measures for protection and improvement to shark habitats have been ineffective. In response, IUCN helped develop Important Shark and Ray Areas. This innovative approach is designed to ensure that discrete portions of habitats critical to shark species are delineated and used in place-based conservation and management initiatives across the world's oceans.

As with IMMAs, there is no legal or regulatory mandate associated with ISRAs. One of main goals of ISRAs is to attract the attention of policy- and decision-makers who design and develop MPAs to the need of maintaining the favourable conservation status of sharks in those specific areas. WCPA members have helped design criteria to capture important aspects of shark biology and ecology and to encompass multiple aspects of species vulnerability, distribution, abundance, and key life cycle activities, as well as areas of high diversity and endemism. With the finalisation of the ISRA Criteria, IUCN is moving forward to assess a region against these criteria and identify the first ISRAs in the world.

The Task Force has now examined **72%** of the ocean and has identified **242**

Important Marine Mammal Areas, or IMMAs, defined as discrete portions of habitat, important to marine mammal species, that have the potential to be delineated and managed for conservation

Important marine mammal areas

WCPA has long recognized the need for a simple but authoritative conservation tool that marine spatial planners, marine protected area practitioners, government, industry, conservation groups, and scientists could use to protect habitat for whales, dolphins, and other marine mammals. Ten years ago, the Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force began to develop a scientific process toward that end, drawing on published and unpublished data to bring together disparate groups of whale and other marine mammal scientists to identify the most important habitats of these wide-ranging species.

WCPA and World Heritage

WCPA, through the position of Vice Chair for World Heritage, supports IUCN in its role as the technical advisory body on natural heritage to the World Heritage Convention, and provides IUCN's Heritage and Culture Team with the technical expertise and knowledge of WCPA experts. WCPA coordinates with the World Heritage Committee, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, and the other Advisory Bodies to the Convention.

In 2023, IUCN prepared 90 State of Conservation Reports on natural and mixed World Heritage sites, presented 14 evaluations of sites nominated under natural criteria, and contributed to the evaluation of 11 cultural landscapes. The World Heritage Committee accepted all seven inscription recommendations by IUCN. The World Heritage Committee has therefore enlarged natural World Heritage areas by more than 100 million hectares, an area roughly 26 times the size of Switzerland.

WCPA also contributed to the new IUCN World Heritage Strategy that is designed to ensure that the World Heritage Convention is recognised and celebrated as protecting the world's most significant areas of natural and cultural conservation importance, and that World Heritage inspires innovation and best practices globally and locally. The strategy seeks to deliver global conservation action and outcomes and results for people while also linking nature and culture, inspiring success and engagement, increasing the ability to deliver through World Heritage and boosting the credibility of World Heritage by upholding exemplary standards. A new toolkit to assess effectiveness of world heritage management was based on WCPA's work on management effectiveness.

476.8 million hectares

The World Heritage List now covers 266 natural and mixed sites encompassing



WORKING TOWARDS A GLOBAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREAS

Target 3 of the GBF calls for 30 percent of the world to be *effectively conserved and managed* in protected and conserved areas (PCAs). Monitoring progress towards this target thus requires a robust methodology for assessing both the quantity and quality of lands and waters under conservation management. Unfortunately, *effectiveness* is one of those concepts that is easy to understand intuitively, but difficult to define and measure in a standard manner, especially in the complex ecological and social systems in which protected and conserved areas are implemented.

In practice, an effective area or network needs to demonstrate three things:

1. Location in areas that are important for biodiversity and sound design.
2. Good governance processes and management strategy implementation.
3. Evidence that these processes and strategies are leading to the achievement of credible short-term objectives on the pathway to long-term threat reduction, conservation, and human wellbeing outcomes.

The key to showing effectiveness is thus to establish a *theory of change* pathway that links management processes and strategies to a series of desired outcomes (see diagram). The challenge becomes operationalising these principles in a credible, feasible, and useful assessment system.

To help meet this challenge, the Defining and Measuring Conservation Effectiveness and Outcomes Task Force, working in conjunction with UNEP WCMC Protected Planet, has systematically compared over 20 existing protected area effectiveness frameworks and tools that have been developed over the past decades. These included both global efforts such as the IUCN Green List Standard, METT, and Blue Park Criteria, as well as various national frameworks. The analysis reveals that these approaches are for the most part able to assess governance and management processes, but are still figuring out how to link actions to credible outcomes in a theory of change. It is critically important to connect the dots, and link existing methodologies that assess governance and management processes to approaches that generate the evidence to measure outcomes such as threat reduction, the retention of biodiversity values and the enhancement of human well-being.

The Task Force is now working with PCA managers in a number of countries and the proponents of these frameworks and tools to develop and test protocols that could help fill this gap. For example, the photo shows one of our tests of our approach with PCA managers from a half-dozen Latin American countries in the RedParques Network. And as described in **Box 4**, WCPA is actively working with the IUCN Secretariat to improve the Green List Standard. It is our hope that this work will result in a global framework for effectiveness assessments that could both help PCA managers improve their work over time and give broader society the confidence that we are collectively moving towards the ambitious 30x30 targets.



Green List governance
The Green List Steering Group provides strategy and guidance for the Green List programme. Four of its eight members are drawn from WCPA while the others come from the IUCN Secretariat.



IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas ^{Box 4}

The IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas is a concept that is coming of age as the global conservation community focusses greater attention to the “quality” as well as “quantity” of land, sea, and inland waters managed to deliver biodiversity and nature conservation. The Green List Standard defines the core elements of equitable and effective area-based conservation based around 17 criteria across four components of equitable governance, sound design and planning, effective management, and successful conservation outcomes. The Green List itself includes protected and conserved areas that have demonstrated with objective evidence that they have met this standard. Many hundreds of other sites engaged in the programme are working towards achieving it.

WCPA was instrumental in the development of the Green List concept and its elaboration. WCPA members work alongside IUCN Secretariat staff and IUCN members in delivering the Green List programme and many of the people supporting and working with the Green List at global, regional, and national levels are WCPA members.

WCPA Regional contributions

WCPA has contributed to the Green List in the regions through the support of Regional Vice Chairs, and with WCPA members contributing as Expert Assessment Groups members, as mentors for sites, and in setting up working groups and providing training on the Green List and management effectiveness (for example in West and Central Africa, Western Indian Ocean, North Africa/Middle East, Oceania, Central and South America).

WCPA members have assisted in preparing capacity development and training material for the Green List and in the review of Green List processes and plans including a procedural manual, the Green List Development Plan, and the self-assessment tool that is under development.

WCPA as the “keeper” of the Green List Standard

A key governance mechanism for the Green List is the seven-member Standards Committee composed of WCPA members. The Committee developed the Green List Standard, drawing on the expertise of WCPA and its experience with assessment of management effectiveness over many years. The Standards Committee manages any local adaptations of indicators within the Standard and in 2024 will undertake a review of the Standard as a whole.

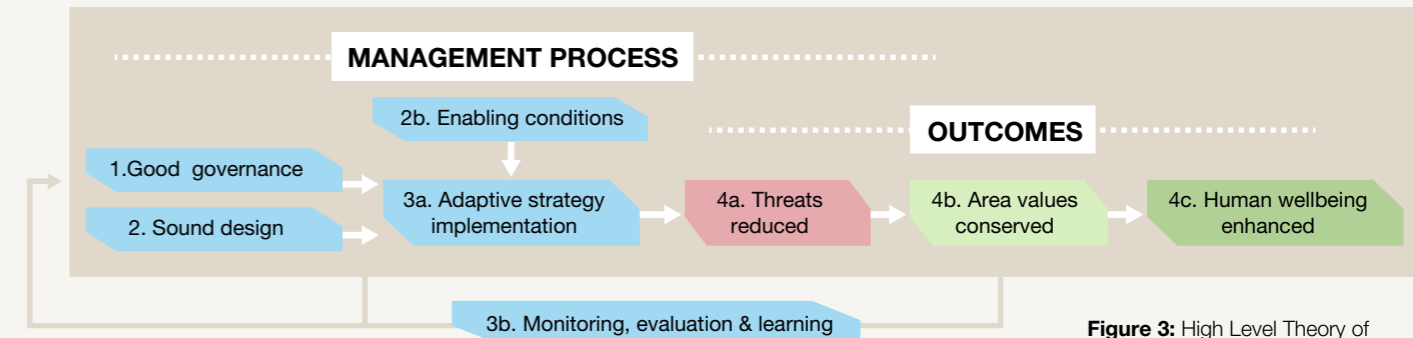


Figure 3: High Level Theory of Change for an Effective PCA

ADVANCING MARINE CONSERVATION: COASTS TO THE HIGH SEAS

WCPA seeks to inspire, inform, and enable people to protect Planet Ocean by promoting the establishment of a global, representative system of effectively managed and lasting networks of marine protected areas (MPAs) and OECMs within National Economic Exclusion Zone areas as well as in the High Seas and Areas Beyond National Jurisdictions. The [Marine Thematic Group](#), which includes the [Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force](#), the [High Seas Specialist Group](#), as well as working groups dedicated to other marine issues such as connectivity, management effectiveness, spatial planning, and climate change, is providing guidance on key elements relevant to the global MPA agenda through assuring quality information, celebrating achievements, identifying priorities, and spurring action in order to help governments, agencies, organisations, and individuals plan, develop, and implement MPAs.

Antarctic and Southern Oceans

WCPA reviewed and updated the strategy for IUCN's Programme and Policy on Antarctica Issues (especially taking into consideration relevant IUCN resolutions, recent policy developments including the GBF and IUCN's Programme of Work) for action now and that can act as an input to the 2025-2029 intersessional Programme; and developed a plan that outlines a sustainable means on implementation including options for fundraising and capacity development, aiming to elevate IUCN's engagement with and influence of relevant policy fora.

Antarctic tourism

Tourism in Antarctica has grown enormously, expanding ten-fold between 1992 and 2020. While Antarctic tourism can foster public support and investment for the continent's protection, tourist activities can also cause damage at visitor sites and along travel routes and disturb wildlife. Antarctic travel also has a high carbon footprint.

All activities in Antarctica are regulated through the Antarctic Treaty System. WCPA members have been active participants in the annual Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings, which constitute the most important decision-making forum for Antarctica. WCPA also supported the revision of the IUCN strategy for Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. [IUCN WCPA Antarctic tourism experts recommend more research to inform the policies and implementation of a science-based tourism management approach, along with improved safeguards and monitoring to help enhance the positive impacts of tourism as a conservation tool.](#)

IUCN Resolution 107 reducing the impact of fisheries on marine biodiversity

Working together with the IUCN Secretariat, Ocean team, and the Programme and Policy Committee, WCPA actively supported the creation of the task force for Resolution 107 which aims to advance the reconciliation of fisheries and conservation, and reduce the impact of fisheries on marine biodiversity.

High seas

In September 2023, the United Nations officially adopted a new international agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (called the BBNJ Agreement). Within just a few months, 86 countries signed the treaty and one has become a formal Party.

WCPA members have been deeply engaged in the decades-long process to conclude this agreement, which marks a watershed moment in the global commitment to safeguarding the health and vitality of the world's oceans. Members of the [High Seas Specialist Group](#) are now working on how to quickly implement the agreement, to foster high seas MPAs, and to help envision sustainable futures for the high seas.

Marine Protected Area Effectiveness

WCPA members are helping develop the tools necessary to assess the effectiveness of MPAs and marine OECMs and organised sessions at the International Marine Protected Areas Congress on this topic. WCPA Marine experts also launched two climate change resilience assessment tools for MPAs – one with the [WCPA Climate Change Specialist group](#), one with the [EU Ocean Governance project](#) – as part of more general WCPA marine protected area management effectiveness activities.

WCPA and the UN Ocean Decade white papers

2024 is the fourth year of implementation of the [UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development \(2021-2030\)](#). The [Vision 2030](#) process of the UN Ocean Decade aims to identify common measures of success for each of the [10 Ocean Decade Challenges](#) on the road to 2030. A key outcome of this strategic ambition setting process is a set of White Papers that will outline a comprehensive approach to user needs, priority datasets, and gaps in science, and outline the strategic measures required to fulfil the objectives of each Challenge by the end of the Ocean Decade. [WCPA is working to influence the White Paper on Challenge 2: Protect and Restore Ecosystems and Biodiversity.](#)

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR CONSERVATION

The term *capacity building* is often equated with training, but it has a much broader meaning; a simple definition is “the means to plan and achieve.” This includes not just the skills and knowledge provided by training, but also the ability of an organisation to meet its targets. Central to organisational capacity is the workforce, which has recently been the focus of the [WCPA Capacity Thematic Group](#).

While identifying where new PCAs need to be is critical to reaching the 30x30 target, it will also be vital to ensure that these areas have the workforce necessary to manage them effectively and fairly. Focusing on the area and not the workforce is like building a new hospital without considering the need for doctors, nurses, ancillary workers, and administrators to staff it. Indeed, [an article published in 2023 by WCPA members](#) refers to rangers as “essential planetary health workers” who are responsible for managing large tracts of the planet’s lands and waters yet are often underutilised, underrecognized, and under-equipped.

A recent study by WCPA members, drawing on data from 176 countries and territories, showed that the PCA workforce is a third of what it needs to be; doubling the area under conservation will require a workforce six times bigger than it is today: around 3 million people, including 1.5 million rangers. These staff also need to be equipped, trained, deployed, and supported to ensure that they do their work effectively, ethically, and equitably.

As a founding member of the Universal Ranger Support Alliance (URSA), WCPA is highlighting the workforce challenges associated with 30x30. The ‘Rangers for 30x30 Framework’ (Figure 4) defines four essential elements of capacity for managing 30 percent of the planet.

Publications based on this framework include a global code of conduct, an international labour standard for working conditions, and a set of competencies required of all rangers. WCPA and its partners are asking



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all those engaged in supporting PCAs to place a far greater emphasis on workforce issues. A landmark meeting in Brussels in September 2023, attended by WCPA members, orientated the European Commission and major conservation donors about the new framework.

WCPA and the other URSA partners are making good progress in operationalising the 30x30 Framework around the world. For example, the International Ranger Federation Ranger Code of Conduct is being widely adopted, including in South Sudan, Bhutan (where 1,400 rangers have been trained to use it), and India, where it has been integrated into the curricula of 28 ranger training colleges. There is a plan to incorporate the Ranger Competencies into national training curricula in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan. The competencies are also being used to train new Indigenous-led ranger teams in Sulawesi, Indonesia. URSA members are discussing with international insurance companies a global scheme to provide life insurance for all rangers. WCPA is also preparing a new Best Practice Guide on Ranger Community Relations.

In December, 2023, 168 participants from 21 countries attended the first [Asian Ranger Forum](#). More than 61 percent of participants were active rangers, 23 percent of participants were women—including one of the first women from Saudi Arabia to work as a ranger—and 31 percent identified as Indigenous people. The forum addressed different aspects of ranger work ranging from marine rangers, indigenous rangers, community trust, human rights, and many more. The outputs from this event will feed into the World Ranger Congress Declaration in 2024, and in turn to a major programme of activities on PCA workforce issues planned for the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress.

The Forum also hosted elections for the Ranger Federation of Asia with its newly elected president, Mr. Bunthy Tao, an indigenous representative from one of India’s largest indigenous tribes.

Sustainable financing

Area-based conservation has historically been under-resourced, often overly reliant on a single income source such as donor-funding or government budgets. Realising and maintaining the environmental, social, and economic benefits of PCAs and OECMs requires long-term adequate financing that leverages diverse finance tools to achieve desired biodiversity outcomes and management objectives.

WCPA’s Sustainable Finance Specialist Group supports the development of new, innovative, and resilient sources of finance that are critical if PCAs and Indigenous and Traditional Territories are to reach their full potential and deliver cross-cutting benefits to people and the planet. The Specialist Group seeks to develop and share knowledge, build awareness and capacity, and promote innovation in sustainable finance solutions through a strategic and collaborative approach to identify, share, and pioneer finance solutions. The Sustainable Finance Specialist Group is also currently developing Good Practice Guidelines publication on Protected Areas Finance.

Sustainable tourism in protected areas

Another important element of effective protected area management is building the capacity to regulate travel and tourism in ways that contribute significantly to local economies and local conservation efforts while ensuring positive outcomes for nature. WCPA’s Tourism and Protected Areas Specialist Group supports the oversight of sustainable tourism in protected area systems and helps develop innovative approaches that recognise the fundamental role of nature in the travel and tourism industry.

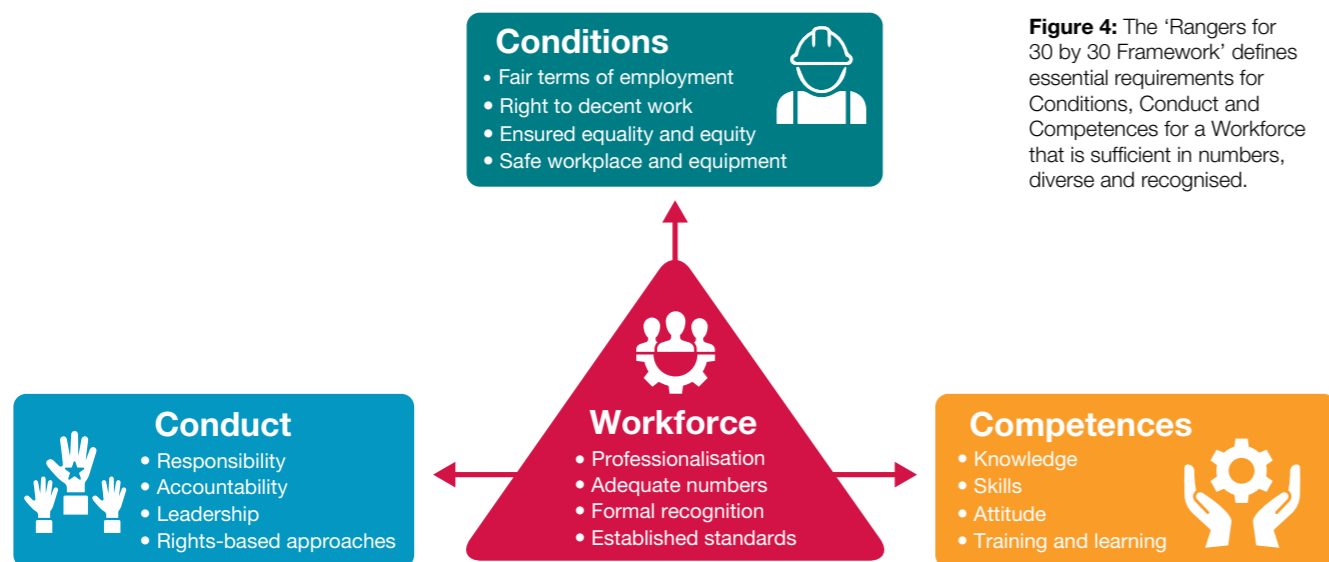


Figure 4: The ‘Rangers for 30 by 30 Framework’ defines essential requirements for Conditions, Conduct and Competences for a Workforce that is sufficient in numbers, diverse and recognised.



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POSITIONING PROTECTION AT THE BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE NEXUS

Climate change and biodiversity loss are two of the most important challenges and risks for human societies. Protected and conserved areas will be critical to solving these inseparable and interdependent crises, which requires coherent, consistent, and integrated efforts on the part of governments at all levels, multilateral and bilateral institutions, communities, businesses, scientists, and others to limit global warming to ensure a habitable climate and protect biodiversity. Only by considering climate and biodiversity as parts of the same complex problem can we develop solutions that maximise benefits while minimising risk.

Safeguarding biodiversity and ecosystems is fundamental to climate-resilient development. That in turn depends on the effective and equitable conservation embodied in the 30x30 target. PCAs are the most effective tools to address biodiversity loss and climate change with the required urgency and WCPA is working on a number of fronts to highlight the role of PCAs.

WCPA supported the development of the IUCN Inter-Commission Task Force on Biodiversity and Climate to promote greater and more visible positioning of IUCN in the biodiversity-climate space, building on the ongoing work of the Commissions, and highlighting existing knowledge products and guidance. As part of this effort, WCPA led the development of a [statement by the chairs of all seven IUCN Commissions on the importance of integrating solutions to the biodiversity and climate crises](#), the first time that all IUCN Commissions have issued such a joint call to action.



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WCPA collaborated with the IUCN Climate Crisis Commission on the production of a technical brief, [Connecting the Dots: Achieving synergistic action for global biodiversity and climate goals utilising the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#), to support COP28 decisions on protected areas and climate change. WCPA prepared two other briefs – [Role of PAs in climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation](#), and [Primary Forests, Ecosystem Integrity and Climate Change](#) – to focus attention at COP28 on the importance of PCAs in the climate-biodiversity nexus.

WCPA, along with the Climate Crisis Commission, the Climate Action Network's Ecosystems Working Group, and World Wildlife Fund, achieved important firsts for nature in the COP28 decision on the Global Stocktake. These include recognition of the importance of:

- Protecting and restoring nature for achieving the Goals of the Paris Agreement;
- Increasing efforts to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation in all countries by 2030;
- Protecting and restoring carbon reservoirs (stocks) as well as sinks and the role of biodiversity;
- Aligning climate action in forests and ecosystems with the GBF;
- Preserving and restoring oceans and coastal ecosystems and scaling up ocean-based climate action; and
- Supporting ecosystem-based approaches to enhance adaptation including in oceans and mountain regions.

WCPA is also developing Best Practices Guidelines for Climate Change Mitigation in Protected Areas. In 2023, as part of that process, 125 participants in two workshops analysed

case studies from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe, North America, and Australia in which climate change mitigation had been incorporated into management of protected areas. The workshops explored topics such as improving ecosystem services in the context of climate change mitigation, and technologies to overlay carbon maps with other map layers such as biodiversity and connectivity to determine priority areas for protection.

WCPA continues to lobby for the integration of primary forests, ecosystem integrity, and the climate biodiversity nexus into both CBD and UNFCCC. At CBD COP15, WCPA sought to incorporate these issues into Target 8 of the GBF and while that effort is ongoing WCPA remains committed to highlighting their importance in multilateral environmental agreements.

WCPA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's MPA Center co-published a new [Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation Planning Tool \(CC-RAPT\)](#) for MPAs and Marine OECMs. CC-RAPT helps MPA programmes improve their management and governance in relation to climate change impacts on marine biodiversity and the cultural, social, and economic benefits that marine biodiversity provides. Many of the existing management effectiveness tools and assessments that MPAs currently use address climate change directly or indirectly by fostering management best practices that can support protected areas under a range of changing circumstances, including a changing climate. However, there has been a lack of tools to help MPAs consider in-depth how climate change relates to their management and the importance of intentionally strengthening management practices in the face of the existential threat of climate change. CC-RAPT is meant to fill this gap.

EXPANDING AND SUPPORTING CONSTITUENCIES FOR NATURE

#NatureForAll

The long-term success of WCPA's mission will require expanding global constituencies for conservation. Yet, the connection to nature is fraying or has been lost across many diverse cultures. Rebuilding that connection and encouraging more people in all regions and contexts to support conservation is a vital but under-appreciated aspect of a comprehensive response to the biodiversity and climate crises.

Recognising the urgency of this task, WCPA, IUCN's Commission on Education and Communication, Parks Canada, and several other international partners (many of them park agencies) founded #NatureForAll in 2016. Today, with core support from the two Commissions, the Alana Institute, the Children and Nature Network, Parks Canada, and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, #NatureForAll is a thriving community of over 600 partner organisations sharing knowledge, strategies, and actions to connect people with nature and build constituency for conservation.

2023 was a busy and impactful year. In February 2023, #NatureForAll hosted its first ever *Love Fest*, a two-week-long celebration of love and action for nature. This online global event shared inspiring stories, featured 50 live interviews with WCPA leaders and other conservationists, and showcased 18 partner events. The #NatureForAll Love Fest is now an annual event for sharing our conservation stories with a broad and diverse audience.

Youth engagement was again an important area of focus in 2023. During the Fifth International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC5), #NatureForAll partners hosted a youth pavilion (#NatureForAll Youth Archipelago), offering youth attendees a place to gather, have their voices heard, and highlight youth efforts in ocean conservation. Lessons from this and previous #NatureForAll youth pavilions were consolidated in a guide to creating youth dialogue spaces at major events that will be published in 2024.

Through webinars, blogs, short videos, and social media content, #NatureForAll continued to highlight the vital importance of protected and conserved areas as places to experience, learn about, and conserve nature. It expanded its website and brought focus to the important work done by staff of protected area agencies. In addition, the Sounds of Your Park initiative, which offers an immersive experience of sounds from protected areas, continued to grow; it now hosts 168 recordings from 21 countries.

Health ^{Box 5}

Ecosystem health, human health and well-being, and climate change are inextricably interconnected. Target 12 of the Global Biodiversity Framework calls on Parties to the CBD to "Increase the area of, access to, and benefits from green and blue spaces, for human health and well-being in urban areas and other densely populated areas."

WCPA's Health and Well-being Specialist Group facilitates partnerships to influence policies and plans across sectors, builds and communicates the evidence on benefits of nature for human health and well-being, and encourages the development of standard metrics to measure the co-benefits.

Connecting with nature is a potential public health strategy that is accessible and affordable for many populations, with research demonstrating not only protective values but restorative benefits as well. Personal experiences and connections with nature provide powerful benefits for individual and societal health, well-being, and resilience.

Wilderness and The World At Night ^{Box 6}

Wilderness has its own protected area category under IUCN's classification system, Category Ib. The primary goal of wilderness areas is "to protect the long-term ecological integrity of natural areas that are undisturbed by significant human activity, free of modern infrastructure and where natural forces and processes predominate, so that current and future generations have the opportunity to experience such areas."

Many people value wilderness for its associations with wild nature and physical space, because of its aesthetic and spiritual values, because of its cultural significance, and because they increasingly understand that wilderness areas provide vital ecosystem services. Yet not even these remote areas are immune to the effects of technology, among the most pervasive and widespread of which is light.

Light pollution not only mars the wilderness experience and landscape beauty, it disturbs ecological and commemorative integrity, interferes with astronomy, degrades the appreciation of mythologies and cultural practices related to the night sky, carries risks to human health, and wastes energy. IUCN, WCPA's Urban Conservation Strategies Specialist Group, the United States Park Service, and other partners analysed the impacts of light pollution, the resources available to help combat it, and the best practices for reducing it and compiled *The world at night*, a guide to light pollution solutions, public engagement, and community outreach. The report is intended to bring night sky values and protection methods to protected areas and nature conservation throughout the world.

WCPA Young Professionals Network ^{Box 7}

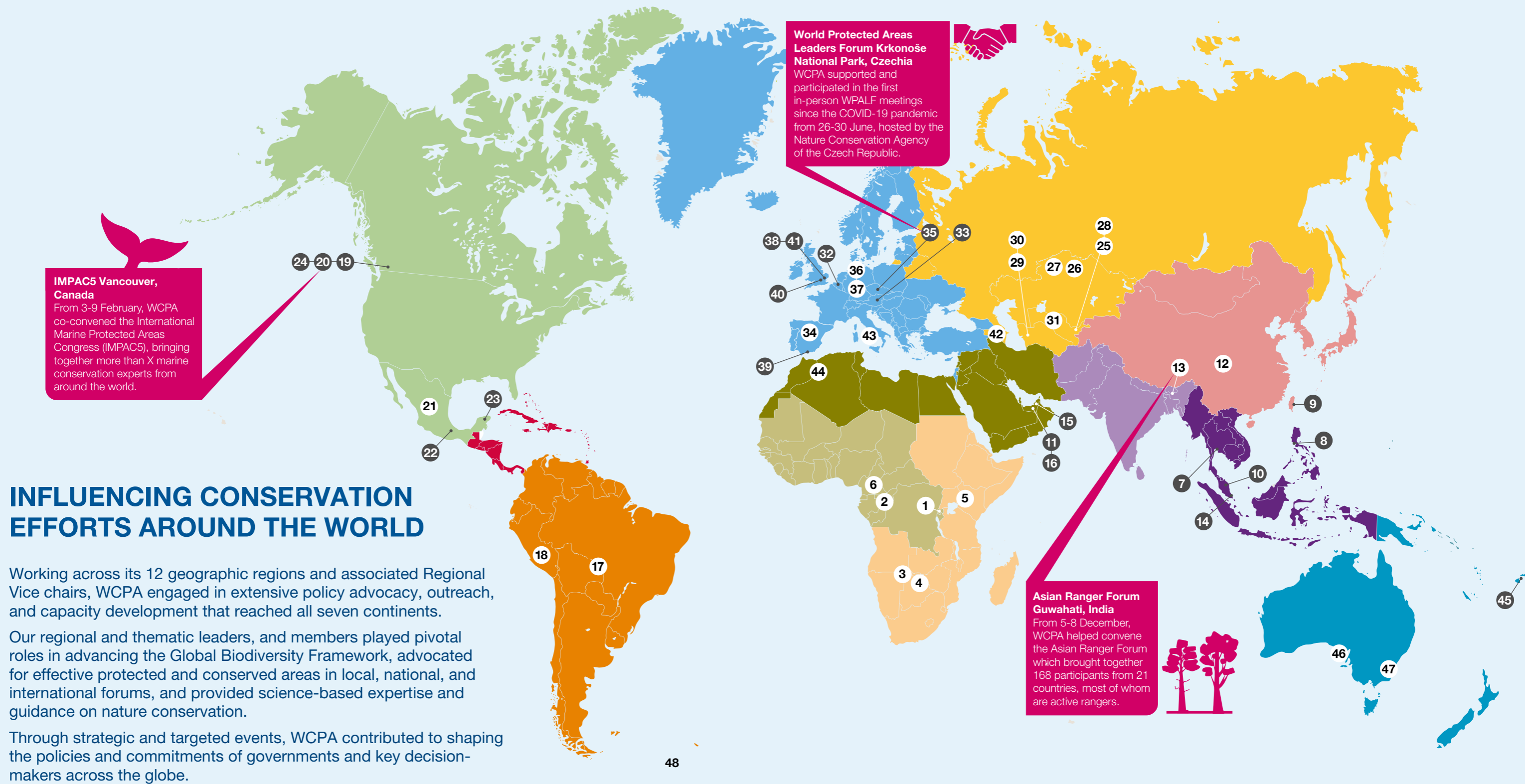
The IUCN WCPA Young Professionals (YP) Network brings together WCPA members under the age of 35. The YP Network supports YP engagement within broader Commission activities and encourages their integration into WCPA's Specialist Groups, Task Forces, Themes, and Regions. The network also works to facilitate and promote intergenerational collaboration and knowledge exchange between established and emerging protected area leaders and professionals.

One of the YP Network's most exciting activities in 2023 was the execution of another successful #NatureForAll Youth Oasis, this time with a marine twist as the Youth Archipelago at IMPAC5. The YP Network also worked alongside IUCN CEC to develop a best practice guide for facilitating youth spaces and making space for young voices at international events.

The YP Network has made targeted efforts to expand its membership in countries and regions with less representation of young people within the Commission. It also continues to support the professional development of young people passionate about protected and conserved areas, including facilitating placements within Specialist Groups and Task Forces across the Commission. The Network is currently rethinking its governance, structure, and strategy, and looks forward to continuing to build on an even stronger foundation in 2024.

Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas

WCPA's Specialist Group on Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas has developed Best Practice Guidelines on the Cultural and Spiritual Significance of Nature in the Management and Governance of Protected and Conserved Areas. In 2023 the group focused on spreading the word about and implementing those guidelines. Specialist Group members conducted training workshops in Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and India, as well as global webinars. The guidelines were translated into Spanish and workshops will be held in Peru in 2024.



- 1. **Rwanda** COMIFAC Regional Workshop Kigali
- 2. **Republic of Congo** Three Basins Summit Brazzaville
- 3. **South Africa** Green list Forum, OECM Bootcamp
- 4. **South Africa** OECM Bootcamp
- 5. **Kenya** SBSTTA-25 Nairobi
- 6. **Cameroon** National Biodiversity Strategy Workshop Yaoundé
- 7. **Thailand** Asia Protected Areas Partnership Workshop Bangkok

- 8. **Philippines** Workshop on the Kunming-Montreal GBF Manila
- 9. **China** International Conservation Congress in Taipei Taiwan
- 10. **Malaysia** 1st Pahang Tiger Summit Kuantan
- 11. **United Arab Emirates** National Protected Areas Workshop
- 12. **China** ICIMOD Transboundary Biosphere Workshop Sichuan
- 13. **India** Asian Ranger Forum Guwahati,

- 14. **Singapore** Insuring the Ranger Workforce for Planetary Health
- 15. **Abu Dhabi** All IUCN Commissions Meeting,
- 16. **United Arab Emirates** UNFCCC COP 28
- 17. **Latin America** Regional Working Group LAC for 30x30
- 18. **Lima, Peru** Regional Workshop on OECMs
- 19. **Canada** #NatureForAll Love Fest Vancouver
- 20. **Canada** IMPAC5 Vancouver

- 21. **Mexico** Virtual Panel of Experts
- 22. **Mexico** National IUCN members Congress San Cristobal de las Casa
- 23. **Mexico** Perspectives: Protected Areas of America Cancun
- 24. **Canada** GEF7 Assembly Vancouver
- 25. **Uzbekistan** One Health Workshop Tashkent
- 26. **Kyrgyzstan** Target 3 Meetings with Kyrgyz Government Bishkek
- 27. **Kyrgyzstan** WCPA Steering Committee Meeting Chunkurcha,

- 28. **Uzbekistan** IUCN/World Bank regional dialogue Tashkent
- 29. **Turkmenistan** Transboundary Conservation and Connectivity Workshop Ashgabat
- 30. **Turkmenistan** IUCN and Ministry of Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan MoU,
- 31. **Uzbekistan** Introduction of Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool Surkhan Reserve
- 32. **Belgium** Technical Workshop on Target 3 Brussels,

- 33. **Austria** Study Trip on River Restoration Danube-Auen National Park,
- 34. **Spain** Seminar on Public-Private Partnerships for Protected Areas
- 35. **Czechia** World Protected Areas Leaders Forum Krkonoše National Park
- 36. **Germany** OECMs in Europe: The Way Forward workshop Vilm,
- 37. **Germany** Good Practice Guidelines for Sustainable Finance Writing Workshop Vilm,

- 38. **Cambridge, UK** IP&LC-led Governance of Protected and Conserved Areas Workshop,
- 39. **Spain** Greenlist Workshop Malaga,
- 40. **London, UK** Workshop on Harmonization of Classifications and Nomenclatures of Area-Based Conservation
- 41. **Cambridge, UK** Target 3 Partnership Meeting
- 42. **Armenia** UK IUCN Europe Congress Yerevan,

- 43. **Italy** IPROMO Training Course and CSVPA Workshop, Ormea,
- 44. **North Africa** Virtual Conventions in Arabic
- 45. **Samoa** SPREP Conference Apia
- 46. **Australia** World Urban Parks Congress Adelaide
- 47. **Australia** ACIUCN GBF Workshop Canberra
- 48. **Antarctica** IUCN Task Force on Antarctica

DELIVERING ON IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS (WCC) RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions represent the main body of IUCN's general policy and are derived from the motions process, the mechanism by which IUCN members influence third parties and guide the policy and programme of IUCN.

Recommendations from over **66 resolutions** from the 2021 IUCN Congress in Marseille and 2016 IUCN Congress in Jeju are relevant to the mandate and vast Programme of Work of the WCPA.

Resolutions calling for specific action from WCPA are prioritised through the work of the Commission's Themes, Specialist Groups, and Task Forces. In 2023, WCPA made good progress on a number of resolutions (as seen in the table/infographic)

The **development of technical guidance and engagement in policy advocacy** is a core mandate of the WCPA. The Commission engaged in the development and dissemination of technical guidance and in policy advocacy that related to 19 Resolutions (as listed below).

The WCPA supported **the planning and/or creation of 10 new Task Forces** whose Terms of Reference address specific recommendations within 11 resolutions.

WCPA continues to support the work of the KBA Partnership (WCC-2016-Res-041), remains engaged with the strategic review of the regional parks congresses in preparation for the World Parks Congress (WCC-2020-Res-104) and continues its engagement in the Nature for All Initiative (WCC-2020-Res-064, with the Commission on Education and Communication).



Resolutions
from the 2020 and 2016 WCCs that are relevant to the 2021–2025 WCPA work programme



Resolutions
that WCPA developed technical guidance and/or engaged in policy advocacy for



Task forces
planned or created by WCPA that aim to address specific recommendations within resolutions

WCPA and WCC Resolutions

New Task Forces

Joint task forces with other Commissions (3):
[WCC-2020-Res-034 Ecological Integrity in the GBF](#) (with CEM)

[WCC-2020-114 Integrated solutions to the biodiversity and climate crises](#) (IUCN-wide)

[WCC-2020-Res-107 Reducing the impact of fisheries on biodiversity](#) (IUCN-wide)

WCPA Task Forces (7)

Restoration ([WCC-2020-Res-009](#), [Res-035](#))

Spatial Planning ([WCC-2020-Res-081](#))

Harmonization ([WCC-2020-Res-081](#))

Protected Area downgrading, downsizing and degazettement (PADDD) ([WCC-2020-Res-084](#))

Human wildlife conflict ([WCC-2020-Res-101](#))

One health ([WCC-2020-Res-135](#))

Conservation effectiveness ([WCC-2020-Res-125](#))

BUILDING AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE

A core mandate for WCPA is the development of scientific knowledge, technical guidance and advice, and policy advocacy. WCPA has several publication series, developed with global contributions and peer review, often in multiple languages, along with a peer-reviewed journal (PARKS), a regular newsletter, technical reports, and technical notes. In 2023, members of WCPA's Specialist Groups, Task Forces, and Themes produced a vast body of knowledge products. A comprehensive list of our publications in 2023 can be found in Annex I.

Progress in 2023

In 2023, eight new publications came out in our technical and good practices series. Several of these were translations, with the major new publications being [Addressing ecological connectivity in the development of roads, railways and canals](#) and [Site-level tool for identifying other effective area-based conservation measures \(OECMs\) : first edition](#). Additionally, WCPA coordinated a major publication on implementing Target 3 of the Global Biodiversity Framework, aimed at increasing coverage of protected and conserved areas to 30 percent of land and ocean by 2030. After several years of work, [The World at Night: preserving natural darkness for heritage conservation and night sky appreciation \(Urban Conservation Strategies Specialist Group\)](#) was also published in early 2024.

In 2023, PARKS published 19 papers contributed by 70 authors from 26 countries. Some key issues covered: safeguarding ranger rights and well-being, protected area network establishment and 30 x 30, protected area environmental and economic value, threats and impacts on protected and conserved areas and monitoring, evaluation and assessment.

WCPA Publications Box 8

Good Practice Series for Protected and Conserved Areas: Since 1998, 33 Good Practices have been published and widely downloaded focusing on topics relevant to WCPA's mandate. Typically taking several years to produce, they draw on global experience and provide state-of-the-art guidance to practitioners.

Technical Report Series: Launched in 2014, this series focuses more on specific methodologies or provides an overview of key issues relating to conservation and management.

Issues paper series: Currently under development, this new series will address topical issues related to protected areas and OECMs, to spark debate and provide up-to-the-minute perspectives from the Commission.

WCPA's Technical Note Series: Short publications that are quick and easy to produce and do not go through the IUCN peer review process but provide clarity on a technical issue or dialogue on a particular topic of concern.

PARKS: A biannual peer reviewed, on-line, open access journal published in English with French and Spanish summaries. There are no publication fees. It has an impact score of 3.05 and is ranked 70th of 192 journals in the nature and landscape conservation category of Scopus, the citation database. Whilst maintaining high academic credibility, PARKS is primarily for people involved practically in protected areas and OECMs. Editors encourage authors who do not otherwise find time to report their findings or who do not speak English as a first language.

88
knowledge products in 2023

49 technical guidance

39 peer-reviewed scientific publications

WCPA PUBLICATION STATISTICS

Good practices



Guidelines for applying the IUCN protected area management categories to marine protected areas

English
2,513 downloads (2023)
6,590 downloads (2022)



Governance of protected areas: from understanding to action

4 languages. English, French, Spanish, Portuguese,
8,998 downloads (2023)
15,293 downloads (2022)



Guidelines for applying protected area management categories

2 languages. English and Chinese
53,891 downloads (2023)
36,434 downloads (2022)



Urban protected areas: profiles and best practice guidelines

3 languages. English, French, Spanish
2,602 downloads (2023)
5,141 downloads (2022)



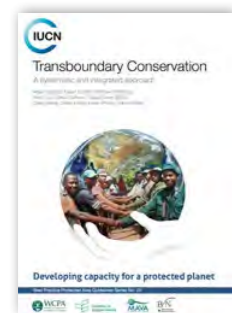
Guidelines for geoconservation in protected and conserved areas

5 languages. English, French, Spanish, German and Arabic
10,078 downloads (2023)
6,721 downloads (2022)



Cultural and spiritual significance of nature

English
4,064 downloads (2022)



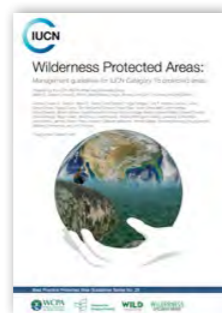
Transboundary conservation: a systemic and integrated approach

English
2,231 downloads (2023)
2,536 downloads (2022)



Adapting to climate change

English
4,435 downloads (2023)
4,153 downloads (2022)



Wilderness protected areas

English
3,358 downloads (2023)
1,526 downloads (2022)



Large-scale marine protected areas

English
2,067 downloads (2023)
2,021 downloads (2022)



Tourism and visitor management in protected areas

6 languages. English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, German and Mongolian
23,789 downloads (2023)
28,876 downloads (2022)



Tools for measuring, modelling, and valuing ecosystem services

2 languages. English and Korean
2,694 downloads (2023)
4,515 downloads (2022)



Guidelines for privately protected areas

6 languages. English, French, Spanish, Japanese, Polish and Portuguese
7,505 downloads (2023)
6,562 downloads (2022)



Guidelines for conserving connectivity through ecological networks and corridors

6 languages. Chinese, English, French Spanish, Mongolian and Korean
6,345 downloads (2023)
15,729 downloads (2022)

Coming Soon

In 2024-25, several important new publications* are under development, including:

- **Recognising and respecting ICCAs overlapped by protected areas** (Governance, Equity and Rights Specialist Group) – early 2024.
- **A framework for monitoring biodiversity in protected areas and OECMs** – concepts, methods, and technologies (OECM Specialist group) – mid-2024.
- **Protected and conserved area finance: good practices** (Sustainable Finance Specialist Group) – mid 2024.
- **Protected and conserved areas for inland waters** (Freshwater Specialist Group) – late 2024.
- **Building Trust with Rangers and Communities** (Capacity Development Thematic Group) – October 2024.
- **Guidance to enhance climate change mitigation in protected areas** (Climate Change Specialist Group) – 2025.

*some titles are provisional

The WCPA Publications Group ^{Box 9}

WCPA publication editors:
 Sue Stolton and Nigel Dudley

PARKS editor: Marc Hockings

Technical series



A global register of competences for protected area practitioners

5 languages. English, French, Spanish, Nepali and Burmese
2,140 downloads (2023)



Recognising and reporting other effective area-based conservation measures

6 languages. English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Korean and Chinese
6,549 downloads (2023)



Site-level tool for identifying other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs): first edition

6 languages. English, French, Chinese, Indonesian, Portuguese and Spanish
3,824 downloads (2023)



Protected Areas Benefits Assessment Tool + (PA-BAT+)

English
1,132 downloads (2023)



Addressing ecological connectivity in the development of roads, railways and canals

English
2,272 downloads (2023)



PARKS
 is in the top 20% of journals in the Environmental Science: Nature and Landscape Conservation subject area.

RECOGNISING CONSERVATION HEROES

As the leading global network of Protected and Conserved Areas professionals in the world, WCPA recognises individuals and organisations for their dedication and achievements to conservation. In 2023, WCPA recognized conservation heroes through the Fred Packard Awards, the Kenton Miller Award, and the Ranger Awards.

Fred Packard Awards

The Fred Packard Award is named for the individual who served as Secretary to the IUCN WCPA in the 1970s and is presented by the Commission in recognition of “outstanding service to protected areas.”

Dr. Eleanor Sterling was a biologist and social scientist serving as Director of the Hawai i Institute of Marine Biology after more than two decades leading the American Museum of Natural History’s Center for Biodiversity and Conservation. She received the Fred Packard Award in recognition of more than 30 years’ work advancing just and effective conservation. With experience in North and South America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania, Dr. Sterling’s research has built the tools to place Indigenous knowledge at the heart of conservation practice. Her work pioneered new approaches to biodiversity monitoring, resulting in over 120 publications, stronger protected area management, and the establishment of locally-managed conservation areas in biodiverse and unique ecosystems. In particular, she was key to shaping the IUCN-WCPA Strategic Framework for Capacity Development at the 2014 World Parks Congress in Sydney and guided the implementation of elements supporting Indigenous peoples and local communities.

Dr. Kristina Gjerde is a lawyer and Senior High Seas Advisor to the IUCN Secretariat, who received the Fred Packard Award for her efforts over the course of three decades to secure protections in international law for the ocean beyond national jurisdiction. A global advocate for marine protected areas, she has authored over 150 publications and since 2002 has been instrumental in leading the WCPA High Seas Specialist Group to advance a global strategy for high seas marine protected areas. Alongside her work with IUCN, she co-founded the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, the Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative, the Sargasso Sea Commission, the High Seas Alliance, and the Deep Ocean Stewardship Initiative. Dr. Gjerde has also served as an advisor on many international science and policy boards, including the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and Schmidt Ocean Institute.



Dr. Eleanor Sterling



Dr. Kristina Gjerde

Kenton Miller Award



Named for Dr. Kenton R. Miller, a leading figure in conservation, the Kenton R. Miller Award for Innovation in Protected Areas Management celebrates individuals who are taking bold steps to safeguard protected and conserved areas. In 2023, the Kenton R. Miller Award is focused specifically on the stewardship of marine protected areas.

Dr. María del Carmen García Rivas is a researcher and ranger with 25 years’ experience working with

communities to protect wildlife and restore ecosystems. Dr. García Rivas received the Kenton R. Miller Award for her leadership of the Hurricane Insurance Project in Puerto Morelos National Park and her role as a role model for other women rangers and conservation professionals. She was one of Mexico’s first female diving instructors, and amongst the first women to work with the country’s fishermen and navy. A documentary about her work won high praise at the 2022 NGO International Film Festival.

Ranger Awards

The IUCN WCPA International Ranger Awards recognize one of our most important assets: rangers working in protected and conserved areas who are responsible for managing large tracts of the planet’s lands and waters. These women and men are fundamental to environmental security and human well-being, yet remain insufficiently recognized for their contributions. They are protectors, educators, community facilitators and wildlife monitors, working in protected areas, private reserves, Indigenous territories and community conservancies. Most importantly, the world’s rangers are fundamental to the recovery of nature and the successful implementation of global biodiversity targets such as Target 3.

The IUCN WCPA International Ranger Awards are supported by the generosity of donors and partner organisations such as the International Ranger Federation, Universal Ranger Support Alliance and the Thin Green Line Foundation that work tirelessly to advance and progress the conditions for rangers around the world.

2023 IUCN WCPA Ranger Award Winners

Ismael Gálvez Gálvez
El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve, Mexico

Biological Corridor 3 Ranger Team
Phub Dhendup, Jigme Dorji, Jigmy Zangmo, Lhapchu Tshering, Neten Tshering, Pema Rinchen, Tandin Wangchuk, Tenzin Dema, Tshering, Yadu Kumar Kami
Bhutan

Anton Mzimba
Timbavati Private Nature Reserve, South Africa

Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park Ranger Team
Segundo Conales Jr., Noel Bundal, Jeffrey David, Crescencio Caranay
Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park and World Heritage Site, Philippines

Royal Belum State Park ‘Menraq’ Team
Ardi Bin Kembong, Talib Anak Lelaki Mat Razi, Fahmi Bin Jali, Sufian Bin Raman, Safian Anak Lelaki Latif
Royal Belum State Park, Malaysia

Desniansko-Starohutskyi National Nature Park Ranger Team
Mykhailo Hrybachov, Iryna Pavlichenko, Svitlana Novik, Denys Artemenko, Kateryna Hankina, Mykola Chernigov, Vasy Vasenko, Tetyana Marukha, Serhii Sugakov
Desniansko-Starohutskyi National Nature Park, Ukraine

Cristián Andrés Vásquez Bermúdez
Reserva Proaves El Dorado, Colombia

Maria Bernadete Silva Barbosa
Marinho dos Abrolhos National Park, Brazil

Fetiya Ousman
Babile Elephant Sanctuary, Ethiopia



LOOKING AHEAD

2023 was an extraordinary year for WCPA. It began with the celebration of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, adopted at the end of 2022. WCPA and its members contributed to that landmark achievement, which marks both the culmination of years of effort and the beginning of new challenges that are promising and daunting in equal measure.

WCPA has much to look forward to in the coming year. The COP 16 of the CBD in Cali, Colombia will be an important opportunity to gauge progress, identify gaps, and help WCPA focus its efforts to support implementation of the Convention. At COP 29 of the UNFCCC, WCPA will be working to place protected areas at the centre of biodiversity and climate actions.

Deepening the links between those two policy fora will be a key goal for WCPA in 2024, as will strengthening partnerships with the CBD Secretariat and the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People. Other key gatherings in 2024 include the World Protected Areas Leaders Forum in Finland in July and the 12th World Wilderness Congress in the US in August.

The new Protected Planet Specialist Group will be coming online in 2024. The goal of the group is to leverage the WCPA network in supporting the recognition and reporting of PCAs and OECMs to the World Database on PAs and OECMs. The Specialist Group will contribute to the next edition in the Protected Planet Report series, an authoritative

assessment of the status of protected and conserved areas around the globe. WCPA will continue to advance and learn from OECMs experience and to gauge how those areas contribute to international progress towards achieving biodiversity targets.

Recognizing the importance of One Health, an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimise the health of people, animals, and ecosystems, the WCPA Task Force on Protected Areas and One Health, launched in 2023, will improve PCA management and policy by incorporating One Health themes. The Task Force will elaborate a role for WCPA in research, policy, and practice.

The coming year will see important steps in our new marine strategy. We will be advancing our work in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean, as well as supporting MPAs in the High seas.

The next World Conservation Congress will take place in Abu Dhabi in 2025, so WCPA will be busy in 2024 preparing for that key event. WCPA members will participate in IUCN Regional Conservation Fora to ensure that protected and conserved areas remain central to the global conservation agenda.

WCPA's scope and influence continues to grow. As this report shows, our members have made enormous contributions to global conservation over the past year. While much remains to be done, we are confident that 2024 will mark continued progress and achievement.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND AFFILIATIONS

WCPA is a voluntary network of individuals contributing in their independent capacities to the mandate of the Commission. WCPA gratefully acknowledges all its members for their generous commitment to the advancement of nature conservation.

WCPA recognizes the many partner organisations who have supported or partnered with the Commission’s programme of activities over 2023 in different ways. A non-exhaustive list of these organisations include the following: Bezos Earth Fund, BfN (German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation), Center for Large Landscape Conservation, Global Environment Facility, Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation, High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, International Ranger Federation, Parks Canada, Parks Victoria, RedParques, Re:wild, Secretariat of the CBD, The Nature Conservancy, Universal Ranger Support Alliance, UNEP-WCMC, World Wildlife Fund US, Wildlife Conservation Society.

WCPA is especially grateful for the generous support of Re:wild as its fiscal sponsor. Any omissions from this list are inadvertent.

The Commission is also immensely grateful for the support of the Membership and Commission Support Unit in the IUCN Secretariat for the invaluable support it provided to our operations in 2023. We are grateful to editorial assistance from Sarina van der Ploeg (IUCN Publications Unit) with all WCPA publications. A complete list of organisational affiliations of WCPA leaders and members who have contributed to WCPA’s Programme of Work are listed below:

Chair and Deputy Chair

Madhu Rao (Wildlife Conservation Society)
Andrew Rhodes Espinoza (iAlumbra)

Thematic Vice Chairs

Parks and People Karen Keenleyside (Retired, Parks Canada)
Scaling Natural Solutions Brent Mitchell (QLF International)
Capacity Development Mike Appleton (Re:wild)
Governance, Equity and Rights Helen Tugendhat (Forest Peoples’ Programme)
Marine Felipe Paredes (Oceana), Fabrice Stephenson (Newcastle University)
Science and Biodiversity Policy Stephen Woodley (Retired, Parks Canada)
World Heritage Cyril Kormos (Wild Heritage)
Conservation Outcomes Paola Mejia Cortez (Foundations of Success), Nick Salafasky (Foundations of Success)
Young Professionals Network Erinn Drage (IUCN WCPA)

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Caribbean and Central America Allan Valverde Blanco (Escuela Latino americana de Áreas Protegidas y Decano de la Facultad de Ambiente y Desarrollo de la Universidad para la Cooperación Internacional)
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South Asia Sonali Ghosh (CCF Assam Forest Department, India)
Southeast Asia Amran Hamzah (Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Johor, Malaysia)
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Oceania Lou Sanson (Retired, Dept. of Environment, New Zealand)
West and Central Africa Florence Palla (Central African Forest Observatory, Cameroon)
North Eurasia Tanya Rosen (UNEP Vanishing Treasures, International Institute for Sustainable Development)
Europe Erika Vaida-Bela (Propark Foundation for Protected Areas)
East and Southern Africa Harriet Davies-Mostert (Conserve Global)
North Africa, West Asia, Middle East Nizar Hani (Shouf Biosphere Reserve, Lebanon)

Specialist Group Leads

Protected Areas Climate Change Risa Smith (Retired, Environment and Climate Change Canada)
 Lauren Wenzel (National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, USA)
Connectivity Conservation Gary Tabor (Center for Large Landscape Conservation)
 Jodi Hilty (Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative)
Cultural and Spiritual Value of Protected Areas Bas Verschuren (Wageningen University, Netherlands)
 Edwin Bernbaum (Instituto de Montaña, USA)
Freshwater Harmony Patricio (Re:wild, USA)
 Rebecca Flitcroft (US Forest Service, USA)
Geoheritage Kyeong Sik Wu (Emeritus, Kangwon National University, Korea)
Caves & Karst Working Group Bärbel Vogel (German Speleological Federation, Germany)
 John Gunn (University of Birmingham, UK)

Governance, Equity and Rights (3 co-leads)

Terence Hay Edie (United Nations Development Programme)
 Heidi Kretser (Wildlife Conservation Society, USA)
 Phil Franks (International Institute for Environment and Development, UK)

Green List & Management Effectiveness

Marc Hockings (Emeritus, University of Queensland, Australia)
 Sandra Valenzuela (WWF Colombia)

High Seas

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 Guillermo Ortuño Crespo (Independent Consultant)
 Emily Stokes (Waitt Foundation, USA)

Health & Well-being

Jo Hopkins (Parks Victoria, Australia)
 Robyn Molsher (Green Adelaide, Australia)

Mountains

Peter Jacobs (Independent, Australia)

Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECM)

Harry Jonas (WWF US)
 Stephen Woodley (Retired, Parks Canada)

Privately Protected Areas & Nature Stewardship

Miquel Rafa (Foundation Catalunya-La Pedrera, Spain)

Sustainable Finance

Candice Stevens (Wilderness Foundation Africa, South Africa)
 David Meyers (Conservation Finance Alliance)

Tourism and Protected Areas

Thiago Souza Beraldo (Independent Consultant, Brazil)

Transboundary Conservation

Stefania Petrosillo (Europarc Federation)
 Piet Theron (Independent Consultant, South Africa)

Urban Conservation Strategies

Thaddeus Trzyna (Inter Environment Institute)

Wilderness

Vance G. Martin (Wilderness Foundation Global)
 John Waitthaka (Kenya Forest Research Institute, Kenya)

Task Forces

Marine Mammal Protected Areas (jointly with SSC)

Erich Hoyt (Whale and Dolphin Conservation)
 Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciarra (Tethys Research Institute, Italy)

Ecological Integrity (Jointly with Commission on Ecosystem Management)

John Robinson (Wildlife Conservation Society)
 Emily Nicholson (University of Melbourne)

Protected Area Downgrading, Downsizing, and Degazettement

Rachel Golden Kroner (WWF US)
 Alta DeVos (Stellenbosch University)

Harmonizing Classifications & Nomenclatures

Brent Mitchell (QLF International)

Spatial Planning

Hedley Grantham (Bush Heritage Australia)
 Vanessa Adams (University of Tasmania)

Integrating Human Wildlife Co-existence into Standards for PCAs

Duan Biggs (Resilient Conservation, Northern Arizona University)
 Isla Hodgson (University of Stirling)

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 Paola Mejia Cortez (Foundations of Success)

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Protected Areas and One Health

Skylar Hopkins (North Carolina State University)
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Key Biodiversity Areas Partnership

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 Kent Redford (Archipelago Consulting)
 Penny Figgis (Independent)
 Dan Laffoley (Independent)
 Kathleen Fitzgerald (Enduring Earth)

APPENDIX I: LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

(by IUCN WCPA and by Members of Specialist Groups and Task Forces)

Area-based Conservation and Target 3

WWF and IUCN WCPA. (2023). A Guide to Inclusive, Equitable and Effective Implementation of Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework: Version 1. Washington, DC and Gland, Switzerland: WWF and IUCN WCPA. (Scaling Natural Solutions Theme- all groups contributed)

High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, The Nature Conservancy, and IUCN WCPA. (2023). 30x30.Solutions Toolkit. Available at: <https://www.30x30.solutions/> (accessed 30 January 2024)

Watson, J.E., Venegas-Li, R., Grantham, H., Dudley, N., Stolton, S., Rao, M., Woodley, S., Hockings, M., Burkart, K., Simmonds, J.S. and Sonter, L.J. (2023). Priorities for protected area expansion so nations can meet their Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework commitments. *Integrative Conservation*, 2(3), pp.140–155. (Science and Biodiversity Theme)

Jacobs, P., Carbutt, C., Beever, E.A., Foggin, J.M., Martin, M., Orchard, S. and Sayre, R. (2023). A Decision-Support Tool to Augment Global Mountain Protection and Conservation, including a Case Study from Western Himalaya. *Land*, 12(7), p.1320. (Mountains SG)

Woodley, S., Laffoley, D., and Dudley, N. (2022). The Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF): Target 3 and the Term “Sustainable Development Areas”: A Technical Brief. *Technical Note Series No. 9*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN WCPA. 11pp.

Woodley, S. (2022). Protected and Conserved Areas: Vital Solutions to Pressing Global Problems. *Technical Note No. 11*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN WCPA. 11pp.

Rosen, T., Amanow, A. A., Annamamedov, I., Atamuradov, B., Choliev, S., Fateyew, S., Hojamuradov, H., HoXe, M., Hudaykuliev, N., Karrieva, S., Kaczynsky, P., Kurbanow, A., Laur, A., Mamedov, B., Mengliev, S., Nasyrow, W., Nazarov, T., Potaeva, A., Saparmuradov, J., Stoddard, C., Tanghriyuliev, E., Tayliev, B., Veyisov, A. and Linnell, J. (2023). Assessment of Wildlife and Protected Areas of Turkmenistan 2023. Ashgabat. Conservation X Labs, Center for Large Landscape Conservation. (North Eurasia)

Freshwater

The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Conservation International (CI), IUCN WCPA and WWF. (2022). A Pathway for Inland Waters in the 30x30 Target: Discussion Document. Washington, DC and Gland, Switzerland: TNC, CI, and IUCN WCPA and WWF. (Freshwater SG)

Flitcroft, R.L., Abell, R., Harrison, I., Arismendi, I. and Penaluna, B.E. (2023). Making global targets local for freshwater protection. *Nature Sustainability*, 6(12), pp.1499–1502. (Freshwater SG)

Privately Protected Areas

A special issue on “Advances in privately protected areas” is available online at Frontiers in Conservation Science journal (Privately Protected Areas SG):

Elton, P. and Fitzsimons, J. (2023). Framework features enabling faster establishment and better management of privately protected areas in New South Wales, Australia. *Frontiers in Conservation Science*, 4, p.1277254.

Brugler, S. (2023). Evaluating successes and challenges for effective governance of privately protected areas in Australia through adaptive governance. *Frontiers in Conservation Science*, 4, p.1291745.

Lewis, A.H., Gottlieb, B., Wilson, B., Sutton, J., Lessmann, J., Delli, G., Dubois, G. and Bingham, H.C. (2023). Coverage and beyond: how can private governance support key elements of the Global Biodiversity Framework’s Target 3?. *Frontiers in Conservation Science*, 4, p.1303801.

Halevy, C., Sebrechts, T. and Sparg, S. (2023). Conservation easements – project selection criteria for quarries in Europe. *Frontiers in Conservation Science*, 4, p.1304712.

Bezaury-Creel, J.E. (2023). Privately Protected Areas in Mexico, a 2012-2023 update. *Frontiers in Conservation Science*, 4, p.1304771.

Kopsieker, L. and Disselhoff, T. (2024). The contribution of private land conservation to 30x30 in Germany. *Frontiers in Conservation Science*, 4, p.1324928

Richardson, B., Brugler, S., Fitzsimons, J., McCormack, P.C. and Akhtar-Khavari, A. (2024). Conservation covenants for ecosystem restoration: Adapting an old instrument to a new global conservation challenge?. *Frontiers in Conservation Science*, 5, p.1335988.

Fitzsimons, J.A. and Mitchell, B.A. (2024). Research priorities for privately protected areas. *Frontiers in Conservation Science*, 5, p.1340887.

Ecological Connectivity

Ament, R., Clevenger, A., and van der Ree, R.(Eds.) (2023). Addressing ecological connectivity in the development of roads, railways and canals. *IUCN WCPA Technical Report Series No. 5*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. (Connectivity Conservation SG)

Center for Large Landscape Conservation and IUCN WCPA Connectivity Conservation Specialist Group. (2023). Supporting Connectivity Conservation at National Levels: National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Bozeman, MT: CLLC. (Connectivity Conservation SG)

IUCN WCPA Connectivity Conservation Specialist Group. (2023). Ecological Connectivity Guidance for revised National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. IUCN WCPA Connectivity Conservation Specialist Group. (Connectivity Conservation SG)

Hilty, J.A. and Woodley, S. (2023). Ecological Networks and Corridors in the Context of Global Initiatives. In *Transformative Politics of the Wild*. Olive, A., Finegan, C. and Beazley, K. (University of Toronto Press). (Connectivity Conservation SG).

OECMs

Jonas, H.D., MacKinnon, K., Marnewick, D. and Wood, P. (2023). Site-level tool for identifying other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs). Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. (OECM SG) — This publication is currently available in English, Chinese, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Indonesian

IUCN WCPA and IUCN ESARO. (2023). *Technical Guidance to Support the South African OECM Roadmap*. IUCN WCPA and IUCN ESARO. (OECM SG)

Sharma, M., Pasha, M.K.S., Nightingale, M., and MacKinnon, K. (2023). Status of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in Asia. Bangkok, Thailand: IUCN Asia Regional Office. (OECM SG)

IUCN WCPA. (2023). Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures in Latin America and the Caribbean: a regional workshop towards achieving an effective Target 3 of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. IUCN WCPA. (OECM SG)

Wanecque, C. and ISTOM. (2023). What Potential For Other Effective Conservation Measures (Amce) In Cameroon?/Quel Potentiel Pour Les Autres Mesures De Conservation Efficaces (Amce) Au Cameroun ? (In French) (WCPA West and Central Africa)

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Stolton, S., Timmins, H.L., Dudley, N., Biegus, O., Galliers, C., Jackson, W., Kettunen, M., Long, B., Rao, M., Rodriguez, C.M. and Romanelli, C. (2023). Essential planetary health workers: Positioning rangers within global policy. *Conservation Letters*, 16(4), p.e12955. (Capacity Development Theme)

International Ranger Federation and the Universal Ranger Support Alliance. (2023). Rangers For 30 By 30: A Professional Workforce To Ensure Equitable And Effective Management Of Protected And Conserved Areas. International Ranger Federation and the Universal Ranger Support Alliance. (Capacity Development Theme)

International Ranger Federation and the Universal Ranger Support Alliance. (2023). Global Ranger Competences: a concise summary of skills, knowledge and personal qualities needed by a competent, professional ranger. International Ranger Federation and the Universal Ranger Support Alliance. (Capacity Development Theme)

International Ranger Federation and Universal Ranger Support Alliance. (2023). Protected and Conserved Area Rangers Convention: A draft International Labour Standard. IRF and URSA. (Capacity Development Theme)

Rights, Equity and Governance/Community-based Conservation

Franks, P., and Booker, F. 2022. Equity in conservation – what, why and how?. *Technical Note Series No. 7*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN WCPA. (GER Theme/SG)

Tugendhat, H., Castillo, A.R., Figueroa, V.E., Ngomo, A.K., Corpuz, J., Jonas, H. and Chepkorir, M. (2023). Respecting the rights and leadership of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in realizing global goals. *Oryx*, 57(3), pp.275–276. (Rights, Equity and Governance Theme)

van Maurik Matuk, F. A., Verschuuren, B., Morsetto, P., Krause, T., Ludwig, D., Cooke, S. J., Haverroth, M., Maeesters, M., Mattijssen, T. J. M., Keßler, S., Lanza, T. R., Milberg, E., Ming, L. C., Hernández-Vélez, C. A., da Silva, K. M. T., Souza, M. P. V., Souza, V. O., Fernandes, J. W., and dos Reis Carvalho, B. L. (2023). Advancing co-production for transformative change by synthesizing guidance from case studies on the sustainable management and governance of natural resources. *Environmental Science & Policy*, 149, p.103574. (CSVPA SG)

Sandbrook, C., Albury-Smith, S., Allan, J.R., Bhola, N., Bingham, H.C., Brockington, D., Byaruhanga, A.B., Fajardo, J., Fitzsimons, J., Franks, P. and Fleischman, F. (2023). Social considerations are crucial to success in implementing the 30x 30 global conservation target. *Nature Ecology & Evolution*, 7, pp.784–785. (Chair’s office)

Esmail, N., McPherson, J. M., Abulu, L., Amend, T., Amit, R., Bhatia, S., Bikaba, D., Bricchieri-Colombi, T. A., Brown, J., Buschman, V., Fabinyi, M., Farhadinia, M., Ghayoumi, R., Hay-Edie, T., Horigue, V., Jungblut, V., Jupiter, S., Keane, A., Macdonald, D. W., Mahajan, S. L., McVey, A., Moehrenschrager, A., Nelson, F., Noshirwani, M. M., Ntiama-Baidu, Y., Postigo, J. L., Rakotondrazafy, V., Rao, M., Roe, D., Sierra Huelsz, J. A., Stolton, S., Tawake, A., & Wintle, B. (2023). What’s on the horizon for community-based conservation? Emerging threats and opportunities. *Trends in Ecology & Evolution*, 38, pp.666–680. (Chair’s office)

IUCN CEESP, WCPA, IIEED, and UN-WCMC. (2023). IP&LC-led Governance of Protected and Conserved Areas: Cambridge, UK, June 29th - July 1st 2023 Workshop Report. IUCN CEESP, WCPA, IIEED, and UN-WCMC. (GER Theme/SG)

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Lübker, H.M., Keys, P.W., Merrie, A., Pereira, L.M., Rocha, J.C. and Ortuño Crespo, G. (2023). Imagining sustainable futures for the high seas by combining the power of computation and narrative. *npj Ocean Sustainability*, 2(1), p.4. (High Seas SG)

Pereira, L.M., Crespo, G.O., Amon, D.J., Badhe, R., Bandeira, S., Bengtsson, F., Boettcher, M., Carmine, G., Cheung, W.W., Chibwe, B. and Dunn, D. (2023). The living infinite: Envisioning futures for transformed human-nature relationships on the high seas. *Marine Policy*, 153, p.105644. (High Seas SG)

Kot, C.Y., DeLand, S.E., Harrison, A.L., Alberini, A., Blondin, H., Chory, M., Cleary, J., Curtice, C., Donnelly, B., Fujioka, E. and Palacio, A.H. (2023). Synthesizing connectivity information from migratory marine species for area-based management. *Biological Conservation*, 283, p.110142. (High Seas SG)

IUCN. (2023). Impacts of Tourism in Antarctica. *IUCN Issues Briefs*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. (TAPAS SG: Yu Fai Leung)

Gjerde, K.M., Clark, N., Chazot, C., Cremers, K., Harden-Davies, H., Kachelriess, D., Payne, C.R., Rodriguez Chaves, M., Spadone, A., Thiele, T., Vierros, M., Goettsche-Wanli, G., and Wright, G. (2023). Initial reflections to support rapid, effective and equitable implementation of the BBNJ Agreement. *IDDRI, Policy Brief N°01/23* (High Seas SG)

Area-based Conservation and Climate Change

Parks, S.A., Holsinger, L.M., Abatzoglou, J.T., Littlefield, C.E. and Zeller, K.A. (2023). Protected areas not likely to serve as steppingstones for species undergoing climate-induced range shifts. *Global Change Biology*, 29(10), pp.2681–2696. (Wilderness SG)

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New Translations

New Portuguese translation of the best practice guidelines, "*Guidelines for privately protected areas*" has been published — Mitchell, B.A., Stolton, S., Bezaury-Creel, J., Bingham, H.C., Cumming, T.L., Dudley, N., Fitzsimons, J.A., Malleret-King, D., Redford, K.H. y Solano, P. 2019. *Directrices para áreas bajo protección privada*. Serie Directrices sobre Buenas Prácticas en Áreas Protegidas No. 29. Gland, Suiza: IUCN. xii + 100pp. (PPA SG)

The 76 recommendations of the IUCN/UIS Guidelines for Cave and Karst Protection have now been translated into 20 languages (Caves and Karst WG)

Published the IUCN *Guidelines for conserving connectivity through ecological networks and corridors* in a sixth language with the addition of the Chinese translation — Hilty, J., Worboys, G.L., Keeley, A., Woodley, S., Lausche, B., Locke, H., Carr, M., Pulsford I., Pittock, J., White, J.W., Theobald, D.M., Levine, J., Reuling, M., Watson, J.E.M., Ament, R., Tabor, G.M. 2023. “通过生态网络和生态廊道保护连通性的指南” 最佳实践保护区指南丛书第 30 号瑞士格 兰德：世界自然保护联盟。(Connectivity Conservation SG)

Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs)

OECM MOOC developed by LAC 30x30 group, hosted by UCI, Costa Rica. 516 people enrolled, 108 certified. (LAC, OECM SG)

Assessing tourism services in protected areas: value chain and economic analyses MOOC — launched in March with 466 participants registered. (TAPAS SG)

APPENDIX II: SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS ACTIVITIES

Resolutions with continuing WCPA engagement	New task forces	Technical guidance/policy advocacy
WCC-2016-Res-041 Key Biodiversity Areas	WCC-2020-Res-034 Ecological Integrity in the Global Biodiversity Framework	WCC-2016-Res-030 Recognising and respecting the territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities (ICCAs) overlapped by protected areas
WCC-2020-Res-064 Promoting conservation through behaviour-centred solutions	WCC-2020-Res-035 Promoting IUCN leadership in the implementation of the UN Decade on Restoration 2021–2030	WCC-2016-Res-032 Achieving representative systems of protected areas in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean
WCC-2020-Res-104 Next IUCN World Parks Congress	WCC-2020-Res-009 Protecting and restoring endangered grassland and savannah ecosystems	WCC-2016-Res-039 Protected areas as natural solutions to climate change
	WCC-2020-Res-081 Strengthening national spatial planning to ensure the global persistence of biodiversity	WCC-2016-Res-050 Increasing marine protected area coverage for effective marine biodiversity conservation
	WCC-2020-Res-083 Ensuring the compatibility of human activities with conservation objectives in protected areas	WCC-2020-Res-002 Strengthened institutional inclusion concerning indigenous peoples
	WCC-2020-Res-084 Global response to protected area downgrading, downsizing and degazettement (PADDD)	WCC-2020-Res-018 Valuing and protecting inland fisheries
	WCC-2020-Res-101 Addressing human-wildlife conflict: fostering a safe and beneficial coexistence of people and wildlife	WCC-2020-Res-032 Ocean impacts of climate change
	WCC-2020-Res-107 Reducing the impact of fisheries on marine biodiversity	WCC-2020-Res-067 Call for Nature in Cities agendas and Strengthening the IUCN Urban Alliance
	WCC-2020-Res-114 Integrated solutions to the climate change and biodiversity crises*	WCC-2020-Res-071 Wildlife-friendly linear infrastructure
	WCC-2020-Res-135 Promoting human, animal and environmental health, and preventing pandemics through the One Health approach and by addressing the drivers of biodiversity loss	WCC-2020-Res-073 Ecological connectivity conservation in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework: from local to international levels
		WCC-2020-Res-074 Geoheritage and protected areas
		WCC-2020-Res-080 Recognising, reporting and supporting other effective area-based conservation measures
		WCC-2020-Res-114 Integrated solutions to the climate change and biodiversity crises*
		WCC-2020-Res-116 Develop and implement a transformational and effective post-2020 global biodiversity framework
		WCC-2020-Res-122 Protection of deep-ocean ecosystems and biodiversity through a moratorium on seabed mining
		WCC-2020-Res-125 Setting area-based conservation targets based on evidence of what nature and people need to thrive
		WCC-2020-Res-127 Strengthening the protection of primary and old-growth forests in Europe and facilitating their restoration where possible
		WCC-2020-Res-128 Acting for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in the ocean beyond national jurisdiction
		WCC-2020-Res-130 Strengthening sustainable tourism's role in biodiversity conservation and community resilience

WCPA's scope and influence continues to grow. As this report shows, our members have made enormous contributions to global conservation over the past year. While much remains to be done, we are confident that 2024 will mark continued progress and achievement.





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