



# The Biosphere Ethics Project

Implementing the Bangkok World Conservation Congress resolution to draft and promote a code of ethics for biodiversity conservation

Project Interim Coordinating Group

Biosphere Ethics Project Paper No. 1



IUCN Environmental Policy and Law Papers online



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Meeting Report prepared by the Project Interim Coordinating Group<sup>1</sup>

Biospheres Ethics Project Paper No. 1

Project Planning Meeting  
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The meeting was organized by the Ethics Specialist Group (IUCN CEL) in collaboration with The Center for Humans & Nature

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# Introduction

This report provides a summary of the main discussion points and outcomes of the planning meeting held to implement Bangkok World Conservation Congress Resolution 3.020 to draft a code of ethics for biodiversity conservation (Attachment 1).

The report has been prepared by the Project's Interim Coordinating Group, chaired by Brendan Mackey, and is being presented to the IUCN Director General (in accordance with Bangkok resolution 3.020), the President of IUCN and the IUCN Council for their comment and approval. A list of the meeting's participants is provided in Attachment 2.

In addition to this summary, the other major document arising from the meeting is a revised version of the Project Concept Paper, which is intended for internal IUCN use and contains details of the proposed drafting process, associated activities, timeline, key events and indicative resourcing needs.

A formal funding proposal for external organisations will be developed from the Project Concept Paper. However, a formal funding proposal will only be prepared following endorsement of the

project by the IUCN Director General, President and Council, as outlined in the Project Concept Paper.

We acknowledge the generous support of the Center for Humans and Nature and the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law for sponsoring this meeting. We also acknowledge the contributions and assistance provided by the staff of the IUCN Secretariat, including Jeff McNeely, Wendy Price, Nadine McCormick and Gillian Martin Mehers; the IUCN Environmental Law Centre, including Daniella Montag; and the IUCN Commissions, each of which sent representatives to the meeting: the Commission on Ecosystem Management, the Commission on Education and Communication, the Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy, the Commission on Environmental Law, the Species Survival Commission and the World Commission on Protected Areas.

During the meeting, a session was held with key IUCN Secretariat staff. Many thanks to Bill Jackson for enabling this session to happen and for facilitating the discussion, which proved extremely useful in stimulating good debate and clarifying many of the participants' perceptions regarding the role of ethics in policy.



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# Rationale for a Code of Ethics for Biodiversity Conservation

The need for and uses of a Code of ethics for biodiversity conservation (hereinafter, the Code) are not self-apparent. The meeting participants identified the following reasons why the Code is a necessary new instrument for the IUCN and all those in the world community concerned with nature conservation.

## **a. We need to recognize and reaffirm our dependency on nature.**

Humanity's material dependency on nature is absolute. In recent years the scientific understanding of humanity's dependence on nature has been significantly advanced, but this knowledge has yet to become a potent influence in national and international affairs. For example, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment documented the kinds of ecosystem services that materially contribute to human health and well being and the extent to which they are now degraded. However, one sceptical response to the MEA is that technology will increasingly provide alternative and substitute services, such that the loss of ecosystems services would not be of any long-term concern. We reject such views and argue that the physical dependence of humans on nature is and will remain absolute at the biospheric/ecospheric level, which in turns reflects the aggregate integrity at the ecosystem level.

In addition, humanity's cultural dependency on nature remains absolute. Economic globalization and current patterns of production and consumption are creating a mono global culture at the expense of cultural diversity. The loss is two-fold. First, cultures based on traditional human/nature relations, that have close ties with local biodiversity, are being extinguished alongside the extinction of associated species and ecosystems. Second, the mono global culture is technologically orientated and is dissociated from nature. Biodiversity is the wellspring of human culture, traditional and contemporary, and its loss undermines the foundations of what it means to be human.

## **b. The urgency is now.**

Species, ecosystems and the ecosphere are now at tipping points. The rise in rates of human forced

environmental change, habitat loss, and species extinctions have continued unabated through the 1990s such that ecological integrity is now threatened at all levels. We are face-to-face with tipping points beyond which there is little prospect of return from mass species extinctions, loss of ecosystem resilience and the rapid shift to a new global climatic regime. The loss of ecological integrity at all levels is unravelling the very process of biological evolution and with it the adaptive capacity which has sustained life on Earth for the last 3.5 billions years. We must consider the consequences of the very real prospect that most productive terrestrial ecosystems will be either destroyed or largely appropriated for human use by the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **c. There is a lack of a biodiversity conservation ethic to guide the world at this most crucial and fragile point in history.**

We need a rich unpacking of what is meant by "biodiversity" and our responsibilities for it. Cultural diversity, as it is related to biodiversity, needs to be encompassed within this multifaceted term. We are at risk of a mono global culture that is disassociated from nature. Humans have come to perceive themselves as fundamentally separate from nature; for example, through certain religious movements. There is also a loss of metaphors with nature in current language, and the metaphors that do exist are exploited by commercial advertising. Traditional practices and knowledge also need to be taken into consideration. To the extent that humans now drive environmental change, we face the challenge of choosing how biologically diverse, and hence how culturally and biologically sustainable, life on planet Earth will continue to be.

## **d. Existing documents are inadequate.**

There are now a number of significant international documents and multinational agreements that have made important contributions to defining the ethical dimensions of conservation. The Code needs to build upon this previous work in world ethics for conservation. We have, however, recognized several inadequacies in these texts. Most lack a specific focus

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on biodiversity, do not adequately reflect modern scientific understanding of evolution and ecosystem dynamics, fail to recognize traditional human nature-relations, or have simply lost momentum for moral inspiration.

We need to create a living document, an international document that will be of real value to local communities and international communities in helping to conserve biodiversity into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. To be a living document, the communities who are to use the Code must be involved in its creation, and it must speak to their challenges and concerns.

The need for a new Code is therefore justified by the deficiencies of this earlier work, the increased urgency at this point in history, recent scientific and philosophical insights, the contemporary milieu and the complex challenges that we will face in the coming decades. We need to identify and address new issues, and prioritize our actions accordingly.

Unlike other documents that may have difficulty translating words into action, or that merely state abstract principles, the Code must speak out on specific, hard issues and show the meaning of what is being stated. Practical implementation would be required of those who endorse the Code.

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# Content of a Code of Ethics for Biodiversity Conservation

- a. The Earth Charter should serve as one of the primary reference texts for the Code.
- b. Biodiversity needs to be expressed in terms that reflect contemporary understanding of evolution and ecology, including ecosystem dynamics.

The Code would contribute to, and not be a diversion from, implementation of WCC3 Resolution 0.022 regarding the use of the Earth Charter as a guide to IUCN policy and programme, also adopted at Bangkok in 2004. The Earth Charter is an integrated ethical framework for a more just, sustainable and peaceful world. The Charter presents a holistic civil society perspective on sustainability and sustainable development. The Earth Charter will inform drafting of the Code in the following ways:

- The Earth Charter helps identify the root causes of biodiversity loss, including pathological behaviours and cultural mal-adaptations; for example, unsustainable patterns of production and consumption; The Earth Charter helps identify the social preconditions necessary for biodiversity to flourish, for example, the moral imperative to eliminate poverty;
- The Ecological Integrity theme articulated in the Earth Charter provides a sound conceptual basis for directly linking biodiversity conservation with the sustainability agenda; and
- The Earth Charter provides an over-arching moral vision for the human endeavour to which biodiversity conservation contributes and is a foundational component thereof.

Articulating a code of ethics for the conservation of biodiversity consistent with the values and principles of the Earth Charter would implement the Resolution's mandate to use the Earth Charter as a guide for IUCN policy and programme. Thus, Promulgation of Resolution 3.020 could be seen as partially, albeit significantly, addressing the intent of Resolution 3.022. The drafting process for the Code would continue the global ethics dialogue, as well as intellectually develop a critical domain that is only broadly addressed in the Earth Charter and which is fundamental to the work of the IUCN.

There was general agreement that evolutionary presuppositions should be evident in the Code. The fact that biodiversity exists within, and depends upon, the integrity of ecosystems also needs to be at the heart of a code.

The Convention on Biological Diversity defines biodiversity in terms of the diversity found at genetic, species and ecosystem levels, including all of the ecological complexes that life forms and of which it is a part. Key objectives of the CBD include the sustainable use of biological resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. Biodiversity is much more than simply species richness or related measures such as species endemism. Biodiversity includes the genetic variation within species at the population level. This intra-species diversity is critical as it is the population not the species that is the unit of evolution. Populations evolve within ecosystems, and ecosystems in turn are part of the total Earth system or biosphere/ecosphere. Life is sustained by both evolutionary processes that enable *adaptation* and ecosystem processes that provide *resilience*. Biodiversity must therefore be understood and valued in its full evolutionary and ecologically dynamic contexts.

In addition, new threats have emerged. Recent years have witnessed the rise of powerful biotechnologies based on the manipulation of life at the molecular level. The creation and release into the environment of genetically modified organisms represents a hitherto unimaginable human intervention in evolutionary and ecological processes. The long term and accumulative impacts of these new biotechnologies on the integrity of species, ecosystems and the biosphere/ecosphere are only barely understood.

**c. A new philosophy of nature needs to inform the document.**

Strachan Donnelley emphasized that, “We are lacking big-thinking and big-clarifying ideas that would give all of the goals of IUCN clear focus. This is what CHN wants to do -- contribute to the fundamental philosophical and ethical arguments.” To do this, he recommended that the Center for Humans and Nature should collaborate with the ESG and the Society for Conservation Biology, among others, to review such things as Ernst Mayer’s new philosophy of nature. Paul Heltne maintained that, “Working on a philosophy of nature would help keep IUCN’s focus on nature and then the ethics of poverty and business (and others) could derive from this understanding.” This would be a way of continuing the global ethics discussion that led to the Earth Charter.

**d. The ethics of the code should express the values of to the world’s diverse religious faiths while at the same time expressing the ultimate commitments we all share.**

Mohammad Sulayem hoped that the subjects discussed above would be elaborated as the process continues, but wanted to express that there are religions that do not believe in, for example, evolution, and that we should not offend any religious beliefs. As Gillian Martin Mehers expressed it, “We must be careful about what we call ethical and unethical. We should look to the intent and the consequences of various worldviews.” Patrick Blandin agreed that “there is a diversity of religions to be respected, and it is important for IUCN to look into these because science may be in contradiction with many of them.” Almah Tararia gave an insightful example from her experience in Papua New Guinea and the gaps that churches are filling in politics, “Political governance is failing people because there is a lack of governance in the government. The churches, however, have been very vocal about public morality and support the [eco-forestry] forum.”

**e. Global/Local (expression of CBD “common but differentiated responsibilities”)**

An elaboration of what “common but differentiated responsibilities” means in the area of biodiversity conservation has not been strongly articulated before.

We now have a rich understanding of how each society occupies a different position in the global economy and ecosphere, with different resources to steward, different cultural understandings of nature and different needs and responsibilities toward the world community. We need to advocate learning between societies along with serious action and commitment by each society and between all societies. Interdependence will be a key aspect of the Code.

We need to base the Code on the values that each society holds in common; it will not replace what is there. For example, Brendan Mackey elaborated, “We should look at indigenous communities who are building an ethic grounded in traditional practices but facing modern pressures and that reflects traditional cosmology and traditional obligations to country and land management practices.”

Strachan Donnelley stated, “What we have discovered in nature and life is how interconnected everything is. People have ethical responsibilities outside of their region, beyond their borders. To be globally responsible, we need an ethical polyculture where we can mutually respect and trust each other.”

Bittu Sahgal emphasized that, “Local imperatives dominate global effects. It [the Code] must be universally applicable and locally replicable.” He also stressed the importance of including the insights of young people in the Code.

**e. The whole range of issues raised by the imperative of biodiversity conservation needs to be addressed or have the capability of being addressed.**

Loss of biodiversity is a symptom and not a cause. We must look to the root causes and unpack those issues. Issues that were identified in our meeting included, but are not limited to: energy; consumption; poverty; state sovereignty; rights of indigenous peoples; protected areas; the powerful and powerless governments, businesses and groups; cultural diversity; political pressure; human health; military; security; world traditions and religion; use of natural resources; sustainable development; social equity; cooperative governance; traditional healing; invasive species; sustainable use of species; patriotism; multi-national corporations; private sectors; trade; customary institutions; displaced peoples;

international law; science; technology; affluenza; space wars...

**f. The appropriate name for the Code needs to be finalized.**

There were various views expressed as to whether “biodiversity” was the most appropriate way to name the subject matter of the Code. Most participants supported the view that a richer understanding of the Code’s intent would be allowed if reference was made to a code of ethics for the conservation of nature. The concept of nature encompasses the three levels of biodiversity as defined by the CDB; the term more readily accommodates values and understandings that come from non-scientific experiences and knowledge systems; and nature conservation is, after all, IUCN’s core policy. It was determined, however, that at least for the immediate future, the term “biodiversity” would continue to be used.

International documents with an ethical dimension have been given various names in addition to “code”, including, but not limited to: Charter; Declaration; Covenant; Pact; Concord; Convention and Compact. In essence, the Code will be what philosophers call an *ethic*, that is, an articulation of a

worldview, shared values and moral principles to guide behaviour towards good ends. However thenomenclature is finalized, as Nadine McCormick stressed, we need to be sure that it does not, in itself, exclude people.

Subsequent to the meeting, Gitte Warnick prepared a research paper on the alternative names for international documents of this kind (Attachment 3). On the basis of this research, Klaus Bosselmann has recommended that the nomenclature of “code” be retained. “Keeping an open mind for the dynamics of the process,” he explained, “The advantage of a ‘code’ is that it neither includes nor excludes states as parties, and as we envisage our work to also influence and shape implementation of existing biodiversity-related international law, a ‘code’ would make more sense than mere ‘ethics for biodiversity conservation’ or ‘ethics for nature.’ For the IUCN 2008 Congress it would certainly be appropriate to present a ‘code’ (in accordance with the 2004 resolution). Likewise, the UN 2010 Summit may more readily take note of a ‘code’ rather than of unqualified ‘ethics’ or more presumptuous descriptions such as ‘Declaration’, ‘Protocol’, ‘Charter’ and the like. The Summit could, of course, convert a code to a ‘Declaration’ similar to the Rio Declaration, Johannesburg Declaration, etc.”





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# The Role of IUCN

## a. IUCN is in an excellent position to draft a Code of Ethics for Biodiversity Conservation.

We have an opportunity for IUCN members and partners to engage in a kind of ethical reflection that is similar to the dialogue that led to the Earth Charter. Many participants stressed that we need an alternative form of globalization today that conserves biodiversity, and that the Code could announce to the world the kind of moral leadership IUCN wished to take in helping to bring this about.

Various suggestions were made as to how the Code would be directly useful to the entire IUCN community, including its Secretariat, its Members and its Commissions. Kalev Sepp expressed that, “Operation between commissions could be better and perhaps this is the umbrella under which we all could work. IUCN is the perfect institution to lead this effort.”

Sheila Abed saw this effort as “an extraordinary opportunity to work with the Secretariat and the other commissions in a collaborative way. This is an opportunity for all of IUCN to push one, single programme.” Bill Jackson agreed that this engages all of the commissions and the Secretariat. Jeff McNeely mentioned that, “IUCN is based on three pillars: knowledge, empowerment, governance. In the past, the ethical component of IUCN has always been implicit. Perhaps through this initiative, ethics can be more explicit.”

In addition, throughout the general meeting and during the staff meeting, the *Future of Sustainability Project* was identified as an ideal opportunity for the Code to contribute to the ongoing development of IUCN. There was general support for the Code to work in close collaboration with the Sustainability project from its very beginning. Sally Jeanrenaud suggested that the “natural partner for the Code is the future of sustainability initiative. As we go forward with the Future of Sustainability project, ethics is central to it.” A new consumer ethic, a new production ethic, an ethic for the market is what is needed, and all of these would be included with the Code. Bill Jackson stated that the Future of Sustainability project is an opportunity to break out

of the mould and take a lead in the push for conservation.

A few participants expressed concern over the conflict between conservation and development in IUCN policy. François Moutou stated that the reason that the French IUCN Committee had brought the Resolution to Bangkok was because “IUCN is conservation” and that unless there is clear ethical guidance advocating sustainable development, it may confuse the picture of IUCN. “The mind and spirit [for ethical conservation] is good, we just do not have the clear vision.” Paul Heltne continued that “there is only one voice in this international forum on nature, and that is IUCN. Its founding was not to advocate for further development, but to protect and conserve.” Patrick Blandin thought that “through adaptability, we can link the tension between conservation and development.” Ron Engel expressed that, “concern for nature is the driving pivotal purpose that is IUCN’s particular mandate, and gives it access to the global ethics discussion. IUCN must reassert its fundamental concern for nature within the integrated framework of global ethics articulated in the Earth Charter.”

## b. IUCN is in need of a unifying moral and ethical rationale for its work.

There was general agreement that a Code would help clarify and refocus the moral rationale for IUCN as an organization. The IUCN has been quite correctly attempting to address some of the root causes of biodiversity loss and influence other sectors, especially business and industry. Unfortunately, an unintended side effect of this process is that its moral rationale as an organization is seen by many to have become fragmented and diffused. Sally Jeanrenaud added that during the time of the World Conservation Strategy, there was recognition that IUCN was a leader, and that “we have seemed to have lost the edge on that.” She acknowledged that, “The world is changing, but has IUCN? We need to think about a new, big idea for conservation.”

Bill Jackson opened the dialogue with the Secretariat staff by expressing that “We are interested in incorporating ethics more strongly within IUCN. This is also good timing because we are beginning to

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plan the new programme.” He continued that even if the Code is not finished, someone should be delegated to “help us with the ethical language in the programme.” He expressed concern because the Secretariat and Commission members face ethical issues daily and are not sure how to deal with them. This project would be an opportunity to provide a set of guiding principles.

Gonzalo Oviedo stated that, “IUCN really needs a new definition of its ethical background,” and that “we have been discussing constantly, ‘What is the position of the IUCN in the world?’” He concluded that “we are at the moment where we need strong formulation of a number of new concepts with strong ethical and philosophical guidance.”

#### **c. Practical ethical tools are needed in the work of IUCN.**

A number of staff expressed interest in whether the Code project could produce some kind of *ethical toolbox* to assist IUCN in dealing with practical ethical considerations that arise in the course of policy development and programme implementation. Bill Jackson mentioned that a critique of IUCN is that they are not providing tools for people on the ground. Sheila Abed, while at the most recent World Meeting on Soil, was asked what IUCN has to offer or build upon for a responsible soil trade. They were surprised that IUCN did not have such a tool. She concluded that, “These issues are being addressed now and people are expecting a strong input from IUCN now.”

For example, could the project develop general procedures (formulae), statements, or criteria relevant to longstanding problems that are confounded by apparently intractable ethical conflicts? There is also a need for materials that can help bridge the hiatus between the conservationist’s need to urgently act and the movement’s philosophical ideals.

The idea of an ethical tool kit elicited an interesting discussion as it raised the question of whether the Code should extend beyond the level of a broad moral vision into ethical guidelines to help resolve specific issues. There was general agreement that practical ethics require moral reflection, deliberation, dialogue and action, perhaps captured by the notion of reflexivity, and that fully integrating practical ethics into IUCN’s work would require a shift in organisational consciousness. Whatever the short-term practical applications, the group felt that the prime value of the Code would be as a moral frame of reference that the IUCN can use to help reclaim global moral leadership for nature conservation.

There was also concern expressed that there might be a chilling effect if there are too many codes, or the risk that a document will be created and then shelved. What is needed is “a description of the ethic of the organization.” The key is in the utility of this new code; not something else to check off, but a positive tool to take to the ground for specific issues.

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# Consultative Process for a Code of Ethics for Biodiversity Conservation

## a. Project Governance

Governance for the Code project will consist of a Steering Committee and a Drafting Committee.

An Interim Coordinating Group was formed from the IUCN CEL Ethics Specialist Group and participants at the planning meeting (see Note 1 above). It subsequently chose Brendan Mackey to be its chair. This Coordinating Group is responsible for advancing the project proposal. The Steering Committee will be activated and the Drafting Committee will be formed once a funding proposal has been prepared and the required resources have been secured.

It was agreed that once the project has commenced, a Steering Committee would need to be appointed. Candidates for the Committee include, in addition to the Coordinating Group members, Strachan Donnelley, Paul Heltne, Sally Jeanrenaud, Gillian Martin Mehers, François Moutou, Bittu Sahgal and Almah Tararia. Membership would also likely include representatives from all six IUCN commissions: Antonio Benjamin for CEL, John Callewaert for CEC, Taghi Farvar for CEESP, Kalev Sepp for CEM, Robin Sharp for SSC and Mohammad Sulayem for WCPA.

## b. Target Audiences

How can we get people to pick up the Code? Brendan Mackey stated that we must give them “trust and communication, which will then motivate action. This is the challenge.”

Jeff McNeely recommended that a meeting be conducted where no one over 30 is involved, “let us hear what the young people of the world think of this. Let us be creative.” Bittu Sahgal emphasized the creativity of children and that their “purity of purpose” is the spotlight we need. Children and teachers could be consulted in the development of the Preamble and other provisions of the Code. The Preamble could express a call to conserve nature, or a call to an ethic for the conservation of nature. This could come in the form of song or poetry. The CEC would be the ideal commission to assist in the

planning and coordination of this aspect of the drafting process. Taghi Farvar stressed that we should not turn our back on any age group or gender, “old people have wisdom, the young have revolutionary blood, and the middle are there to take advantage of each.”

## c. IUCN Involvement

It was agreed that all of the many facets of IUCN could and should be involved in the creation of the Code. Mohammad Sulayem acknowledged that, “in order to facilitate the process and achieve acceptance by IUCN, it is important for members and the Council to be invited, encouraged and informed of the process.” Jeff McNeely, as a member of the SSC for 35 years, said that other specialist groups should be involved early on, such as the Invasive Species Specialist Group and the Veterinary Specialist Group. Brendan Mackey also mentioned that Laura Westra is now Co-Chair of the Indigenous Specialist Group. Gillian Martin Mehers also stated that the World Conservation Learning Network has sub-regional networks that are connected internationally. Each subsection looks at a different topic, such as poverty, water, etc., and none have yet addressed biodiversity.

Brendan Mackey also expressed that, “the resolution was endorsed by the member organizations, so they are asking us to engage the entire IUCN family. Its members, its Secretariat and its Commissions must all be involved.”

There was general agreement that the Code project develop close working linkages with the Secretariat as it develops the IUCN programme for approval at the 2008 Barcelona World Conservation Congress. It was agreed that a liaison person from the Project Interim Coordinating Group should be identified to work with the Secretariat to ensure that the Code project is appropriately integrated into the IUCN programme for the 2008-2012 period.

Following the session with the Secretariat staff, there was general agreement with the staffs’ suggestions. It was further agreed that given the potential strategic significance of the Code to the

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Union's mission, it will be important for the Code sponsors to develop a good working relationship with Gabriel Lopez, Director of Strategies for the Global Programme.

Bill Jackson recommended that February-March 2007 would be the best time to become involved and to influence the programme. The Project Interim Coordinating Group will also seek the Director General's approval to have additional key staff appointed to the Steering Committee, including the Director of Strategies and the manager of the Future of Sustainability project. In addition, the Commission Representatives of the Code Steering Committee will report regularly on the project's progress to the IUCN Council.

Bill Jackson advised the group to use the poverty book as an example of good process, and that questions and practical tools would be very useful to the staff.

#### **d. Consultative Meetings and Partnerships**

The Code should be an invitation to serious reflection. As Strachan Donnelley stated, "we cannot write a Code when all the thinking has not yet been done." We understand that we will be educating ourselves through the very process of the creation of such a Code. There are many different notions of biodiversity, whether through law, philosophy, science, or other paradigms. In order to create a code that can be adapted for many uses, we will need to be active participants in efforts to create local codes, conferences where the Code project has the opportunity to be presented and meetings that

specifically address these most crucial foundational questions. As Klaus Bosselmann stated, "the fundamental purpose of the Code would be to provide guidance through *informed* ethics."

The Center for Humans and Nature has graciously agreed to conduct a series of expert meetings to advise the Steering Committee and the Drafting Committee on the philosophical and scientific conceptual foundations for the Code. Strachan Donnelley mentioned the possibility of bringing together a multi-disciplinary group that could meet in Chicago or elsewhere, and that it would also be important to join other meetings around the world. "This needs to be tackled in a serious, long-range way."

Ron Engel stated, "let us not select ourselves, and then isolate ourselves. We need an alliance of organizations from the beginning. We do not want to be at the end propagandizing; we need a large alliance to be formed at the beginning." Potential partnerships are as unlimited as the very issues that this Code will address. The Code will have direct applicability in an unlimited array of local, regional and global issues and it needs to speak for the oppressed of the world, the bullied nations, indigenous communities, as well as governments, the private sector and even the WTO. As Jeff McNeely stated, "we need to capture the aspirations of all of these different groups." In addition to the many organizations within IUCN that should participate in the project, other organizations that were identified include the Earth Charter Initiative, the World Future Council, the Society for Conservation Biology and UNEP.

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# Drafting Process for a Code of Ethics for Biodiversity Conservation

## a. The Drafting Committee

As noted above, the Drafting Committee will be officially formed once the project has been approved and funding secured. Patrick Blandin expressed a particular interest in being involved with this group.

## b. Continue global/local dialogue and encourage local communities to draft their own codes

There is a need for member organisations to engage in the international drafting process. One novel, bottom-up approach, would be to ask groups to develop draft codes at local, national and regional levels. This would ensure the Code is relevant to local needs. The Code will not have any power unless local communities are directly involved in the writing of a code that speaks to their specific challenges. As Razeena Wagiet stated, “we must respect regional communities and work closely with them. The bioregional context is what will promote connectivity.” A drafting process within a learning local community framework is needed. In this regard, the CEC would be the ideal commission to assist in the coordination of local case studies. In addition, the CEL would be the ideal commission to assist with domestic and international legal organizations.

Particular issues were raised regarding local and regional involvement. For example, we must be aware that many representatives of the community are not true representatives of their interests. As Almah Tararia stated, “tribal groups have representatives in the city that do not actually represent them. There is a heavy abuse of the political system.” Taghi Farvar further emphasized that “there is a deceit of representation that has the potential to discredit these customary institutions,” and that “this must be dealt with in the drafting of the Code.” Razeena Wagiet also wanted to stress that “locals are where developers aim, and we must be mindful of that.” Almah Tararia explained the tension between the government and landowners in Papua New Guinea. “We not only desire, but need, local involvement from the earliest

stages of the Code drafting process.” We do not want the people to say, ‘It is not our law because they made it.’

We acknowledge that there will be no motivations for sacrifices unless individuals and communities own their values. We do not want only an endorsement, but *engaged* endorsement, commitment translated into action. Therefore, the meeting recommended that there should be a series of local and regional consultative processes in support of the global drafting process.

There may be opportunities for discussions with local communities at the following 2007 meetings:

- The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Colloquium of the IUCN Academy of Environmental Law, Sustainable Development and the Law, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 4-8 June 2007
- The World Environmental Education Congress, scheduled to take place in Durban South Africa, 2-6 July 2007
- The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for Conservation Biologists, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, 1-5 July 2007

## c. Present the Benchmark Draft at the 2008 World Conservation Congress, and the final draft at the 2010 CBD Conference

A consultative process that will engage with all elements of IUCN needs to be embarked upon. In this regard, a benchmark draft should be presented for consultation by members coinciding with the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of IUCN at the World Conservation Congress, 5-19 October 2008 in Barcelona. At this time, an invitation will also be issued to IUCN members to take initiative in the development of local codes that will further inform and help develop the global Code. The aim will be for the Code to be launched by IUCN at the 2010 CBD Conference.





# Attachment 1

*The resolution on drafting a code of ethics for biodiversity conservation as adopted by the World Conservation Congress 24 November 2004* (reswcc3.020 drafting a code of ethics for biodiversity; Conservation Congress reference: cgr3.res017-rev1).

RECALLING humanity's primary responsibility for preserving the diversity of life on earth, taking into account the past and present impact of its activities on the environment;

REAFFIRMING the value of the existence of biodiversity, linked to humanity's own value, as well as to the satisfaction and wellbeing that its existence brings, and the additional value it represents for future generations;

HIGHLIGHTING the concerns raised by the use and impact of new biotechnology tools on the future of biodiversity, particularly with regard to certain genetically modified organisms, and by negotiations on the patentability of living matter;

HIGHLIGHTING ALSO the limits, or even pernicious effects, of a strictly utilitarian view of biodiversity and the services rendered by nature;

RECALLING the first preambular paragraph to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which underlines the intrinsic value of biological diversity and the value of its elements at social, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic levels;

RECALLING FURTHER that the Global Biodiversity Strategy and IUCN's strategy Caring for the Earth set out the basic principle that respect is due to all peoples and forms of life on earth, and stipulate that human development must not be implemented at the expense of future generations, nor threaten the survival of other species;

REAFFIRMING its commitment to the preamble of the IUCN Statutes, which affirms that nature conservation contributes to the establishment of peace, progress and human prosperity and that

natural beauty constitutes the essential framework for humanity's spiritual development, which an increasingly mechanized existence renders necessary more than ever; and

NOTING that many philosophical and religious schools of thought are becoming more and more explicitly involved in nature conservation;

The World Conservation Congress at its 3rd Session in Bangkok, Thailand, 17-25 November 2004:

1. REAFFIRMS IUCN's commitment to an ethical view of nature conservation, based on respect for the diversity of life, as well as the cultural diversity of peoples;
2. CALLS ON the Director General to invite the ethics specialist group of the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law to hold discussions with a view to drafting a code of ethics for the conservation of biodiversity, accompanied by aims to be achieved and actions to be undertaken, and to submit such a code for consideration at the next World Conservation Congress;
3. PROPOSES that IUCN takes an interest in the efforts made by existing philosophical and religious schools of thought regarding nature conservation throughout the world;
4. RECOMMENDS that IUCN considers subsequently strengthening its work with States in order to promote the adoption of national codes of ethics offering each and every person rights and duties concerning respect for the diversity of life on Earth.

State and agency members United States refrained from engaging in deliberations on this motion and took no national government position on the motion as adopted for reasons given in the US General Statement on the IUCN Resolution Process.

NOTE: Only the United States submitted a written statement.





## Attachment 2

### ***List of workshop participants***

Name	Affiliation
Abed, Sheila	IUCN CEL
Benjamin, Antonio	IUCN CEL
Blandin, Patrick	IUCN FR
Borrini-Feyerabend, G. REP	IUCN CEESP
Bosselmann, Klaus	IUCN CEL ESG
Callewaert, John	IUCN CEC
Chouchena-Rojas, Martha	Biodiv., Intl. Agr.
Coull, Bruce	IUCN CEC/CHN
Donnelley, Strachan	CHN
Engel, Ron	CHN
Farvar, Taghi	IUCN CEESP
Heltne, Paul	CHN
Jackson, Bill*	Dir. Glbl. Prgms.
Lopez, Gabriel*	Dir. Strtgc. Plnng.
Mackey, Brendan	IUCN CEL ESG
Martin Mehers, Gillian	IUCN CEC
McNeely, Jeffrey	IUCN Sec.
Moutou, Francois	IUCN FR
Oviedo, Gonzalo*	Scl. Plcy. Indgns.
Rafiq, Mohammed*	Bus. & Biodvrsty.
Sahgal, Bittu	Sanctuary Mag.
Santosa, Mas Achmad	Indonesia
Sepp, Kalev	CEM
Sharp, Robin	IUCN SSC
Tararia, Almah	PNG
Wagiet, Razeena	RSA, EC Council
Kintzele, Kathryn	CHN
McCormick, Nadine	IUCN Sec. Intern



