

WCC-2016-Res-035-EN

Transboundary cooperation and protected areas

NOTING that many areas of high biodiversity value straddle international borders and that transboundary conservation initiatives have been expanding over recent years;

ACKNOWLEDGING the fact that transboundary cooperation to achieve conservation goals across international boundaries has the capacity to deliver multiple objectives, including enhanced nature conservation outcomes, ecological sustainability, enhanced ability to respond to climate change, sustainable socio-economic development, and the promotion of peace;

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING the fact that cooperative frameworks supported by transboundary conservation processes may be used as a platform for peace building and international collaboration in times of climate change and political instability, involving local communities, indigenous peoples, protected area staff, conservation officials, civil society, and scientists;

RECOGNISING the fundamental role played by protected areas in the provision of ecosystem services for the development of economic activities, and the need to increase their extent, connectivity (including across international borders), ecological representation and management effectiveness in order to ensure the continuing provision and sustainability of these services;

NOTING that the relevance of transboundary conservation areas is dependent upon public support from citizens of the countries entrusted with their protection and management, and that this relevance must be fostered by continuous connection with citizens via visitation, communication and awareness raising;

RECOGNISING that the institutional resilience of conservation agencies worldwide is strengthened by interrelated initiatives, activities, collaboration on shared issues and cooperation with a sense of co-responsibility and that this can be achieved by working together at transboundary and continental scales;

NOTING WITH CONCERN the specific threats facing transboundary conservation areas, such as: armed conflict, physical barriers at the boundary impeding the movement of wildlife, incompatible actions to respond to shared issues and inconsistencies in national legislation;

CONVINCED that the conservation of transboundary conservation areas involves intergovernmental cooperation and also cooperation between local authorities and indigenous communities;

RECALLING the work carried out by the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group since its creation;

FURTHER RECALLING Resolution 5.043 *Establishing a forum for transboundary protected area managers* (Jeju, 2012) and Recommendation 5.152 *Enlarging and connecting transboundary protected areas for the Ecological Corridor of Northeast Asia* (Jeju, 2012);

ALSO RECALLING the recommendations of the Vth IUCN World Parks Congress (Durban, 2003), including Recommendation V.15 *Peace, Conflict and Protected Areas* and, as part of 'The Promise of Sydney', Recommendation 18 under Stream 6 on Enhancing the diversity and quality of governance (IUCN World Parks Congress, Sydney, 2014);

REALISING that IUCN is able to encourage international cooperation by using its convening role and scientific knowledge networks to achieve more effective conservation and sustainable development in transboundary conservation areas; and

EAGER to strengthen IUCN's contribution to the development of transboundary conservation by encouraging the study and dissemination of data and information on all relevant disciplines related to transboundary conservation areas, as well as forward-looking reflection;

The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Hawai'i, United States of America, 1-10 September 2016:

1. ASKS the Director General to work in close cooperation with all Commissions, including the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), Members and partners in order to:
 - a. support transboundary conservation initiatives through thematic and regional programmes, emphasising capacity development;
 - b. promote research, share knowledge and develop tools for adopting, scaling up, measuring, and evaluating policy, strategy, communication, and action to foster transboundary cooperation in the management of transboundary conservation areas and to enable the standardised assessment of the effectiveness of these areas; and
 - c. facilitate the establishment of a Global Platform for Transboundary Conservation, in conjunction with IUCN Members and partners, and with advisory support from WCPA's Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group, to advance transboundary conservation worldwide;
2. CALLS upon the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) to develop and maintain a comprehensive global inventory of transboundary conservation areas, as a component of the World Database on Protected Areas;
3. ASKS the World Commission on Environmental Law, in connection with the WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group, to establish a legal resource centre on transboundary conservation areas;
4. CALLS ON IUCN and IUCN Members to endorse the WCPA Best Practice Protected Areas Guidelines No. 23 on transboundary conservation, and continue supporting the WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group to collate and integrate experiences into policy briefs to inform public and private decisions related to the governance and management of transboundary conservation areas worldwide;
5. URGES governments and all IUCN constituencies to foster transboundary cooperation in the management of transboundary conservation areas at bilateral and multilateral scales, and to take further action and coordination for developing and implementing management plans that support the sustainability of natural processes across international boundaries;
6. ENCOURAGES the strengthening of existing transboundary cooperation mechanisms, including transboundary landscapes and waterways, transboundary Biosphere Reserves, Ramsar Sites, and World Heritage Sites, and the development of new mechanisms, in accordance with the WCPA Guidelines No. 23, including Eco-Peace Parks and Transboundary Migration Conservation Areas; and
7. ENCOURAGES cooperation and exchange of knowledge and best practices between scientists, protected area managers, civil society and other interested parties at relevant scales.