**World Leaders’ Conservation Forum 2018**

**Jeju, 3-4 October 2018**

**“Together for a Sustainable Future”**

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| **Background Paper**  **Beyond Borders: Conservation Beyond Borders** |

**Executive Summary**

*…the least you need to know*

At the first World Leaders’ Conservation Forum in 2015, participants considered the topic **Facilitating Transboundary Conservation and Peace-Building**, in the context of protected and conserved areas, and with a specific focus on the demilitarized zone (DMZ) on the Korean peninsula.

Key questions considered by leaders at that time included:

* What is the global vision for transboundary conservation that we want to achieve and who are the leaders who can help make this happen?
* What are the barriers, including awareness and capacity challenges, to achieving that vision and how can leaders help overcome those barriers?
* What role can IUCN play in advancing a transboundary conservation vision?
* What role can Korea play in demonstrating leadership? Can the DMZ become a global symbol of conservation and peace?
* How can a shared vison be achieved for conservation of the DMZ, initially in South Korea and then with North Korea?
* How can international organisations play a brokerage role between the two Koreas to achieve a positive transboundary outcome in the DMZ?

Priorities and perspectives outlined by the first World Leaders’ Conservation Forum included:

* Considering transboundary conservation as part of a wider inter-sectoral process of engagement and cooperation at a regional scale, necessitating dialogue with other ministries and interests;
* Decoupling the concepts of peace and conservation, with conservation seen as an intermediate step among particular stakeholders who have a common interest, and not being subject to a more complex and unpredictable peace process;
* Creating readiness, so that conservation efforts could come into play as part of a wider process of cooperation when the time is right;
* Striving always for bilateral or multilateral cooperation and not a one-way process, and perhaps using other initiatives as part of a broader frame within which to work;
* Focusing on some of the fundamental principles, capacities, knowledge and understanding so as to engage a broader constituency.

Since the dialogues in 2015, a number of efforts have been undertaken by IUCN, IUCN WCPA and IUCN member organisations to take forward the recommendations and perspectives of the forum. These include the following, elaborated further in this document below:

* The passing of a resolution on transboundary conservation at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2016, as well as other resolutions with transboundary elements and moving beyond boundaries, including connectivity conservation, the promotion of human health and well-being, the issue of re-connecting urban communities with nature, and addressing climate change.
* The secondment of a programme officer by the Republic of Korea to perform the role of a Secretariat to APAP based in the IUCN Asia Regional Office and a focus of this function to provide advice and coordination on transboundary conservation;
* The definition by IUCN Global Protected Areas Programme and the IUCN WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group of the objectives and activities of a proposal Global Platform for Knowledge Exchange and Capacity Development;
* Further inputs into the CBD’s Peace and Biodiversity Dialogue Initiative;
* A focus on transboundary conservation and on the nexus of nature, health and cities in the Parks for the Planet Forum convened by the Salzburg Seminar and IUCN;
* A focus on compiling case studies and fostering knowledge exchange on transboundary conservation and other topics using PANORAMA;
* Engagement regarding transboundary projects and programmes, including for the conservation of the Yellow and Bohai Seas, and in the Mekong River, among other initiatives globally.

Since the 2015 Forum, the world has also seen some major changes in the geopolitics of transboundary zones and processes that shift the context and increase the urgency of greater coordination and cooperation. For example:

* The 50-year conflict in Colombia has ended, and efforts are underway to reconcile relationships with communities in border zones, restore protected areas and provide alternative nature-based livelihoods for generations affected by the conflict.
* There has been a new surge of rapprochement between north and south on the Korean peninsula, and visible steps to forge a new relationship, bring the issue of the future of the DMZ into sharp focus.
* There have been ongoing and new threats to the conservation of nature in border areas through the illegal trafficking of wildlife across borders;
* The crisis of millions of people fleeing conflict zones and ailing economies has continued to challenge national and regional responses as people move in search of greater security and prosperity;
* There are new regional efforts to link countries around common challenges, such as climate change or human health and well-being, e.g. the collective declaration by countries in South America to invest in nature conservation as one committed response to reducing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere;
* Achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Sustainable Development Goals that relies on collective and cooperative action, including for connectivity, flows of resources for water and food production, the means to address disaster risk, and for addressing disease transmission.

**The opportunity in 2018**

A World Leaders’ Conservation Forum in 2018 with a focus on **Conservation beyond Borders** must embrace this complexity and the many, potentially linked initiatives that intersect with the concept of transboundary natural resource governance. As was concluded in 2015, there is a need to move beyond a conceptual discourse towards a more calculated and active response to forge real progress. This is by no means easy, but a dialogue should at a minimum suggest some avenues for a stronger institutional response as transformative approaches usually require catalytic leadership and the communication of effective examples that inspire emulation.

Against this background, the objectives of the expert workshop on **Conservation Beyond Borders** in Jeju in October 2018 will therefore be to:

1. Build on the outcomes of the 2015 dialogue on Transboundary Conservation and Peace-Building towards an action-oriented agenda for transboundary conservation governance and management that informs the adoption of a post-2020 Framework for Biodiversity and relevant work programmes;
2. Reflect on a global suite of transboundary initiatives that will promote more effective conservation of transboundary ecosystems (e.g. for migratory species), and address issues leading to biodiversity loss (e.g. illegal cross-border wildlife trade);
3. Reflect on a global suite of transboundary and beyond boundaries initiatives that address contemporary global challenges, including climate change/water resources, peace and security following conflict, humanity on the move, human health and well-being, and re-connecting people in cities with nature;
4. Broaden the discussion beyond the specifics of the DMZ towards a regional action plan for transboundary conservation in the Korean peninsula and adjacent countries and oceans.
5. Make recommendations for implementation by IUCN, the CBD Secretariat, APAP, and other initiatives and partners in the period leading up to 2020, and for the post -2020 Biodiversity Framework to unlock opportunities for transboundary conservation,.

**Context**

*…where are we now?*

This supporting document briefly synthesizes some of the current trends and developments following the 2015 World Leaders’ Conservation Forum for transboundary conservation with a focus on moving **Beyond Borders**. It draws on a number of workshops and other initiatives, led by IUCN Secretariat, members, Commissions and partners, and uses these as a foundation for a discussion regarding new opportunities for leadership and catalytic action.

By way of introductory references, IUCN, through the WCPA Best Practice Guidelines on Transboundary Conservation notes that *“Ecosystems across the globe are divided by political boundaries. So they are exposed to many different policy, legal and institutional structures, management and governance regimes; they are affected by various social, cultural and economic contexts and systems; and they are sometimes impacted by complex relations between countries. Transboundary conservation has emerged as a practical way to overcome these differences and encourage cooperative working across international boundaries so as to achieve shared conservation goals”.* (Vasilijević et. al., 2015). Borders are not limited to the dividing lines between countries or other jurisdictions, but also to the borders between disciplines, interests and outlooks. Moving **Beyond Borders** is the working basis of this background paper. It is concerned with identifying where borders exist and to leverage the value of transboundary conservation for going beyond borders.

The discussion, of necessity, touches on zones that are potentially disputed, whether between countries, across regions, or among viewpoints. Any views and positions expressed here are those of the author/s and should not be taken to represent the position of IUCN, the Ministry of Environment, ROK or the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province as hosts of the WLCF, nor of any of the partners involved. An honest and open dialogue has to confront potentially divisive issues and concerns, and propose solutions.

**Precedents and current initiatives**

*…what’s been happening around the world?*

Since the first World Leaders’ Conservation Forum in 2015, a number of initiatives and events have been taking place around the world that address different elements of the whole agenda of transboundary conservation and peaceful cooperation. The following is not a comprehensive listing, and participants may well be able to identify other related initiatives. Significant developments include:

1. **IUCN Resolution WCC 2016 RES 035 on Transboundary Cooperation and Protected Areas**

At the 2016 World Conservation Congress held in Hawaiʻi, the IUCN adopted a resolution that summarises a range of needs to foster transboundary cooperation and protected areas. [Resolution 35](https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/46452)

This resolution is complemented by several others, including WCC 2016 RES 087 on Connectivity Conservation, and WCC 2016 RES 036 Supporting Privately Protected Areas, that address large scale multi-stakeholder governance models for nature.

The resolution recapitulates several elements of the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas, and most importantly, suggests:

* 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;
* compilation of a comprehensive global inventory of transboundary conservation areas, as a component of the World Database on Protected Areas;
* 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.

1. **The Convention on Biological Diversity’s Peace and Biodiversity Dialogue Initiative (PBDI)**

*“Peace, development and environmental protection are interdependent and indivisible.” The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Principle 25.*

The Peace and Biodiversity Dialogue Initiative (PBDI) promotes transboundary cooperation in protected areas globally. [Peace and Biodiversity Dialogue Initiative](https://www.cbd.int/peace/)

Supported through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Secretariat of the CBD and the Korean Ministry of Environment, the objectives of the Peace and Biodiversity Dialogue Initiative are to:

* Showcase the value of Peace Parks and the conservation benefits of biodiversity, and especially how conservation also helps to alleviate conflict;
* Update information on transboundary conservation complexes in the world including in areas that could be established as Peace Parks;
* Catalyze the creation of new Peace Parks and strengthen existing ones in a number of regions, giving priority to areas declared as UNESCO World Heritage Sites;
* Organize small workshops with three or four countries to explore opportunities of furthering their transboundary collaboration, and possibilities, including through partners; to increase political will;
* Disseminate Best Practice Guidelines, and the Code of Conduct on transboundary conservation areas to facilitate their wider acceptance and application; and
* Facilitate the exchange of data and information, provide outside expertise, capacity building as well as technical assistance for planning and implementing the Peace Park concept.

During the coming years until 2020, the PBDI intends to use the ongoing engagement among Parties to the CBD to foster the objectives of the initiative. In particular, it will update information on transboundary conservation initiatives around the world, provide information and e-learning modules, facilitate dialogue towards establishment of new initiatives, and leverage the role of the Republic of Korea in promoting peace parks worldwide. Regarding updating information, the PBDI intends to undertake a new survey using standardized methods to update the list of transboundary conservation areas worldwide, and to indicate the extent to which they are able to foster peaceful cooperation.

The Korean Ministry of the Environment and the CBD Secretariat will explore the opportunity to organize a high-level Conference on Peace and Biodiversity in 2020, in conjunction with the 15th Conference of the Parties to the CBD to take place in China, and with a focus on peace and security issues.

1. **A focus of the Asia Protected Area Partnership on Transboundary Conservation**

Established formally at the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014, the Asia Protected Area Partnership is an informal and voluntary initiative to facilitate improved conservation outcomes for protected areas in Asia, in

accordance with the Sendai Charter, and in support of national and regional efforts to implement the

Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. APAP has three objectives:

* To promote best practices and innovative solutions to the challenges facing the region's protected areas, through knowledge sharing and capacity building;
* To promote enhanced transboundary and regional cooperation;
* To raise awareness of the multiple benefits of Asia’s protected areas, both within and outside the region.

To this end, the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea has agreed to support the programme of work of APAP financially, and has seconded a staff member to maintain an APAP Secretariat function in the IUCN Asia Regional Office. The position has potential to fulfil some of the needed functions for promotion of enhanced transboundary and regional cooperation in the Asia region.

1. **Parks for the Planet Forum: The Next Frontier: Transboundary Conservation for Biodiversity and Peace**

Since the IUCN World Parks Congress in 2014, the Salzburg Global Seminar and IUCN have co-led the Parks for the Planet Forum as a ten-year collaborative partnership to transform and catalyze leadership and action to deliver the Promise of Sydney. The focus of the 2016 Parks for the Planet Forum was “**The Next Frontier: Transboundary Cooperation for Biodiversity and Peace**”. The over-arching goal was to help address the question: “ How can collaboration for transboundary conservation deliver cross-sector benefits for inclusive development, regional cohesion and peace-building?” The seminar focused on four main issue streams:

* Access to water and basic needs for human security;
* Contribution to sustainable livelihoods and broader regional benefits and development;
* Conflict transformation and peace-building; and
* Migration, displacement, and disaster relief.

The seminar led to the production of the **“Salzburg Statement on Transboundary Cooperation for Biodiversity and Peace”** with the following vision [Session Report](https://www.salzburgglobal.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Documents/2010-2019/2016/Session_571/SalzburgGlobal_Report_571__online_.pdf) :

*Our vision is of a world where transboundary cooperation fosters trust among sovereign nations to overcome ideological, political, cultural and historical barriers, tackle conflict over natural resources, reduce migration pressures, and promote human wellbeing. We seek to build a global network of outstanding transboundary initiatives that demonstrate the power of shared approaches to advance conservation and development, strengthen resilience and combat climate change.*

1. **Transboundary and Regional Programmes under the auspices of the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention, and the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme**

The Ramsar Manual provides specifically for the designation of transboundary Ramsar Sites, within the context that Article 5 of the Convention calls upon Parties to consult with one another in the case of shared wetlands, or water systems. There is a realization that individual action by States may be insufficient for the conservation and management of wetlands, because many wetlands and watercourses cross national boundaries, many wetland species are migratory, the management of wetlands often requires exchange of experiences between countrie,; and development assistance is often required for wetland conservation actions in developing countries. <https://www.ramsar.org/>

Increasingly, Ramsar Contracting Parties are designating their new and existing Ramsar Sites as Transboundary Ramsar Sites, meaning that an ecologically coherent wetland extends across national borders and the Ramsar Site authorities on both or all sides of the border have formally agreed to collaborate in its management, and have notified the Secretariat of this intent.

In a recent example, in 2017, the Governments of the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) agreed to collaborate in the management of three exceptional Ramsar Sites as a Transboundary Ramsar Site on both banks of the Congo River. It is the second African Transboundary Ramsar Site and the largest yet established. It covers over 129,000 km2 of some of the world’s richest ecosystems, including over 60,000 km2in each country.

The Congo Basin is one of the most important wetlands in Africa and one of the largest freshwater bodies in the world. Its peatlands act as a huge carbon sinks which plays an essential role in global climate regulation.

This designation brings to 20 the number of such transboundary conservation programmes involving Ramsar sites, and now including 57 designated Ramsar Wetlands, and is an important mechanism for fostering cooperation for a range of purposes.

Also of importance is the range of initiatives under the Ramsar Convention that foster regional approaches, that also include cooperation among Parties for a variety of purposes including coordination and capacity building but also have significant utility for conservation. Fifteen regional initiatives worldwide are slated for confirmation for the period 2019-2021 are fifteen, including for example, the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership, the Indo-Burma Ramsar Regional Initiative, and the Mediterranean Wetlands Ramsar Regional Initiative (MedWet).

**Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention)** – The World Heritage Convention is one of the oldest of the MEAs and, at its heart, is about international cooperation and the promotion of international security through the recognition of shared global heritage. It is the only Convention specifically linking nature and culture. Configuration options for WH properties provide for and encourage transboundary inscriptions, both contiguous and in discrete components as transnational serial sites. Currently, there are 17 transboundary sites of this kind on the World Heritage List, 3 of them are cultural landscapes, and 2 are mixed sites. There is institutional coordination at the level of sites, and at the level of the Convention, there is the opportunity for discussion, knowledge-generation and learning that can be promoted by UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee, including IUCN. <https://whc.unesco.org>

**UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB)** - Biosphere reserves apply to terrestrial, coastal, marine and island areas. The MAB concept is based on connected land and seascapes which function across larger scales often including across international borders. The 1995 Seville Strategy recommended the establishment and functioning of transboundary Biosphere Reserves “as a means to conserve organisms, ecosystems and genetic resources crossing national boundaries” (UNESCO, 1996). Five years later, recommendations for the establishment and functioning of transboundary Biosphere Reserves were adopted and as of today, 14 of the 631 Biosphere Reserves are transboundary. [Transboundary Biosphere Reserves](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/biosphere-reserves/transboundary-biosphere-reserves/)

1. **Humanity on the Move**

European countries, among other regions in the world, are currently under severe pressure to accommodate migrants and people seeking asylum from war and conflict zones, especially Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and those attempting to escape poverty from other regions, such as Africa and the Balkans. Many of these migrants are hoping for a better life in Germany, Austria, Italy, Scandinavian countries, and other EU countries. Many other countries are also experiencing the transit of large numbers of migrants en route to their destination, necessitating measures to address their needs and expectations. In the case of Europe, it is expected that the flow of people will continue for many years and may involve approximately 8 million people. In some countries, including Austria, there have been special programmes to enable the assimilation and integration of new citizens into domestic programmes and to conduct support activities while asylum processes are being conducted.

Protected areas, including transboundary conservation areas, have been venues for participation in some of these programmes, prompting a review of experiences and seeking to develop further guidance which may have much wider application globally. It was considered that taking this approach would also bring benefits to the environment, nature and especially parks and their management, through emphasizing the relevance of PAs to different sectors. Working with new immigrants could bring broader social benefits, including enhanced social integration but would also raise the profile of protected areas and their value to society across governmental sectors and perhaps attract more funding for staff, key infrastructure and equipment.

A workshop was held at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2016 to scope the issues involved, and a focused workshop was held at the Neusiedler See National Park from 20-22 March 2017 under the auspices of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, entitled HUMANITY ON THE MOVE . It aimed to analyse the current legislative and administrative environment for utilizing protected areas more effectively in the process of integration and assimilation of new immigrants into European societies.

1. **A proposed enhanced IUCN WCPA global platform for knowledge exchange and capacity development on transboundary conservation and peace-building**

The Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group of IUCN WCPA together with the Global Protected Area Programme has long sought to provide the basis for a global platform for knowledge exchange and capacity development, and this purpose is reiterated here as it resonates with so many of the conclusions and recommendations of current initiatives. The Global Platform initiative aims to enhance the implementation of transboundary conservation, through expanded practice and skills development, targeted at the most promising and pressing opportunities that maximize outcomes for biodiversity, peaceful cooperation and sustainable development. It represents a timely investment in changing how conservation is practiced, moving beyond traditional site-based approaches to scaled-up conservation networks. It will play a crucial role in the implementation of the Promise of Sydney and other international targets including the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and the Sustainable Development Goals.

It is based in the expansion of the IUCN Global Transboundary Conservation Learning Network [www.tpba.net](http://www.tpba.net) as an active broker/facilitator of measurable progress through diagnostic approaches, practical guidance for implementation and capacity development in the context of a specific suite of transboundary conservation initiatives globally. This approach is needed because transboundary conservation governance involves various stakeholders who must work cooperatively to achieve common conservation goals and benefits across international boundaries and regions. In the absence of an objective and skilled facilitation role, it is often difficult to achieve cooperation under these circumstances.

Bringing the actors together requires objectivity and authoritative knowledge and capacity, innovative mechanisms and collaborative structures at every level. Issues such as leadership, innovation, representation, public participation, authority, conflict management, legitimacy, advocacy, decision-making and financing, must be deployed skillfully to achieve effective transboundary programmes, and these attributes may not be present in the early stages of an initiative. There is a further need to develop the skills of local actors to sustain initiatives in the long term, to learn from best practices that can be applied more widely, and to induct new members into the international networks of skilled professionals.

1. **PANORAMA: Solutions for a Healthy Planet: transboundary conservation solutions**

[**PANORAMA – *Solutions for a Healthy Planet***](http://www.panorama.solutions/) is an initiative to identify and celebrate existing local, national and regional solutions for biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource use, facilitate knowledge exchange, and support broader application of success stories. Solution case studies are published on an online platform, documented in a standardized format describing their replicable key modules, or “building blocks”. The solutions are further promoted by the PANORAMA partners including through publications, webinars and workshops.

PANORAMA is led by GIZ, IUCN, UN Environment, GRID-Arendal, Rare and IFOAM, and inviting further partners. All PANORAMA partners have strong mandates and track records in reaching a broad constituency of conservation practitioners and government institutions, supporting the implementation and scaling of local solutions and best practices, as well as their integration into policy frameworks. IUCN, with GIZ, has played a leading role in developing the case study methodology that underpins PANORAMA and the two organizations also constitute a joint partnership secretariat.

PANORAMA is a rich resource of knowledge: To date, the web platform features around 400 solutions from over 350 individual solution providers, and has been visited around 66,000 times since October 2016 by users from over 70 countries. The initiative currently covers four global thematic communities, reflected through “thematic portals” on the web platform: Protected areas, Marine and coastal, Ecosystem-based adaptation, and Agriculture and biodiversity, with a fifth one on business engagement scheduled to launch in late 2018.

with a fifth one on “Business engagement” scheduled for launch in late 2018. Transboundary solutions feature across many of these thematic communities and can be easily accessed through a dedicated filter “Connectivity/transboundary conservation”. PANORAMA solutions illustrate many of the aspects outlined above, such as the role protected areas can play in supporting integration of immigrants ([see here](https://panorama.solutions/en/solution/working-beyond-boundaries-improving-healthemployment-outcomes-refugees)).

PANORAMA supports practitioners and policy-makers in designing better, more effective and efficient conservation and sustainable development initiatives. Individual solution case studies are highly valuable for replication and scaling, but analysis across all of them in terms of their cumulative contribution to policy targets, is increasingly relevant with the database’s growth in regional and thematic coverage.

**​**PANORAMA convened an interactive webinar in December 2016 to showcase transboundary protected area solutions contributing to biodiversity conservation, sustainable social and economic development, and peace-building. Presenters introduced their solutions from Jordan/Israel/Palestine and from Slovenia/Italy, and explained what made them successful. PANORAMA also produced a summary publication to showcase 17 transboundary solutions downloadable here: [**Solutions In Focus: Transboundary Protected Area Solutions**](https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/46613).

**8. Latest efforts to promote reconciliation between North and South Korea**

**8.1 Korea’s Demilitarized Zone (notes extracted from the 2015 Background Document)**

The hosting of the first WLCF in Korea was an opportunity to focus on the TBC possibilities within the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). The DMZ established in 1953 has been free of human occupation for more than 60 years and presents remarkable opportunities to conserve the flagship biodiversity of the Korean Peninsula. The DMZ and its corresponding Civilian Control Zone (CCZ) buffer zones cover an impressive linear terrestrial area of an estimated 367,000 ha as well as a marine component which has been the subject of Marine Peace Parks proposals advocated by the Korea Maritime Institute (ROK). The DMZ contains a mosaic of terrestrial habitats including mountainous areas and moors, lowland valleys, forests, grasslands, rivers, lagoons and wetlands as well as diverse coastal and marine habitats. The watersheds of five major rivers dissect the DMZ. The area also incorporates numerous cultural and archaeological sites of importance.

Some 4,000 species representing 67% of all those found in Korea are estimated to exist within the DMZ including charismatic mammal species like Asiatic Black Bear, Musk Deer, Spotted Seal, Leopard and even Tiger. The area is also renowned for its birdlife and diversity of freshwater fish. Red Crowned Cranes are an emblematic species in Korea and find refuge within the DMZ and CCZ with a third of the world’s estimated population of 2,500 concentrated within this area. This area is also a living laboratory for the study of ecological succession within a rare planetary system left free of human intervention.

There has been much discussed and written about the potential for conservation within the DMZ as a means to achieving the multiple aims of protecting nature, memorializing social history and ensuring stability and lasting peace on the troubled Korean Peninsula. Much of this debate has been centred in the ROK, supported by a diverse external group of organizations and interested individuals outside of Korea. The deep interest in the future of the DMZ stems from a combination of its unique conservation potential, its powerful social symbolism and the fact that its future is open to many different and potentially conflicting expectations in a post-reunification world.

Organizations such as UNESCO, UNDP, World Bank, FAO and UNEP have, with numerous Korean NGOs and Research Institutes, actively engaged in thinking through future scenarios for the DMZ and adjoining areas. The IUCN TBC Guidelines note the recent history of events focusing on the DMZ and its future: an International Conference on the management of the DMZ for peace and ecosystem conservation took place in 2010; during IUCN’s 2012 World Conservation Congress at Jeju, there was a meeting to promote the natural heritage of DMZ; a symposium on conservation and peace building in the DMZ took place during the 12th CBD COP in Pyeongchang, 2014, at which the host government spoke of its hope of building a ‘World EcoPeace Park’ in the DMZ; finally, the government launched the Peace and Biodiversity Dialogue Initiative during the CBD COP 12 (Vasilijevic et al. 2015).

A number of conservation options have been proposed including transnational UNESCO World Heritage nominations, Biosphere Reserves and Ramsar sites; the Hanbando Peace Park (a TBPA between Seoraksan in ROK and Kumgangsan in DPRK); a Marine Peace Park in the Yellow Sea; an Ecotourism Belt; a Green Belt similar to that in Eastern Europe; and the DMZ World Eco-Peace Park. The WLCF provides a high profile forum to revisit these ideas and find ways in which the world’s leaders can advance TBC in the DMZ as a means to reducing tensions and improving relations between the North and the South. A shared vision for the future conservation and development of the DMZ coupled with political will and support from the international community is needed to safeguard the future of this unique area.

**8.2 Conservation and Management of the Intertidal Wetlands of the Yellow and Bohai Seas**

An International Symposium on the Conservation and Management of the Intertidal Wetland of the Yellow and Bohai Seas was held in Yancheng from 14-15 December 2017. It involved representation from many relevant international organizations, including EcoForum Global, Ramsar and IUCN, as well as representatives of the Democratic Peoples’ Republic of Korea (North Korea), the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and China, being the countries bordering the Yellow and Bohai Seas. The meeting aimed to define and implement a programme of adaptive ecological management and monitoring with responsibilities across the three countries, to forge a long-term strategy for sustainable development that includes conservation, and to promote a joint or serial nomination of important components of the area as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The meeting resulted in the establishment of the Yancheng Coastal Wetland Research Institute to pursue all of these objectives:

* Increase scientific monitoring of the key values and threats, as the basis for development increased capacity to manage this dynamic ecosystem;
* Better define the Outstanding Universal Value (for World Heritage nomination) of the transboundary site;
* Establish an appropriate governance arrangement, based on regional and national dialogues to guide the objectives and cooperative management framework;
* Define an operational action plan for the area;
* Integrate sustainable ecotourism development in the long-term strategic planning of the site;
* Undertake capacity development.

It was noted that Transboundary cooperation will be key to ensure that the management of the Yellow Sea is carried out in a holistic and coherent way. Whereas the leadership will come from the Yancheng Government (China), it will actively convene regional, national and international coordination and cooperation for implementation. The most important work for the Yancheng authorities will be to participate in a Trilateral Yellow Sea Working Group for the co-management of the Yellow Sea coast including ecologically associated wetlands behind the sea wall to harmonize intertidal wetland conservation strategies in relation to World Heritage reporting and management requirements. IUCN was requested to facilitate the establishment of the Working Group in conjunction with the relevant state authorities in the Peoples’ Republic of China, the DPRK and ROK.

Some points to consider in these regional efforts to promote cooperation and peace through transboundary conservation are:

1. **The Declaration by the Latin American Network of Protected Areas to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Paris Agreement**

As a contribution to the Paris Agreement, 18 countries in the Latin America Region, coordinated by RedParques (the Latin American Network of Protected Areas) made a collective declaration to enhance the contributions of systems of protected and conserved areas to the mitigation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere and to enhance the adaptive capacity of ecosystems to the impacts of climate change.

They highlighted that protected areas contribute to adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change by reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience of ecosystems during the stabilization and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, especially in regards to biodiversity conservation, maintaining the flows, quality and quantity of water for human consumption and renewable energy generation, regulating local and regional climate, mitigating the impacts of extreme events and sea level rise, guaranteeing food, water and energy security, sustaining livelihoods by maintaining ecosystem services that contribute to poverty reduction, among others. They also recognized that all terrestrial, freshwater, marine and coastal biomes, such as the Amazon, island systems, peatlands, the Mayan rainforest, temperate savannas, Andean paramos, the Mesoamerican reef system, forests and wetlands, are fundamental because of the ecosystem services they generate and to safeguard social, cultural and economic interests of society as a whole and specially of local communities, traditional populations and indigenous peoples.

They appreciated that a regional approach was necessary to achieve these objectives, including connectivity between and among the ecosystems and countries and that the RedParques Network would be an effective coordination mechanism at regional and sub-regional scales, making and overall contribution at global scale. The Declaration was positioned as a role model for other countries and regions.

**A call to action**

*…overcoming barriers and making the most of opportunities*

Building on the 2015 World Leaders’ Conservation Dialogue, many of the issues raised there, and raised in subsequent efforts remain pertinent and important for the future. It remains true that there is a rich and varied experience of conducting transboundary conservation around the world, and there is evidence of excellent progress in many diverse efforts.

In summary, and taking stock of these, the following remain important needs, in relation to the objectives of the 2018 World Leaders’ Conservation Dialogue:

**Coordination and communication**

* Global and regional coordination mechanisms to draw together the efforts of the most relevant actors in transboundary conservation, including the future of the Peace and Biodiversity Dialogue Initiative;
* Compilation of data and information, including through PANORAMA;
* Communication of the relevant evidence to support transboundary conservation;

**Mainstreaming**

* Expansion of the scope of transboundary conservation beyond nature conservation to deal with global challenges that manifest at the scale of transboundary phenomena (water, climate change, health and well-being, human migration, and conflict);
* Consolidate efforts to address conservation priorities of transboundary ecosystems (e.g. animal migration) or address threats to biodiversity (illegal cross-border wildlife trade);
* Explicitly linking the practice of transboundary conservation to relevant Sustainable Development Goals;
* Guiding the introduction of elements for the post-2020 Strategic Framework for Biodiversity.

**Learning, capacity development and facilitated solutions**

* Compilation of case studies on effective transboundary governance and management to inform a broad constituency of practitioners;
* Addressing the particular challenges of important transboundary zones around the world, e.g. Korean Peninsula, Meso-America, Pacific Islands, wildlife migrations, flyways.

Against this list of well-established needs, the following remain important institutional and knowledge assets:

* The decisions and frameworks within the Convention on Biodiversity, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, the World Heritage Convention, the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme (and related conventions including CITES, and the Bonn Convention on Migratory Species)
* The World Database on Protected Areas jointly managed by UNE-World Conservation Monitoring Centre and IUCN.
* PANORAMA managed jointly by GIZ and IUCN with UN Environment, GRID-Arendal, Rare and IFOAM.
* The IUCN WCPA Specialist Groups on Transboundary Conservation, and on Connectivity Conservation;
* Institutions focused on the governance of protected and conserved areas of all kinds and representing many institutional actors (ICCA Consortium, WCPA Specialist Group on Privately Protected Areas, Task Force on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures).
* The Peace Parks Foundation (Southern Africa) specialised in transboundary conservation, but also other organisations, including Wetlands International, WWF, AWF, TNC, WCS and FFI amongst others who have invested in transboundary approaches
* The TFCA Secretariat with the Southern African Development Community, ASEAN and other Regional Development and coordination bodies, such as RedParques.
* Bilateral and multilateral development agencies and partners who invest in transboundary and regional programmes, including the German Development Bank (KfW), GIZ, UNDP, GEF, World Bank, MDBs etc.
* Foundations and private funding agencies.

**The World Leaders’ Conservation Forum – stating the opportunity**

The WLCF 2018 aspires to be a *“platform for leaders from all sectors of society, including Governments, business, civil society and academia, to discuss and seek creative nature-based solutions to global environmental, economic, and social challenges. The Forum aims to use innovative participation tools to encourage public and remote participation to the debates”*.

More specifically the Conservation Beyond Borders session will attempt to break through some of the barriers and hurdles to achieving a common purpose to address needs and seize opportunities, by leveraging the assets available.

**Conclusions**

*…what do we want the world’s most influential people to do?*

Key messages from the technical session should inform global leaders - those people with the standing and influence to shape global agendas - in thinking through what is needed and how transformative change can happen for transboundary conservation and peace building.

**What are the key messages that should be conveyed through considering the three objectives stated above?**

We should ultimately frame this around an outcome that addresses the question “what do we want the world’s leaders to do with respect to transboundary conservation?”  What bold leadership is needed to create a global vision for TBC and the necessary follow through to see it happen? How can the outcomes from the WLCF shape existing conservation processes and events.

**Who are these leaders? How can they be reached? Who will undertake this catalytic step? When will this be done?**

**References and further reading**

*…learn more 🕮 recommended reading*

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