

## IUCN Resolution # 64 - Progress Report (by operative statement), September 2017, 04 October 2017

### *“Strengthening cross sector partnerships to recognise the contributions of nature to health, well-being and quality of life”*

#### Operative Statement

1. **REQUESTS the Director General to work in collaboration with the World Health Organisation to develop global and regional programmes that advance the value of nature, including parks and protected areas, for health and wellbeing benefits;**

#### Co-sponsor implementation activity

Parks Victoria facilitated a World Leadership Dialogue entitled ‘Nature is Good Medicine’ at the 15th World Congress on Public Health 2017, bringing together the IUCN and the World Health Organisation to demonstrate the strong links between biodiversity and health and their commitment to working together <https://www.cbd.int/health/wcph2017-nature-is-goodmedicine.pdf>.

Many organisations contributed to the World Leadership Dialogue and Workshop – ‘Nature is Good Medicine’ at the 15th World Congress on Public Health 2017.

The IUCN have appointed a member of the Secretariat (Peter Cochrane) to sit on the Inter-Agency Liaison Group on Biodiversity and Health, established by the Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat and the World Health Organisation. This aim of this role is to strengthen knowledge and awareness of the linkages between biodiversity and human health.

2. **URGES the Director General to establish suitable mechanisms to bring together Members, Commissions and the Secretariat to develop policies, programmes and cross-sectoral partnerships on the connection between healthy ecosystems and natural heritage and community health and wellbeing, including economic, social and cultural well-being;**

Parks Victoria is leading the establishment of a new IUCN WCPA Health and Well-being Specialist Group <https://www.iucn.org/theme/protected-areas/wcpa/what-we-do/health-and-wellbeing>.

WCPA has demonstrated strong leadership in advocating health and biodiversity by establishing a new Health and Wellbeing Specialist Group.

#### Co-sponsor

**Parks Victoria (Australia)**

**Department of Conservation, New Zealand/Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (Australia)/South Australian Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (Australia)/New South Wales Office of Environment and Heritage (Australia)/ Parks Victoria (Australia)**

**International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**

**Parks Victoria (Australia)**

**World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)**

<p><b>3. CALLS ON Members to consider further recognising and quantifying the extent of benefits for human health and well-being provided by nature and apply this information to inform cost-benefit assessments for increased investment in the management of ecosystems and natural heritage, including parks, protected areas and natural spaces within urban areas;</b></p>	<p>Parks Victoria’s <a href="#">Valuing Victoria’s Parks report</a>, which outlines a new framework for environmental ecosystem accounting of protected areas and provides estimates the ecosystem services and benefits from Victoria’s parks (including health benefits) has been presented at four international conferences since 2016.</p> <p>DELWP’s <a href="#">Victorian Biodiversity Plan, Protecting Victoria’s Environment – 2037</a> sets a 20-year vision and framework for managing biodiversity in Victoria. It recognises that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the use of environmental-economic accounting will help reveal the linkages between natural capital, society and the economy, and identify risks and opportunities for Victoria.</li> </ul> <p>DELWP supports the <a href="#">Victorian Memorandum for Health and Nature</a> which was released alongside Biodiversity 2037 at the 15<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Public Health 2017 is a commitment for the Victorian Government’s health and environment portfolios to collaborate and maximise the health benefits that arise from connecting with nature.</p>	<p><b>Parks Victoria (Australia)</b></p> <p><b>Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) (Australia)</b></p>
<p><b>4. ALSO CALLS ON Members to contribute to improving methods for quantifying the benefits of nature (more specifically parks, protected areas and natural spaces within urban areas) for human health and well-being, including the development of more consistent global accounting standards for this purpose;</b></p>	<p>Commonwealth, state and territory environment ministers have agreed to collaborate on a common national approach to environment-economic accounting. This work will use the internationally accepted standards from the United Nations System of Environmental-Economic Accounting.</p> <p>OEH is developing improved methods for valuing social, economic and cultural values of National Parks and biodiversity conservation. One major application of this work will be to develop indicators that can be tracked over time to identify whether an ongoing policies and programs lead to an improvement in social and economic wellbeing for the NSW community.</p> <p>TWS developed a joint formal request in collaboration with unions and industry for government development of specific carbon methods for native forests.</p> <p>The Victorian Government is leading efforts to account for the benefits that natural capital provides to our communities. Some practical applications and studies are available online at our <a href="#">website</a>.</p> <p>WHSG is making efforts to improve environmental risk assessments and regulations for contaminants (e.g. veterinary pharmaceuticals, lead and intentional poisons, expert position of EU licensing of diclofenac for veterinary use and threat to vulture populations)—area of collaboration/interest with Vulture Specialist Group, Convention on Migratory Species and other IUCN partners.</p>	<p><b>Australian Government Department of Environment and Energy</b></p> <p><b>New South Wales (NSW) Office of Environment and Heritage (Australia)</b></p> <p><b>The Wilderness Society (TWS) (Australia)</b></p> <p><b>Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (Australia)</b></p> <p><b>Wildlife Health Specialist Group (WHSG)</b></p>
<p><b>5. RECOMMENDS that Members actively seek interdisciplinary partnerships and alliances with the health sector and local and regional communities to</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Australia’s Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (2010- 2030)</a> will be refreshed to highlight the links between environment for human health.</p> <p>Australia’s <a href="#">National Landcare Program</a> and the Improving Your Local Parks and Environment Program now highlight the nature-health linkages.</p>	<p><b>Australian Government Department of Environment and Energy</b></p>

**develop programmes of nature-based solutions to prevent and treat noncommunicable diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, mental illness and dementia, as well as to encourage the appropriate use of parks and protected areas for improving cultural and spiritual well-being and social connection;**

Australia’s [Indigenous Protected Areas](#) and the [Indigenous Rangers- Working on Country](#) programs are specifically aimed at environmental, social and economic outcomes for Indigenous people.

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The Australian Government supports each Australian state to establish green urban spaces for the benefit of human health.

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The Australian Government’s Green Army and 20 Million Trees programs enables programs such as the Victorian State Government’s [Greening the West 1 Million Trees project](#) which aims to enable sustainable, liveable, healthy communities through urban greening in Melbourne’s west.

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Australia is also an active Party to the Partnership for the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds and the Sustainable Use of their Habitats in the East Asian–Australasian Flyway. A Ramsar regional initiative, the Partnership is an informal and voluntary collaboration of effort focusing on protecting migratory waterbirds, their habitat and the livelihoods of people dependant on them.

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DOC has promoted the Healthy Nature Healthy People (HNHP) approach to more than fifty national and regional organisations and agencies.

**Department of Conservation (DOC),  
New Zealand**

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DOC has developed a strategy to support adoption and integration of the HNHP principles and drive external growth of the movement.

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The FairWild Standard, in which MPSG has been a founding partner, is implementing at least one certification of sustainable wild collection in a protected area— in Panda habitat in China.

**Medicinal Plant Specialist Group  
(MPSG)**

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MPSG is working on ongoing Red List assessment of 150 species included in the WHO Monographs on Selected Medicinal Plants including gap analysis of in-situ conservation.

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MPSG is working on ongoing development of Plants for People regional initiatives — currently focusing on North America, South Pacific, and Europe, where we have some capacity that does not require funding. In-situ conservation gap analysis is a major component of these initiatives. Next goal is South America and Caribbean/Central America.

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OEH is sitting on the Healthy Eating Active Living Senior Officers Group to collaborate with other state government agencies to meet the Premier’s priority of tackling childhood obesity. As part of this, OEH is partnering with NSW Health to find ways to cross promote their Make Healthy Normal Campaign and our Young Adults Campaign, looking at how to deliver healthy food on park and encouraging kids to be inspired to get out into nature and be active.

**New South Wales (NSW) Office of  
Environment and Heritage (OEH)  
(Australia)**

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As part of our commitments under the Health Eating Active Living Senior Officers Group OEH is also developing a Healthy Parks Healthy People Strategy.

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OEH also has numerous programs dedicated to facilitating Aboriginal peoples’ connections to Country to enhance their wellbeing. These include the Aboriginal Joint Management Program and the Parks Partnerships Program.

OEH is an active partner of #N4A initiative and taking a leadership role for Australian agencies.

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Parks Canada is [offering free admission](#) to all visitors to its national parks, national marine conservation areas and national historic sites in 2017.

**Parks Canada**

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Parks Canada is expanding their [Learn to Camp](#) program which is connecting more people with nature.

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Parks Canada is dedicating staff time to advancing the [#NatureForAll](#) initiative to connect people with nature in Canada and globally.

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Parks Victoria, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning have commenced the development of new shared priorities and a targeted work program to implement the Victorian Memorandum for Health and Nature (April 2017).

**Parks Victoria (Australia)**

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Parks Victoria is working with local governments across Victoria to ensure that their Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plans recognise the physical and mental health benefits from connecting with nature and that the Municipal Plans enable a range of new and innovative partnerships that deliver programs, experiences and research to improve the health of communities and nature.

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Parks Victoria is working with the State's health promotion foundation, VicHealth and the YMCA to deliver a ['Camp Out'](#) in Victoria's Government House grounds for disadvantaged children in November and to leverage this event as a promotion campaign on the benefits of time outdoors in nature for the upcoming summer school holidays.

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Parks Victoria is recruiting nine new 'community engagement' rangers and 40 seasonal rangers to develop and maintain diverse health sector partnerships for community activation, such as health programs, volunteering, learning and nature play.

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Parks Victoria in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services and Nutrition Australia has developed [Healthy Eating in Parks](#) guidelines to promote healthy eating as part of healthy active lifestyles for community health.

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Parks Victoria has released a new Guide to Healthy Parks Healthy People, which provides information on what Healthy Parks Healthy People is, why it is important, the role of parks for community health and wellbeing, building knowledge, and commitments and priorities in Victoria.

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Parks Victoria is a signed up partner of the #N4A initiative.

<p>Scottish Natural Heritage is leading on the development of <i>Our Natural Health Service</i> action programme, a cross-sectoral initiative with key partners to mainstream green exercise into health sector policy and practice- <a href="http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A2239751.pdf">http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A2239751.pdf</a>.</p>	<p><b>Scottish Natural Heritage</b></p>
<p>Scottish Natural Heritage's NHS Greenspace demonstration project – <a href="http://www.paha.org.uk/Feature/nhs-greenspace">www.paha.org.uk/Feature/nhs-greenspace</a> is moving into a new phase as part of the <i>Our Natural Health Service</i> action programme, developing NHS Greenspace for Health Partnerships focusing on activating more use of the health service outdoors estate by patients, visitors, staff and local communities.</p>	
<p><a href="#">Healthy Parks Healthy People South Australia</a> (HPPH SA) is influencing the state's mental health policy agenda and highlighting the importance of engaging with nature as a daily or weekly habit that helps to maintain mental health and wellbeing.</p>	<p><b>South Australian Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) (Australia)</b></p>
<p>DEWNR is collaborating across multiple sectors to develop research partnerships to improve Aboriginal people's health and wellbeing through Connection to Country and ensuring urban communities have access to quality green spaces and places for recreation, health and wellbeing.</p>	
<p>DEWNR's HPPH SA approach is influencing opportunities for all members of the community to connect with nature by completing significant upgrades to metropolitan parks which respond to user-needs and include accessibility upgrades, as well as new partnerships with organisations such as Autism SA.</p>	
<p>TNC is in the process of developing the <a href="#">Melbourne Metropolitan Urban Forest Strategy</a> which will provide an overarching vision for a greener city with a growing population. Critical to this strategy is the value nature (especially vegetation) plays in reduction of heat, increased amenity, and improved physical and mental health for Melbourne's residents.</p>	<p><b>The Nature Conservancy (TNC) (Australia)</b></p>
<p>TNC supports Traditional Owners in northern and central Australia in managing their country through sustainable financing mechanisms such as carbon farming, and through <a href="#">Healthy Country Planning</a>.</p>	

The [Victorian Biodiversity Plan, Protecting Victoria's Environment – 2037](#) sets a 20-year vision and framework for managing biodiversity in Victoria. It recognises that:

**Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Australia**

- Helping Victorians understand that their personal wellbeing and the economic wellbeing of the state are dependent on the health of the natural environment.
- Helping communities act to protect the environment that underpins the health and wellbeing of every Victorian.
- That by protecting and building the state's natural capital, it is possible to enhance Victoria's ability to generate wealth and economic productivity
- That Victoria will increasingly need to protect and utilise its environmental assets, including its world-class tourism attractions, to deliver co-benefits for the economy and environment, and to help communities become more liveable, resilient and climate adapted.

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DELWP notes that the [Victorian Memorandum for Health and Nature](#) which was released alongside Biodiversity 2037 at the 15<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Public Health 2017 is a commitment for the Victorian Government's health and environment portfolios to collaborate and maximise the health benefits that arise from connecting with nature.

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TWS is developing next generation communications and branding centring on human dependence on nature's health.

**The Wilderness Society (TWS) (Australia)**

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WHSG is coordinating with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health) on solutions for simplified procedures to prevent delays in diagnosis and disease management strategies.

**Wildlife Health Specialist Group (WHSG)**

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WHSG is working in close collaboration with WHO, OIE, UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and World Bank on issues relating to the human-animal-environment interface, including effects of environmental change on disease risk (e.g. producing operational and regulatory guidance, capacity assessments, and disseminating information via meetings/presentations, blogs and policy briefs).

**6. CALLS ON Members to continue to build the evidence base for quantifying the benefits of nature for human health and well-being and encourages Members to build cross-sector partnerships to measure the effectiveness of nature-based health programmes; and**

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Parks Victoria is working in collaboration with the University of Melbourne (School of Population Health) to develop a new framework for evaluating the health and wellbeing benefits of being 'on Country' for Indigenous Australians.

**Parks Victoria (Australia)**

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DEWNR has developed a research-policy network to improve coordination and collaboration between researchers and policymakers and to maximise the opportunities for research to inform decision making with respect to the benefits of nature to human health and well-being.

**South Australian Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) (Australia)**

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WHSG is investigating and/or information tracking of morbidity and mortality events of conservation importance: e.g. Saiga antelope killing of non-human primates in response to Yellow Fever outbreak in humans.

**Wildlife Health Specialist Group (WHSG)**

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**7. WELCOMES IUCN's leadership in recognising and communicating the initiatives and co-benefits from connecting nature and human health and well-being, and integrating these initiatives as part of national and international policies regarding public health and 'nature based solutions'.**

The IUCN have appointed a member of the Secretariat (Peter Cochrane) to sit on the Inter-Agency Liaison Group on Biodiversity and Health, established by the Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat and the World Health Organisation. This aim of this role is to strengthen knowledge and awareness of the linkages between biodiversity and human health.

**IUCN**

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OEH is supportive of the IUCN's leadership in these areas and hosted a WCPA members meeting in May 2017 so that Sydney based members could meet with Dr Kathy MacKinnon, Chair of the Commission and Julia Miranda Londono, Deputy Chair and Director of Parques Columbia to further dialogue between members.

**New South Wales Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) (Australia)**