THE PRESIDENT OF IUCN
ELECTION, ROLE AND FUNCTION

(Approved by the Bureau of the IUCN Council, 1 July 2019, decision B/XVI)

The Council has agreed on the guidance, qualifications and requirements presented here to guide IUCN members in the nomination process and Council’s Nominations Committee.

1. **Election**

The President of IUCN is elected by the World Conservation Congress. IUCN Regulation 32 provides the following guidance:

"Not more than two nominations for President and for Treasurer shall be made by the Council after considering the proposals made by Members in Categories A, B and C. Nominations for President may also be made directly by Members as provided for in the Statutes, provided that such nomination is received by the Director General not less than two months prior to the opening of the session of the World Congress."

**Guidance for nomination of President**

(a) Nominations should take into account the background of the Director General and reflect the diversity of IUCN. (Regulation 33)

(b) Nominations should aim to attract the best, high calibre candidates available and to ensure that nominees know the nature of their commitment and also contribute to promoting a balance on Council in respect of (i) governmental/non-governmental, (ii) developing country/developed country, (iii) gender, (iv) youth and (v) indigenous people.

2. **Term of Office**

The term of office of the President extends from the close of the World Conservation Congress at which the President is elected to the close of the next ordinary session of the Congress.\(^1\) (Statutes, Article 41)

The President, as well as any other member of the Council, shall not hold the same office consecutively for more than two full terms. (Statutes, Article 42)

3. **Responsibilities of the President**

**General**

(a) As a member of the IUCN Council, the President serves first and foremost the best interests of IUCN, fulfilling the functions of the IUCN Council as outlined in the IUCN Statutes, Articles 37 and 46 and providing oversight of IUCN’s governance, financial management and programme as well as guidance on the overall development and implementation of the Union’s world-wide policies and programmes in the period between sessions of the World Conservation Congress.

**Specific**

(b) To preside over and lead the work of the Council pursuant to the Statutes including but not restricted to Article 37, decisions of the World Conservation Congress, and strategic objectives of Council, promoting the One Programme Charter which calls upon the constituent parts of the Union to work together to implement the IUCN Programme collaboratively.

\(^1\) Article 24 of the Statutes provides that the World Congress shall meet in ordinary session every fourth year and therefore the duration of the term of office is approximately four years.
(c) To preside at sittings of the World Conservation Congress.

(d) To work with all members of Council and the Director General to make the World Conservation Congress and Council as effective as possible.

(e) To guide the Director General, in consultation with the Chairs of Council Committees, on the issues to be brought before Council in the draft agenda, and where appropriate, to approve the papers to be laid before Council before these are circulated to the members.

(f) To advise the Director General, on behalf of the Council, on how the policies, strategies and decisions endorsed, defined or adopted by the Council should be implemented between sessions of the World Conservation Congress.

(g) To contribute prestige and influence to enhance the high regard in which the Union is held in the international arena and to facilitate its access to governments and international organizations at the highest level.

(h) To represent the Union at meetings of persons of similar status, and to undertake such other representational tasks as are appropriate; representational duties being divided between the President and Director General in a fashion most convenient to them both.

(i) To carry out other duties and responsibilities as provided for in the Statutes.

4. **Qualifications and Requirements**

**General**

(a) Previous governance/Board experience, preferably in an international organization or large regional organization

(b) Commitment to conservation, equity, justice and sustainable development

(c) Have a global view of the Union, and the ability to contribute to the strategic directions of IUCN and determination of its priorities

(d) Financial literacy

(e) Capable of working in English and if possible, at least one of the other official languages of IUCN

(f) Gender equity and regional diversity must be taken into consideration in presenting candidates.

**Specific**

(g) The President should be:

   (i) an individual with a significant record of interests and activities strongly supportive of the Vision, Mission and objectives of IUCN

   (ii) of international profile, with a network that enables access to high level officials

   (iii) an excellent ambassador for the Union

   (iv) an accomplished speaker

   (v) a competent chair for meetings

   (vi) an individual with leadership qualities
**Annex 1**

**Requirements**

(h) Avoid conflict of interest situations

(i) Serve in a personal capacity and not as a representative of State, Member organization or interest groups

(j) Able to devote substantial time to the Union

**Desirable**

(k) Support at institutional/employment base

(l) Experience from regional and/or international networking

(m) Prior IUCN involvement

5. **Expenses**

The Presidency of IUCN is a voluntary position. IUCN covers the cost of travel and subsistence for meetings of the Council and will cover the expenses incurred by the President when undertaking special missions for the Union agreed as a part of the Union’s programme of action. IUCN may also contribute to office support for the President, according to a budget agreed with the Director General and Council.

6. **Additional Reference Material**

The IUCN Council Handbook and Performance Tools prepared and approved by Council, provides guidance on the role and responsibilities of the President (Section 4, §44-53). Prospective candidates are invited to consult the IUCN Council Handbook as well as the IUCN Statutes and Regulations.