

74th Session of IUCN Council, 29th Meeting of the Programme and Policy Committee (PPC)

The IUCN World Parks Congress (IUCN - WPC) – Discussion on the potential role of IUCN Council

Origin: Director General

Required action:

The PPC is invited to consider the role of Council in respect of the 2014 World Parks Congress proposed in the present document.

Background:

The IUCN World Parks Congress (WPC), which is held every ten years, is the key global forum on protected areas issues. One of its purposes is to set the global agenda for protected areas. Since 1962 five World Park Congresses have provided essential policy and technical guidance on protected areas planning and management. WPCs have helped the international community define new concepts and a road map for the future of protected areas. The WPC is organized by the IUCN Global Protected Areas Programme (GPAP) and the IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) with support from other Commissions, key Members, global and regional programmes and IUCN senior management. Since May 2009 Parks Victoria (Australia) has kindly funded a secondment arrangement for Zoe Wilkinson to work with GPAP on staging the next WPC.

The most recent Congress, held in Durban, South Africa in September 2003, brought together over 3000 delegates (with peaks of up to 5,000 delegates attending the Congress Fair) from 160 countries. Delegates reviewed global status and trends in protected area management, and discussed the challenges and opportunities for the coming decade. IUCN, considering the growing constituency on protected areas, envisages welcoming between 3000 and 5000 participants for the 2014 World Parks Congress, although there could be as many as 6000. A large proportion of delegates will be drawn from the IUCN Members and partners, WCPA and other Commissions.

Update on progress:

IUCN has tried to implement WPCs in all regions of the world yet to date there are two regions, Oceania and Europe, where the Congress has not been held. GPAP, on behalf of IUCN, has initiated a search for expressions of interests to host the 2014 Congress in these two regions and two countries have responded to this request: Australia and Turkey. However IUCN has also received exploratory enquiries from Singapore Exhibition & Convention Bureau and, through WCPA Chair, from the city of Montreal. Accordingly GPAP is planning to expand the search so as to have higher chances to obtain more competitive proposals. Initial discussions on the staging process for WPC will be done during the annual meeting of the WCPA Steering Committee (14-17 June 2010, Canada). The World PA Leadership Forum will as well include the WPC on their agenda for their upcoming meeting in August. Thus, it is expected that PPC of Council would provide guidance on this discussion.

The role of Council at its 74th Session (IUCN-HQ, 2-4 June, 2010)

For all previous WPCs, the IUCN Council, through its Programme and Policy Committee (PPC) has been kept informed on the organization of the Congress and guidance has been requested on issues such as the Congress programme and outputs.

Whilst input from Council has been most helpful both GPAP and WCPA consider that Council can play a much more active role in the strategic direction of the Congress and in engaging Members and partners. This is justified due to the high influence from WPC's outputs in shaping up the IUCN Programme and in influencing the IUCN constituency and international policy on key protected areas issues; for example the Message from Durban to the CBD substantially influenced the content of the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas. Accordingly PPC is requested to consider the

following issues in relation to the role of Council towards the effective implementation of the 2014 WPC:

1. To provide advice on criteria that Council may consider desirable in arriving at a series of competitive offers and the consequent selection process of the host country.
2. The IUCN Council, based on input received from the International Steering Committee (to be established shortly) of the WPC , may like to provide policy guidance on:
 - (a) The key strategic objectives, programme and expected results for the WPC 2014 Congress.
 - (b) Balance on representation (geographic, gender, NGOs/government, non-conservation audiences, others as applicable) of participants, including potential targets for sponsorship.
 - (c) Ways and means to ensure an effective follow-up for implementing WPC's recommendations, including through the IUCN Programme.

Resolution adopted by Council:

World Parks Congress 2014

Senior Protected Areas Officer gave a brief update on the process of organizing the next World Park Congress. He indicated that IUCN had received expression of interest for hosting the next WPC from Australia, Singapore and Turkey. Requirements, adapted from the World Conservation Congress, were sent out to the 3 countries. PPC will receive an update on the analysis of the bids during the next meeting. Guidance is requested from Council on the following item: (1) criteria to assess the best competitive offer to implement WPC and (2) objectives, representation and resources. The Deputy Director General added that Council has not previously provided any such guidance but such input would be welcomed.

The PPC agreed that the World Parks Congress is a vital IUCN initiative and warrants Council's close attention and support.

On the recommendation of the Programme and Policy Committee, The IUCN Council:

AGREES to play a strategic overseer role in the preparation of the next World Parks Congress 2014, including during the intersessional period leading to the next Council meeting.