



**IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS
3–10 September 2021, Marseille, France**

**Development of a new 20-year Strategic Vision, inclusive of a
Financial Strategy, and Strategic Plan for the Union**

ADOPTED MOTION

ACKNOWLEDGING that the development of a new strategy for IUCN, taking the next 20 years into consideration, which is tied to its financial strategy was a key recommendation of the [External Review of Aspects of IUCN's Governance](#) undertaken by Stewardship and Governance Associates (SGA);

NOTING that IUCN's mission is to "Influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable";

RECALLING that the IUCN Council, at its 76th meeting in 2011, adopted the [One Programme Charter](#) committing the Union to engage all its components in working towards its mission and specifically to invite more participation in IUCN Programme development;

NOTING that in adopting the One Programme Charter, the IUCN Council recognised that IUCN's unique strength lies in proactive collaboration across the different parts of the Union to achieve its mission and that all the constituents of IUCN are working together to achieve the IUCN vision of *a just world that values and conserves nature*;

NOTING that the last Union Strategy was for the period of 2009–2020;

MINDFUL of the fact that the world has undergone tremendous change, including as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, in recent years and both nature and humans are facing increasing challenges; and

CONCERNED that nature is coming under increasing pressure and progress on the SDGs is slow;

***The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Marseille, France,
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REQUESTS the IUCN Council, as a matter of priority, to establish an intersessional Council working group including IUCN Members to lead and work with the Director General:

- a. to define a consultative process to undertake the following:
 - i. undertake a global situational analysis of IUCN that takes into account all points raised in the external review;
 - ii. develop options to address the points raised in the *External Review of Aspects of IUCN's Governance*, including strengthening Council's capacity to carry out its oversight and governance roles, and if needed, reviewing its membership models and any needed organisational change;

- iii. develop a long-term (20 years) integrated Strategic Vision that includes a Financial Strategy, and Strategic Plan and other implementation plans, as needed, that follow the four-year planning process of the Union; and
 - iv. establish a clear roadmap to ensure that the Union effectively and efficiently fulfils its mandated objectives, including by actively engaging its membership, while ensuring financial sustainability;
- b to consult with the IUCN membership during the process, including sharing the proposed process, the composition of the working group, and the situational analysis and the outcomes of that strategic planning process and options developed in a.ii; and
- c. to submit the Strategic Vision, Financial Strategy and Strategic Plan and options developed in a.ii. to a vote by the Members before the end of the next World Conservation Congress.

Development of the Strategic Vision inclusive of a Financial Strategy and Strategic Plan for the Union

Draft Terms of Reference (ToR)

1 Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused more than three million deaths worldwide (April 2021), compromised health systems, brought nations to a halt, and disrupted economic patterns all over the world; in many cases there have been substantial negative impacts on nature. Many organisations have experienced constraints to their operations and financial stability. The future implications of this for nature and human well-being are uncertain, and myriad futures are possible and dependent on how we address our major socio-ecological dynamics. But there is broad agreement of the urgency to achieve global nature conservation goals. This has prompted many to re-think their strategies and ask questions about what changes need to be made.

Looking ahead IUCN will need to be responsive and agile in responding to rapidly changing circumstances. In preparation for Congress, the IUCN Council presents this preparatory work to support the 2021–2025 Council in initiating a process to provide strategic direction to IUCN to realise the vision, mission and strategic objectives, with a 20-year horizon, while taking adequate measures to ensure financial sustainability. At a time when the pandemic and its social and economic consequences have strained global resources and changed governmental priorities, the renewal of the leadership role of IUCN in conservation must include adapting its business model to ensure effective delivery and long-term financial sustainability. It is proposed that an integrated strategic process, taking a 20-year horizon, will deliver the Strategic Vision that incorporates a Financial Strategy that, in strengthening financial stability, will address the totality of the Union’s finance as it relates to organisational form and role, Programme and governance. It is envisaged that implementation plans taking account of the IUCN four-year planning cycle will be developed. The proposed process will include a participatory review that includes IUCN Members, Commissions, the Secretariat and key partners. The process will draw on needed professional skills, including of partners. The IUCN Council will have a lead role in designing the strategic process and driving needed organisational change.

The proposed Draft Terms of Reference provides background information on the overall objectives of the strategic planning process, proposed methodology, tools and approaches, the expected outputs and commitments required to facilitate the development of the 20-year Strategic Vision and the first detailed plan(s).

2 Background

The development of a new strategic plan for IUCN was a key recommendation of the [Review of Aspects of IUCN's Governance](#) (henceforth “the Governance Review”) conducted by Stewardship and Governance Associates (SGA). Although the global situation has changed considerably since the Governance Review was undertaken, the recommendations remain pertinent and should be taken into consideration in the development of any future strategy/strategies.

The Governance Review addressed the fragmentation among IUCN governance bodies having an adverse impact on the ability of IUCN to develop and implement an effective strategy (Section 6.6.1). It proposes in Section 6.6.1.a that a facilitated process amongst governance bodies with a goal to build alignment around the IUCN strategy, and focused on allowing for sufficient attention to external developments as well as potential future opportunities and threats emerging from the external competitive landscape would be useful to conduct on an ongoing basis. Council accepted the recommendation and agreed that the next Council should establish a process that focuses on strategic outlook, taking the next 20 years into consideration, leading to a new strategy for the Union that is tied to its strategy for financial sustainability.

Further, the Governance Review proposed that various organisational and governance changes were needed in order for IUCN to effectively develop its mission, including membership models and how these respectively meet strategic requirements (6.6.2), and the effectiveness of Council in its strategic, oversight and policy functions as defined in the IUCN Statutes. The IUCN Council accepted the recommendation that membership models should be considered as part of the process that leads to a new strategy for the Union. Further, it decided that Council should bring a draft decision to the Congress in Marseille for support, and to mandate the next Council to develop the strategic plan. [[Management Response](#) p.14].

The IUCN Council acknowledged the Governance Review's recognition of the "high degree of commitment and energy that Councillors and staff, as well as Members, bring toward fulfilling IUCN's mission". The IUCN Council believes that these attributes make it well placed to develop a Strategy that recognises, and is built on this strength.

Pursuant to these commitments, Council agreed that the Governance and Constituency Committee (GCC) of Council should present to Congress a motion requesting that the next Council carry out a strategic planning process and propose Draft Terms of Reference to be considered by Council 2021–2025. Council further requested the GCC to undertake preparations for consultations with IUCN Members to take place at the Marseille Congress.

2.1 Mission and Programmatic Approach

IUCN is a democratic Union, bringing together a coalition of governments, government agencies, international and national NGOs, indigenous peoples' organisations, and other institutions such as universities, in partnership to pursue the IUCN vision and mission. The IUCN mission to "influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable", along with the undertakings needed to achieve it, are provided for in Articles 2 and 3 of the IUCN Statutes.

Recognising that IUCN's unique strength lies in proactive collaboration across the different parts of the Union to achieve our mission and vision of "a just world that values and conserves nature", the IUCN Council, at its 76th meeting in 2011, adopted the [One Programme Charter](#). This commits the Union to engage all its components in working towards its mission and specifically to ensure comprehensive participation in IUCN Programme development and delivery; leverage the strengths and resources of the constituent parts of the Union to more effectively achieve the IUCN vision, mission and Programme; align the Secretariat and other constituent parts of the Union to maximise

Programme results, create more efficient work and communication processes, and foster a better and more conducive working environment between different parts of the Union.

The One Programme Charter established the following principles to guide collaboration:

- We deliver the Programme at the most appropriate level, using the best-placed part of the Union to deliver national, regional or global results.
- We cooperate and do not compete for roles and resources.
- We allocate resources to the part of the Union responsible for delivery.
- We communicate openly and transparently to keep each other informed of plans and activities.

3 Objective

The overall objective of IUCN's strategy 2009–2020, [A 2020 vision for IUCN](#) was to position IUCN as a global player in the fields of conservation and sustainability and ensure that this global platform offers value to IUCN Members, Commissions, partners and the world at large. The strategy sought to help IUCN “to leap forward by better using its main assets – its wide networks of Members and Commission experts, its staff within its worldwide Secretariat and its constituency of governments and private bodies” to expand IUCN's ability to influence change to enable humankind to live sustainably, in harmony with the natural world. The proposed strategic planning process will build on the success of the 2009–2020 vision 2020 and the recommendations of the Governance Review, and underpin needed organisational change in the Union.

The overall objective of this process is to develop an integrated Strategic Vision that includes or aligns both the overall Strategy as well as a Financial Strategy, taking a twenty-year horizon, to ensure that the Union effectively and efficiently fulfils its mandated objectives and ensure financial sustainability. The Financial Strategy is an integral part of the overall strategy and Strategic Vision and should be cognizant of the risks for the future. The Financial Strategy will address the totality of the finances of the organisation, including, but not restricted to, effective management of risk and the relationship thereof with reserves, programme and projects, organisational structure including the evaluation of the costs and benefits of the HQ-out posts-regional office triangle, partnerships, fundraising plan and engagement with non-traditional donors, and the role of Council. The integrated Strategic Vision will be complemented by more detailed shorter plan(s), including Implementation Plans taking account of the IUCN planning or programme cycle of four years.

This will be achieved through active engagement of its membership, appropriate expert and professional advice, needed organisational and governance change that enjoys broad support from all constituent parts and partners while ensuring financial sustainability. Moreover, as the strategic plans are dynamic, it will be important to include clear mechanisms for their revision and update at the beginning of each planning cycle over the 20-year horizon.

4 Scope of work

- a) Undertake a global (situational) analysis, taking into account the main developments currently affecting conservation, biodiversity, social and environmental issues, with contributions from each of the Regions. This analysis will also include early consultation with internal and external actors.

- b) Familiarisation and review of IUCN’s vision, mission, mandated objectives and strategies, and ways of working.
- c) Undertake a situational analysis of the Union, in the context of the new challenges IUCN is facing and building on the Governance Review, including its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT).
- d) Develop a draft theory of change for consultation.
- e) Review the institutional culture, framework and capacity, organisational structure including financial, management and administrative systems against strategic objectives and define changes in structure, governance (taking account of the Governance Review) and operations, priorities and approaches to work more effectively. This will include:
 - identifying changes to strengthen the professional capacity of Council to fulfil functions of oversight, policy development and strategic direction as provided for in the IUCN Statutes, including in its financial, human resources and audit functions, while maintaining democratic representation of IUCN’s Members;
 - identifying changes in the IUCN membership model related to the Strategic Vision and the IUCN mission;
 - developing an integrated process to deliver a Financial Strategy to support the new strategic direction that considers the totality of the finances of the organisation, including but not restricted to effective management of risk and the relationship thereof with reserves, programme and projects, organisational structure including the evaluation of the costs and benefits of the HQ-out posts-regional office triangle, partnerships, generation of future revenues for the Programme, operations, governance, engagement with non-traditional donors, strengthening its risk-taking capacity, the role of Council and as needed to develop appropriate tools to monitor implementation and outcomes. As appropriate, propose organisational changes to ensure the necessary checks and balances in financial governance, including by strengthening capacity and resources of Council.
- f) Hold regional consultations and electronic consultation among Members, Commission members and staff to validate the draft Strategic Plan.
- g) Propose monitoring and evaluating strategies and mechanisms to ensure the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan.
- h) Elaborate on core competencies, capability building required, including of IUCN membership required to support success.
- i) Conduct a risk analysis and develop a contingency plan to be incorporated into the Strategic Plan along with specific resource requirements.

5 Outputs

The key deliverables are:

- i) Integrated 20-year Strategic Vision, including a Financial Strategy;
- ii) Strategic Plan taking account of the four-year planning cycle of IUCN (including

proposed high-level organisational changes taking into account the recommendations of the Governance Review);

- iii) Strategic Plan monitoring and evaluation framework;
- iv) Reports on the process including:
 - initial situational analysis,
 - rapid assessment performance report,
 - stakeholder mapping and analysis report,
 - Union situational analysis, and
 - stakeholder consultations and validation workshops;
- v) Risk Analysis report and contingency plan.