



FORUM  
RÉGIONAL  
DE LA CONSERVATION  
**BISSAU**  
8-11 JUILLET 2019



## Central and West Africa Regional Conservation Forum (RCF) Guinea Bissau, 9 - 11 July, 2019

Theme: *Conserving nature for peace, security and sustainable economic development in Central and West Africa*

# REPORT





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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

**AD:** Acção para o Desenvolvimento

**FDA:** French Development Agency

**PA:** Protected Area

**BIOPAMA:** Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management programme

**CBD:** Convention on Biological Diversity

**CoP-CBD:** Conference of Parties - Convention on Biological Diversity

**ECOWAS:** Economic Community of West African States

**CITES:** Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species

**WCPA:** World Commission on Protected Areas

**NC:** National Committee

**CoP:** Conference of Parties

**CREMACO:** Regional Committee of IUCN Members for Central and West Africa

**GEF:** Global Environment Facility

**FODER:** Forest and Rural Development

**GCF:** Green Climate Fund

**GAECA:** Grupo de Apoio à Educação e Comunicação Ambiental

**IBAP:** Instituto da Biodiversidade e das Áreas Protegidas

**IPBES:** Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

**MOLOA:** Observation Mission of West African Littoral

**SDG:** Sustainable Development Goals

**ODZH:** Organizacao para a Defesa e o Desenvolvimento de Zonas Humidas

**NGO:** Non – Governmental Organization

**CSO:** Civil Society Organization

**PACO:** Central and West Africa Programme

**PRCM:** Regional Partnership for Conservation of the West African Coastal and Marine Area

**RASTOMA:** Network of Actors for the Safeguard of Marine Turtles

**UEMOA:** West Africa Economic and Monetary Union

**IUCN:** International Union for Conservation of Nature

**WACA:** West Africa Coastal Area

**WWF:** World Wildlife Fund



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## I. INTRODUCTION

Every four years, prior to the World Conservation Congress, each regional IUCN programme around the world, organizes a regional conservation forum bringing together IUCN Members and Commissions and also government and civil society partners. Such fora are platforms for exchanging views at a larger scale, on current environmental issues and most importantly on opportunities for synergetic actions of IUCN Members and Commissions so as to influence and assist government and civil society actors in providing the most appropriate responses.

Regional conservation fora are also meant to enable IUCN Member Organizations to gather information on the Union and proceedings of the World Conservation Congress, to be prepared for effective participation and to understand the formulation and submission of motions in order to convey proposed conservation solutions at both global and regional levels for the well-being of communities and peoples.

Finally, given that the Members are the ones responsible for adopting the IUCN four-year programme at the World Conservation Congress, the regional fora will provide an opportunity (i) to IUCN constituencies to take good ownership of the draft programme, (ii) collect inputs and recommendations from everybody on the draft programme and (iii) incidentally conduct a mid-term review of the on-going programme.

Initially designed for the IUCN Members and Commissions, the fora have gradually opened up to other partners, turning into a meeting framework for conservation and sustainable development actors in view of mobilizing and generating knowledge, capitalizing on experiences and learning lessons, exchanging information, setting long term programming priorities and promoting a scientific dialogue.

Thus, the third edition of the IUCN Regional Conservation Forum for Central and West Africa was held in Bissau (Guinea-Bissau) from 9-11 July, 2019. It brought together hundreds of delegates /participants from Central and West Africa, including Government representatives, development and civil society actors, scientists, conservation community representatives and political actors. The forum made it possible to share experiences and best practices in the field of conservation and sustainable development, among actors in the region and beyond.

The theme of the third edition was: "Conserving nature for peace, security and sustainable economic development in Central and West Africa".

The forum was organized prior to and in preparation for three major world conservation events scheduled to take place in 2020, namely: the World Conservation Congress to be held in June 2020 in Marseille, the 25<sup>th</sup> UNCC Conference of Parties (COP 25) in November 2019, and the Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 due to be held in November 2020 in China.



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The main objective of the regional conservation forum is to provide a reflection and exchange framework to the IUCN Members, Experts of thematic Commissions and partners (States, NGOs, civil society), enabling them to fully play their influential role in the international conservation and sustainable development agenda. The specific objectives are the following:

- To identify and popularize the main challenges in conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in the region, in order to facilitate a common vision;
- Share success stories in terms of responses to environmental challenges;
- Strengthen the participation of African delegations in international encounters, notably the COP21 on climate change and the World Conservation Congress.

More specifically, the forum gave an opportunity to (i) discuss and collect feedback from IUCN Members in Central and West Africa regarding the upcoming four-year IUCN programme (2021-2024), which will be submitted for approval during the Congress; (ii) discuss and agree on the most effective implementation mechanisms of "One Programme" ; (iii) share and adopt a concerted stand on the post – 2020 Conservation Agenda at the global level; (iv) highlight the linkages between the IUCN four-year programme and the post - 2020 biodiversity agenda; (v) identify relevant issues related to the four-year programme and post - 2020 agenda to be debated at the next Congress and (vi) consider current and potential joint initiatives with the IUCN Secretariat as related to the Red List of Species and Ecosystems, Green List of Protected Areas and Key Zones for Biodiversity in Central and West Africa.

The Forum was structured around five main sessions

- **Session i** : Opening ceremony of the regional conservation forum
- **Session ii** : Overview of IUCN – a union for nature and life
- **Session iii** : State of nature and biodiversity conservation around the world and in Central and West Africa
- **Session iv** : Proposed solutions for better addressing nature conservation issues and challenges
- **Session v** : Preparations for the 2020 World Conservation Congress.



## II. OPENING CEREMONY AND MESSAGE FROM CONSERVATION LEADERS

The opening ceremony was chaired by Madam Quite Djata, Secretary of State for Environment and Biodiversity standing in for the Prime Minister of Guinea Bissau. The ceremony was marked by five addresses:

In her welcome address, Mister Miguel de Barros, Chairman of the National Committee of IUCN Members in Guinea Bissau expressed his appreciation to all actors who worked towards the holding of the Forum, particularly the authorities of Guinea Bissau for having accepted to host this major event together with the IUCN Secretariat, Members and regional and national committees.



The second statement was delivered by Mr. Alain Traoré, Chairman of the Regional Committee of the Regional IUCN Members in Central and West Africa (CREMACO): He thanked the IUCN partners namely MAVA, Global Fund for Nature, PRCM, the French Development Agency, the IUCN Members and Commission experts in Central and West Africa for their mobilization. He further expressed his gratitude to the Government of Guinea Bissau for having accepted to host the forum. He then reiterated the engagement of the members in the region to work towards environmental conservation and urged participants to join efforts in contributing to the achievement of IUCN's vision.

Mister Mamadou Diallo, IUCN Regional Councilor for Africa, thanked the Government of Guinea Bissau for hosting the Forum and underlined the engagement of Members in attaining the objectives of IUCN in a very challenging context of environmental degradation.

In her address, Madam Aguilar Rojas Grethel, acting Director General of IUCN welcomed the participants to the regional conservation Forum. She thanked the authorities for having opened the country's doors for IUCN and for the warm welcome given to the participants. She commended Guinea Bissau for their efforts to conserve nature. She underscored the strategic position of the Central and West Africa region in conservation, challenges posed by the various pressures on biodiversity and the need for striking the balance between socio-economic development and nature conservation. To take up such challenges, the post-2020 agenda should be the focus of the discussions among the participants. Finally, she highlighted the fact that the Forum represents a major step towards the upcoming World Conservation Congress scheduled to take place in Marseille, France in June 2020, as well as the large events to be held in year 2020: the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity CoP; enforcement of the Paris Agreement on Climate.

Madam Secretary of State for Environment and Biodiversity standing in for the Prime Minister of Guinea Bissau thanked all participants for their dedication to biodiversity conservation. She then

made a comprehensive description of the challenges and issues related to the environment and nature conservation in Guinea Bissau. Finally, she urged the participants to work hard and make the

Forum a success and wished to see strong recommendations and relevant and innovative ideas for nature conservation emerge from their fruitful deliberations.

### III. CONSERVATION CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN CENTRAL AND WEST AFRICA

This session was intended to review the state of biodiversity and nature conservation in view of better determining the orientations and decisions during the Forum. The major issues and challenges requiring conservation actions were highlighted during the session.

#### 1. The global Vision of IUCN

The Acting Director General took the floor and set the pace of the Forum by giving an overview of the mission of IUCN and its deployment across the world. She recalled the mission and ambition of IUCN which is built around the well-being of the Earth. After 71 years of existence, IUCN has given evidence of its know-how in terms of establishing a data base and information base such as the Red List of Protected Species, the Green List of Protected Areas, a wide range of information tools and a platform as well as its capacity to influence and assist the world in conserving nature. Today, IUCN intervenes in 160 countries with over 500 projects, and contributes to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Having a healthy ecosystem is the basis for achieving these SDGs. Madame Acting Director General thus emphasized the fact that the meeting provides a great opportunity for conducting all possible discussions among the various IUCN constituencies, and more particularly sharing views on the next four-year programme 2021-2024, so as to collect comments from all actors on the platform that was put on line to that effect.



Moreover, the 2020 Marseille Congress will be an occasion to make our voices heard and express the ideas in which we believe, with the aim of achieving sustainable and effective natural resource management. She concluded by highlighting the importance of conveying a strong message during the upcoming Congress.

#### 2. PACO's Vision

The Regional Director for Central and West Africa also highlighted the challenges facing conservation in our region, notably climate change effects and the loss of biodiversity. He further recalled the significance of ecosystems in the region, as they provide goods and





services to the communities that depend on them. The region also has a great cultural diversity that constitutes an asset to be valued for the well-being of the communities. Hence, the mission of IUCN hence to influence through the rolling-out of the four-year programme that will lead to the generation of knowledge, data, tools and lessons to be learned. To conclude and addressing the Members, the Regional Director identified some opportunities for collaboration among certain on-going programmes such as the BIOPAMA Fund for Action, the SOS Big Cats Project and the Mangrove Project.

### **3. The strategic Vision of Guinea Bissau in the area of Conservation**

The host country Guinea Bissau was given an opportunity to present their challenges in relation to nature conservation. With a surface area of 36, 125 Km<sup>2</sup> and two million population, Guinea Bissau has a highly diverse biodiversity composed of islands and mainland. The country has created protected areas for and with the communities. Using a participatory process, the people are the primary actors and beneficiaries of the effective management of this large network of protected areas. They however face many challenges to be taken up, including inter alia:

- Low financing /budgeting for protected areas : concerning this issue, the government has expressed the wish to invest more in protected areas with the view of making them a lever for economic development
- The risk of fragmenting the forest as a result of agricultural encroachment (rice, cashew nuts) into protected areas;
- Deforestation, abusive tree cutting that do not benefit the economy of the country;
- Sustaining the interest of the communities in protected areas by showing them the importance of their contributions, is another major challenge;
- Crop farmer- livestock breeder conflicts should also be reckoned with, as well as the conflicts between humans and certain animals.

## **IV. INNOVATION IN TERMS OF INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE AND REFORMS WITHIN IUCN**

During this session, general information was given on the functioning and structure of IUCN as a Union of Members and network of actors whose mission is to influence, encourage and assist societies in conserving the integrity and diversity of nature and ensuring that natural resources are used in an equitable and sustainable manner.

### **1. Reforms and Members' strategy**

#### **a) Reforms**

The IUCN Councilor for Africa presented the various reforms carried out within IUCN since the latest Congress held in Hawaiï, United States, notably (i) the inclusion of infranational governments as IUCN members (a proposal made in 2012 and 2016 without obtaining the majority of 2/3), in view of enabling them to be members under the Category of States and Members; (ii) the appointment of a councilor as proposed by Indigenous Peoples' Organizations that are members of IUCN; (iii) the modification of the term « Regional Councilor» into « Councilor» given that Councilors are appointed

to defend IUCN globally and not regionally; (iv) enhancement of the motion processes by increasing the majority required for the adoption of a motion (from simple majority to 2/3 majority) ; (v) the scientific independence of the works conducted by the Commissions ; (vi) the ceiling of the number of abstentions for an adoption.

### ***b) Members' Strategy***

In this respect, the Councilor recalled that the specific objectives of the strategy are to present the engagement of members to popularize and improve IUCN' products and knowledge, influence the environment and sustainable development agenda and establish networks, partnerships and alliances required for achieving the defined objectives.

The idea is to build synergy to an optimum level among members, commissions and Secretariat so as to increase members' influence on the pursuit of the mission. The collaboration among the three IUCN's pillars can be further developed. By opening conversations among us, we shall successfully advance the work of the Union.

National and Regional Committees should be given the means to coordinate the engagement and recruitment of members and implementation of programmes at country level. National and regional committees represent an excellent instrument for facilitating the work of the members. Opportunities should be identified and tapped on. The Secretariat has currently undertaken to revise the statutes of all National Committees (NCs) of IUCN in order to give a clearer picture of the situation. We may at the same timework with the members to provide supportive resources and a structural framework.

IUCN should use its convening power to increase the Members' potential, add value by working together and operate as a set and not as individual units.

In the discussions that followed the presentation, the participants focused on a number of points:

- The Members' strategy is quite weak in terms of objectives and goals. In Africa, the use of this strategy is at a very low level at about 10%. IUCN is aware of such shortcomings, given that out of 500 on-going projects; only 31% genuinely involve the Members. Nevertheless, as we have donors that have considerable requirements, certain projects such as GEF's and GCF's provide opportunities for engaging the Members in the implementation.
- The application of the Red List of Species still requires some capacity building. This tool has not yet been fully understood and generally speaking.
- Members are not involved in the ONE programme's approach. They need to be trained and informed on all tools and knowledge products. Moreover, IUCN should identify capacity building needs and defined measurement indicators of compliance with the 'ONE programme' approach. The Members have requested that knowledge products generated at their level bear the label of IUCN given that they too participate in generating information, and this should be disseminated.
- A programme cycle includes planning, execution and monitoring and evaluation. Therefore, we need to agree on the term 'ONE programme' in this programming cycle which remains blurred to several members.
- Finally, the issue of the language used in the tools was raised. Several tools are in English only. For better collaboration and involvement of the Members, the tools should be translated in all official languages of the Union.

## 2. Discussion Panels

### a) Panel of Commissions

The panel of commissions was aimed at presenting the various IUCN commissions, their structures and missions. The panel was made up of the World Commission on Environmental Law, the Species Survival Commission, the World Commission on Protected Areas and the Commission on Education and Communication.

Mr. Antonio Hermann Benjamin of the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law stated that making policies without support for environmental rights would be just helpless. Similarly, all programmes approved within IUCN should have legal support. This Commission is the oldest environmental law group in the world. It is at the origin of several treaties such as the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (foundation drafted by the Commission on Environmental Law), the Convention on Endangered Species, the Convention on Biological Diversity as well as the Convention to Combat Desertification. It includes several groups of specialists (climate change, oceans, coral reefs etc.) and one of the current flagship initiatives is the establishment of the *global judicial institute on the environment*. The Commission organizes capacity building workshops on a regular basis. Mr. Antonio concluded by paying tribute to the late Alfredo Da Sylva, referring to him as a hero of conservation.

The Species Survival Commission is a network of 8000 members including 140 groups of specialists. The Commission is involved in providing trainings and information on the Red List, as well as scientific advice on conservation projects and initiatives.

The World Commission on Protected Areas has set the mission to develop and provide advice and devise scientific and technical policies. It facilitates a representative world network which is effectively administered for equitable management of marine and terrestrial protected areas, and more particularly zones that are specifically important to biodiversity and ecosystem services. The Commission has over 180 members and collaborates with the other Commissions to undertake concrete actions such as support for multilateral negotiations, project development and dissemination of the Green List in the region.

The Commission on Education and Communication lays emphasis on the challenges to be taken up including notably the need to increase the volume of information and data disseminated as well as their impact. This information gap sometimes leads to duplication in the projects. Reflections are underway to define methods for sharing and capitalizing on lessons learned within the Union. The Commission also encouraged the participants to register as members and take advantage of the various awards available.

At the end of the presentations, the floor was open for discussions among participants and panel members of the commissions. It appeared in general that each Commission has its own structure and way of doing business, which may be different from the others, such as the absence of a vice-chairperson in the Commission on Environmental Law. In addition, this Commission needs to enhance the capacity of judges, magistrates and other actors of Environmental Law so as to enable its enforcement, mostly for those countries that lack environmental laws and which could take ownership of the provisions of the Commission.

Regarding protected areas, the WCPA gave a brief explanation during the discussions, of the protection process of an area, which involves data, information and evidence collection for advocacy to the authorities to obtain the protection of the area concerned. In general terms, one should make the case on the value of the area, providing accurate data in a bid to influence the Government.

To conclude on this first panel for the day, the Officer in charge of relations with Members presented the types of distinctions that are awarded at the Congress so that the Members could get ready and possibly apply. She gave details on the J. C. Phillips, H. J. Coolidge Member of Honor distinctions.

### **b) Panel of Members**

The second panel was that of Members. Five Members presented their respective organizations and achievements in the area of nature conservation.



**Nature tropicale:** The vision of the NGO *Nature Tropicale* is to contribute to building a world and an Africa where local communities are associated to the States to implement environmental policies that are based on the socio-cultural realities and lessons learned from the experiences of actors, thus enabling new forms of legitimate governance conducive to the emergence of an active African citizenship in fulfilling moral and public responsibilities in view of sustainable development. *Nature tropicale* works towards informing, sensitizing and specifically conveying messages on Species protection and ecotourism.



**Forêt et Développement Rural (FODER)** (acting together for natural resource sustainability) : this organization works towards the advent of a fairer society which is marginalization-and - discrimination free and puts their natural resources at the service of sustainable development. FODER has developed a quality assurance tool for environment known as ISO 9001 2015. FODER is a member of the IUCN National Committee on behalf of Cameroon and considerably contributes to the effectiveness of the One Programme in view of its experience in collaborating through IUCN projects.



**Green Senegal:** The Research and Environmental Studies Group (GREEN-SENEGAL) is an NGO that was created back in 1999, with the mission to contribute to food security by promoting sustainable agriculture, and to environmental protection and preservation. Today, the NGO acts as a coach to over 40 university students. Green Senegal basically works to mitigate the degradation of the 718 kilometers of the Senegal coast. Additionally, they have put in place a programme titled Green Jobs which aims at granting funds to the youth for decent job creation. The NGO would like to step up their collaboration with IUCN within the framework of the ONE Programme implementation and in terms of support for accessing funds such as GEF and GCF.



**RASTOMA:** RASTOMA is a network acting in six countries. It counts about fifty actors and 11 NGOs in Central Africa. The vision of the network is to keep the marine turtles in their natural habitat in Central Africa in the longer term. The network supports the efforts made by marine turtles conservation professionals in Central Africa by organizing meetings in the associative life of RASTOMA, developing and coordinating a conservation strategy and concerted sub regional

actions, facilitating exchanges among various actors in the region and supporting their members through technical assistance and trainings (capacity building) and fund raising support. Finally, the network recommended that the meeting immediately ponders over the visibility of Members at the 2020 Congress and over motion proposals.



**MALI:** Mali made a short presentation advocating for support for the safeguard of elephants in the Gourma. This zone has got out of control of the country and so for the state of the elephants living there.

Following the presentations by the panel members, the Regional Director reverted to the ONE programme approach, highlighting the collaborative aspect. PACO through a number of programmes is facilitating collaboration with the Members through grants earmarked for conservation actions. This is the case for instance of BIOPAMA and the Governance programme.

## V. REVIEW OF THE FOUR-YEAR PROGRAMME 2017-2020

This session was intended to present data from the *Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* (IPBES) report on biodiversity on one hand, and the mid-term review of the IUCN four-year programme 2017-2020 at the regional scale.

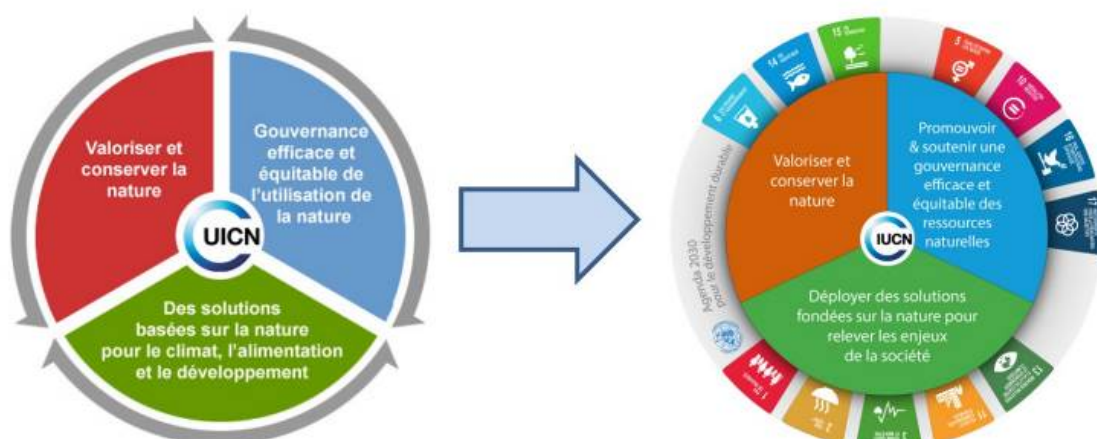
### 1. The IPBES Report

IPBES is an intergovernmental platform that has the mission to enhance knowledge in view of improving scientific policies, conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, long term human well-being and sustainable development. IPBES is composed of 145 experts and 310 contributor authors drawn from 51 pays. The report highlights the biosphere and atmosphere upon which mankind as a whole depends. The analysis of the report shows how nature and its vital contributions to people's lives are deteriorating worldwide.

### 2. Review of the four-year programme 2017-2020

In this regard, the Regional Coordinator recalled the various components of the four-year plan.

The four-year plan 2017-2020 was implemented against a backdrop of socio-economic and environmental degradation. The context was specifically marked by conflicts and growing security instability with major impacts on biodiversity. Natural resources are being used to finance conflicts.





Transboundary parks are sources of conflict and compound interventions. Adding to this is the socio-economic dimension with sheer exploitation of natural resources and construction of infrastructure at the expense of the environment.

The region is confronted with ecosystem depletion. During the first half of the implementation of the four-year plan 2017-2020, IUCN has worked on:

- Promoting and establishing regional integration policies, strategies and mechanisms for biodiversity conservation. Examples are given by the Abidjan Convention and MOLOA for the master plan of the West African Coast, all of which constitute progress accomplished in collaboration with UEMOA, CSE and ECOWAS;
- Capacity building and environmental leadership development of actors;
- Support for structures to achieve effective natural resource governance;
- Support for effective law and policy enforcement;
- Promoting local conservation initiatives for the well-being of communities;
- Releasing tools and knowledge for effective governance;
- Strengthening natural resource governance frameworks;
- Promoting nature-based solutions;
- Developing innovative mechanisms for conservation financing.

IUCN is implementing initiatives such as the West Africa Coastal Area Management Programme (WACA) on coastal resilience and the European Union Natural Resource Governance Project. Such initiatives, as well as the GEF and GCF projects underway or being developed, provide opportunities for effective compliance with the ONE Programme approach.

## VI. SOLUTIONS TO ADDRESS CONSERVATION CHALLENGES

The session served for presenting, discussing and valuing different kinds of solutions (strategies, financing and support mechanisms, institutional and policy mechanisms, etc.) These are solutions proposed by the IUCN Secretariat, Members, Commissions and financial partners in view of meeting nature conservation and sustainable development challenge through the next IUCN four –year plan 2021-2024 and post-2020 agenda.

### 1. The 2021 – 2024 Programme

The IUCN programme is defined in the Union’s rules and regulations and constitutes an indispensable tool that enables IUCN to conduct its mission. The four-year programme preparation and development principles are the following:

- **Engaging all members:** the Secretariat is in charge of coordinating, however, it is important that all components of the Union be involved, hence the consultation mechanism. Consultations are made at every stage of development of the programme, up to the final phase of the Congress and its validation.
- **Dialoguing with donors:** it is important to know that the selected intervention domains are priority areas to the donors. This involves a permanent dialogue with donors.
- **Defining the niche of the Union:** other organizations do work on biodiversity-related issues. It is therefore important for us to define our niche for value addition.

- **Aligning the programme with global issues:** the relevance of the programme also goes through its compliance with the various existing conventions, global goals such as SDGs and Aichi goals. We should position ourselves in relation to these major issues at stake and determine our inputs. Our topics should take account of discussions at the global level.
- **Considering lessons from the past:** our plan should necessarily understand the lessons learned from our past interventions in order to enhance effectiveness.

The 2021-2024 Programme is still being developed based on the timeline below.



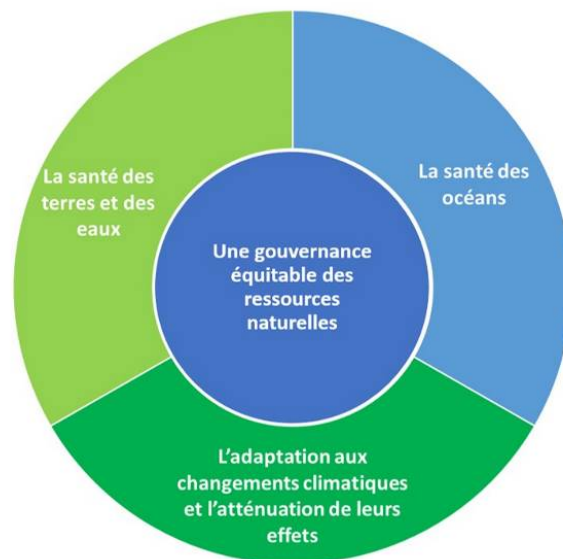
2021-2024 programme development timeline

Consultations are in process to collect the views and observations of all IUCN components and partners. Comments may be sent up to 15 September, 2019 on the platform created for this purpose. The programme may be discussed once more during the 2020 Congress in Marseille before final validation.

This is a high level strategy document and at this juncture, the idea is to give the major orientations and later finalize with the operational section.

The thematic areas selected for the 2021-2024 Programme are the following:

- Land and water health;
- Oceans health;
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation of climate change effects;
- Equitable natural resource governance.



For actors to understand the logic behind the drafting of this document, the approaches defined for each programmatic domain were presented as follows:

- Setting Strategic Objectives in relation to the change that we want to see;
- Interconnecting all programmatic domains and strategic objectives and making them complementary;
- Designing objectives according to a general outline: *Protect – Restore – sustainably use natural resources*;

Breakout sessions were organized to collect observations and comments on the four thematic domains of the programme. Four groups were set up to work, focusing on the challenges and opportunities, solutions, priority zones of the domain, the role of IUCN and that of the actors already engaged in each of the domains. The outcomes of group work are to be summarized, analyzed and incorporated in the four-year plan under preparation.



## 2. The Post -2020 Agenda

In 2010, despite the commitments made by the governments to undertake effective and urgent actions to halt biodiversity loss so as to build ecosystem resilience in 2020, there is still a long way to go. We are far from controlling all the threats looming over biodiversity as show by the IPBES data.

In 2016, the members of IUCN adopted resolution 6.096 aimed at preserving the place of nature and our future. The idea was to develop a post-2020 strategy calling on the parties to the CBD and other

stakeholders to initiate a process towards drafting an ambitious post-2020 strategy that could contribute to achieving sustainable development and supporting the Rio Conventions, as well as other biodiversity-related conventions. Since then, IUCN has participated in the preparation of the world framework for post-2020 biological diversity, by giving its viewpoints on the process, its scope and content. IUCN has also convened and participated in expert meetings aimed at providing technical inputs to ensure that the preparation and implementation of the post-2020 framework can materialize Vision 2050 for biodiversity, "Living in harmony with nature".

With 18 months to go before the adoption of the monitoring of the strategic plan on biological diversity 2011-2020, in addition to the intersession meetings and regular negotiation sessions, many other events will take place that contribute to shaping the final document, notably the IUCN World Conservation Congress in June 2020.

### **3. The WWF New Deal**

While WWF was warning few weeks ago about the collapse of biodiversity in the world through the [Living Planet Report](#), the 14<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties (COP 14) of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) that took place last November in Sharm-el-Sheikh has been a key window of opportunity for scaling up global efforts to stop biodiversity loss. The planet is colored with red, with alarming figures of temperature rise and mass disappearance of up to 60% of vertebrates. The IPBES report is quite compelling on the issues affecting the planet as the link between climate change and nature loss. There will be no prosperity in a degraded planet stated WWF. There is need to act and reverse the trends.

The purpose is to prepare the upcoming COP of the Convention on Biological Diversity which is scheduled to take place in Peking in 2020 and lead to a new global agreement on nature protection, taking into account the next stages of the Aichi goals adopted in 2010. It is therefore now that a process is being designed that will enable us to negotiate this future agreement. This is the reason why WWF is calling on the States to elevate their ambition through the adoption of a sound roadmap supported at the highest political level and capable of resulting into an ambitious agreement to end nature erosion by year 2030. The new deal that was presented and supported by WWF is designed to make all Heads of State make a commitment, a very strong declaration at the time when they are ready to go to the COP15. This is to ensure that nature is considered as a central issue and that solutions are found to the climate for the well-being of the populations.

To achieve this, a movement should be created for citizen's enlightenment and awareness, a movement that will enable us to reach three objectives:

- To obtaining the highest level of political ownership by Heads of State;
- Engage the public (youth, religious leaders, private sector) in this citizen's enlightenment;
- Engage all countries in the post – 2020 process.

So far, international engagement to nature protection has failed to halt the collapse of the living environment, due to the lack of political commitments, measures that match the emergency in effective implementation. Most of the 20 Aichi Goals on biodiversity will not be achieved by 2020, unless the States drastically fast track the required transformations within the next two years. Yet,

the stability of our economy and society depends on nature and the free services that it provides. We need nature for our development and mere survival. WWF intends to submit a motion on the new deal and a side event will be organized in Marseille in 2020.

#### **4. The natural capital concept**

The natural capital concept aims at making the values of nature more visible in decision – making by Governments, private sector, financial institutions and society, in order to define better goals on biodiversity, environment and people’s well-being. The approach is used as a blanket term referring to various elements of natural capital assessment, the identification, measurement, estimate of and accounting for the natural capital stock or ecosystem service flow. The natural capital concept is expanding in the conservation circles and at IUCN.

The World Conservation Congress at its Hawaiï session in 2016 advocated for the following:

- Set up as a matter of urgency of an interdisciplinary and multisectorial working group based on the One Programme charter, involving diverse representations of the Secretariat, Commissions and Members, in order to develop a discussion paper and an IUCN draft policy on natural capital for dissemination, consideration and adoption by the Union prior to the 2020 World Conservation Congress;
- Provide the working group with the text of the original motion for consideration and use;
- Explore the *conceptual and ethical underpinnings* of the natural capital approach in relation to the policies and based on ecological, environmental and social principles;
- Contribute as a side activity, to the consideration and utilization of current knowledge in concept and proposal development, effective mainstreaming of the natural capital approach through the implementation of projects.

Furthermore, a survey on this approach was commissioned under the leadership of the Secretariat with support from the Government of the Netherlands around the following question: *Natural capital, what’s debate about?*

The findings of the survey show that over 50% of the persons interviewed find the concept useful for guiding decision-making and setting up agenda. The survey shows a small number of people who consider the natural capital concept as being dangerous and confusing and that it is better to exercise great caution as to its utilization.

#### **5. Synthetic Biology**

Presented by the Global Director of Programmes, synthetic biology is a new concept and a new dimension of modern biotechnology combining science, technology, engineering to facilitate and accelerate the understanding, design, and reshaping, manufacturing and / or altering of genetic material, living bodies and biological systems.

Some examples of the use of synthetic biology in agriculture and health include transforming rice from an ineffective C3 photosynthesis in C4 photosynthesis (like that of maize, sugar cane and sorghum), increasing micronutrients in existing crops, creating new domestic crops for agriculture and health, reducing the impact of malaria, developing new or improved medicines and improving medicine efficacy.



The Global Director of Programmes recalled the context. In Hawaï, resolution 86 requested in-depth consideration of this technology, an evaluation and based on the results, the development of an

IUCN draft policy aimed at providing guidance as to biodiversity and nature conservation in relation to synthetic biology.

A working group of the Union composed of Members of Commissions and of the IUCN Secretariat, natural and social science experts, Governments, NGOs, Universities, Companies and indigenous Peoples was put in place. The working group appointed a technical sub-group in charge of conducting the recently published technical evaluation.

The evaluation was designed to use evidence-based data and the authors complied with the specifications. But no applications of synthetic biology to conservation have been released in nature for the time being. Thus, in the absence of direct data, no strong danger statements and other promises of high benefits were made. The issue lies in highly varying world values and visions that underpin the various responses received from the evaluation when preliminary results were presented at the November 2018 CBD CoP.

## Renforcer notre analyse des effets positifs et négatifs attendus de la biologie de synthèse



Positive and negative effects of synthetic biology

The authors of the evaluation acknowledge the fact that synthetic biology governance is a key issue that should be part of the discussions on the timeliness of moving forward and how to go about it.

As requested by IUCN Resolution 086, the Working Group used the findings of the technical evaluation to develop an IUCN policy that aims at guiding the Director General, Commissions and Members on biodiversity and nature conservation in relation to synthetic biology. The first section is on intention statement (objectives, impacts, application), the second section presents the audience of the policy, the third section describes its scope (coverage, effect on conservation) and then the

background and principles and finally the policy per say: **« IUCN is of the opinion that the potential uses of synthetic biology should be made on a case-by-case basis, depending on the specific context and application and taking account of the views of all stakeholders involved, including indigenous peoples and local communities, based on equitable access to all relevant information and building upon the precautionary principle. Adhering to this policy aims at preventing or reducing to the bare minimum any potential negative effect of synthetic biology on biodiversity and optimizing its potential to make existing conservation approaches stronger and complementary».**

Finally, the Global Director of Programmes indicated that the draft policy basically remains a sketch that needs to be finalized by the Members. Today the goal is to continue the discussion and online motion process and also in Marseille in June 2020.

## **6. The FDA Biodiversity Facility: an opportunity for Africa in the post – 2020 Agenda**

The Forum was an occasion for the FDA to launch the Facility which is an opportunity for Africa in the 2020 Agenda.

On 14th March, the French President announced the Facility for Africa by stating that there was a need to move from discussions to actions. He urged actors to work together with clear objectives for the climate, transparency and mobilization of actors and funds.



The European Union also carries an ambitious project implemented by Expertise France. The project aims at facilitating the emergence of an ambitious 2020 framework for meetings in view of collaborating until the CoP 15. The idea is to open a dialogue prior to the COP 15 in order to share the same visions and understand the issues of each and every one. 16 African countries were selected and PACO is represented by Cameroon, Benin, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Gabon and Congo for an amount of Euro 10 million through collaboration among IUCN, WWF and Expertise France. The project has a life span of 24 months in the perspective of the Marseille Congress and CoP 15.

The FDA intends to assist a group of pilot countries to defend ambitious goals for the next decade so as to ensure that such goals contribute to the achievement of the global goals narrowed down to national and sectorial goals. The aim is to identify key conservation stakes, define objectives in terms of gains for biodiversity, curb the impact and reflect on how objectives can be narrowed down to the sectorial level.

The FDA Facility also provides a good collaboration opportunity in terms of business engagement. Discussions were already started in Cancun on the mainstreaming of sectors such as infrastructure and many more sectors into biodiversity. The Heads of State should set the pace like Cameroun already did by drafting a roadmap.

## 7. GEF/GCF financing Mechanisms

GEF was established on the eve of the Rio Summit in 1992. It is aimed at helping to address the most pressing environmental problems. 2019 was the year of the seventh replenishment of the Facility. A CSO – GEF Network was created in 1995 in the form of an independent network<sup>1</sup> of Member Organizations which activities heavily bear on the environment and sustainable development in compliance with the GEF mandate. The Green Climate Fund (GCF) was established in 2010 as a UNCC financing mechanism. It aims at minimizing or reducing greenhouse gas effect in developing countries and helping vulnerable societies to adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change.

The master instrument of the GCF grants two CSOs the right to attend its meetings as active observers, one representing a developed country and the other a developing country. Organizations that wish to obtain the observer status at the Global Environment Facility and participate in the activities of the Facility have to apply for this status. The GEF Governing Board makes calls for accreditation of observers on a regular basis.

IUCN is the executing agency of GEF (2014) and accredited entity to GCF (2016). Efforts are made to integrate Members as execution partners in most of the projects. GEF and GCF are highly in favor of civil society participation in the preparation, implementation, execution and monitoring of projects. Together, we can better tap on the opportunities offered by these two funds and to achieve that we need the following:

- Governmental and non- governmental members should improve their collaboration relationship in order to facilitate the integration of non- governmental actors in GEF/GCF projects.
- Governmental Members should also influence the GEF and GCF policies and practices by actively participating in the networks put in place by these Facilities
- Governmental Members should be at the core of GEF and GCF financing because they are often the focal points of the Conventions concerned and they have the capacity to fast track the implementation of civil society policies of the two Facilities.

## VII. PREPARING THE 2020 CONGRESS AND POLICIES

This session was dedicated to informing and engaging the Members, Commissions and partners around the upcoming World Congress that will be held in Marseille in June 2020 ; debating and deciding on draft resolutions in preparation for the World Congress.

### 1. The Congress

The IUCN Congress is the venue where IUCN as a Union sets priorities and guide conservation and sustainable development actions. It is the most significant world forum devoted for scientific knowledge, conservation and sustainable development policies and practices. With over 1300 resolutions adopted since 1948, the Union has demonstrated its influence on conservation policies at all levels, assisted in defining the international conservation agenda and contributed to giving a new impetus to environmental treaties (e.g.: CITES, Ramsar, World Heritage and CBD). Through its

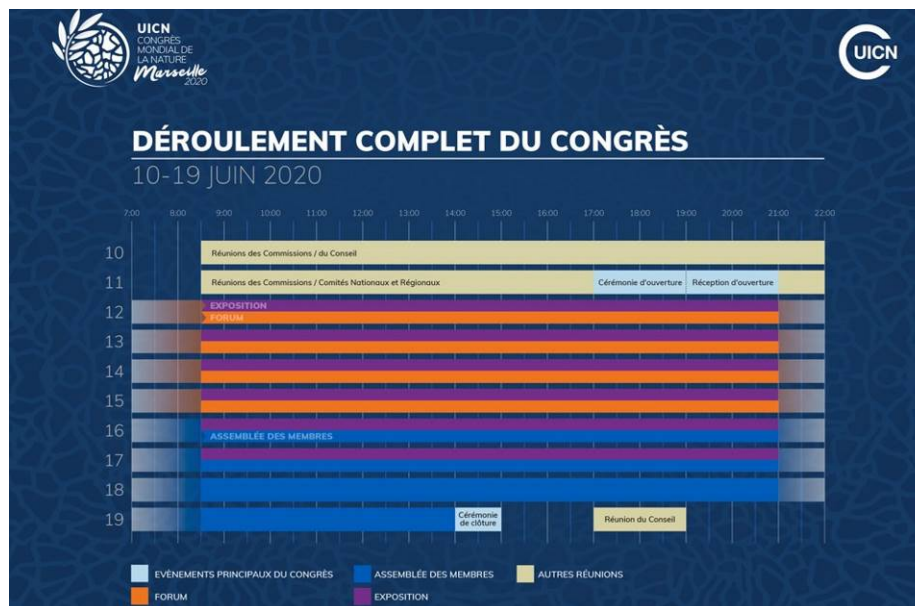
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<sup>1</sup> [www.gefco.org](http://www.gefco.org)

resolutions, IUCN supports indigenous peoples, the systematic mainstreaming of gender issues and the recognition of the linkages between nature conservation and human rights. The work of IUCN on species conservation and protected areas has led to the development of global standards.

The next Congress scheduled to take place in Marseille at Parc Chanot, from 11 to 19 June, 2020 is the sixth of its kind. It will be an ideal and transparent platform for NGOs, Governments and indigenous peoples for decision-making. This is the highest decision-making platform and space dedicated to knowledge sharing.

➤ **The full running of the forum is presented below**



Seven themes were selected for the next Congress as follows:

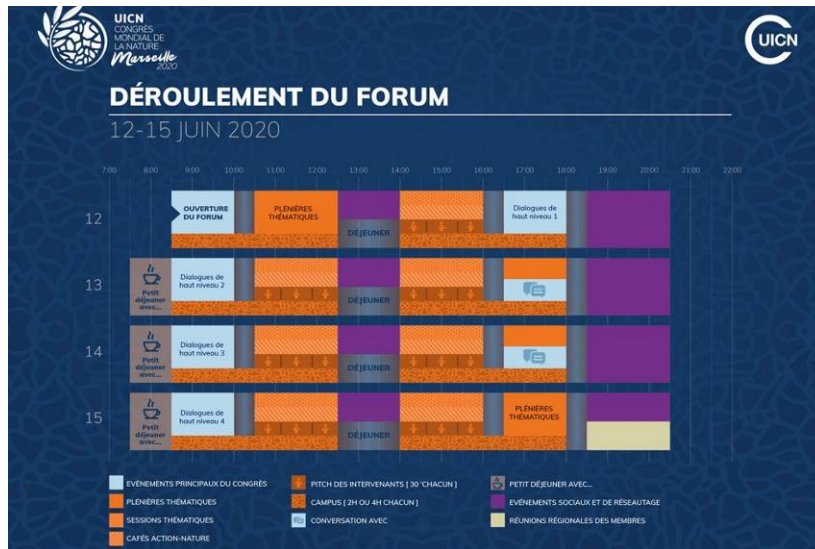
1. Managing landscapes and territories for nature and humans;
2. Conserving fresh water for life preservation;
3. Restoring ocean health;
4. Accelerating the mitigation and adaptation to cope with climate disturbance;
5. Supporting rights and ensuring effective and equitable governance;
6. Optimizing economic and financial systems for sustainability;
7. Advancing knowledge, learning, innovation and technology.

The Congress will be run in several phases namely the opening of the forum, assembly of Members, exhibitions and trainings.

➤ **The Forum**

It will be held from 12 to 15 June with thematic plenary sessions, thematic sessions, high level dialogues and speaker pitches. Calls for proposals were made and can be received up to 17 July 2019 for presentations on the various topics during the forum.





➤ **The**

### **assembly of Members**

The assembly of Members is the highest governing body of IUCN. The main milestones in the preparation of the assembly of Members are shown below:

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>
<b>Motion submission process</b>	Open from 7th May to 28 <sup>th</sup> August 2019
<b>Proposals and nominations at elective positions at the IUCN Council</b>	15th May to 11th December 2019
<b>Call for nominations for IUCN awards</b>	15th May to 15th September 2019
<b>Members are invited to suggest amendments to the statutes of IUCN</b>	15May to 11th December 2019
<b>Members are invited to discuss about mandates of Commissions</b>	15th May to 11th December 2019
<b>Call for nominations addressed to all Members of IUCN to appoint 3 persons at the organizing Committee of the Congress to act as a reviewing body</b>	17th June to 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2019
<b>Call for nominations addressed to all IUCN Members to nominate 3 persons in the Working Group of motions</b>	17th June to 17th July 2019
<b>Comment on statutory reform proposals of the Council</b>	July to 15th September 2019

The assembly shall have the following duties:

- Elections to the IUCN Council;
- Statutory Amendments;
- Adoption of the IUCN Programme 2021-2024 ;
- Mandates of the Commissions ;
- Awards: the Congress is also an occasion to award international distinctions to people who, through their engagement, have dedicated time and energy to the international cause of conservation. For more information on prizes, please click on the following link: <https://www.iucn.org/about/union/members/iucn-awards> ;
- Applications should be sent to: [awards@iucn.org](mailto:awards@iucn.org) for consideration by the Awards Jury;
- Motions : Motions are provisional written decisions of the Congress. If adopted, they become resolutions or recommendations;



- Voting rights and accreditations: your organization should be up to date with their membership dues (including for 2019). The Unit of relations with Members shall get in touch with the various member organizations to explain the split voting system.

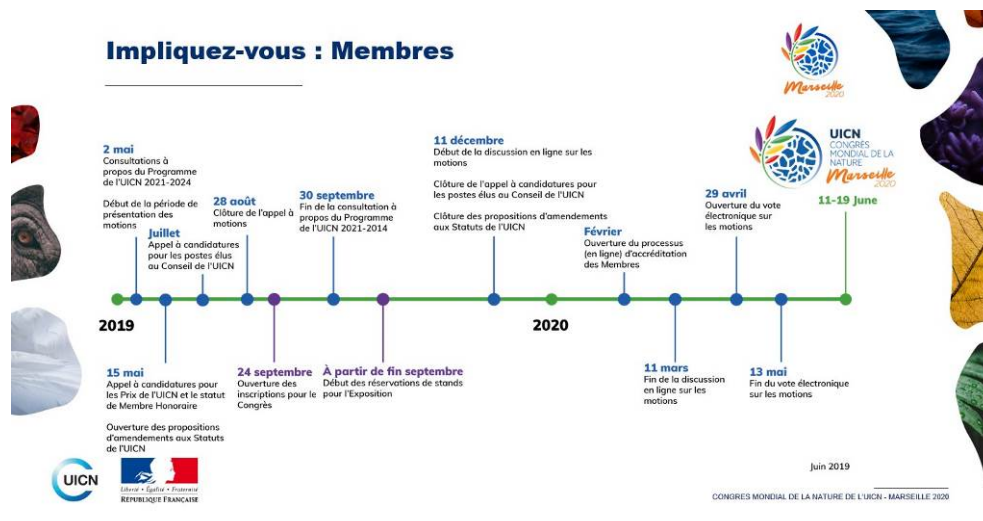
**Moreover, concerning sponsorship, within the limits of available resources, IUCN shall sponsor a maximum of one delegate per Member Organization based on the following criteria:**

- Maximum of 1 delegate per Member Organization with a voting right and originating from a low or middle income country;
- Only government bodies with a voting right are eligible;
- Geographic balance according to regions;
- Strive to have a representation of young delegates and male-female parity;
- No need to have been an IUCN Member for a specific duration to be eligible.

There are also 3 conditions to be fulfilled as established by the Council of IUCN:

- The Member Organization participates in the electronic voting of motions before the Congress;
- Participates in the 9 full days of the Congress, including participation in the events of the Forum ;
- Is physically present (no proxy) every day during the Assembly of Members; and exercises its voting right on at least 75% of the decisions of the Assembly of Members.

Major deadlines to get involved are defined below:



Useful contacts for participating, getting involved in the preparations for the Congress:

### Contacts

- Demandes générales**  
[congress@iucn.org](mailto:congress@iucn.org)
- Assemblée des Membres - Motions**  
[motions@iucn.org](mailto:motions@iucn.org)
- Exposition & Parrainage**  
[congresspartnerships@iucn.org](mailto:congresspartnerships@iucn.org)  
+41 22 999 0232  
[philippe.appriou@developpement-durable.gouv.fr](mailto:philippe.appriou@developpement-durable.gouv.fr)
- Forum**  
[congressforum@iucn.org](mailto:congressforum@iucn.org)
- Accréditation**  
[accreditation@iucn.org](mailto:accreditation@iucn.org)
- Presse**  
[congressmedia@iucn.org](mailto:congressmedia@iucn.org)  
+41 22 999 0245

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## 2. Motions

The Global Director of Programmes has discussed with the participants on the motions. It appeared that the motion processes define global policies on conservation and influence the conservation agenda at the international scale. The presentation of motions fulfills very specific conditions before being approved by the Working Group on motions:

- Proposing or **modify a general policy of IUCN** and specify how the modalities of its implementation
- Calling on **reasonable and achievable contributions** from IUCN components (if the latter are called upon), that should be consulted before the presentation
- Being **ambitious and technically sound** in what they aim to achieve
- Not just repeating the content of the Resolutions and Recommendations that were previously adopted
- Having been **discussed with the Members, relevant Commissions** and other stakeholders of the geographic region (if the motion concerns a specific region)
- Being proposed by the Council, or a Member with a voting right, with the co-sponsorship of at least five other Members with a voting right of at least two Regions.

Motions and adoption of resolution have impacts on conservation and place IUCN as the world leader in conservation. The Members of IUCN have adopted over 1,300 Resolutions and Recommendations since 1948. With this, the Union has demonstrated its influence on conservation policies at all levels, contributed to shaping the international conservation programme and facilitated the creation of environmental treaties (*e.g.: CITES, Ramsar, World Heritage and CBD*). Through its Resolutions, IUCN has supported indigenous peoples, the mainstreaming of the gender dimension and acknowledgement of the linkages between nature conservation and human rights. The attention paid by IUCN to species conservation and protected areas has enabled the preparation of global standards.

However, IUCN is facing major challenges that were identified by the Members, Commissions and Secretariat in their implementation reports of Resolutions in 2018:

- **Lack of financial resources** which prevent or delay the measures required for the implementation of the Resolutions
- **External factors**, including the lack of political will or feasibility of implementation in the current political context
- **Inadequate Coordination** among the various IUCN groups of stakeholders and components in terms of reporting (including engagement challenges)

We should remain engaged after the adoption of the proposed resolutions. The most important part is not the adoption but the implementation of the resolutions. There is need to follow up and submit progress reports on the resolutions. The IUCN data base has more than 1305 resolutions, and it is envisaged to clean them up, with an archiving system that would keep only active resolutions. Over 700 resolutions will be proposed for archiving.

The Council shall establish a working group on motions as soon as the date of submission. In October this working group shall review all motions and select some of them based on the above-mentioned criteria.

The key timeframes to remember for the motions are indicated below:

- Presentation of motions : 7 May - 28 August 2019 (13:00 GMT / UTC)
- Publication of motions (in their original language) : 30 October 2019
- Online discussion on motions : 11 December 2019 - 11 March 2020
- Electronic voting on motions : 29 April - 13 May 2020
- Publication of results: ~ 29 May 2020
- Presentation of « new and urgent» motions : 4 – 16 June 2020
- Assembly of Members: 16 – 19 June 2020

## **VIII. PARALLEL SESSIONS**

The end of the second day was marked by parallel sessions aimed at getting people to know about the various on-going initiatives and projects at IUCN. These sessions helped to establish partnerships and define potential collaboration areas among Members, Secretariat and Commissions.

Three parallel sessions were organized, namely the BIOPAMA Project, a session on the regional approach to business engagement and one on the Guinea Bissau Committee of IUCN.

### **1. BIOPAMA**

The project was presented by its Regional Coordinator during a session was attended by about forty participants who followed with interest the points on the rationale behind BIOPAMA's intervention. The participants however had questions to ask, mainly on the Action Fund. BIOPAMA aims at strengthening the management and governance of protected and conserved zones in the 79 African countries, the Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) through better use of information and capacity building in terms of management and governance. BIOPAMA is a six-year programme (2017-2023) with Euro 60 million investment to improve long term conservation and achieve sustainable use of biodiversity and natural resources in ACP countries. The budget includes Euro 20 million for the component on actions and Euro four million for support activities in the Central and West Africa region.

The Action Fund was launch on 24 June, 2019 and the information was disseminated to the Members and Commissions. It was important during this session to provide some clarifications so that Members can position themselves. The main tendency that emerged through the discussions is that Members from the same country wanted to organize themselves as a consortium to weigh more heavily during the assessment of proposals. This type of initiative was strongly supported.

Certain countries where BIOPAMA has no concrete action in the field also expressed the wish to be paid special attention. Country initiatives are indeed welcome but the Secretariat is no longer part of the independent Committee of experts that will analyze the proposals.

Furthermore, English speaking countries raised the issue of providing documents in both French and English so that they can easily access the Fund.

The participants were informed that the current call for proposals relates to medium grants but other calls for small grants and technical grants will be made at a later stage. The organizations that wish to apply should well identify the type of financing that better fits their project idea.

## **2. Regional approach to business engagement**

The session was presented by the regional coordinator of the project in front of thirty participants or so. It appeared that businesses have a major impact on biodiversity through their operations and supply chains. Every business benefits from the services rendered by ecosystems.

The regional approach to business engagement is an implementation of the global strategy for business engagement, at the regional level:

- An approach based on three priority sectors for the development of countries in the region: extractive industries, agribusiness (including forestry) and infrastructure ;
- A collaborative approach similar to ONE programme (IUCN Members and Commissions involved in the implementation) ;
- An approach that is likely to include other priority sectors for the development of countries in the region (fisheries, tourism) after 2020.

At the operational level, three pilot countries (Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Ghana) were selected for the implementation of the programme. Similarly, the programme will focus on three sub –sectors namely non-timber forest products (shea butter, honey, baobab, cocoa and palm oil), large scale mining and road infrastructure with the objective of engaging in 2020 at least 3 companies in each sub-sector and country.

Following the presentation, discussions were conducted on the roles of companies and IUCN members in the successful implementation of the new Programme at the regional scale, as well as avenues for collaborating with the participants.

## **3. IUCN National Committee of Guinea Bissau**

Several NGOs attended the parallel session and took turns to present their organization, the visions, objectives, intervention areas, achievements and the way forward. Most of these NGOs are IUCN Members. They were as follows:

- AD (Acção para o Desenvolvimento), an NGO created in November 1991 to work in the area of community development revival (agriculture, horticulture, beekeeping, fruit growing), natural ecosystem conservation and valuing, community vocational training, environmental education. The NGO is basically present in the Northern and Southern parts of Guinea Bissau.
- The Institute of Biodiversity and Protected Areas (IBAP) : It is a government institution in charge of conservation of protection of terrestrial and marine ecosystems of the country. It was created in 2004, to manage 26.3% of the national territory. IBAP has implemented

several IUCN projects in Guinea Bissau including the most recent one i.e. the GEF6 *Rice and Mangrove Project*.

- ODZH (Organizacao para a Defasa e o Desenvolvimento de Zonas Humidas) is an NGO that focuses on integrated and sustainable wetlands management, monitoring of iconic species present in national wetlands, environmental education of school children and communities living within and around wetlands. Its members are drawn from the conservation world, scientists and civil society. ODZH is mainly dedicated to the observation and protection of birds in their environment.
- ONG Palmerinha (Grupo de Apoio à Educação e Comunicação Ambiental – GAECA): it is a Non- Governmental Organization of Guinea Bissau created in 2004. Its main purpose is to work in the field of education and environmental communication in protected areas, targeting resident communities in particular. Its goal is to make communities know about and take ownership of behaviors and attitudes that facilitate the sustainable use of ecosystem services and environmental conservation. Palmerinha has contributed to the implementation of several IUCN projects in Guinea-Bissau.
- NGO Tiniguena: is present in the Bijagos Archipelago and Quinará region. Its scope covers community and agricultural development (fruit growing, horticulture, rice farming focusing on rice field rehabilitation), local product valuing (processing, marketing, sustainable productive systems) and sustainable fishing.
- Centro de Investigação Pesqueira Aplicada : is a public institution for scientific fishing research and management, fisheries co-management in Cacheu, Cacine and Buba Rivers, fish products valuing, etc. CIPA is an active member of IUCN Guinea Bissau and has participated in the implementation of the Rias do Sul project.

## IX. GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF CREMACO

The General Assembly of IUCN Members in Central and West Africa was held on the last day of the forum ; it enable Members to discuss on the Membership vision, candidature proposals for the Council, motion and reform ideas; the Members also made observations to be taken on board for the finalization of the four-year programme and formulated recommendations directed to the Secretariat and Council, regarding notably payment deadlines of annual membership dues.

The Assembly appointed the following bureau:

CREMACO BUREAU	
<b>Chairperson</b>	Laurence Wete
<b>Vice-Chairperson</b>	Tomane Camara
<b>Secretary General</b>	Babakar Salif Gueye
<b>Deputy Secretary General</b>	Ousmane Ibrahima Bah
<b>Treasury</b>	Ogou Maixent
<b>Communication Officer</b>	Mamadou Mariko
<b>Programme Officer</b>	Roger Tchuente



## X. CLOSING CEREMONY

The closing ceremony of the forum was honored by the presence of the Prime Minister of Guinea Bissau. The ceremony started with the address by the Secretary of State for Environment of Guinea Bissau. He emphasized the involvement of the populations in programmes, support for the populations to achieve sound management of protected areas as an asset for them.

A representative of the participants then read the final communiqué of the forum and the new executive bureau of the Members was introduced. The newly



elected woman Chairperson of CREMACO expressed her thanks for the trust and confidence put in her and reiterated her appreciation and commitment to serve the cause of CREMACO. She also thanked the Government of Guinea Bissau, the National Committee of IUCN, Guinea Bissau and PACO. She stressed the fact that the forum was an occasion to make their voice heard in this preparatory process of the Congress, as well as the development of the next IUCN four-year plan, and reassured the participants that the Members will work towards a single effective programme.

The Acting Director General of IUCN said that she was honored to be in Bissau to work towards coping with the threats on biodiversity and learning from the country which is among conservation leaders. She gave assurance that the country can count on our constant support. She came back to the challenges discussed during the meeting such as the quest for a solution to the loss of nature and biodiversity in Africa and in the world, the recent IPBES report and its conclusions, the emergence of new technologies, efforts made by countries such as Guinea Bissau towards nature conservation, and finally the challenges to be taken up by IUCN entities to achieve One programme. She expressed her satisfaction with the collaboration among IUCN bodies in Guinea Bissau as well as with the Government. Finally, the acting Director once again thanked the Government of Guinea Bissau and the *Instituto da Biodiversidade e das Áreas Protegidas* (IBAP). She further expressed her gratitude to MAVA, Expertise France, WWF, PRCM and the IUCN Committee of Guinea-Bissau for their support for the organization of the forum. To conclude the acting Director paid tribute on behalf of IUCN to our late collaborator Alfredo Simão da Silva who died in March 2019.

Taking the floor, the Prime Minister of Guinea-Bissau, on behalf of his Excellency the President and the Government of Guinea Bissau, thanked all actors who have contributed to the success of the forum. The presence of the Government reflects the great recognition of the place of biodiversity conservation in Guinea Bissau. The closing of the forum opens a new page for the next four years and the Government is aware of the unique opportunity for a new horizon. The Government shall ensure that degradation control, climate change are core concerns and that no stone will be left unturned to provide effective IUCN support and that of its members in the 2021-2024 vision for sustainable ecosystem management. On these words, the Prime Minister declared the third conservation forum closed.



FORUM  
RÉGIONAL  
DE LA CONSERVATION  
**BISSAU**  
8-11 JUILLET 2019



## XI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Central and West Africa regional Forum helped to achieve encouraging results, namely (i) the identification of major conservation and sustainable natural resource use challenges affecting the region, (ii) the sharing of success stories in responses to environmental challenges (iii) African delegations are better informed about international gatherings and their role, regarding in particular the upcoming World Conservation Congress in Marseille, France.

**Recommendation:** the participants recommend that all members make efforts towards the effective implementation of the "One Programme" approach.

Visit the web page of the Forum: <https://bit.ly/2L6dQjt>