



Nature is Good Medicine

CALL TO ACTION

Arising from the Nature is Good Medicine Workshop on 5 September 2021, we call on IUCN and its Members to recognise the irreplaceable potential of nature-derived health services to individuals and society and to actively promote and support partnerships with the health sector and other key partners to make access to nature and its benefits available to all.

Context



- [Resolution 64 from the 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress](#) titled - **Strengthening cross-sector partnerships to recognise the contributions of nature to health, well-being and quality of life** - welcomed IUCN's leadership in recognising and communicating the initiatives and co-benefits from connecting nature and human health and well-being and integrating these initiatives as part of national and international policies regarding public health and 'Nature-based Solutions'.
 - » Resolution 64 specifically calls on IUCN Members to develop stronger partnerships and alliances with the health sector, further recognise and quantify the benefits to human health and well-being and to parks and protected areas, and recognise and communicate the initiatives and co-benefits from connecting nature and human health and well-being.
- [The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) includes targets to address non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and mental health, and to provide safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces, and recognises in **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3** the importance of ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages.
- The **VISION** of the **First Draft** of the **United Nations (UN) Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework** currently states: "By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people."
 - » **Target 12** of the draft Global Biodiversity Framework specifically calls on Parties to the CBD to "Increase the area of, access to, and benefits from green and blue spaces, for human health and well-being in urban areas and other densely populated areas."

Audience



- Park and protected area professionals, practitioners across policy, research, and practices
- Professionals and practitioners from aligned sectors particularly health, education, transport, recreation and tourism and social policy
- Government, non-government, and community-based organisations from the above areas

Guiding Principles



- Ecosystem health, human health and well-being, and climate change are inextricably interconnected
- Parks, protected and conserved areas and green spaces provide critical natural, physical and social infrastructure that provides essential services that benefit human health and well-being
- Healthy, well-managed and ecologically sustainable protected and conserved areas provide suitable settings for positive physical, mental, social, cultural, and spiritual health benefits
- Positive engagement with nature is a key contributor to improving conservation outcomes of protected and conserved areas and society's sustainable development goals and related ambitions more broadly
- Indigenous Peoples' worldviews, which understand that human systems are a part of, and must remain in balance with, ecosystems, provides a foundation for nature-based solutions to health and well-being
- People's connection to nature can occur in diverse settings – from remote protected areas to urban green spaces to nature in the home
- Nature-based health and well-being solutions can take many forms – from 'everyday' unstructured use of parks to targeted nature-based health interventions and therapeutic practices and,
- Health promotion through contact with nature should focus on equitable and inclusive access, be fit for purpose for target groups, adaptable, environmentally and culturally sustainable, and scalable.

Actions



The Nature is Good Medicine Workshop calls for the following actions:

1. **Share best available knowledge** across ecosystem management, health, education, tourism and other sectors about the benefits of nature connection for positive human health and well-being through protected and conserved areas, including territories and areas conserved by Indigenous Peoples and local communities (ICCAs). Create innovative communications to raise awareness and partner to build further evidence.
2. **Develop cross-sector policy frameworks**, based on the interdependency between the health of the natural environment and human health and well-being benefits, at international, national and local levels.
3. **Mainstream opportunities for positive health and well-being through nature connection** into conservation and visitor management policy, protected and conserved area management planning, as well as regulatory, financial, managerial, educational, behavioural, research, monitoring, and reporting measures.
4. **Provide more equitable and inclusive access to protected and conserved areas** to tackle health inequalities by reducing physical, social, and cultural barriers and providing more inclusive nature-based opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds.
5. **Support integrated nature-culture-health models through the establishment of territories and areas conserved by Indigenous Peoples and local communities (ICCAs)**, where Indigenous communities have the primary role in protecting and conserving ecosystems through Indigenous laws, governance and knowledge systems.
6. **Grow nature stewardship in urban and regional populations** and promote greater activation of nature-rich parks and greenspaces in disadvantaged areas as stepping-stones for engaging new and diverse communities in nature.
7. **Integrate nature-based solutions into preventative, treatment and recovery programmes and existing and emerging health practices** that promote healthy active lifestyles through volunteering and community learning, social prescriptions, and preventative physical and mental health models.
8. **Develop new models of funding and investment partnerships** for innovative nature-based health practices in protected and conserved areas between government, corporate, philanthropic, research, community, and volunteering sectors.
9. **Increase the skills and capacity in the environment and health sectors** to integrate nature-based solutions (e.g. healthy parks healthy people practices) into health practice by providing technical, financial, and training support to protected areas agencies, health and community organizations and operators (including in developing countries).
10. **Quantify and monitor benefits and impacts** by prioritising health and well-being benefits of nature into environmental and economic accounting frameworks and standards and "State Of" reporting.
11. **Bring together IUCN's work** on Nature-based Solutions, #NatureforAll, Healthy Parks-Healthy People, EcoHealth and One Health initiatives into a coherent and transformational post-COVID19 programme promoting "Healthy People-Healthy Planet."

Supporting Partners



PeopleScapes



Further Information



- [WCPA Health and Well-being Specialist Group](#)
- [IUCN WCPA Health and Well-being Prospectus](#)
- [#NatureForAll](#)
- [EUROPARC – Healthy Parks Healthy People Toolkit](#)
- [Parks Victoria – Healthy Parks Healthy People Framework](#)
- [ACIUCN – Healthy People in a Healthy Environment](#)
- [US NPS – Healthy Parks Healthy People Strategy](#)
- [Parks & Wildlife Finland – Healthy Parks Healthy People Strategy](#)
- [Scotland – Our Natural Health Service](#)
- [Government of South Australia – Healthy Parks Healthy People SA 2021-2026](#)
- [Park RX](#)
- [Walk With A Doc](#)
- [ParkSeek](#)
- [World Urban Parks](#)



Link to recording of the session for registered WCC 2021 delegates