External Review of IUCN 2007

Volume 1

Synthesis of Findings and Recommendations

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Summary of Synthesis Report of the External Review of IUCN 2007

The report of the IUCN External Review 2007 is in two volumes. Volume 1 is a synthesis of the main findings, conclusions and recommendations. It contains two annexes that provide the field evidence and background support for the findings on linking conservation to livelihoods in Africa and closing the policy-practice loop. Volume 2 presents the review of the IUCN Membership. Together the two volumes constitute the final report of the External Review 2007.

The terms of reference identified three specific areas for review:

1. The value IUCN adds to its Members, particularly in the South (Volume 2)
2. Linking conservation to livelihoods in Africa (Annex 1 to the Synthesis report)
3. Closing the Policy-Practice Loop: with a thematic focus on the Water Programme and the Global Marine Programme (Annex 2 to the Synthesis report)

In examining the three topics, the review team identified some common problems in the governance and management of IUCN that are reducing IUCN's performance in each review area. At the request of the Director General and with the agreement of the Framework Donors, the review team agreed to also address some of the major issues facing IUCN that cut across the three topic areas of the review. In hindsight the review team believes that these broader organizational issues should have been in the original terms of reference, for they lie at the heart of IUCN's ability to perform well as a membership organization and to effectively deliver its programme. The External Review takes place once each Intersessional Period. It is the principal opportunity for IUCN to take stock of progress and see the emerging issues from a big picture perspective. It is also an important means for the Framework Donors to gain insight into the overall achievements and performance of the organization. The terms of reference for future External Reviews should reflect the importance of looking at IUCN as a whole once each Intersessional Period.

Given the effort of the review team to respond to the original terms of reference, this review cannot be and is not an in-depth management or organizational review. It highlights some of the common challenges facing IUCN that were identified during the review and proposes some short-term actions to address them. The review was designed and conducted to facilitate learning and follow-up actions through stakeholder feedback, facilitated workshops and ongoing interaction with IUCN, especially with the senior management and staff of the secretariat and with donors.

A common observation made by reviewers of IUCN is that findings and recommendations made by earlier reviews of IUCN are not adequately responded to. Thus they are doomed to repetition

from one review to another. This is true for the last External Review 2003 and it is true for this External Review 2007. IUCN and its donors invest heavily in reviews. There should be better systems and controls for ensuring that management acts on its own *Management Response* to reviews.

The review team heard virtually universal endorsement for the concept of IUCN as a highly valued organization with a unique and probably irreplaceable membership structure that gives IUCN international credibility and authority. IUCN is clearly doing much good work at all scales and in all regions and is delivering important results and products. That IUCN is doing valuable work in many areas is not the key issue. Rather it is whether IUCN is sufficiently focused on and aligned with its own value proposition - that it works through its members and harnesses the efforts of thousands of volunteers through its Commissions - to be a global leader in strategic influencing through world-class knowledge products and convening processes.   This is the question for IUCN that is addressed by the review.

The review found IUCN's unique niche for convening different actors across different scales to forge shared understanding, commitment for change and joint action to be undisputed. Yet there was widespread concern that IUCN's full potential in this regard is not being realised.   The context in which IUCN is operating is changing very rapidly, leading the review team to conclude that significant revitalization is required across the Union if it is to fully achieve its potential and remain a relevant and financially viable organization into the future.

Many of the issues raised by this review are not new to IUCN. They have been raised repeatedly in various reviews, evaluations and strategy documents over the recent past. Consequently this review has also focused on the key underlying constraints to change. IUCN has a strong base of support and much commitment to its cause, yet there is also a potentially damaging level of frustration emerging. The coming Intersessional Programme will be a critical period for IUCN to demonstrate that it can change and that it can deliver on its full potential.   The areas where change is most needed are identified below.

IUCN is a membership organization. Members want to see IUCN doing more convening and strategic influencing work that involves them. To do this IUCN needs to utilize its resources in a different way and have more resources for membership support and strategic influencing. The current project model makes this difficult. Currently IUCN's key organizational systems like ICT, MIS, M&E and knowledge management as well as some of its staff capacities are weak for a global organization with major influencing, knowledge brokering and communications functions. Over the recent past the leadership of IUCN, its funding model and its management structure and processes have not enabled IUCN to escape a vicious circle of taking on projects to support the secretariat to undertake more projects.

Key challenges facing IUCN

Despite IUCN's valued role and its strong track record of achievements it is currently facing a number of serious issues that impact on its performance, its capacity to meet expectations and its future viability. The main challenges for the Union are:

- **IUCN's governance structure** – everyone agrees that IUCN is a unique member organization. Although it is needed now more than ever, it is very unlikely that its bi-cameral governance structure could be created today. However, the relationships between its constituent parts - the membership, Commissions and secretariat – are suboptimal. IUCN continues to operate without effectively engaging its membership and the Council is seen as a less effective a governing body than is needed. The Union must become once again more than the sum of its parts;

- **Growth and decentralization of the Secretariat** – The rapid growth and decentralization of the secretariat has led to problems in a collaboration and communication across functional units and regional offices. A smaller organization can rely on informal networking and still function quite well but an organization that operates from more than 60 locations and has more than 1000 staff needs strong organization-wide systems and processes. These include clear accountability for who does what and who informs whom. IUCN lacks sufficiently clear and consistent systems and processes to manage the secretariat.

- **Financial resources** – IUCN has achieved impressive results with available resources but its current financial model is weak and unsustainable. IUCN derives at least 85% of its income from Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) funding through a limited number of OECD countries and about 73% of its income is restricted to specific ODA funded projects. Only about 11% of income is unrestricted, including fees from its members.

- **External competition** – IUCN lacks some of the fundamental tools such as an effective Management Information System (MIS) and networking models to remain competitive in a rapidly changing external environment. To some extent it needs to reinvent itself if it is to retain its leadership as the voice for Nature and sustainable use of natural resources.

Revitalising the Union

Over the last decade, studies and reviews have identified the governance of IUCN as a major challenge to IUCN being able to capitalize on its unique status of member organization and networks of experts in the Commissions supported by a professional secretariat. They have repeatedly called for improvements in accountability and transparency in governance of the Union. This review has raised concerns about the effectiveness of Council as an oversight body and in providing strategic leadership for the Union. Strategic leadership is needed from Council now more than ever. IUCN is facing serious challenges and is responding with new strategic

initiatives in different areas and transformation processes, in the Commissions and in the secretariat.

There are cracks in the Union. They produce difficulties in coordination, competition over resources and poor communication across and within the three pillars. One of the most fundamental and exciting challenges facing IUCN is rethinking how to revitalize the Union in a world of globalization, new forms of social networking, and competing demands on the resources which are the lifeblood of IUCN – volunteers, networks, highly professional staff, the attention of governments, and the resources contributed by members and donors. Council needs to understand the changes in the external and internal environments of IUCN and provide leadership to the Union.

What is reasonable to expect from a governing body that is composed of volunteer Council members that comes together infrequently and cannot be expected to know the Programme or organization in detail? Council needs to consider if there is a gap between governance supply and demand and if so, how it might be bridged. The review has suggested Task Forces of Council that might include Council members, staff and outside experts. The important issue to resolve is how to ensure that the Union has the strong governance that most observers say it clearly needs.

IUCN as a Member Organization

The review of members' engagement in the work of IUCN found that members are very supportive of the mission of IUCN but many members are frustrated with IUCN. They want to be more involved in programme and policy. They want a stronger IUCN presence in their countries. They want the knowledge produced by IUCN to be more accessible and they want to play a larger role in the generation of that knowledge. In general members want to be more engaged in the work of IUCN, but IUCN suffers from systemic weaknesses in its organization, particularly within the secretariat that inhibits members who wish to be more informed and engaged to become so. It has also followed a number of policies and strategic directions over the past decade with respect to membership and open access to information that seem to be taking IUCN farther away from its main purposes as a membership organization.

IUCN has largely failed to deliver the key results of the Membership Strategy 2005-2008, including increasing the engagement of members in the work of IUCN. The review recommends that a new Membership Strategy be developed for 2009-2012 but not before the present policy directions and rapid expansion of the membership, that underlie the existing membership strategy are reconsidered. IUCN needs a new policy framework for membership that is clearly mission driven and considers where IUCN wants to be in terms of membership, partnerships and networks 20 or more years from now – in other words, what kind of organization will IUCN be and how will it do business? The targets for membership growth in the current strategy were not only

unrealistic in the light of experience but are to be questioned in terms of where they are taking IUCN as a Union.

Transforming the project portfolio

Project implementation has provided IUCN not only with significant financial resources but also valuable hands-on experience of conservation and development. However, the current large portfolio of field projects is not adequately aligned with the niche and value proposition of the Union in relation to its members. Neither does the project portfolio sufficiently support IUCN's unique capacity to play a strategic influencing role at national, regional and international scales. In some regions simply maintaining a large project portfolio of donor-funded field projects to ensure financial viability, has become the overriding focus of management. The issue is not so much the value of field projects, but rather about the balance between field activities and strategic influencing activities, and the inadequate learning from field experiences to support strategic influencing – which may occur soon after or many years after the project was completed.

The review has noted very positive and encouraging examples that illustrate the potential for IUCN to change the current situation. Particularly significant are the Water and Nature Initiative and Livelihoods and Landscapes Programme funded by the Government of the Netherlands that support a globally coordinated approach to linking field experiences with strategic influencing. Embedded within these programmes are clear processes of capturing and utilizing lessons learned and the allocation of resources for knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation.

IUCN's strategic influence

IUCN occupies an important and potentially powerful middle ground between advocacy, scientific research and project implementation. IUCN aims to bring about change in the world which means it has a set of both implicit and explicit values, positions and policies that lead it to work towards certain sorts of change and change processes. As its knowledge, empowerment and governance strategy implies, it does much more than just provide technical information on conservation and development issues. However, given the nature of the membership, it is not, and cannot be, a strong or radical advocacy organization.

The review found that IUCN is highly regarded as a trusted broker and respected convener for informed dialogue between different groups, including the critically important dialogue between government and civil society. Strategic influencing goes beyond policy influence to mean the "influencing, encouraging and assisting societies" component of IUCN's mission. There is increased demand at national, regional and international levels for IUCN to provide platforms for dialogue and policy development.

The long history of many failures in planned interventions in international development together with increasing demand for impact measures and accountability of public investments, has led to a renewed interest in *theories of change*. Theory of change refers to being explicit about the underlying assumptions of how social change happens and how it can be influenced. So far, IUCN has not paid enough attention to understanding how its actions lead to positive change. In future, IUCN needs to become more rigorous in the design of its interventions, both at the field project level and in providing platforms for strategic influencing.

Monitoring and evaluation

A key part of understanding how interventions make a difference is being able to learn lessons from field projects and other work in order to influence policy and to scale-up successes. Over time IUCN has made considerable effort to improve its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. It has established a number of interesting internal performance and assessment procedures. It has clear guidelines for carrying out quality external evaluations. The importance of M&E is recognised by most staff and a number of the newer initiatives within global programmes are focusing more on M&E. IUCN now needs to ensure that the M&E systems in place are properly used so that they can provide consolidated results in a timely fashion and support both analysis and synthesis that can make organizational learning more systemic.

Knowledge management

Knowledge management is another key component in organizational learning. Overall the review found current knowledge management systems and processes to be weak and unable to support the needs of the Union. Access to knowledge held by IUCN is also a policy issue that needs urgent attention. Compared to other organizations, IUCN is either by intention or by default, more restrictive in its knowledge sharing than it should be.

As articulated in the Knowledge Management Strategy, effective knowledge management involves issues of conceptual understanding, organisational culture, work processes, incentives and ICT capabilities. At present IUCN is struggling with knowledge management in all these dimensions. The review recognises that attention is being given to improving the ICT infrastructure and urges that investment in an improved ICT and MIS backbone be given priority by the Director General in 2008-2009. It also recommends that the Knowledge Management Strategy be updated and implemented with more focus on what knowledge products are needed to support IUCN's strategic influencing objectives.

Investing in core capacities

The review has noted that IUCN has neither sufficient resources nor the appropriate targeting of existing resources to make the necessary investments in core organizational capacities that are essential for it to be a relevant and effective organization into the future. Over the coming period IUCN must significantly increase its investments in core capacities such as: knowledge management, management information systems, communications; staff development; Commission support; strategic influencing; performance assessment and monitoring and evaluation. IUCN should focus on overcoming what appears to be a vicious cycle of under-resourcing its critical systems that seems to be one of the reasons for the Union's inability to respond adequately to strategic issues that have been repeatedly raised by previous reviews and evaluations.

The review fully endorses the work that is currently going into transforming IUCN's management information systems and the introduction of the enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. It has also noted the constructive communication within the secretariat about these developments and the intention to drive the process through representative working groups. It is a concern that the resources necessary to implement this proposed transformation have not yet been fully secured.

To improve IUCN's core organizational capacities will require considerable attention and time input from staff. It will also require a cultural change in the organization in terms of staff's willingness to support and utilize corporate wide systems and procedures.

Leadership and change management

IUCN undertakes analysis and seeks evidence to guide and support what it does and how it does it. It is less effective in putting plans and recommendations into action. IUCN is involved in many reviews and planning exercises across different parts of the Union and at all levels in the lead-up to the WCC in 2008 and the start of the next Intersessional Programme in 2009. Despite good intentions, the history of IUCN has until now been too much characterized by reviews that produce repeated recommendations that are not followed up; policies that exist more on paper than in reality; and targets that are not adequately monitored to see if they are achieved.

The timeframe for effective planning for the next Intersessional Period is so short that planning processes that should be sequential and build logically from one step to the next are taking place more or less simultaneously without sufficient interaction to inform one another. Strategies like the Membership Strategy and Commissions' mandates all need to be framed by a major positioning strategy for IUCN about where it wants to be in 2020. There is a danger that these key planning initiatives which together will guide IUCN for the next decade or so will not be logically

consistent unless a strategic and participatory planning process is established by Council to reposition IUCN for 2020.

Management, staff, governance bodies and external reviewers have each identified problems as barriers to improved performance of the secretariat in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. These range from communication problems across different parts of the secretariat; competition instead of cooperation between organizational units; human resource problems in terms of morale, perverse incentives and lack of clear accountability; and a history of management's perceived inability to make decisions. The review underscores that the problems are systemic and need to be tackled in a systematic way.

The Director General has begun a change management transition process for the secretariat that will address some of the root causes of these problems and will encourage participation from staff and support from the Framework Donors. Council and the Director General must work together to provide that strategic leadership to set agreed changes in motion and provide strong oversight to ensure that the changes are implemented to achieve the desired outcomes.

Conclusions

The review team heard from many people that now is the time to make the changes that can lead to far-reaching reforms to revitalize the Union. If there is one message coming from the work of this review it is that IUCN should take stock of where it is, look at what it has learned, review its existing strategies, establish its own priorities for action and focus its efforts on making the changes needed and following through to ensure that they work.

The review has led to many recommendations dealing with the three areas for special attention and with the overarching issues. If there were a few key actions that are both important and immediate to do, we would propose the following four linked steps:

> **PRIORITY ACTION 1** - Undertake a meta-review of all the reviews and strategies IUCN has done over this Intersessional Period and produce (1) an analysis of where they are mutually supportive and where they are inconsistent; (2) rationalize the recommended actions into an integrated and streamlined Action Plan 2009-2012 that will underpin the next IUCN Strategy; (3) produce an operational/business plan with agreed priorities based on sound financial analysis and (4) assign resources and specific responsibilities for achieving the different components of the plan.

> **PRIORITY ACTION 2** - Develop a new Membership Policy and Strategy that can guide IUCN's organizational evolution until 2020. Ensure that it is aligned with agreed actions arising from the Commission Review 2008 and that both are aligned with the next IUCN Strategy 2009-2020.

PRIORITY ACTION 3 - Use the IUCN Strategy 2020 and the Action/Business Plan 2009-2012 to develop an engagement process with the Framework Donors and potential new donors at a high level. The purpose would be to lay out the longer term vision for IUCN supported by clear business and operational plans to achieve the vision, and to make the case for special funding to strengthen IUCN's critical organizational systems in the short term.

PRIORITY ACTION 4 - Start to implement the change management process in the secretariat in 2008 and use it to demonstrate to members, Commissions and donors that the leadership of IUCN is committed to change and that change is possible.

Finally, the review team is convinced that IUCN's value does not lie only in its past successes but even more in its future potential. The world is facing an escalation in the loss of biodiversity and the increasingly unsustainable use of natural resources. IUCN's mission and work is even more relevant today than when IUCN was founded nearly 60 years ago.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

BRAO	Western Africa Regional Office
CPRI	Conservation for Poverty Reduction Initiative
EARO	Eastern Africa Regional Office
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
ECOLEX	IUCN's Information Service on Environmental Law
FLEG	Forest Law Enforcement and Governance
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MA	Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
MIS	Management Information System
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ROSA	Regional Office Southern Africa
TRAFFIC	Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network
WCC	World Conservation Congress
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

Acknowledgements

1.   Introduction

This report is volume 1 of the report of the IUCN External Review 2007. It presents a synthesis of the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the External Review. Volume 2 of the External Review is the report of the review of IUCN's membership. Together the two volumes constitute the final report of the External Review 2007.

Wageningen International and Mestor Associates jointly undertook the review from May 2007 to January 2008.

1.1   Context for the Review

The context for this External Review 2007 is important for understanding and interpreting the findings and recommendations. Four factors are particularly significant.

One, the world is facing an escalation in the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems, with the problems compounded by climate change. The consequences for nature and human wellbeing are dire. In such a context IUCN is precisely the type of organization that must be supported and strengthened by the international community. The review team has heard virtually universal endorsement for the 'concept' of IUCN. The importance of the Union being highly effective and efficient in working towards its mission is more critical than it has ever been.

Two, the scale and complexity of environmental degradation mean that improvements in the situation require holistic thinking and integrated approaches. It is impossible to tackle conservation challenges in isolation from the driving economic, political and social forces. This presents the Union with the enormous challenge to set the boundaries of its engagement broad enough to be relevant and effective, but not so broad that its focus is lost and its capacities are overstretched.

Three, over the last decade and particularly over the last Intersessional Period many reviews, evaluations and strategies have been produced that all return to a common set of challenges and problems for the Union. This Review also returns to many of the issues raised previously that are generally well known and accepted across the Union. The Review notes the difficulty that IUCN has in bringing about the strategic changes needed to resolve these issues and considers that IUCN has now reached a critical point. If considerable revitalization is not achieved in the coming Intercessional Period IUCN's medium and longer-term relevance and effectiveness will be severely compromised.

Four, IUCN has a very wide base of support, an extremely impressive record of achievements and a generally highly dedicated set of members, commission members and secretariat staff. Important changes have occurred over recent years and the new Director General has made clear her commitment to enabling and supporting on open and constructive reform agenda. There is every reason to believe that the conditions are right for IUCN to reshape itself to better achieve its undisputed potential as a unique organization for conservation and sustainable development.

1.2   Scope and Objectives of the Review

IUCN and its core framework donors jointly commission the external reviews with the main purpose of improving the design and delivery of the IUCN Programme. Framework donors also use the reviews to obtain evidence on the value for money that IUCN delivers with their support. The review is intended to be forward looking and to examine a few topics in depth rather than attempt to investigate the breadth of the entire IUCN Programme. It is timed to assist donors to consider their future support to IUCN for the period 2009-2012 and to assist the Director General and Council to develop future strategy and action for the next Intersessional Period.

The three main topics selected by IUCN and the Framework Donors for the External Review 2007 are:

Objective 1   The value IUCN adds to its Members, particularly in the South (Volume 2)

Objective 2   Linking conservation to livelihoods in Africa (Annex 1 to this volume)

Objective 3   Closing the Policy-Practice Loop: with a thematic focus on the Water Programme and the Global Marine Programme (Annex 2 to this volume)

In examining the three topics, the review team identified some common problems in the governance and management of IUCN that are reducing IUCN's performance in each review area. The review the team encountered widespread concern and frustration expressed by staff about the functioning of the secretariat. At the request of the Director General and with the agreement of the Framework Donors, the review team agreed to also address some of the major issues facing IUCN that cut across the three topic areas of the review. In hindsight the review team believes that these broader organizational issues should have been in the original terms of reference, for they lie at the heart of IUCN's ability to perform well as a membership organization and to effectively deliver its programme.

These broader organizational issues are the focus of this synthesis report. We see them as more fundamental and difficult challenges for IUCN that are impediments to IUCN's continued good performance. If these challenges are not dealt with, changes to strategies to deal with membership, linking conservation to livelihoods and making the policy-practice loop work will

meet with limited success. The review has had to address the broader issues within the same timeframe and resources provided for the original more limited terms of reference. It should be quite clear therefore that this review is NOT an in-depth management or organizational review. It highlights some of the challenges as we see them and proposes some short-term actions to address them.

1.3 Approach

The approach to the review has four important characteristics:

- It is designed and conducted to facilitate learning and follow-up actions through stakeholder feedback, facilitated workshops and ongoing interaction with IUCN, especially with the senior management and staff of the secretariat and with donors. In this way, review conclusions were tested before going forward and emerging findings were able to be incrementally incorporated into preparations for the next Intersessional Period 2009-2012;
- It seeks to provide a balance between an evidence-based 'accountability' component to review how IUCN has performed in certain areas, and a forward-looking component to provide input and ideas for future strategy;
- It built links and collected comparative data across the three topic areas to provide efficiencies in data collection and enabled findings for one component to inform the analysis for the other two components;
- It includes a regional perspective in the review, particularly from Africa by including regional consultants in the international review team. The review team conducted interviews for the review in the three official languages of IUCN.

The field visits and meetings with project leaders, members and staff gave us an opportunity to see for ourselves a few examples of the excellent work for which IUCN is rightly well known. Despite the inevitable problems encountered in field visits and data collection, the learning approach built around stakeholder feedback appeared very successful. Even before the final report was written, the review has stimulated a change management transformation process for the secretariat led by the Director General and has encouraged donors to consider different ways in which they can provide support to IUCN during the transition process.

The reporting structure for the review is as follows. Volume 1 provides the synthesis of the main findings, conclusions and recommendations. Volume 2 provides specific findings and recommendations on membership not included in Volume 1. Volume 1 is complemented by Annexes 1 and 2 which provide the background field data, analysis and discussion on review objectives 2 (poverty and conservation) and 3 (linking field practice and policy). The main findings, conclusions and recommendations from these annexes have been fully integrated into

Volume 1 of the Synthesis Report and are considered supplementary to the final report. Lists of people and documents consulted are included in Volume 2 and Annexes 1 and 2 and not in Volume 1.

1.4   Methods

The structure of the review into three main areas of inquiry (*Membership relations; linking conservation to livelihoods in Africa; and closing the Policy-Practice loop*) posed a special methodological challenge to the review team - how to efficiently organize data collection and analysis and how to optimize synergies across the three lines of inquiry to support overarching conclusions. The methods used for the review of each the three objectives are described in detail in elsewhere (volume 2 and Annexes 1-2 of volume 1). They were discussed with the Review Steering Committee before fieldwork began.

The main investment in fieldwork was for the review team to visit three regions in Africa (BRAO, EARO and ROSA) between July and September 2007. While the main focus of the field missions was on Objective 2: *Linking conservation to livelihoods in Africa,* the questions posed in interviews, stakeholder meetings and documentary review covered the other two objective areas on IUCN's member relations and policy work. A spreadsheet was developed to capture project characteristics for C and D category projects in the three regions with respect to all three of the evaluation objectives for the five-year period 2002-2006. For objective 2 the projects were examined to identify those with *explicit poverty reduction targets* and those with *unintended poverty reduction outcomes.*

Twelve case studies were selected across the three regions of IUCN projects in Africa that are seen as representative of "the IUCN way of doing things". They were the focus of interviews with IUCN members and Commissions, secretariat staff and others, field visits, literature searches and data analysis. The case studies are neither in-depth project reviews nor a truly representative sample of project work in Africa. Rather they represent an entry point to assess IUCN's engagement with members and partners, to estimate the scope of IUCN's activities to link poverty reduction and conservation and to see what policy outcomes were achieved. Details on the case studies in Africa are given in volume 3.

For the review component on IUCN membership, the main methods used were interviews with 85 representatives of 76 IUCN members to obtain their individual views and experience; analysis of the results of the 2007 *Global Survey of IUCN Members* to provide a broader picture of member involvement in IUCN, and cross-checking the findings through documentation and an additional 56 interviews with 24 partners, and 59 key people within IUCN, including Council members, Commission Chairs and secretariat staff. In all, 169 people were interviewed on membership.

To analyse the links between practice and policy the review team examined the portfolio of work of the Water and Global Marine Programmes, studied these links in specific projects and had broad ranging discussions with key informants on the policy-practice link in IUCN

1.5   Constraints to the Review

The terms of reference for this review, as noted by the review team in its original proposal, were ambitious relative to the time frame and resources. As discussed above, during the review process the terms of reference were even further broadened at the request of the Director General to take on a number of governance and secretariat management issues. With the encouragement of the Review Steering Committee, the review team consciously took the position that a broader review that linked together a number of cross cutting issues for the Union would be of considerably more value than a narrow interpretation of the original terms of references. This means that not all dimensions of the review have gone to the depth of data gathering that may have been ideal. The review team has been forced in some areas to provide its professional assessment based on limited data. However it has always carefully checked its conclusions from multiple sources and does not believe there are areas where it has risked unfounded conclusions on the overall picture. It does mean though that it may well have missed and not fully documented exceptions, positive and negative, to the overall conclusions.

The timing of initiating the review meant that by the time the team was ready for field work, the July August summer break was upon us. For one of the regions and many of the people we needed to interview it was not possible to engage with them until after the summer period. This then meant the final writing period fell in the Christmas and New Year period. This meant some minor delays in what might have been ideal delivery dates for the conclusions and the final reports.

During the period of the review the Regions in Africa were in a process of being restructured as well as having to respond to the internal processes of situation analysis and programme planning. This created some considerable constraints in the capacity of the regions to engage with and support the review. This was particularly the case in terms of gathering, collating and synthesizing information that could have informed the review. It also appeared that the importance of the review and expectations for support of the review team were not always clear to regional management and staff. As will be further elaborated in the report, weak monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management systems also hampered the review team's ability to quickly and easily access relevant information.

2.   Initial Observations

2.1   IUCN is highly valued

The review team heard virtually universal endorsement for the concept of IUCN as a highly valued organization with a unique and probably irreplaceable governance structure that gives IUCN international credibility and authority.   Despite the lively debate within IUCN that surrounds its increasing concern with the social and economic drivers of loss of biodiversity, about 98% of IUCN members find that IUCN's mission is clear to them and is well aligned with their own organizational mission and objectives[1].

In our interviews with members, partners, donors and staff the most important message from IUCN's stakeholders was that IUCN is unique and valued.   If there are problems – and stakeholders were quick to recognize that there are problems facing IUCN - they must be fixed because most observers agree that another organization with IUCN's unique characteristics and 60-year track record of leadership and influence will never be created *de novo* in today's world.

IUCN's value does not lie only in its past successes but even more in its future potential. The world is facing an escalation in the loss of biodiversity and the increasingly unsustainable use of natural resources. IUCN's mission and work is even more relevant today than when IUCN was founded.

2.2   Some highlights of IUCN's work

This Review examined only a small sample of IUCN's very wide scope of work. Nevertheless, we found numerous and impressive examples of achievements and innovative initiatives. These range from the impacts of specific field projects to a wide range of activities aimed at strategic influencing and the creation and dissemination of an impressive science base on conservation issues. The scope, analytical depth and linkages across geographic scales and analytical depth of much of IUCN's work are impressive. As has been noted by the External Review 2003, that IUCN achieves so much with such modest resources is in itself a considerable achievement.

Evidence from programme activities and from the views and experience of IUCN's members, partners and donors show that there is no doubt that the organization has overall a very sound track record. As this Review will show, the current issues for the Union are not about a lack of

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[1] Global Survey of IUCN Members, September 2007, Figure 1, p. 19.

valuable work and achievements. Rather, they are about how to value add to and capitalize on this work in ways that harness the full strength of the Union.

Some of the highlights noted by the review and related to its terms of reference include:

Scope and engagement of global programmes: The Global Marine and Water Programmes are both undertaking a diverse range of initiatives on well targeted at priority issues working from local to global levels. They are very well networked in their field and are working creatively to combine knowledge products, tools kits, capacity development and influencing work in ways to effect structural change. Both programmes are working albeit in different ways and with varying successes to improve the linkages between regional work and global work. The review found the work and the staff of the programmes generally highly regarded by those outside IUCN. Both programmes have been very successful in securing programme funding. The review also noted the very positive external review of the Forest Conservation Programme.

Projects: While partly problematic, as this review will explain, IUCN does have a rich portfolio of projects at all scales doing much valuable, innovative and critical work. For example, through this work, wetland management in Uganda has been transformed; pro-poor and sustainable use of natural products is being stimulated in Southern Africa, equitable and ecologically sound use of water is being planned in the Pangani Basin Tanzania and the Volta River in Burkina and Ghana. In the Saloum Delta Biosphere Reserve and Mt Elgon Forest, integrated conservation and development programmes are underway which work to improve the overall institutional frameworks for management and also seek sustainable livelihood options for local people. The PRCM coastal zone project in West Africa illustrates IUCN's capacity to be part of a large scale multi-party initiative that links development and conservation.

Convening: Members, partners and supporters would like to see IUCN do more convening. This demand is, to a significant extent, clearly a response to its capacity and success in this area. While best known for its international role the review found good examples of IUCN playing a convening role at regional and national levels. Some examples of convening, at all scales, noted by the review are; the Global Marine Programme's work on bottom trawling in the high seas; the Water Programme's sessions on environmental flows organized during the World Water Forums; Ministerial and transboundary dialogues held for the implementation of the Water and Nature Initiative projects in various parts of the world; the parliamentarians initiative in Senegal; and the Directors of Conservation meetings in East Africa.

Tools and resources: IUCN is becoming increasingly active in producing practical tools and resources for conservation management, often linked with livelihood improvement objectives, and then coupling these with capacity development activities. IUCN's web-site provides access to more than forty such tools. Some examples include; Managing Marine Protected Areas: A Toolkit for the Western Indian Ocean; Flow - The Essentials of Environmental Flows; Change – Adaptation of Water Resources Management to Climate Change; The Handbook for Corporate

Action; Analytic Framework for Assessing Factors that Influence Sustainability of Uses of Wild Living Natural Resources.

New Programme Approaches: The IUCN secretariat has begun to develop a series of broad initiatives that link regional and national projects into an overall globally coordinated programme. This model seems to offer many more opportunities for effective learning and linking across scales and for a great focus on priority themes. The review has been impressed by what it has seen of the Water and Nature Initiative and of the intentions for the Livelihoods and landscapes Programme.

Documentation: IUCN continues to produce a wide variety of publications that are generally much appreciated by their audiences. The efforts of the Global Marine Programme in this regard were particularly noteworthy.

Innovation: The review team undertook several hundred interviews and meetings with members, commission members and secretariat staff. It could not help but be impressed by the richness of ideas for innovation in regard to changing the world to achieve conservation and in regard to strengthening IUCN. The enormous human potential on which IUCN can draw is unquestionably a key asset.

2.3   Inadequate response to identified problems

A common observation made by reviewers is that findings and recommendations made by earlier reviews of IUCN are not adequately responded to. Thus they are doomed to repetition from one review to another. This is true for the last External Review 2003, the Knowledge Management Study 2004 and other reviews, many of whose findings and recommendations are repeated in this review.

A review of the implementation status of the recommendations of the last External Review 2003 shows that while actions have been taken, many of the recommendations have not been fully implemented within this Intersessional Period 2005-2008.[2] Indeed some have been moved forward into the next Intersessional Period 2009-2012 for implementation. Interim actions have been taken, such a new knowledge management strategy or M&E strategy prepared, but they fall short of what was actually recommended. The implementation matrix largely reports on management responses that are intermediary *inputs* than on the achievements of the *outcomes* recommended by the External Review 2003. Given this situation it is not surprising that IUCN's weaknesses in 1994 are almost the same as those found by this review in 2007 (Table 3 in volume 2).

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[2] Matrix of implementation status in September 2007 for External Review 2003 provided by Global Programme Unit

Why do reviews of IUCN find the same problems as reviewers have before them? Are the problems themselves intractable? Is IUCN weak as a learning organization? Is it a problem of lack of resources? Is it a matter of leadership or a lack of consensus on the way forward?

It is true that the problems are difficult and their resolution requires resources that are not already budgeted. But with a reordering of priorities, resources can and should be shifted to make progress on problems that have been repeatedly identified (and accepted by management) as major impediments to performance. Monitoring and evaluation reporting is still weak in IUCN which reduces its effectiveness as a learning organization. But the underlying problem appears to have been one of weak systems for assuring governance and management accountability. Council has not required clear and regular reports from management on the follow-up to the main organizational reviews required by the statutes and donors. Senior management has not required timely reports on the follow-up, nor ensured that whatever resources are needed are provided for in the secretariat budget and work-plans. We will return to these questions in sections 4 and 5.

There are major costs to IUCN of failing to act on recommended changes. The main cost is not that IUCN is investing in reviews that will identify problems that are already well known. It is not that IUCN is falling behind other organizations in some key areas, although both are real costs. It is that IUCN stakeholders - including Council members, members, and staff - get discouraged when they see too little change to remedy widely known and long-standing problems, for some of which IUCN already has strategies in place. It is in this context that the leadership of the Director General for strengthening IUCN and initiating a change management process for the Secretariat as well as her commitment to making necessary changes, that are so important.[3] Among the positive changes proposed are strengthening of the support provided to members and Commissions from the secretariat, strengthening the support for learning and leadership, and more support to governance.

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[3] Julia Marton-Lefevre, 2007, Strengthening IUCN: Decisions and Recommendations on Organizational Change, 14 May 2007.

3.   Main Findings for Three Objectives of Review

This section presents the findings and a summary for each of the three review objectives. Full details can be found in volume 2 of the External Review for Objective 1 on Membership and in Annexes 1-2 of this volume of the report for the other two objectives.

3.1   Objective 1: Strategic involvement of members

The review of members' engagement in the work of IUCN found that members are very supportive of the mission of IUCN and share a common understanding of the value of IUCN to its members. But many members are frustrated with IUCN. They want to be more involved in programme and policy. They want a stronger IUCN presence in their countries. They want the knowledge produced by IUCN to be more accessible and to play a larger role in the generation of that knowledge. In short, the good news is that in general members want to be more engaged in the work of IUCN. The bad news is that IUCN suffers from systemic weaknesses in its organization that inhibits members who wish to be more informed and engaged to become so. It has also followed a number of policies and strategic directions over the past decade with respect to membership and open access to information that seem to be taking IUCN farther away from its main statutory purposes as a membership organization.

Table 3.1 shows a summary of the main findings of the review of IUCN's relations with members. A full discussion of each finding is given in volume 2.

Table 3.1 Main review findings on IUCN Members

1	Members strongly support the present formulation of the IUCN Mission that links conservation and the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources. However, any further shift towards a sustainable development focus, if it is seen to be at the expense of being a leading voice for Nature is likely to lose some support among the current membership.
2	National and Regional Committees could potentially play a stronger role as platforms to connect and engage members, and to extend IUCN's policy influence at national and regional levels.
3	IUCN must develop better mechanisms to achieve the benefits of having Commissions and Members in the same Union
4	There is a gap between IUCN's strategic intentions and member expectations on the one hand and secretariat capacities and priorities on the other.
5	Members have different priorities from those reflected in the secretariat.

6	Organizational systems and operational procedures within the Secretariat need to change if "membership engagement is everyone's business"
7	Members look to IUCN for networking so IUCN should strengthen its capacity to support members to work together and with the Commissions
8	IUCN publications are highly appreciated by members and their value could be further increased.
9	Most members are only marginally involved in the IUCN Programme, and do not see it as driven and "owned" by members.
10	The gap between member profile and programme is widening. The 2009-2012 Programme requires more expertise in areas that do not match the skill and interest profiles of the majority of members.
11	Some members are critical of the way the secretariat delivers the Programme citing competition with members and working outside of its technical expertise.
12	Members want to be able to play a larger role in IUCN policy setting than they currently do.
13	Members look to IUCN for support in policy work
14	The three core elements in IUCN's value proposition to members are: networking, IUCN's convening power, and governmental and non-governmental members sharing the same platforms from local to global levels.
15	Many of IUCN's strengths and weaknesses are the same in 2007 as in 1994 with organizational weaknesses deepening.
16	IUCN can do better to support good management of its partnerships and alliances
17	The Membership Strategy 2005-2008 has not been made operational with specific objectives and performance measures. For the most part it has not been implemented, and with the exception of the IUCN Member Survey, little effort has been made to measure results.
18	The membership strategy and recruitment and retention guidelines need revision based on a rethinking of IUCN's membership policy as an integral part of IUCN's strategy for the future of the Union.

If one were to roughly group the 18 findings according to their main causal factors, about half are related to the way the Union functions, including its structure and policies; and half are related to the way the secretariat functions.

At the level of the Union, the most difficult challenge (and the area of greatest opportunity) is how to achieve better synergies between the work of the Commissions, the secretariat and that of members so that the Union really works as a Union. The review found that the communication and operational links between Commissions and members could be strengthened to optimize the value-added of having both in the Union. It would be worth exploring how to further embed information and network contacts from Commissions and the secretariat into the organizational fabric of member organizations. At present, the communication links are too dependent on individuals who may not be effective network nodes or information brokers. When they leave the member organizations, the links are broken. Rescission is more likely and even without the

actual loss of a member, opportunities are missed to reach more people within the member organization.

In terms of its thematic focus, IUCN has to move cautiously on any further shift in the mission or it may lose the support of some key constituencies among the membership. This also applies to the thematic areas for the Programme 2009-2012, which members see as largely driven by the secretariat and which appear to be moving IUCN farther away from the thematic interests and capacities of the membership. This raises important challenges for IUCN – how to engage with more of its members in delivering the new Programme. Should the membership profile be changed to better match the Programme? If so, how can the current closed system for admitting new members lead to changes in the make-up of the membership that are fast or comprehensive enough to reflect the evolution in IUCN's programme? It is not clear how IUCN can reconcile the two objectives of working more with members and delivering the new programme.

Another policy question at the level of the Union is *how* IUCN positions itself to be a global player. The review found that members value highly IUCN's ability to provide them with platforms on which to debate policy positions and develop policy instruments that are technically well grounded. In general, members want the secretariat to do fewer field projects in the regions and focus more on technical and facilitation work to support policy implementation. That IUCN is capable of excellent work in policy facilitation is shown in the Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) work in Ghana and Sri Lanka.

The emphasis in the recent past has been on the regional and country offices as the main instruments for IUCN's decentralized presence. While members appreciate the support of the regional offices, they believe that membership committee structures have been neglected. There are issues of accountability and performance that need addressing but IUCN could better use and strengthen its National and Regional Committees.

The balance between secretariat effort in developing IUCN's positions in international arenas such as the MEAs and supporting member countries to adopt appropriate policies within their own jurisdictions is another area worth further examination. While important and valued for IUCN's visibility and positioning, the international policy work is seen as a top-down approach led from the secretariat with limited input from members and Commissions. Strengthening policy debate through IUCN platforms at national and regional levels could allow more members to have input to IUCN positions on international policy. More importantly it would likely ensure a more supportive environment for IUCN positions when framed into national and regional policies.

The majority of the findings lead to recommendations for changes in the management and functioning of the secretariat. The most discouraging ones relate to improving the ICT backbone of IUCN and the knowledge management systems and policies, which together restrict the availability of information to members and to Commission members.

The findings on knowledge management are discouraging because the problems were clearly identified in 2003; were followed up by a good analysis in the knowledge management studying 2004 and developed into a clear strategy in 2005. Despite strong effort by the Global Operations team, knowledge management in IUCN is as much a challenge today as it was five years ago. IUCN is still behind other organizations in its ICT backbone and in its management information system including the quality of its databases – for example those on IUCN members and Commission members. The efforts of the MIS Initiative are to be commended but they need more support and more resources to jump-start some of the improvements needed. IUCN also needs to consider its policies on access to information and knowledge management as described in the Knowledge Management Strategy 2005. The leadership of IUCN and the Framework Donors should recognize the problems with IUCN's management information system and knowledge management for what they are – major roadblocks to IUCN's performance across the board – that can and should be solved as a matter of priority.

Other review findings relate to the organization and management of the secretariat. These problems were identified in the review with respect to membership but they are more systemic and affect how the secretariat functions in relation to Commissions, and in delivering the Programme. Many problems result from a rapid growth in the size of IUCN, particularly in the secretariat. Organizational growth combined with decentralization and regionalization needs to be combined with equally vigorous development of organization-wide systems to support communication, collaboration, human resources management, reporting requirements and delegated accountability. In IUCN, this does not appear to have happened - yet.

The change management process being led by the Director General in 2008 is an important initiative to reverse some of the performance issues that this review and others have observed within the secretariat. The change management initiative should also include attention to strengthening management accountability and reporting since it is failures in the management accountability system that represent a significant risk for IUCN, and lie at the root of other problems in communication and collaboration.

IUCN has largely failed to deliver the key results of the Membership Strategy 2005-2008, including increasing the engagement of members in the work of IUCN. The review recommends that a new Membership Strategy be developed for 2009-2012 but not before the present policy directions and rapid expansion of the membership, that underlie the existing membership strategy are reconsidered. IUCN needs a new policy framework for membership that is clearly mission driven and considers where IUCN wants to be in terms of membership, partnerships and networks 20 or more years from now – in other words, what kind of organization will IUCN be and how will it do business? The targets for membership growth in the current strategy were not only unrealistic in the light of experience but are to be questioned in terms of where they are taking IUCN as a Union.

The recommendations arising from the review of the membership are listed in Appendix 2.

3.2   Objective 2: Linking conservation to livelihoods in Africa

For Objective 2 the review team assessed IUCN's programme delivery in building the case for linking conservation to livelihoods in Africa. The review examined the scope of work, its relevance, the delivery of benefits for conservation and poverty reduction, how purposeful IUCN is in designing projects that link poverty and conservation, and how well it scales up and transfers lessons.

A study of twelve projects across East, Southern and West Africa formed the basis of the review for this objective. The projects were nominated by the IUCN regions as being representative of their work in the conservation and poverty reduction domain. The case studies were complemented by interviews with donors, members, IUCN staff and other key informants along with a review of relevant documentation.

The review used the conceptual framework of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) to define the different dimensions of the link between conservation and poverty. The determinants of human wellbeing in the MA closely reflect the five capitals of the livelihoods framework. As will be further explained, the review team felt that the analysis of IUCN's work is also helped by making a distinction between *direct poverty alleviation* and *improving livelihood assets*.

IUCN has a clear and well articulated position on the relationship between conservation and poverty alleviation and it places this central to its work, which includes an explicit focus on gender.

The twelve projects studied show that IUCN is executing a diverse range of initiatives that all have a very clear link between conservation and improving people's livelihood assets. These include coastal zone projects where sustainable fisheries management is central; integrated forest conservation and development projects; river basin management projects; and project to support the development of natural products and policy orientated projects with clear livelihood benefits. What is particularly notable is IUCN's focus on an ecosystem approach where ecosystem services for people livelihoods are considered equally important with or dependent upon conservation.

There is no doubt that the work being done by IUCN on such projects is making an important contribution to sustaining the resource base on which people depend for their livelihoods and which if degraded will lead to greater poverty. It is also clear that IUCN is adopting approaches of working with people in a participatory way that can empower then to sustainably manage their own resources. IUCN is also strongly committed to developing systems of governance that include rather than exclude the poor from decision making over natural resources.

The case for the relevance and impact of IUCN's poverty and conservation work can, at this stage largely only be made on logical grounds. IUCN has done very little in its projects to clearly analyse livelihood risks and potential benefits from its planned interventions. Further monitoring and evaluation of the extent of poverty impact is largely non-existent.

The case for IUCN's impact on direct poverty alleviation is more difficult. Direct poverty alleviation is used here to mean income generating activities or other means of improving people's financial situation, food security and access to basic services. Certainly a significant number of IUCN' projects have included components for direct poverty alleviation. However, again lack of monitoring and evaluation and the lack of any attempt to collate information across projects make a clear assessment of the scale and potential impact of this impossible. There are certainly a series interesting and inspiring examples of where this has happened. Not withstanding this, the overall impression is that, given the scale of poverty in the project areas, the impact of IUCN's interventions on direct (short-term) poverty alleviation is unlikely to be more than marginal at best.

While considerable awareness about gender issues has been created within IUCN over the last decade, the direct impact of this on IUCN's poverty and conservation work is difficult to determine. The are examples of explicit consideration of gender. However, just as project design could be improved to be more explicit about how poverty impacts will be achieved the same can be said for gender. The review could see no evidence of systematic monitoring of the gender dimension of IUCN's work and could find no attempt to collate and synthesise experiences and lessons from the gender dimension of linking poverty and conservation.

The review noted a considerable weakening in strength of IUCN's attention to poverty alleviation in moving from broad policies and principles through to project design and eventually to monitoring and evaluation. IUCN's articulation of the conservation poverty link at the corporate level is sound and impressive. The goals and objectives of most projects set ambitious targets for poverty alleviation. How this will be achieved is not so clearly laid out in the project design. In implementation IUCN makes less use than it could of partners with development specialisation and it lacks the full range of expertise required for effectively implementing direct poverty alleviation initiatives. Finally, the monitoring and evaluation of the poverty alleviation dimensions of projects is largely non-existent.

An impressive array of publications is associated with many of IUCN's projects. The link between conservation and poverty is often a central theme and a point for learning lessons. What is much less clear is how well insights from different projects have been collated into an overall synthesis of lessons learned that has relevance for policy influencing at various scales. It seems that there is often more attention to the production of the publication than to its follow up and use. The review found the information available IUCN web-sites and in the Knowledge Network fragmented, partial and hard to access.

A critical question raised by the review is where should IUCN focus, given its value proposition, to improve the linkages between conservation and poverty alleviation. The view of many IUCN members and secretariat staff, which is supported by the review team, is that more attention could be given to creating the enabling environment for conservation issues to be more integrated into poverty alleviation and other development projects. This would require IUCN to be more active at the national policy level, and to engage actively with development financing institutions and implementing agencies. In the policy arena sector development plans and poverty reduction strategy plans are examples of potentially important points of engagement. However, this sort of engagement would require a different funding model and a willingness by donors to fund IUCN for strategic influencing work in place of the current emphasis on field implementation. The work with Parliamentarians in West Africa, the Parliamentarians' visit to the Mt Elgon Project and the directors of conservation meetings in East Africa, together with projects such as the Southern Africa Biodiversity Support Programme, are good examples of what IUCN could be doing on a wider scale.

IUCN could potentially strengthen its conservation and poverty work by establishing more and closer partnerships with development organisations. Three benefits could arise from this. One, strengthening the expertise needed for designing and implementing direct poverty alleviation interventions. Two, it would achieve greater integration of conservation issues into the work of development organisations. Three, expanding the experience base on which to draw lessons about conservation poverty links.

While recognising that IUCN is heavily funded through ODA resources, the review considers that donors should be realistic in their expectations of IUCN. The implementation of large scale direct poverty alleviation projects is clearly not core business for IUCN, nor does it have the expertise. Yet clearly the conservation issue is central and fundamental to poverty alleviation. The challenge for donors and IUCN is to ensure the right niche, focus and set of partnerships to optimise IUCN's value added contribution to a sustainable livelihoods approach to poverty alleviation.

In 2005 IUCN launched the Conservation for Poverty Reduction Initiative (CPRI) which clearly positions IUCN in relation to the Millennium Development Goals. A target of USD 300 million was established for this initiative. It is not clear what progress has been made or if it is an intention that is still to be acted on. The project part of the web-site dealing with the initiative remains under construction. However, the new Livelihoods and landscapes and Mangroves for the Future programmes respond to many of the issues and opportunities raised by this review. These will be very important models for IUCN in the future, and deserve considerable management support to ensure effective implementation.

Reflecting the CPRI, the 2009-2012 Programme sets out an ambitious direction for IUCN in relation to managing ecosystems for human wellbeing (thematic priority area 4). Many of the issues raised in this review are reflected in the Programme, in particular a greater focus on policy

influencing and the establishment of partnerships with development agencies. To achieve the ambitions of the new programme, careful attention will have to be given to IUCN's own expertise in this area, particularly in the regional offices. While IUCN is often adept at using the language of development – rights based approaches, livelihoods, participation, risk and vulnerability – it is not so clear that the expertise always exists to turn these concepts into well designed interventions and then to effectively implement them. This will be an important challenge for IUCN to respond to over the coming programme period.

Table 3.2 shows a summary of the main findings of the review of linking conservation and poverty alleviation. A full discussion of each finding is given in Annex 1 to this report.

Table 3.2 Main review findings on Linking Conservation and Poverty Alleviation

1	IUCN has a strong and well articulated position on the link between conservation and poverty reduction and working to achieve this link is central to the development of its programmes in Africa.
2	IUCN's activities linking poverty reduction and conservation in Africa are highly relevant to key stakeholders (African governments, African civil society, donor community, international development community), especially so given the escalating decline of natural resources and the consequent negative impacts on people's livelihood assets.
3	Poverty reduction in several or all of its dimensions is included in most of the projects. However, the level poverty analysis (including the gender dimension) in project design is generally low and poverty alleviation assumptions and strategies insufficiently well articulated.
4	The projects studied demonstrated IUCN's potential for linking together its strategies of knowledge, empowerment and governances to help create an enabling environment for livelihood improvement
5	Most of IUCN's field projects have a policy influencing component and there have been notable successes. However linking lessons across projects, regions and scales to provide an overall knowledge base for policy influencing remains fragmented and generally weak.
6	Claims of positive impacts on poverty in any of its dimensions (including gender), can most often not be substantiated because of the - sometimes conspicuous - absence of M&E systems at programme level or insufficient M&E systems at project levels (no baselines, no impact monitoring).
7	The current funding model obliges the Secretariat at regional and country levels to generate income by implementing ODA projects for which it does not always have the necessary expertise and capacities. This model seems to discourage partnerships with development organisations, pushes IUCN beyond its niche and jeopardises its reputation for quality in analysis and project implementation.
8	Membership engagement in IUCN programme activities in Africa, including Commission members, is very limited. Members have been underutilised so far, especially in linking conservation and development interventions.
9	Strategic partnerships with development-oriented NGOs that can fill gaps in IUCN competencies are currently insufficiently explored.
10	IUCN makes good attempts at scaling up and replicating its project activities with some clear

	successes. However, limited resources and systems for 'beyond' project learning, knowledge management and up-scaling clearly limit it's potential in this regard.
11	IUCN has been relatively successful in the institutional embedding of its biodiversity conservation/livelihood interventions. However, financial sustainability is less secure and projects too often depend on follow-up funding that can not be guaranteed by IUCN, with a serious risk for the sustainability of project results.
12	IUCN is contributes to conservation knowledge especially in repackaging information for practitioners use. Laudable efforts are made to document project experiences and lessons learnt that are often considered excellent quality publications for use by an international audience.
13	IUCN is less effective in internal learning. M&E at programme and strategic levels is largely absent. Feedback into strategic programming is sub-optimal for a 'learning organisation'.

3.3   Objective 3: Linking practice to policy

Objective three of the review investigated the policy-practice loop in IUCN by looking at the Global Marine and Water Programmes and at a series of projects in the Africa regions. The intention was to build on the work of 2005 Review of IUCN's Influence on Policy.

The review found tremendous interest from members, partners and secretariat staff around the policy issue. There was a unanimous view that policy influencing is key to IUCN's niche and that IUCN has a unique role to play. At the same time there was much concern that for a complex of reasons IUCN is not optimising its potential for policy influencing, particularly at the regional and national scales. From what the review has seen and heard, there is much that could be done to improve the policy-practice loop. The very strong focus on policy in the results of the 2009-2012 programme underscores the importance of greater clarity within IUCN on its policy processes and how it can best utilise field experiences.

The terms of reference for the review focused on the link between field work and policy work at different scales. However, in engaging with members and secretariat staff the review team was constantly brought back to a broader set of issues impacting on IUCN's overall approach to policy influencing.

IUCN does have a rich and diverse array of often successful policy influencing activities at all scales, though more so at the international level (see Annex 2 for a fuller account). The central question here is not whether valuable work is being done - it is - but rather whether there is sufficient coherence and focus given IUCN's value proposition and limited resources. Another central question is whether there should be a better balance between IUCN's attention to global policy processes and its attention to policy processes at regional and national levels, and in particular to those processes that lie outside and yet impact on the conservation domain.

The review found 'policy' to be an ambiguous concept within IUCN with no clear way of delineating what for IUCN is policy work and what is not. This issue is compounded by the fact

that IUCN's only strategy on policy is focussed entirely on international conventions and agreements. Policy issues and processes were weakly addressed in the regional situation analysis documents for the two (new) Africa regions. Policy influencing is often mentioned in relation to expected programme results, without any greater specification of what this means in practice. When the term 'policy influencing' is used, generally it is not clear if the focus is only on government policy or on the policies of all actors. Nor is it clear whether what is being referred to is just the establishment of a policy or the wider set of activities that create the conditions for policy change and subsequently enable effective policy implementation, review and adaptation. Further, the relationship between 'policy' and the adoption of sustainable practices by different actors in society is rarely made explicit.

The review recognises gender issues, along with many other specific issues, need to be appropriately integrated into policy influencing processes. While a specific analysis of gender in policy influencing was not the focus of this review, it was noted that along with many other critical social, cultural and political factors, little attention seems to be given to the implications of gender for strategic and policy influencing.

Consequently, the review concludes that policy influencing needs to be placed and understood within a wider context of strategic influencing – what is expressed in IUCN's mission as 'influencing, encouraging and assisting societies'. Strategic influencing for IUCN involves at least some combination of: gathering the scientific data to put issues on the agenda; bringing issues to the attention of the media; developing information materials accessible to the wider public; engaging with leaders in business government and civil society; being active in policy forums and multi-stakeholder dialogues; advocating for specific policies; supporting specific policy development in government, business and civil society; developing tools, methodologies and approaches for policy implementation; reviewing how well all actors have lived up to their conservation-related strategies and policies. A wide interpretation of policy influencing could include all these dimensions and would be synonymous with strategic influencing - and thus by definition be largely inclusive of everything IUCN does. The point is that there is currently insufficient clarity how broadly or narrowly 'policy' is to be understood in IUCN.

Being driven partly by emerging thinking in the field of new institutional economics, institutional analysis is becoming central to the understanding of social, economic and political change. Here the term institution is used to refer to the full set of cultural beliefs and attitudes, formal and informal rules, organisational arrangements, and structures and processes for decision making that shape the functioning of societies. Government policy often fails because it fails to take account of the wider institutional context. The review found little explicit attention being given to this important link between institutional analysis and policy.

The overarching message from the review for Objective 3 is that IUCN's 'policy' work is being undertaken in the absence of a sufficiently clear and well-understood overall conceptual framework. This has enormous implications for closing the policy-practice loop, learning lessons

from field projects, and the design of programmes and projects and coherence across the Union. It is too often not clear what is to be learned about what in order to influence what. This raises the importance of giving more attention in IUCN to the *theories of change* that underpin its intervention strategies.

The review concludes that the entire assumption about the direct relevance between IUCN's overall project portfolio and specific policy influencing initiatives needs to be more closely questioned. The project portfolio, particularly at the regional level has often developed as a result of donor interests and priorities for particular countries and regions. Historically there has been limited effort to identify and develop regional projects that would directly support global policy initiatives. With initiatives such as Livelihoods and landscapes and the Water and Nature Initiative this is now beginning to change. Further, the assumption that the information needed for policy influencing could or should come predominantly from IUCN's field projects seems very questionable. Clearly there is a much wider set of experiences that IUCN should presumably be drawing on in building its resources for strategic influencing.

From members and secretariat staff there was universal consensus that IUCN could be taking a stronger role in policy/strategic influencing at national and regional scales and that at these scales its convening function was being underutilised. Four main reasons for this were commonly expressed. One, there is a lack of resources for doing this work. Two, the portfolio of projects remains too focused on field implementation at the expense of strategic influencing. Three, the secretariat has an inadequate skill set to fully support a more substantial programme of strategic influencing work. Four, there is insufficient engagement between members, national committees and the secretariat on strategic influencing issues.

Weak monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management systems were universally recognised as a constraint to effectively learning from projects and being able to widely share lessons. This is not simply in terms of the ICT backbone and the weak management information system, although both are certainly an issue. Rather it is the lack of the human organization systems, and the resources to support them, to bring people from across the Union together to reflect on experiences, establish learning agendas and to jointly undertake action-learning initiatives. For example, the review team was struck by how infrequently staff from the different global programmes meet to discuss matters of content that cut across programmes.

IUCN has an enormously rich diversity of policy and strategic influencing experiences, successes and failures from local to global levels across all its programme areas. There are also enormously high expectations for IUCN to be a major player in helping to shape a sustainable future. The dynamics between government, business and civil society in a rapidly changing and globalised world are becoming ever more complex. The challenge for IUCN is to bring an ever higher degree of rigor and focus to its strategic influencing interventions. To achieve this its internal learning systems will need considerable investment and strengthening

Table 3.3 shows a summary of the main findings of the review of linking policy between scales. A full discussion of each finding is given in Annex 2.

Table 3.3 Main review findings on Linking Policy Between Scales

1	The scope of what is meant by the term 'policy influencing' is not sufficiently well defined within IUCN. When being used it is not always clear if it refers to - global policy processes or processes at all scales - government policy or the policies of all actors – just the establishment of a policy or a full cycle of problem identification, development implementation and review.
2	As illustrated by the Global Marine and Water Programmes, IUCN is involved in a very diverse range of policy influencing processes from local to global levels that are highly relevant to the conservation agenda. While not always well documented or collated anecdotal evidence indicates many successes.
3	Individual staff members within the global programmes studied are extremely articulate about their approach, focus and rationale for policy influencing work in their area. However this valuable information is hardly documented and essentially impossible to access without in-depth personal engagement.
4	With the exception of input into global conventions, IUCN's policy work across the different thematic and regional programmes is essentially fragmented and individually-driven with no overall framework on policy influencing, and relatively little sharing and lesson learning across programmes.
5	The case for relevance, at a general level, in the link between much of IUCN's field work and its policy work (and visa versa) can in general terms be made. However this seems, in hindsight, a less important question than that of clarity of focus and strategy which is far less clear.
6	With a few notable exceptions, it is not clear that overall and collectively IUCN's field projects play a critical role in contributing to IUCN's policy influencing. Rather, it seems that experiences from IUCN's own projects form a relatively small part of the total 'package' that enables effective policy influencing. (This finding excludes specific policy work that is an in-built objective of a project itself.)
7	IUCN's field projects do clearly contribute to keeping most secretariat staff in touch with field realities and examples, which is important for credibility and clear communication of conservation issues.
8	From the field projects studied it seems that projects have most influence on policies directly at the scale of the project or within the country. There is less evidence of lessons being learned from a series of projects across different countries and then the collective lessons being systematically applied to a particular policy issue at high scales and in different locations.
9	Informative publications are often produced from projects. However, such publications have a history of being quite delayed, and not always available on the web-site and there are rarely deliberate strategies for supporting lessons-learned to be taken up in relevant policy processes.
10	Up to this point there is little evidence that IUCN has designed either its projects or its programmes to be purposeful in linking field practice with policy and visa versa. (This finding excludes specific policy work that is an in-built objective of a project itself.) However, the more recent Water and Nature Initiative and Landscape and Livelihoods Programmes are giving very focused attention to

	this issue and offer a promising model for the future.
11	IUCN has not given sufficient attention to drawing lessons from the experiences of projects being implemented by other organisations that would broaden the experience base considerably.
12	At the national and regional levels IUCN is insufficiently engaged in policy/ strategic influencing activities and lacks sufficient resources and capacities to do so.
13	The weaknesses of IUCN's knowledge management systems and procedures is a severe handicap to any rigorous process of capturing, synthesising and utilising lessons from a series of projects for policy influencing.

4.   The Major Challenges Facing IUCN

Despite IUCN's valued role and its strong track record of achievements it is currently facing a number of serious issues that impact on its performance, its capacity to meet expectations and its future viability. The main challenges for the Union are:

- **Growth and decentralization** – The growth of the Union, particularly the rapid growth and decentralization of the secretariat has led to problems in communication across functional units and regional offices. A smaller organization can rely on informal networking and still function quite well but an organization that operates from more than 60 locations and has more than 1000 staff needs strong organization-wide systems and processes. These include clear accountability for who does what and who informs whom.
- **IUCN's governance structure** – everyone agrees that IUCN is a unique member organization. Although it is needed now more than ever, it is very unlikely that its bi-cameral governance structure could be created today. However, the relationships between its constituent parts - the membership, Commissions and secretariat – are suboptimal. IUCN continues to operate without effectively engaging its membership. The Union needs to be once again more than the sum of its parts;
- **Lack of sufficient focus on its 'value-added' strategic influencing role** particularly at national and regional scales. In this context, the value of IUCN's large and diverse portfolio of projects to its overall mission requires closer scrutiny.
- **Resources** – It is remarkable what IUCN has achieved with the resources available to it but IUCN's current financial model is weak and unsustainable. It severely limits how well IUCN can respond to the many demands on the Union for collaboration and action. At the heart of IUCN's current difficulties is a lack of resources for, and investment in, core organizational capacities to make it more efficient and a project funding model with high transaction costs that reduces IUCN's ability to be cost-effective;
- **External competition** – IUCN lacks some of the fundamental tools and models to remain competitive in a rapidly changing external environment. To some extent it needs to reinvent itself to retain its leadership as the voice for Nature and sustainable use of natural resources;
- **Secretariat** – the secretariat has grown exponentially during its regionalization and decentralization without adequately changing its core organizational model or management processes. Now it needs to change to serve a revitalized Union.

4.1   Governance of the Union

Over the last decade, studies and reviews have identified the governance of IUCN as a major challenge to IUCN being able to capitalize on its unique combination of member organizations and networks of experts in the Commissions supported by a professional secretariat. They have repeatedly called for improvements in accountability and transparency in governance of the Union.[4] Council appointed a Governance Task Force in 2001 to respond to these concerns and to work towards a stronger governance system and structure to enable the Union to work together more optimally in the future. The Governance Task Force has been consulting with members and partners and presenting options to Council for proposed governance reforms.

The Governance Task Force established benchmark principles and objectives for IUCN's governance. The objectives are[5]:

- Provide leadership and vision for the Union;
- Ensure scientific excellence and reputation;
- Ensure functional clarity among components of IUCN;
- Ensure strategic decision making to lead the Union;
- Ensure representation in the governance of the Union to reflect diversity;
- Involve IUCN membership in the governance of the Union; and
- Sustain volunteerism

One of the specific areas of work for the Governance Task Force 2001-2004 was the effectiveness of the IUCN Council as an oversight and strategic body to guide the Union. While reforms to the operations of Council were adopted at the WCC in 2004, this review has raised concerns about the effectiveness of Council as an oversight body and in providing strategic leadership for the Union. An important role for Council is to provide both support to management and to ensure adequate oversight of management.

The concerns are at several levels:

- Council does not appear to be giving sufficient attention to some of the key strategies that will affect the longer-term character of the Union and the performance of IUCN. One of these is the Membership Strategy 2005-2008, which includes targets for membership expansion that have significant implications for the future development and positioning of the Union. It has been noted that much of the time of the Membership Committee of Council is taken up with the approval process for individual members at the expense of strategic policy discussions.

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[4] The Mayr report on the Functions of Council (1998); the Sandbrook report to Council (2000); the External Reviews 1999 and 2003, and the Review of Commissions 2000

[5] Report of the IUCN Council on Governance Reforms and Proposed Amendments to the Statutes and Rules of Procedure, World Conservation Congress, 17-25 November 2004, Bangkok

- Council is not requiring management to provide the kind of reporting on progress in implementing strategies and follow-up to recommendations by reviews that it needs to carry out its oversight function. This includes the follow-up to the External Review 2003 – many of whose recommendations are repeated here because of inadequate follow-up. Council receives a large amount of documentation from the secretariat and it does not need more, but it probably needs different reporting to help Council members to focus on those areas where oversight is most needed. An effective accountability framework for IUCN must start at the top – that is, at Council and senior management level.
- Strategic leadership is needed from Council now more than ever. IUCN is facing serious challenges and is responding with new strategic initiatives in different areas and transformation processes, in the Commissions and in the secretariat. A new Strategy for the Union is being developed. Strategic oversight by Council is essential to ensure that these various strategic initiatives are mutually consistent and supportive and in line with Council's vision.
- There are cracks in the Union. They produce difficulties in coordination, competition over resources and poor communication across and within the three pillars. One of the most fundamental and exciting challenges facing IUCN is rethinking how to revitalize the Union in a world of globalization, new forms of social networking, and competing demands on the resources which are the lifeblood of IUCN – volunteers, networks, highly professional staff, the attention of governments, and the resources contributed by members and donors. Council needs to understand the changes in the external and internal environments of IUCN and provide leadership to the Union.

What is reasonable to expect from a governing body that is composed of volunteer Council members that comes together infrequently and cannot be expected to know the Programme or organization in detail? What does IUCN need in terms of oversight and leadership from Council as it goes forward? Council needs to consider if there is a gap between governance supply and demand and if so, how it might be bridged. The review has suggested Task Forces of Council that might include Council members, staff and outside experts. The important issue to resolve is how to ensure that the Union has the strong governance that most observers say it clearly needs.

4.2   Changing external environment

IUCN is operating in a fast-moving environment, not only with respect to the escalating scale and complexity of environmental changes but in the organizational environment in which IUCN does its work. If the work to be done is ever more urgent and challenging, so too is the need for IUCN to be able to evolve and adapt itself to changing circumstances. And most observers inside and outside of IUCN see the Union as too unwieldy to lead in new directions and slow to change even when change is widely recognized as needed. One of the main reasons is that IUCN has grown to be very large in its organizational membership, in its Commissions of volunteers and in its

professional staff. Other organizations have emerged to fill the niche that IUCN might have filled earlier in its history – they are more focused, more adaptive and more cohesive. They can make decisions and produce results more quickly. Some of these organizations are members of IUCN.

The resources on which IUCN depends – financial support, human talent (salaried and volunteer) and the attention of its target audiences – are all in demand from other organizations. Competition for all resources is getting fiercer and is leading many organizations to experiment with new partnerships and strategic alliances, including different types of public-private-arrangements – sometimes as an alternative strategy to organizational growth. That is not to say that IUCN is not having success in developing new partnerships – it is. But its structure and size, combined with poor operational systems for communication and collaboration make it less competitive than others in using partnerships to significantly extend its reach.

IUCN is a global organization but is still more centralized in its administrative functions than it needs to be. Other organizations have used a broad international presence to locate central functions like ICT, publishing and libraries where they are most cost-effective, which today can be outside of their headquarters. IUCN is also a more hierarchical organization than many others: for example, in its admission of volunteer experts into its Commissions, which is still top-down, and in its policies and operations with respect to access to knowledge. A particular challenge that IUCN faces is to bring in more social science and development expertise within its ranks. How will it attract the leading thinkers and practitioners in these areas unless it is able to provide a stimulating intellectual environment for them to work in – which means more open access and knowledge sharing (as well as letting them into the ground floor of concept development and problem definition). In the external environment for knowledge organizations, command and control approaches are seen as less competitive and likely to result in weaker performance in the long run. They are being challenged by more open and democratic means of networking, peer-review and creativity.

Lastly, IUCN is facing more competition in terms of its knowledge products. It still produces many of high quality that are widely appreciated but poorer quality outputs are also part of the mix. IUCN lacks an adequate peer review system to assure consistency of output quality across all its products. Some important IUCN products, like ECOLEX suffer from a lack of investment that would allow them to compete against better-funded competitors. Where competitors can focus on a fewer number of high quality outputs, IUCN seemed to be mired in too many "product-lines" to bring all successfully to its audiences and target markets.

The donor environment has also changed significantly in the last decade. There is much more demand from donors to demonstrate impact and to have evidence of clear results. Many development assistance donors have decentralized and regionalized their own organizational structures so that funding decisions are made more frequently from in regions. This combined with the donor agreements in the Paris Declaration to support developing country governments

through central budget support reinforces the reality that accessing development funding is much more complicated and time-consuming than it was ten years ago.

4.3   Resource constraints and priorities

In 2006 IUCN's Secretariat income was CHF 123 million. Since 2001 total income has increased slightly from CHF 114 million. By comparison in 2006 WWF had an income of CHF 704 million and Conservation International CHF 118 million. IUCN with its global reach, regional and national offices, commissions, and its diverse and broadening portfolio of work is trying to achieve a great deal with comparatively limited resources.

IUCN derives at least 85% of its income from Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) funding through a limited number of OECD countries. Significantly approximately 73% of IUCN's income is restricted to specific ODA funded projects. Membership fees and other sources provide approximately 11% of income as unrestricted. Membership fees represent c.9% of total forecast income 2005-2008 but 66% of unrestricted income – they are equivalent to about half of the money from the Framework donors. A group of OECD donors, and very recently a private foundation, provide framework funding that in 2006 accounted for 16% of income. Historically IUCN has used a significant proportion of the framework funding for programme implementation work. Since 2001, income from all sources has increased slightly but the underlying structure of funding has not significantly changed and shows no sign of doing so in the immediate future.

The consequence of this funding structure, combined with budget choices made by management, is that IUCN is severely constrained in terms of the investments it can make in core organizational functions such as knowledge management, staff development, management systems development, membership support and commission support. As this review has observed, this constrains IUCN's capacity to engage in the strategic influencing activities that are central to achieving its mission and to its value proposition. By comparison, the annual reports of WWF and Conservation International indicate more flexible funding and considerably higher expenditure on activities and functions that underpin strategic influencing.

This overall funding situation for IUCN is well understood by management and staff and actions are being taken to try and improve the situation. This includes working to increase framework funding, diversifying the funding base, improving financial management and internal financial incentive structures, and developing a portfolio of new projects (programmes) that have greater strategic influencing potential. However, so far it is not at all clear that these developments will bring about sufficient change in the underlying resources structure and budgeting priorities to enable the urgent investments that are required in organizational capacities.

The Review Team considers that responsibility for this situation needs to be taken equally by IUCN and its donors. To a significant extent IUCN is a victim of the contradictions and

dilemmas in the development sector. The donor community clearly sees IUCN as a key player in contributing to the Millennium Development Goals and other development priorities. The environment, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management are central to sustainable development and poverty alleviation. Ecosystem decline, potentially seriously aggravated by climate change, will undoubtedly have enormous negative ramifications for the world's poorest people. It is also clear that solutions to these issues require strategic engagement from local to global levels across government, civil society and the private sector. This is the precise niche of IUCN. Supporting IUCN to be the most effective organization it can be would seem to be fundamentally aligned with the donor community's interests and priorities. Given that 85% of IUCN's funding comes from OECD donors it makes no rational sense for this funding to be structured in a way that significantly impedes investment in core organizational capacities.

The last external review recommended increasing framework funding and this review will do likewise. However, within IUCN there must also be a much more focused processes of internal budgeting, priority setting and accountability to ensure a sustainable organization.

4.4   Functioning of the Secretariat in Supporting the Union

IUCN has a professional secretariat of 1102 staff, with 148 located headquarters in Switzerland and 954 located in the regions and outposted offices[6]. IUCN is fortunate in having a highly dedicated, very competent and extremely hard working group of staff. The review team has been inspired and impressed by its interaction with staff at all levels.

Unfortunately, staff members across all parts of the secretariat with whom the review has engaged, are feeling the negative impacts of the resource structure in IUCN combined with weaknesses in management and leadership. The quality of the IUCN staff means that much is achieved *despite* weaknesses in the organization and management of the secretariat. As with any organization there is a diversity of opinions and normal degree of 'complaining' about the weaknesses inherent in any organization. However, in deeper discussion with staff, the issues being raised and the evidence given convinced the review team that there are serious issues in the secretariat.

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[6] Includes 18 staff seconded to Ramsar and 12 to TRAFFIC. Data provided by Human Resources Management Group for December 2007.

These issues were often clearly linked to a lack of investment in core capacities[7]. However, it is also clear that management processes and structures, communication and accountability are genuine points of concern. The review team encountered a significant, albeit limited relative to the total work of IUCN, number of examples where performance of the secretariat was not in line with the expectations of members and partners and clearly below what should be expected of a professional secretariat. The review team is concerned that without change the Secretariat may well experience an escalating drop in performance and hence reputation.

The review team realizes that management is largely aware of these issues and that there are a significant number of initiatives underway to make improvements, led by the previous and current Director General. Partly through the interactive process of this review the current Director General has become much more aware of the challenges and is highly committed to change. The key initiatives include:

- Restructuring of the management structure by the previous Director General
- Performance review process
- Staff review process
- The process and review of regionalization and decentralization
- Development of a knowledge management strategy
- The MIS Initiative
- The Director General's reorganization of the secretariat offices in Africa
- The current process of developing a strategic and operational/business plan

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[7] For the purposes of this review core capacities are defined as the critical organizational systems, human resources and support functions needed for the UNION to function effectively and for it to deliver on its mission and value proposition. These include: management information systems; knowledge management; communications; staff development; membership and commission support; strategic/policy influencing; performance assessment; and monitoring and evaluation.

5.   Recommendations

These recommendations follow the order in which the areas are discussed first, as major challenges (section 4) and then in terms of steps to overcome the challenges (section 5). This order leads to recommendations on the "what" followed by "how". In the introduction to each group of recommendations we have again highlighted the "why" and where appropriate placed this in the context of existing and current initiatives and developments.

5.1   Revitalising the Union

The review team heard from many people that now is the time and opportunity to make the changes that can lead to far-reaching reforms that will revitalize the Union. It has observed that IUCN appears much stronger in analyzing its problems and in developing strategies than it is in pushing through reforms. This suggests that the management planning and accountability system between Council and senior management and between senior management and staff needs strengthening and emboldened to take action. In particular, Council and the Director General must work together to provide that strategic leadership to set agreed changes in motion and provide strong oversight to ensure that the changes are implemented to achieve the desired outcomes.

5.1.1   IUCN Mission and Statutory role of members in the Union

Although there are exceptions, IUCN is generally not as effective in mobilizing the individual and collective strength of its membership at national or international levels as it could be. Instead the secretariat has performed much of the work apart from rather than "with and through members" although there are some important exceptions especially in the Forest Conservation, Water and Global Marine Programmes. IUCN's way of doing business needs to change if it is to remain a strong and inspirational Union in an increasingly competitive environment for the resources and member support on which it depends. If it is to deliver on its statutory obligation to involve members in the IUCN programme while the gap between the interests and expertise of the members and the thematic needs of the programme is increasing, strategic leadership is needed that brings together the mandate and expertise of both governance bodies and management.

Without making any formal recommendation, Council and the Director General may wish to consider establishing a mechanism such as a **Joint Task Force on Revitalizing the Union** or an extension of the existing Task Force on Governance, that consists of Council members and staff members (together with any needed outside experts in an advisory capacity). The proposal for a

Joint Council-Management Task Force is made because the need for strategic leadership cuts across governance and management functions. Such an initiative may also be timely in the context of changes in IUCN's accountability systems that are occasioned by the changes in the Swiss Audit Law in 2008 and the recognition that IUCN should develop strong accountability systems for non-financial risks as well as financial ones.

RECOMMENDATION 1:   A NEW COMPACT WITH MEMBERS

COUNCIL and the DIRECTOR GENERAL should consider the findings of this review on members, particularly with respect to the outcomes of the Membership Strategy 2005-2008, and provide strategic direction and a longer-term vision for a future policy (or a new "Compact" with members) for IUCN as a membership organization. Specifically:

1.1.   COUNCIL and the DIRECTOR GENERAL should propose clear policy guidelines for the future development of IUCN as a membership organization and should be prepared to support any necessary statutory changes, with respect to the criteria for membership; categories of members (including new categories); targets for growth of members in different categories and regions; and the benefits and responsibilities of membership.

1.2.   A new policy for members should also address the links between members and Commissions and how these might be improved to make IUCN more effective. This should build on the work of the Reform Process Task Force and One Programme Working Group8 established by Council at its meeting in November 2007 and the change management process for the secretariat being led by the Director General.

1.3.   In order to assist Council in its deliberations, the DIRECTOR GENERAL should provide a financial analysis of the costs of providing current services to members of different categories and across all regions for 2004-2008 (or 2003-2007 to ensure the costs of one WCC year are included) and if possible provide some future financial scenarios to guide alternative new policy options.

1.4.   The MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL and the DIRECTOR GENERAL should review the current and potential future roles of National and Regional Member Committees and any changes that might be needed to support an expanded role, such as more resources and more accountability. This follows from the proposal by the President of IUCN to develop a new framework for cooperation between member committees and IUCN.

1.5.   THE FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE and the MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE of COUNCIL, in consultation with the DIRECTOR GENERAL should define what accountability framework, including an Internal Control System (ICS) is needed for IUCN that will include IUCN members (including National and Regional Committees), Commissions and the entire secretariat in the light of (1) changes to Swiss laws governing auditing in January 2008; (2) the Risk Register being developed for IUCN;

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[8] Now combined into the One Programme Working Group

and (3) any new 'compact' between members and the Union that may be developed as part of the new IUCN Strategy 2020.

5.1.2   Linking IUCN Members, Commissions and the Secretariat

One of the organizational challenges facing IUCN is how to articulate the working relationships between its members and the expert networks that make up its Commissions. It is clear that the outputs of the Commissions are very important to members in achieving their own missions. But opportunities are missed to make the work of the Specialist Groups in Commissions more relevant to IUCN Members because there is little communication between them. In addition to adding new knowledge to the work of IUCN, the Commissions could play a stronger role in its policy development and policy platform work and lend their weight to its strategic influencing role.

If IUCN is to be able to deliver on the promise of the Union and efficiently and effectively link its more than 1000 organizational members to the knowledge networks of the Commissions composed of over 10,000 individual experts, it will need a new vision for the Union and strategic leadership to achieve that vision. While individuals within member organizations can also be volunteer members of Commissions, the direct links between the member and Commission are based on individuals and are not embedded in the institutional structures. When individuals leave the links are broken.

5.1.3   Membership policy

This review has touched on a number of areas that relate to the functioning of the Union and the need for strategic leadership to strengthen the Union. One of the key areas relates to the membership of IUCN including the responsibilities of and benefits to members, desired directions for the growth and geographic distribution of membership; member profiles by member categories; new categories of members, associate members and partnership; and the implications of any changes on criteria for membership.

Another area involving members are National and Regional Committees. IUCN should take a closer look at the comparative advantages of National Committees (and at the regional level of Regional Committees) compared to its decentralized secretariat structures to identify those tasks for which a National or Regional Committee might be more effective than a Regional or Country Office and vice versa.

The review of the membership (volume 2) has identified some challenges in the organizational structure of IUCN whose resolution goes beyond better information and communication systems, or more staff support from the secretariat (although both are needed as necessary first steps).

The present membership policy is primarily determined by the technical and operational needs of the 2005-2008 Programme; the generation of financial resources; and IUCN's global outreach, image and positioning. In practice very few members are engaged in delivering the programme and many new members 'cost' the Union more financially than the member fees they contribute.

The current emphasis on membership growth has exacerbated some of the organizational weaknesses of IUCN and needs rethinking in the light of recent developments in virtual networks, public-private-partnerships and strategic alliances. New forms of partnerships and perhaps new categories of membership or association that might also be able to include business among others need to be reconsidered if IUCN is to achieve its mission.

RECOMMENDATION 2:   A NEW MEMBERSHIP STRATEGY FOR 2009-2012

COUNCIL and the DIRECTOR GENERAL should develop a new membership strategy based on consultation with the members and input from Commissions and the secretariat. The strategy should be consistent with the new IUCN Strategy 2009. Inter alia, the strategy should include:

2.1.   The benefits and responsibilities of membership including services to be provided to members by the secretariat should be made clear so that members can better understand the value proposition of IUCN to them;

2.2.   Targets for increasing members in different regions and categories and with different profiles should be reexamined in the light of experience with the current strategy. Specifically, the global targets to increase membership and spread IUCN's presence more thinly over more countries might be reconsidered;

2.3.   If a new policy determines that new categories of membership or association are acceptable, provisions for these will be included in the strategy;

2.4.   Responsibilities for reaching targets, levels of service and reporting on results should be made clearer and more specific within the Secretariat and Commissions;

2.5.   The secretariat should reorganize the way it provides services and support to members to become more efficient and effective;

2.6.   The strategy should include a membership survey to be undertaken once each Intersessional to provide for feedback from members and comparison with the baseline established by the IUCN Member Survey 2007.

5.2   Platforms for Change - IUCN as strategic influencer

The review has heard universal endorsement for the role IUCN can play as a trusted broker and respected convenor for informed dialogue between different groups and across different scales. This endorsement often comes from experiences and observations of IUCN's many and diverse achievements in this regard.

As explained in section 3.3.3, strategic influencing is being used in this report as generic term to cover the 'influencing, encouraging and assisting societies' part of IUCN's mission. Strategic influencing is a process that links knowledge, empowerment and governance, and includes but goes beyond narrow interpretations of policy influencing.

Much has been achieved by IUCN at the international level, yet realisation of global goals and agreements also requires action at the national level. The view of many members, and the conclusion of this review is that much more could be done by IUCN in working with members at the regional and national level to create the enabling conditions for conservation. There is widespread concern by members, partners and secretariat staff, shared by the reviewers, that currently IUCN is not sufficiently focused on its role as in strategic influencing. Particularly at the regional and national levels there is criticism that field projects dominate IUCN's agenda at the expense of strategic influencing, although we recognize that there are some outstanding examples of projects that have achieved successful influencing.

The review has noted a number of successful initiatives at the regional level that while not happening on a large scale, do indicate the potential. The Business and Biodiversity Programme also demonstrates the important role IUCN can play in facilitating the engagement of the private sector.

IUCN occupies an important and potentially powerful middle ground between advocacy, scientific research and project implementation. IUCN aims to bring about change in the world which means it has a set of both implicit and explicit values, positions and policies that lead it to work towards certain sorts of change and change processes. As its knowledge, empowerment and governance strategy implies, it does much more than just provide technical information on conservation issues. However, given the nature of the membership, it is also not, and cannot be, a strong or radical advocacy organization. IUCN is also clearly not an organization whose added value lies in large-scale field level implementation of conservation or development projects. This may seem like stating the obvious. However, the findings of this review indicate that IUCN is not as focused on strategic influencing as it needs to be to live up to its value proposition and its mission. This is not to suggest that IUCN is not currently doing a great deal of strategic

influencing work – it is. However, the structure of IUCN's donor based funding has locked too much of the organizations resources, particularly in the regions, into a field implementation mode of operation.

This is not the only constraint to a greater focus on strategic influencing. Historically, IUCN has given much attention to the biophysical and technical aspects of conservation and for this it is much respected. Its staff expertise remains very much oriented to the natural sciences with much less expertise in the economic, social and political sciences. Within the membership, the secretariat and the Commissions it is not always clear how to go about strategic influencing in this middle ground between advocacy, scientific research and field implementation. Today there is a much more sophisticated understanding of the relationship between scientific knowledge, power and politics in how change occurs than earlier on in IUCN's history. Further, in the modern globalised world strategic influencing has become a complex dynamic between local and global dimensions and between the power and influence of government, civil society and private sector actors.

To strengthen IUCN's effectiveness in strategic influencing the review has identified the following four areas for attention.

5.2.1   Articulating and using theories of change

This synthesis report is not the place for an extensive explanation of theories of change. Nevertheless some background is necessary to explain the recommendations.

There is a long history of many failures in planned interventions, both in international development assistance and in the policies and programmes of Western governments. This along with increasing attention for the impact and accountability of public investments has given rise to an emerging interest in *theories of change*. Theory of change refers to being explicit about the underlying assumptions of how social change happens and how it can be influenced. Is it the underlying attitudes and values of individuals that drive change? Or, is change essentially an issue of the exercise of power? Does fundamental change only occur through crisis and major conflict? What about the power of ideas or the influence of technology? To what extent should society look to government or business in the search for solutions to sustainable development? Any intervention is based on many assumptions that are often not made explicit and which are not deeply discussed. These assumptions are often a complex mix of political belief, scientific theory, personal experience, religious belief, cultural history and personal conviction. These assumptions directly influence the strategies of individuals and organisations and the effectiveness planned interventions.

The development world has become very used to laying out a simple linear intervention logic in the form of a logical framework, as required by many donors. A theory of change perspective

takes such analysis to a much more sophisticated level. Indeed a good theory of change analysis may well lead to the conclusion that it is not possible to, in advance, predict and prescribe the path that change will take.

Articulating and using theories of change means bringing an intellectually and conceptually rigorous analysis to the design of interventions. IUCN argues that it aims to learn lessons from its field work in order to influence high level policies and to scale-up successes. Such learning processes essentially involve being explicit about intervention assumptions and then testing them. In other words a theory of change perspective is core to effective learning from field experiences.

Within IUCN's membership, secretariat and Commissions, and from its partners and supporters there is a richness of ideas about how the Union can be most effective in contributing to change. Many of the IUCN staff members the review team spoke with were deeply thoughtful about what they were doing and why there was success or failure. Yet, IUCN has not been able to adequately institutionalise the systemic processes of reflection and learning needed to bring an appropriate level of rigor to the design, monitoring and evaluations of its programmes and projects.

RECOMMENDATION 3:   ANALYSIS OF INTERVENTION ASSUMPTIONS

IUCN instigate a process to deepen understanding and more clearly articulate and test the assumptions (theories of change) that underpin how it aims to strategically influence society on conservation issues. Specifically:

3.1.   The DIRECTOR GENERAL establish a joint commission and secretariat learning and innovation group on the topic with the tasks of: preparing and documenting a conceptual basis for using theories of change; developing practical tools and methodologies that would enable such analysis to be integrated into programme and programme design and the planning of strategic influencing processes; developing practical guidelines on how to facilitate theory of change analysis.

3.2.   Recruitment of secretariat staff be orientated to a better balance between biophysical and social science expertise.

3.3.   A theory of change approach be part of a secretariat and commission wide training programme.

3.4.   A theory of change perspective be explicitly integrated into situation analysis, programme and project planning and monitoring and evaluation processes and the accompanying documentation.

3.5.   The testing of theories of change central to IUCN's organizational learning and monitoring and evaluation processes.

5.2.2   Strengthening IUCN's capacities and resources for strategic influencing

It has also been widely noted that the Secretariat, particularly at the regional and national levels, lacks sufficient breadth and depth of expertise in advocacy, strategic influencing and high-level process facilitation to initiate and support the strategic influencing role. It is also clear that at the regional level IUCN simply lacks the time (a function of resources) to engage in, or to initiative the range of strategic influencing activities that would seem appropriate given its mission.

Effective strategic influencing requires that an organisation be able to marshal a diverse set of capacities in quickly and flexibly. It involves a combination of political understanding and analyses, communication and media skills backed up by sound research, process facilitation, networking, conflict management and diplomacy. Bringing all these capacities together and using them in a way that enables IUCN to maintain its reputation as being scientifically credible and a trusted broker is indeed a challenge. The strategic influencing role is something that must be done in jointly by the secretariat and the membership.

RECOMMENDATION 4:   ENHANCING CAPACITIES FOR STRATEGIC INFLUENCING

The DIRECTOR GENERAL, in collaboration with the membership and Commissions, develop a strategy to strengthen IUCN's strategic influencing role, particularly at the regional and national levels. Specifically:

4.1.   Clarify the roles and responsibilities for National and Regional Committees in relation to initiating and supporting strategic/policy influencing activities.

4.2.   Enhance the regional situation analysis processes to include an assessment of emerging and critical policy developments affecting conservation.

4.3.   Establish and resource a regional level task group of members, Commission representatives and secretariat staff at the to overview and guide strategic/policy influencing work.

4.4.   Enhance the coordination and prioritization of key strategic/policy influencing objectives across the Union.

4.5.   Undertake a needs assessment of the individual and organisational capacities required at various scales to effectively support strategic and policy influencing activities of the Union

4.6.   Establish a capacity development programme for secretariat staff, Commission members and IUCN members

4.7.   Ensure that regional directors or at least one other senior staff member at the regional level have high level abilities related to strategic influencing

4.8.   Provide the regional offices with dedicated staff and resources for strategic influencing activities

4.9.   Improve the balance in skill sets across the secretariat, to ensure greater depth in advocacy, communication, and the social sciences as part of a staff development and longer-term recruitment plan.

4.10. Ensure the recommendations of the Regionalization and Decentralization Review, particularly those directed at an improved regional model for the secretariat, are implemented.

5.2.3   Knowledge Management

Knowledge management and the engagement of IUCN's members, partners and target audiences in well-supported learning networks are fundamental to IUCN's strategic influencing capacity. In today's digital world it is also obviously vital that information is well organised and presented on web-based platforms. Further, a problem for many is information overload rather than lack of information.   This creates an extra challenge for an organisation like IUCN to ensure its information is packaged and presented in ways appropriate to its diverse audiences so that they are timely, cost-effective and efficient.

IUCN has a long history of being a powerhouse of scientific, technical and policy publications in the conservation world. This tradition is clearly continuing and the review team has noted many excellent publications. It has also been impressed by the work being done on a diverse range of practical guides and manuals aimed at translating broad conservation objectives into on-ground action.

In 2005 IUCN produced a comprehensive and well articulated draft Knowledge Management Strategy. It established a framework for action to steer developments in IUCN's knowledge management to the year 2012. This strategy noted that in terms of knowledge management systems appropriate for the future:

"… the current state of IUCN's knowledge management leaves much to be desired. We have to accept that as an organisation that bases itself so explicitly on the generation and delivery of knowledge products and services, IUCN's performance as 'knowledge organisation' is unconvincing."

This observation is thoroughly endorsed by the external review. In undertaking the review the following was noted:

- The great difficulty an outsider has in gaining an overview of what IUCN is working on (let alone achieving) in particular areas. The only way to gain such a perspective from the two programmes included in the review (Global Marine and Water Programmes) was to spend a great deal of time talking directly to the staff involved.
- Weakly institutionalised and resourced processes for drawing out, documenting, publicising (in all forms) and using lessons and experiences from projects and other work.
- A resistance by secretariat staff to contribute to and use the current 'knowledge network' and other systems because of their poor quality and because of the time involved with perceived little return.
- A members' site that contains little additional to what is on the public site.
- Many outdated web pages where more recent documents and materials have clearly not been updated for months or years.
- Very few recent publications on some sites such as the EARO site.
- A very outdated and only partially completed project portfolio database.
- IUCN websites on similar topics compare poorly compared to those of WWF.

Overall the review found current knowledge management systems and processes to be weak and unable to support the needs of the Union. Access to knowledge held by IUCN is also a policy issue that needs urgent attention. The review team wondered why the members of IUCN do not have access to the Knowledge Network[9]. Why are key documents, including governance documents and evaluations not freely available on the website? Compared to other organizations, such as the World Bank, IUCN is either by intention or by default, highly restrictive in its knowledge sharing.

As articulated in the Knowledge Management Strategy, effective knowledge management involves issues of conceptual understanding, organisational culture, work processes, incentives and ICT capabilities. At present IUCN is struggling with knowledge management in all these dimensions. IUCN is certainly not alone in this regard. Many if not most multi-lateral and large and small NGOs struggle with the many of the same issues.

The review team recognises that this issue is well understood by the Secretariat and that attention is being given to improving the ICT infrastructure. However, the knowledge management strategy (partly because of delays in its production) has never been formally approved and no clear action plan developed for implementation established. The review team is concerned that investments in an improved ICT backbone, while critical, will on its own not improve overall knowledge management.

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[9] The argument that some personnel, administrative and financial data presently on the Intranet should be more restricted can be dealt with by having it accessible to the Secretariat only. Issues of privacy and controlling access will need to be examined.

The review suggests that in moving forward with knowledge management more focus be given to the processes and end-uses to which knowledge will be used. With the current emphasis, in many organisations, on learning and documenting lessons it often seems that entering such information into databases and posting on websites *is* the end point. However, the learning process to use lessons is equally important as the learning process to capture lessons. A clearer understanding of how knowledge will be used and by whom can help to focus knowledge management. IUCN's knowledge management strategy could be improved by more focus on the end use and what knowledge products are needed, and in what form, to support its IUCN's strategic influencing objectives. In particular it may be valuable to look at what processes and networks would be initiated, supported or informed to ensure the update and use of knowledge.

This is not the place for a more fundamental discussion of the concept of 'knowledge'; suffice it to say that IUCN should be very aware that many of the knowledge processes in organisations and society are informal. They often operate (semi-) independently from knowledge processes based on codification and documentation. For strategic influencing, these processes may be as or more important than formalised knowledge processes. Encapsulated by the concept of learning alliances and communities of practice there is a growing understanding of how to build on and strengthen the organic processes of learning and knowledge generation and sharing that often exist along formalised knowledge systems. Much can be gained by supporting and strengthening naturally occurring informal processes and networks.

RECOMMENDATION 5:   STRENGTHEN IUCN AS A KNOWLEDGE ORGANIZATION

The DIRECTOR GENERAL gives urgent attention and high priority to enhancing IUCN's knowledge management functions and capacities to support the work of the Union. Specifically:

5.1.   Commission an internal task force, linked to external expertise, to review current developments in the fields of cognitive science, complexity, organisational learning and knowledge management to establish key principles for an innovative, robust and workable approach to knowledge management within the Union.

5.2.   The draft Knowledge Management Strategy be revised and adopted.

5.3.   The ICT backbone, content management systems and web-site functionality be substantially upgraded within an 18- month period in order that functional and 'user friendly' knowledge management support systems are in place for the 2009-2012 Programme.

5.4.   The DIRECTOR GENERAL bring to COUNCIL a new policy and practical guidelines for sharing key information within the Union (members, Commissions and secretariat), including opening access to the Knowledge Network, and enhancing the members website.

5.5.   Within the change management process for the secretariat, the DIRECTOR GENERAL work towards creating a culture, the protocols and performance-based incentives and sanctions that will encourage contribution to and use of IUCN's knowledge management systems.

5.6.   Guidelines and procedures be established to ensure new projects contribute financially and content-wise to IUCN knowledge management objectives. This should include attention for how knowledge produced will be utilised.

5.7.   IUCN's thematic programme areas more clearly and explicitly identify key learning (action research) questions to help focus learning activities with specific projects and initiatives.

5.8.   DONORS support the Director General to obtain additional funds for upgrading the ICT and management information system of IUCN, including the functionality and content of databases such as the member databases, as a matter of urgency.

5.2.4   Monitoring and Evaluation

The repeated calls for all organizations that receive development funding to improve their M&E systems, the difficulty of doing this and the frustrations on all sides becomes tiresome. Again not unlike many other organizations IUCN finds itself with all the dilemmas and difficulties of this issue. It is with some trepidation that this review raises the issue of M&E. There seems little point in the ongoing mantra from external evaluation to 'do more M&E'. If it is so difficult, clearly some more fundamental thinking is required. Repeating the mantra will apparently change nothing.

Over time IUCN has made some considerable efforts to tackle this issue. Considerable M&E support has been provided to regions and global programmes. IUCN has established a number of interesting internal performance and assessment procedures. It has clear guidelines for carrying out quality external evaluations. The importance of M&E is recognised by most staff and a number of the newer initiatives within global programmes are focusing more on M&E, both in terms of financial resources and human capacity. A document on monitoring the IUCN Programme has been presented to the Framework Donors for the coming intersessional programme.

With this said, this review found a lack of M&E and/or a lack of consolidation, synthesis and presentation of results to be a major constraint to undertaking the review. Significantly it impedes a full and accurate description of what IUCN is doing and achieving. Too often, representative data are not available and results in conclusions that are based on impressions and anecdotes. This is an issue closely related to that of knowledge management discussed above.

It is necessary to make a distinction between the external evaluation function and the development of monitoring and evaluation systems that are embedded in project, programme and organization processes to provide the necessary information for management, accountability, learning and organizational profiling. Within the Secretariat, the roles, responsibilities, and lines of accountability for the external evaluation, performance assessment and embedded monitoring and evaluation functions appear to require clarification and potentially some restructuring.

Clearly IUCN must be able to report to its donors and supporters on what it is doing and demonstrate what it is achieving. Despite widespread recognition of the difficulties in measuring impact, donors are increasing their requirements for more reporting on outcomes and results and are looking for evidence of impacts from the projects that they fund. For the security of its long term funding IUCN must take this issue very seriously.

RECOMMENDATION 6:   STRENGTHENING THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION FUNCTION

The DIRECTOR GENERAL oversee a substantial upgrading of the secretariat's capacities, structures, procedures and resources for monitoring and evaluation processes to support learning and accountability functions and to enable reporting on the Unions activities and achievements in a synthesised and coherent manner. Specifically:

6.1.   Conduct an internal review of the secretariat's successes and failures in institutionalising monitoring and evaluation over the last 10 years as a basis for establishing a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for 2009-2012.

6.2.   In the context of the well-recognised difficulties of monitoring and evaluation in the development sector, greater clarity is sought from the Framework Donors about their medium and longer term requirements.

6.3.   The DIRECTOR GENERAL review the roles, responsibilities and reporting relationships for the corporate evaluation, performance assessment and programme monitoring functions as well as their appropriate locations within the organisational structure to ensure that needs for independence and accountability and integration are appropriate.

6.4.   Monitoring and evaluation functions and capacities continue to be strengthened and supported in regional and thematic programmes.

6.5.   Monitoring and evaluation systems to support the Programme 2009-2012 are carefully designed to ensure that they provide the necessary information for both accountability and learning, are realistic in terms of data entry required and can be effectively supported by the knowledge management system.

6.6.   Much greater attention is given to the monitoring of the gender dimensions of IUCN's work and ensuring gender disaggregated data.

6.7. Management require programme monitoring reports to make specific reference to member involvement in programme implementation and should reward staff for successful member engagement through incentive schemes such as budget allocation and performance appraisal.

5.3   Strengthening the business model

The business model refers to the way IUCN raises funding, uses its resources and internally structures its financial management. The nature of the business model impacts on financial viability and the way IUCN is able to invest to realise its mission. This is an area for collaboration between IUCN and the donor community.

The basic characteristics of IUCN's funding and expenditure were outlined above in section 4.3. The consequences of the current business model is that IUCN is highly dependent on a limited number of ODA donors, and much of its funding is tied to the implementation of specific ODA funded projects. This situation combined with its internal budget setting priorities is constraining the organization from investing optimally in core organizational capacities and strategic influencing activities. This creates a struggle for IUCN in optimally aligning its investments and activities with its niche and value proposition.

The 2007 report on Regionalisation and Decentralisation has also clearly identified these issues and noted that "there is a need to redesign IUCN's funding model". The report makes a series of recommendations around financial allocation and management that this review endorses. It is understood that these are in the process of being acted on by the Secretariat and that the core funding issues are also being addressed in a business plan that is being prepared to accompany the 2009-2012 Intercessional Programme.

To ensure the longer-term viability of IUCN, over the coming Intersessional Period, considerable progress must be made in relation to the following four areas.

5.3.1   Investing in core organizational capacities

The review has noted that IUCN has neither sufficient resources nor the appropriate targeting of existing resources to make the necessary investments in core organizational capacities that are essential for it to be a relevant and effective organization into the future. Over the coming period IUCN must significantly increase its investments in core capacities such as: knowledge management, management information systems, communications; staff development; Commission support; strategic influencing; performance assessment and monitoring and evaluation. IUCN should focus on overcoming what appears to be a vicious cycle of under-

resourcing that seems to be one of the reasons for the Union's inability to respond adequately to strategic issues that have been repeatedly raised by previous reviews and evaluations.

The review endorses the work of the MIS Initiative and its three areas of development:

1. ERP ICT stream – focusing on the finance management needs and building the global ICT backbone of IUCN;
2. The Programme and Knowledge Management stream – to support IUCN's programme delivery;
3. Management Information System stream – providing management with the information needed for management decision-making

It has also noted the constructive communication within the secretariat about these developments and the intention to drive the process through representative working groups. It is a concern that the resources necessary to implement even the first phases of this proposed transformation have not been fully secured. It is beyond the scope of this review to make detailed comments on the appropriateness of the current strategy.

As critical as the MIS Initiative is to IUCN's overall organizational performance, it will be essential for the Secretariat to also invest in the core technological tools and human and organizational capacities that are directly related to IUCN's value proposition and its overall programme objectives. Knowledge management (learning processes and web-based information management) and staff capacities for strategic influencing are particularly critical in this regard.

To improve IUCN's core organizational capacities will require considerable attention and time input from staff. It will also need a cultural change in the organization in terms of staff's willingness to support and utilize corporate wide systems and procedures. Leadership will be essential.   Given the tendency of IUCN staff to dedicate themselves to programme implementation, it will be necessary to explicitly build organizational capacity development into job descriptions, work planning and performance appraisal. The clear implication is that for future benefit, over the coming 4 year period, the time given to programme implementation versus internal organization development will need to be realigned at all levels. This should be discussed and negotiated with the Framework Donors.

From its engagement with the Framework Donors the review team understands that there is more scope than previously assumed to use framework funding for the development of core capacities that relate directly to programme implementation, such as membership support, knowledge management, communication, staff development and monitoring and evaluation. It appears that there many be some variation in the policies of differences between different Framework Donors which should be clarified.

RECOMMENDATION 7:   ENHANCING AND CORE CAPACITIES

The DIRECTOR GENERAL prepares for approval by Council an overall plan for enhancing core organizational capacities with clear targets, priorities and responsibilities, based on a detailed assessment of the additional resources required. The plan is explicitly linked to the annual business plans from 2009 onwards and the Director General reports on implementation progress regularly to Council.

5.3.2   Transforming the project portfolio

There is no doubt that IUCN has achieved a great deal through implementing a diverse range of projects and in doing so is making a worthwhile contribution to conservation. Its project portfolio gives the organization much hands-on experience of conservation and is important for its overall credibility. The lessons from projects may not have been always explicitly documented and utilized as best they could. Yet across all levels of the organization the review team has heard staff regularly referring to their insights from projects and the implications for the overall work of IUCN. Clearly there is a reasonable degree of informal or 'osmotic' sharing of and learning from field experiences.

With this said and again echoing IUCN's own assessment the large portfolio of field projects is not well aligned with the niche and value proposition of the Union in relation to strategic influencing functions. In some regions simply maintaining a large project portfolio of donor-funded field projects, to ensure financial viability, has become too much the overriding focus of management. The issue is not so much the value of field projects, but rather the balance in the portfolio between field activities and strategic influencing activities, and the availability of resources to ensure that learning from field experiences are captured and used as input to support strategic influencing – which may occur soon after or many years after the project was completed.

The review team has noted very positive and encouraging examples that illustrate the potential for IUCN to change the current situation. Particularly significant are the Water and Nature Initiative and Livelihoods and landscapes Programme funded by the Dutch that each support a globally coordinated approach to linking field experiences with strategic influencing. Embedded within these programmes are clear processes of capturing and utilizing lessons learned and the allocation of resources for knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation.

The 13 projects selected as case studies for the review (see Annex 1) are good examples of nationally or regionally funded projects that are clearly more aligned with a strategic influencing agenda.

Within the Secretariat there are differing opinions on how much scope is available to change this situation given donor priorities and funding modalities. But there are good examples of funded projects for strategic influencing such as the Forest Law Enforcement and Governance work. While not underestimating the difficulties of donor funding modalities for IUCN, the review team considers that there is more, and quite possibly considerably more, scope for different types of projects to be funded nationally and regionally. Certainly in the Africa regions it is not clear that IUCN has adequately engaged with donors on this issue nor is it clear that sufficient effort has gone into formulating projects in a way that would enable greater value relative to the value proposition.

In any project implemented by IUCN there must be a fair contribution to the overhead costs of management, knowledge management, communication, staff development and monitoring and evaluation. This may be as management fees and/or as specific project activities that nevertheless enable this contribution. It is understood that the proposed enterprise resource planning system and modified internal accounting procedures will also contribute to improving this situation.

RECOMMENDATION 8:   TRANSFORMING THE PROJECT PORTFOLIO

The DIRECTOR GENERAL oversee a significant realignment (and potentially a reduction) of the project portfolio such that it enables IUCN to have project resources that are more focused on its strategic influencing, learning, innovation and knowledge management functions. Specifically:

8.1.   Establish clear guidelines for project design and budgeting that ensure activities and resources for IUCN's added value are whenever possible embedded.

8.2.   Improve coordination and alignment of global programme work with regional initiatives.

8.3.   Enhance staff capacity to initiate, design and negotiate the funding for projects better aligned with strategic influencing and IUCN's value proposition

8.4.   Ensure the management structures and human resources are in place for regional offices to effectively support and implement global initiatives such as the Water and Nature Initiative and the Livelihoods and landscapes Programme

8.5.   An improved balance in the project portfolio become explicit in the expectations and performance assessment of regional directors.

8.6.   Component Programmes be asked to include in their Workplans and planning budgets for 2009-2012 more information on how (and where possible, which) members will be involved in implementation of the programme.

8.7.   The Secretariat more proactively seek project funding from donors at the national and regional levels that is primarily focused on strategic influencing, learning, innovation and knowledge management or which include sufficient resources for these functions to be carried out.

8.8.   The secretariat more clearly articulate its added value through convening, knowledge management and other strategic influencing activities and how this aligns with donor objectives and priorities in particular regions and countries.

8.9.   A track record of existing projects and initiatives of a strategic influencing nature be developed to provide examples for acquisition

8.10. More regular bi-lateral and multi-donor meetings be held at national an regional levels to discuss and negotiate how projects can be developed that give a better fit between both donors' objectives and IUCN's added value.

5.3.3   Enhancing Donor Support

IUCN achieves a great deal with relatively limited resources, while having to manage diverse and growing expectations of the Union from its donors and members. Some of the resource challenges for IUCN are in part a direct consequence of the aid architecture. There are almost certainly opportunities for IUCN to broaden its funding base through foundations and corporate sector support. However, in the medium term it is difficult to see the backbone of IUCN's funding coming from anywhere other than development assistance donor support.

IUCN is a unique organization but also experiences unique funding challenges. It is attempting to work on a global scale on issues of global importance with resources of a similar magnitude to many development NGOs that are working in limited fields and geographic scale.

IUCN must convince the global donor community that it is a unique and effective global institution responsive to current global issues and therefore worthy of more support. In an era when it has become widely acknowledged that conservation and environment issues can only be tackled through constructive and well informed engagement between government, civil society and business the potential of IUCN needs to be much better recognized and supported by the global donor community.

IUCN could be doing much more to market itself to donor governments and to clearly and simply communicate its achievements. In this regard it is critical that IUCN engage more at the political level and with the most senior levels of the aid agencies. Particularly given the broader scope of

the new global programme, there may also be possibilities of increasing funding from other ministries and not just from development cooperation.

RECOMMENDATION 9:   ENHANCING DONOR SUPPORT

Framework Donors take a more proactive role in supporting IUCN to achieve a level and structure of funding that enables it to invest in core organizational capacities and respond to growing demands of the international community. Specifically:

9.1.   Donors make a one-off investment over the next four years that would enable IUCN to development the critical organizational capacities that are key to meeting the expectations of members and donors.

9.2.   The Director General consult with Framework Donors to clarify and if possible increase the flexibility available to IUCN in allocating framework funding for core organizational functions within the Secretariat and Commissions.

9.3.   The Framework Donors instigate an internal process of communication and engagement between their central offices and their national/regional offices that could support IUCN in re-orientating the nature of its project portfolio to better align with its value proposition.

9.4.   Framework and other donors provide additional funding for IUCN in the form of global support programmes similar to the Water and Nature Initiative and the Landscapes and Livelihood Programme.

9.5.   The Framework Donors actively support the Director General in increasing the number of framework donors and partners and in ensuring a level of framework funding appropriate for the mission value proposition of IUCN.

5.3.4   Diversifying the funding base and developing new partnerships

A full analysis of alternative funding sources and the current progress on this issue across the Union is outside the scope of this review. However, a number of perspectives on this did emerge during the review and are reflected here.

IUCN has begun actively pursuing alternative funding sources but this has not yet resulted in any significant shift in the funding structure. The 2005-2008 Financial Plan was for a 4.5% increase in unrestricted funds and approximately 5% increase in other income streams. This target was met or exceeded for the framework funding and projects-restricted funding but not for

unrestricted funding. The 2005-2008 Financial Plan gives little attention to strategies or targets for alternative funding outside the traditional streams.

IUCN, particularly through its business and biodiversity initiative, has started to develop new partnerships with business. So far this has included initiatives with Shell, Holcim, and others. IUCN has also produced a strategy and operational guidelines for private sector engagement.

With the enormous power of global corporations and business as a key agent in driving change, it is difficult to imagine IUCN being effective in the future without some form of closer engagement with the private sector. The themes in the Programme 2009-2012 such as climate change and energy and poverty-alleviation cannot really be tackled without paying attention to the role of business and what factors drive its decisions and actions. In terms of poverty alleviation the current focus is very much on market-driven development - again making some engagement with business critical. A strong interest has emerged around value-chain analysis, both from the perspectives of environmental sustainability and the inclusion of the poor into modern markets.

Working more extensively with business will take IUCN into different operational models. While business may well finance some specific conservation initiatives much of the work is likely to be more oriented towards helping businesses themselves to change their practices. As IUCN's business engagement strategy points out, this will require some considerable adjustment of current capacities. However, any engagement with business entails risk for IUCN because it is a highly divisive issue within the Union.

In terms of the poverty and conservation linkages, in a similar model to business partnerships, there is potential for IUCN to provide advice on how to integrate conservation into development work. Historically IUCN has not received significant levels of funding from foundations, bequests and private donations. A recent positive development has been the Mava Foundation becoming a Framework Donor.

RECOMMENDATION 10: DIVERSIFYING THE PARTNERSHIP BASE

The DIRECTOR GENERAL and COUNCIL make diversifying the funding base and the establishment of new strategic alliances a central priority over the coming Intersessional Period. Specifically:

10.1. A Task Force involving Council members, selected IUCN members and appropriately qualified external advisors be established to provide support and guidance to the Director General and Council in diversifying the funding base of IUCN.

10.2. The Finance Plan 2009-2012 should include clear objectives and implementation actions for how funding diversity is to be achieved, and should be aligned with the business plan for the Secretariat.

10.3. The DIRECTOR GENERAL develop guidelines for staff on best practice on managing partnerships and alliances, including with members. The guidelines will take into account existing IUCN protocols for work with the private sector and should deal with policy issues of concern to Council. The guidelines should be accompanied by training for staff and become part of performance appraisals for staff and managers.

10.4. The DIRECTOR GENERAL should make more financial and staff resources available within the secretariat for member engagement and support. This should include both headquarters and regional offices and administration and programme functions

5.4 Leadership and Change management

Despite its size and complexity, the leadership and staff of IUCN understand many of its strengths and weaknesses. IUCN is a "thoughtful" organization that undertakes analysis and seeks evidence to guide and support what it does and how it does it. It is less effective in putting plans into action but in two key areas – strategic planning and organizational change management – the need to do so is urgent and the opportunity is there to make some early gains.

5.4.1 Strategic planning process for 2009-2012 and beyond

IUCN is involved in many reviews and planning exercises across different parts of the Union and at all levels in the lead-up to the WCC in October 2008 and the start of the next Intersessional Programme in 2009. Despite good intentions, the history of IUCN has until now been too much characterized by reviews that produce repeated recommendations that are not followed up; lists of resolutions that are not implemented; policies that exist more on paper than in reality; and targets that are not adequately monitored to see if they are achieved. This is a plea to bring back more <u>strategy</u> into IUCN planning.

The timeframe for effective planning for the next Intersessional Period is so short that planning processes that should be sequential and build logically from one step to the next are taking place more or less simultaneously and in some cases without sufficient interaction to inform one another. These planning exercises include the Programme Framework, Regional Situation analyses, Component Programme workplans, the IUCN Strategy for 2009-2012 and beyond, the Commissions' mandates, the IUCN Membership Strategy, regionalization and decentralization in the secretariat and others.

Council will need to support the Director General to ensure that the various policy and planning processes underway are mutually consistent with one another and will provide a strong basis for the revitalization of the Union that is envisaged. There is a danger that these key planning

initiatives which together will guide IUCN for the next decade or so will not be logically consistent unless a strategic planning overview process is established by Council.

RECOMMENDATION 11: STRATEGY AND PLANNING COHERENCE AND FOLLOW-UP

The DIRECTOR GENERAL and COUNCIL agree on a clear hierarchy and coherence of strategy and planning documents that include a long term strategy, the Intersessional Programme, and rolling business plans and organisational development plans. Specifically:

11.1. A meta-analysis by undertaken of the recommendations of the various recent and ongoing reviews of different components of Programme, Membership, Commissions, Regional Offices, Secretariat functions, Knowledge Management etc. and agreed priority actions be integrated into a roling organisational development plan that is updated after new evaluations, reviews and strategies.

11.2. COUNCIL establish a special oversight body or charge the Governance Task Force to provide effective oversight to the many strategic planning initiatives underway to ensure that they are mutually reinforcing, implemented in a logical sequence, and together form a coherent planning system.

5.4.2   Change management process for the Secretariat

IUCN has experienced a history of management decisions over recent years that have failed to overcome the core problems in the management and performance of the secretariat. Many of these problems result from the rapid growth and decentralization of the secretariat without putting in place the systems needed for a decentralized secretariat to function effectively. Over the past decade the Secretariat has grown in size to approximately 1,100 staff members and in complexity of operations, largely through a decentralization and regionalization process. Functions such as member relations, collaboration with the Commissions, managing and implementing programmes and projects, fundraising and donor relations are also shared between headquarters and the regions.

The challenge of the next IUCN Programme 2009-2012, including bringing the members and Commissions into closer engagement with the programme, will demand greater team work across the secretariat, a breaking down of present 'silos', strengthening staff skill sets and capacities, and greater flexibility in working together. Presently most staff members focus their energies where they have more control and can achieve results leading to a pattern in which staff retreat into their smaller units and are not energized into dealing with the wider needs like better cooperation and coordination across units – be they defined by programme, function, or region. The overall

performance of the secretariat is highly dependent on good internal communications, trust and clear accountabilities.   What the review heard from secretariat staff is that these essential conditions are not yet in place.

Management, staff, governance bodies and external reviewers have each pointed to different problems as barriers to improved performance. Some of these will be tackled by the MIS Initiative. The problems are systemic and need to be tackled in a systematic way. A number of problems have been identified that negatively affect the performance of the Secretariat in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. These range from communication problems across different parts of the secretariat; competition instead of cooperation between organizational units; human resource problems in terms of morale, perverse incentives and lack of clear accountability; and a history of management's perceived inability to make decisions.

The Director General has begun a change management transition process for the secretariat that will address some of the root causes of these problems and will encourage participation from staff and support from the Framework Donors. We agree that a change management process is needed and have the following recommendations for the Director General based on the findings of the review.

RECOMMENDATION 12: CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The DIRECTOR GENERAL establish and lead a change management process that will make an overall diagnosis and analysis of the problems in the Secretariat; will identify the needed changes to operational processes and organizational structures; and will guide management to map out and then implement the changes needed, while ensuring that the impact of changes are subsequently monitored. Specifically:

12.1. The DIRECTOR GENERAL requests the support of the framework donors to obtain expert consultant advice to support and guide the internal change management process and provide insight on best practice and lessons learned from other organizations relevant to IUCN.

12.2. The Director General obtains the services of a consultant reporting directly to her to provide assistance and advice in managing the transition. The terms of reference of this consultant should emphasize a team-building consultative approach to the change process itself, rather than an expert analysis followed by an externally designed solution.

12.3. An Internal Change Management Team should be established to work closely with the Director General and the consultant. The composition of the change management team will include staff with different skills and drawn from different parts of the secretariat. If the change management process includes the regional offices as well as headquarters, some representation from the regions should be included.

12.4. After an initial diagnostic stage, it is further suggested that the change management process should focus first on improving the operating processes and procedures. This is based on the management principle that if you have the organizational processes right they can overcome sub- optimal structures but if you don't have the processes right there is no organogram that will function optimally.

12.5. The DIRECTOR GENERAL should use the change management diagnostic process with other analyses to identify new skill sets needed in the secretariat and reflect these in new recruitment and job descriptions.

12.6. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL should put into place organizational changes and processes within the secretariat to strengthen the secretariat's capacity to improve services and communications to members as part of the change management process. Where appropriate, input should be sought from members and from others to ensure that changes are based on best practice and meet the needs and capacities of members.

12.7. A report on the change management process and its financial implications for 2009-2012 should be provided to Council who should also receive regular updates on progress made and remaining challenges.

6.   Conclusions

To recall some of the opening words of this review: the world is facing an escalation in the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems, with the problems now compounded by climate change. The consequences for nature and human wellbeing are dire. In such a context IUCN is precisely the type of organization that must be supported and strengthened by the international community. There is virtually universal endorsement for 'concept' of IUCN. It is therefore more important than ever that the Union is effective in working towards its mission.

IUCN has, and is doing valuable work in all regions. The review was able to see first-hand only a tiny fraction of the programme, policy and projects that IUCN is engaged in. Its potential as a force for good in the world is enormous. IUCN's reach and influence if it can fully harness the power of the Union is also enormous. The weaknesses that have been identified in this review and others are impediments to a better functioning IUCN but they are all problems that are solvable.

6.1   A Proposed Plan of Action

If there is one message coming from the work of this review it is that IUCN should take stock of where it is, look at what it has learned, review its existing strategies, establish its own priorities for action and focus its efforts on making the changes needed and following through to ensure that they work.

The review has led to many recommendations dealing with the three areas for special attention and with the overarching issues. (Annex 3 provides a complete list). If there were a few key actions that are both important and immediate to do, we would propose the following four linked steps:

PRIORITY ACTION 1 - Undertake a meta-review of all the reviews and strategies IUCN has done over this Intersessional Period and produce (1) an analysis of where they are mutually supportive and where they are inconsistent; (2) rationalize the recommended actions into an integrated and streamlined Action Plan 2009-2012 that will underpin the next IUCN Strategy; (3) produce an operational/business plan with agreed priorities based on sound financial analysis and (4) assign resources and specific responsibilities for achieving the different components of the plan.

PRIORITY ACTION 2 - Develop a new Membership Policy and Strategy that can guide IUCN's organizational evolution until 2020. Ensure that it is aligned with agreed actions arising from the Commission Review 2008 and that both are aligned with the next IUCN Strategy 2009-2020.

PRIORITY ACTION 3 - Use the IUCN Strategy 2020 and the Action/Business Plan 2009-2012 to develop an engagement process with the Framework Donors and potential new donors at a high level. The purpose would be to lay out the longer term vision for IUCN supported by clear business and operational plans to achieve the vision, and to make the case for special funding to strengthen IUCN's critical organizational systems in the short term.

PRIORITY ACTION 4 - Start to implement the change management process in the secretariat in 2008 and use it to demonstrate to members, Commissions and donors that the leadership of IUCN is committed to change and that change is possible.

6.2   Reflections on the Review

In undertaking the review the review team has encountered some questions, concerns and insights about the purpose and process of the review. These reflections on our experience are shared to be helpful in planning future external reviews.

The External Review takes place once each Intersessional period. It is the principal opportunity for IUCN to take stock of progress and emerging issues from a big picture perspective. It is also important means for the Framework Donors to gain insight into the overall achievements and performance of the organization. As with this review, it can also provide an opportunity for a deeper look at specific issues, regions, or themes – but this should not be done at the expense of keeping the broader perspective clearly in focus, since other reviews can examine specific issues more in-depth. One of our observations is that while IUCN has many reviews, most look at only parts of the whole picture. IUCN should not miss opportunities to bring different reviews together to help them to see the bigger picture.

The Terms of Reference for this review identified three areas for closer examination. Given the limited resources and timeframe available, this meant that none of the areas could be examined in depth. The resources available for the review were even more strained when it became obvious that there were major cross cutting issues that were of concern in the organization and whose resolution was critical to making progress on the three objective areas which were being reviewed. This is another argument for using the Intersessional External Review for addressing major issues in IUCN.

The learning aspects of the review were very valuable for the review team, and we believe for IUCN. The interactive sessions with members, secretariat staff and Commission members were

seen to be extremely valuable on both sides. But these interactive processes take time and they, like field missions, must be planned in advance.

IUCN and its Framework Donors invest significantly in these reviews. To ensure that the reviews, especially the Intersessional External Review, fulfil their expectations, we believe that small improvements to the process will reap big benefits in the value of the findings and recommendations.

Appendix 1   Consolidated List of Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1:   A NEW COMPACT WITH MEMBERS

COUNCIL and the DIRECTOR GENERAL should consider the findings of this review on members, particularly with respect to the outcomes of the Membership Strategy 2005-2008, and provide strategic direction and a longer-term vision for a future policy (or a new "Compact" with members) for IUCN as a membership organization.

RECOMMENDATION 2:   A NEW MEMBERSHIP STRATEGY FOR 2009-2012

COUNCIL and the DIRECTOR GENERAL should develop a new membership strategy based on consultation with the members and input from Commissions and the secretariat. The strategy should be consistent with the new IUCN Strategy 2009.

RECOMMENDATION 3:   ANALYSIS OF INTERVENTION ASSUMPTIONS

IUCN instigate a process to deepen understanding and more clearly articulate and test the assumptions (theories of change) that underpin how it aims to strategically influence society on conservation issues.

RECOMMENDATION 4:   ENHANCING CAPACITIES FOR STRATEGIC INFLUENCING

The DIRECTOR GENERAL, in collaboration with the membership and Commissions, develop a strategy to strengthen IUCN's strategic influencing role, particularly at the regional and national levels.

RECOMMENDATION 5:   STRENGTHEN IUCN AS A KNOWLEDGE ORGANIZATION

The DIRECTOR GENERAL gives urgent attention and high priority to enhancing IUCN's knowledge management functions and capacities to support the work of the Union.

**RECOMMENDATION 6:   STRENGTHENING THE MONITORING AND
                                              EVALUATION FUNCTION**

The DIRECTOR GENERAL oversee a substantial upgrading of the secretariat's capacities, structures, procedures and resources for monitoring and evaluation processes to support learning and accountability functions and to enable reporting on the Unions activities and achievements in a synthesised and coherent manner.

RECOMMENDATION 7:   ENHANCING AND CORE CAPACITIES

The DIRECTOR GENERAL prepares for approval by Council an overall plan for enhancing core organizational capacities with clear targets, priorities and responsibilities, based on a detailed assessment of the additional resources required.   The plan is explicitly linked to the annual business plans from 2009 onwards and the Director General reports on implementation progress regularly to Council.

RECOMMENDATION 8:   TRANSFORMING THE PROJECT PORTFOLIO

The DIRECTOR GENERAL oversee a significant realignment (and potentially a reduction) of the project portfolio such that it enables IUCN to have project resources that are more focused on its strategic influencing, learning, innovation and knowledge management functions.

RECOMMENDATION 9:   ENHANCING DONOR SUPPORT

Framework Donors take a more proactive role in supporting IUCN to achieve a level and structure of funding that enables it to invest in core organizational capacities and respond to growing demands of the international community.

RECOMMENDATION 10: DIVERSIFYING THE PARTNERSHIP BASE

The DIRECTOR GENERAL and COUNCIL make diversifying the funding base and the establishment of new strategic alliances a central priority over the coming Intersessional Period.

**RECOMMENDATION 11: STRATEGY AND PLANNING COHERENCE AND
                                    FOLLOW-UP**

The DIRECTOR GENERAL and COUNCIL agree on a clear hierarchy and coherence of strategy and planning documents that include a long term strategy, the Intersessional Programme, and rolling business plans and organisational development plans.

RECOMMENDATION 12: CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The DIRECTOR GENERAL establish and lead a change management process that will make an overall diagnosis and analysis of the problems in the Secretariat; will identify the needed changes to operational processes and organizational structures; and will guide management to map out and then implement the changes needed, while ensuring that the impact of changes are subsequently monitored.

Priority Actions

PRIORITY ACTION 1 - Undertake a meta-review of all the reviews and strategies IUCN has done over this Intersessional Period and produce (1) an analysis of where they are mutually supportive and where they are inconsistent; (2) rationalize the recommended actions into an integrated and streamlined Action Plan 2009-2012 that will underpin the next IUCN Strategy; (3) produce an operational/business plan with agreed priorities based on sound financial analysis and (4) assign resources and specific responsibilities for achieving the different components of the plan.

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PRIORITY ACTION 4 - Start to implement the change management process in the secretariat in 2008 and use it to demonstrate to members, Commissions and donors that the leadership of IUCN is committed to change and that change is possible.