

IUCN SUI Review - Part 1

Narrative of SUI's Technical Evolution and Institutional Development

Introduction

In concert with IUCN's broader Monitoring and Evaluation Initiative, the IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative (SUI) is undertaking an evaluation of its effectiveness and impact since the launch of the SUI in January 1995. Formation of the Initiative was catalyzed by Recommendation 19.54 of the 19th Session of the IUCN General Assembly (January 1994) and the subsequent recommendations of a Task Force on Sustainable Use convened in June 1994 to advise the Director General and Chair of the Species Survival Commission (SSC) on the Union's future work in regards to sustainable use.

The purpose of this evaluation is two-fold. First, the evaluation seeks to provide strategic information to the leadership responsible for various tiers of operation under the SUI. It is meant to aid strategic programme and organizational management decisions, and provide a picture of the Initiative's evolution, accomplishments and challenges to facilitate programme and financial management (in terms of planning, income generation and budget allocation). Second, the evaluation will provide some information about the SUI's systems of work planning, reporting and evaluation which will aid in the development of the Initiative's M&E capacity in the context of building such a capacity in IUCN as a whole.

Furthermore, the SUI Review *may* provide a critical baseline of information to maintain and/or stimulate the motivation of current or new participants of the SUI's Sustainable Use Specialist Groups, and generate improved participant understanding about the rationale and purpose of the SUI and the structure and process set in place to achieve this purpose.

The review of the IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative (SUI) will consist of the following three elements:

- Narrative history of the SUI covering its i.) rationale, mandate and objective; ii), the work plans and products of the SUI over the period January 1995 to June 1999; and, iii), the organizational development of the SUI across the constituent elements of the IUCN (Commissions, Members and Secretariat).
- Survey of SUI participants and other interested IUCN parties on the performance of the SUI to date, and key recommendations for the future.
- Assessment of the future implications for the SUI of these lessons.

The first two elements of the Review will be descriptive. The final two evaluative elements of the Review will be generated from information secured through a survey of targeted SUI actors and stakeholders.

The Narrative History

This report represents the first element. It is meant to be descriptive and objective. The principal source of information has been the written records of meetings and products provided by the IUCN SUI Global Support Team¹. This has been supplemented in parts by direct interviews with some members of the IUCN SUI Executive and some representatives of both the Regional Sustainable Use Specialist Groups and the relevant IUCN Secretariat structures.

A summary of the process and underlying assumptions driving this review of IUCN's Sustainable Use Initiative has been produced and is attached as an appendix to this report.

SUI's Inception

The early history of the IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative (SUI) is well documented in the first major product of the SUI - the report to the First World Conservation Congress in Montreal Canada (October 1996) entitled "Factors Influencing Sustainability". The following summary of the SUI's inception is drawn principally from this document, with supplemental references designated in the text.

At IUCN's 18th General Assembly in 1990 (Perth, Australia), IUCN members unanimously adopted Recommendation 18.24 which called for the Director General, in collaboration with the Chair of the Species Survival Commission (SSC), to prepare guidelines for the sustainable use of renewable natural resources. While not expressly stated in the Recommendation, it was believed that such guidelines could be used to discriminate between uses that were sustainable and those that were not, and that it would be possible to develop regulatory and incentive systems that, if properly applied, would make resource use sustainable.

Following an extensive consultation process with interested parties, draft Guidelines for the *Ecologically Sustainability of Non-consumptive and Consumptive Uses of Wild Species* were prepared by SSC's Specialist Group on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species for presentation to members at IUCN's 19th General Assembly in 1994 (Buenos Aires, Argentina). Following extensive review and discussion, the guidelines were not offered for adoption. A significant body of IUCN members believed the guidelines were too prescriptive and too narrowly focused on biological criteria. A broad group of developing country members argued strongly that socio-economic, cultural and legal factors are usually critical to the sustainability of resource use in any given location. Therefore, the IUCN Members adopted Recommendation 19.54, which called on the Director General, in collaboration with the Chair of the SSC, to:

- test the Draft Guidelines, and provide revised guidelines to the next General Assembly,
- ensure IUCN took the lead in communicating the role and importance that ecologically sustainable use of wild species can have in conserving biodiversity, and,
- work with governments to correct situations in which wild species are being used unsustainably.

¹ The written records included few final minutes of Advisory Group and Steering Committee meetings, so the identification of formal decisions has been inferred by the subsequent record of activity and correspondence.

Following the 19th General Assembly, the SSC Specialist Group and the counterpart Sustainable Use of Wildlife Program jointly sponsored a Task Force meeting in response to IUCN Recommendation 19.54. The Task Force was convened in June 1994 in Gland, Switzerland to develop strategic recommendation relevant to IUCN's work on sustainable use. The Task Force Report concluded that the goals of the Sustainable Use Initiative should be:

- to develop the capacity to distinguish uses that are ecologically and socially beneficial from uses that are ecologically and socially harmful, and,
- to assist IUCN members and others to support and augment the conditions that contribute to uses that optimize the benefit to both ecosystems and people.

To address these goals, the Task Force recommended that IUCN's role should be:

- to improve understanding of the human and ecological factors that contribute to the sustainability of uses of wild species and ecosystems,
- to promote that understanding to IUCN members, decision-makers, and others, and,
- to assist in the application of that understanding to achieve greater sustainability in the use of wild species and ecosystems.

The process of improving understanding was envisioned as being iterative. When new understanding was achieved, it would be tested and the ideas further refined.

Initial Organizational Structure

To implement the SUI, the Task Force recommended the development of a multi-disciplinary Sustainable Use Specialist Group under the SSC. This Specialist Group should "concentrate on the development and synthesis of knowledge related to the concept of sustainable use". It was suggested that this Specialist Group be considered as the nucleus of a possible new full Commission of IUCN. The Task Force also advised that a Sustainable Use Program be established in the IUCN Secretariat and that adequate resources be allocated to this program. "The primary responsibility of the Program should be the facilitation of network activities in support of the Initiative, and the coordination of supporting actions from the full range of IUCN program activities."² Finally, the Task Force recommended that the Director General and Chair of the SSC jointly appoint an Advisory Group to oversee the operation of the Sustainable Use Initiative. (Task Force Report, 1994)

On the recommendation of the Task Force, the Director General and Chair of the SSC jointly appointed a SUI Advisory Group. This group met for the first time in November 1994. Amongst the principal recommendations from this meeting were the following:

- The SUI should be composed of three components - i) Advisory Group, ii) SSC Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SUSG), and iii) IUCN Secretariat Support Team.
- The Advisory Group should establish the institutional and technical framework for the SUI, as well as recommend, review and revise priorities for action by the SUSG and Secretariat program, and monitor SUI progress and impact.

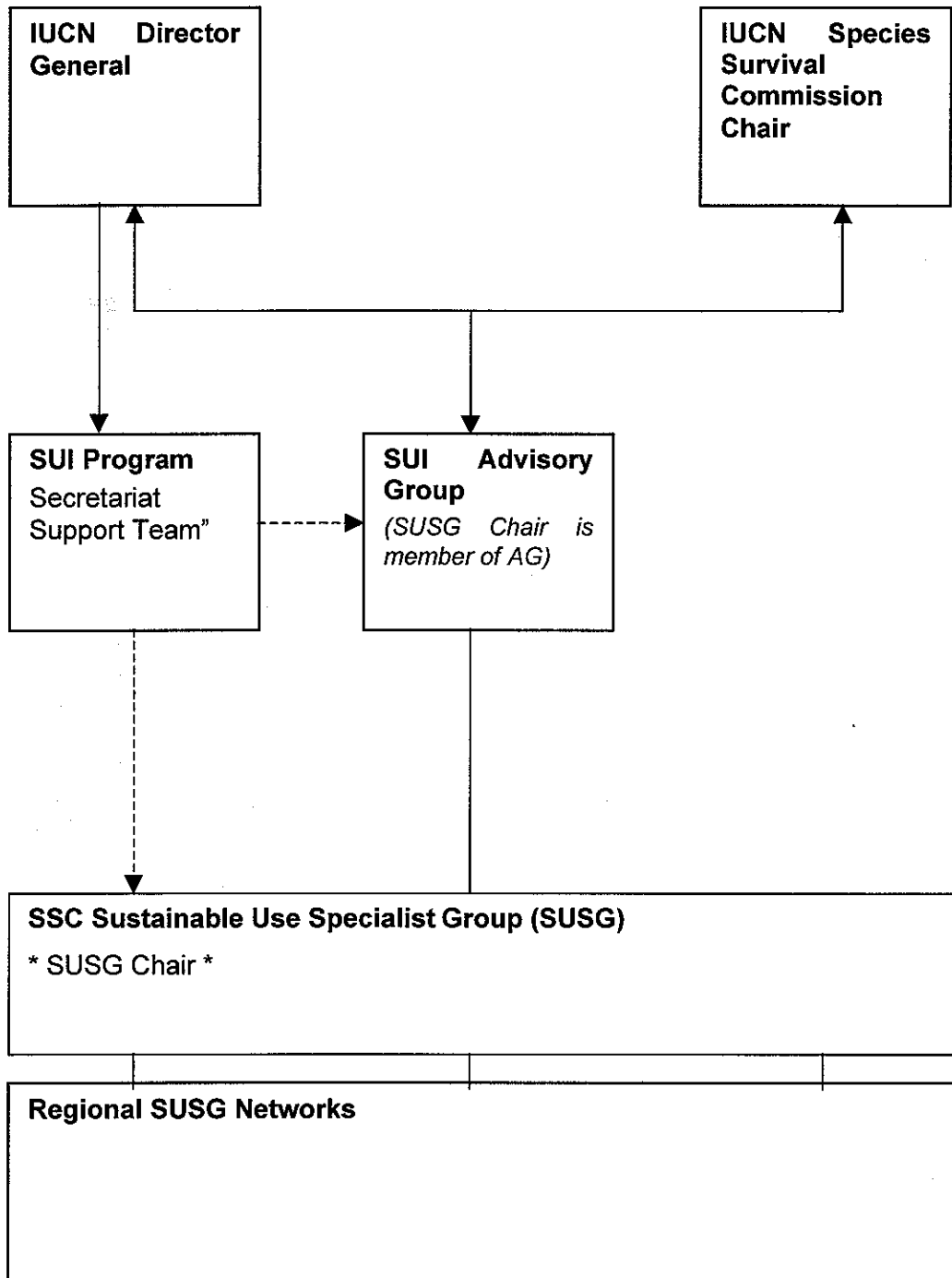
² The name "Sustainable Use Initiative" was adopted to underscore its hybrid nature involving both Commission Specialist Group and Secretariat components.

- The SUSG network should be regionally driven, open and transparent, and responsive to regional needs.³ The following priorities in terms of regional network establishment under the SUSG Network were suggested: Central America, South America, Southern Africa, West/Central Africa, SE Asia and the Arctic/Circumpolar region. The IUCN regional and country offices were asked to support the SUSG regional networks wherever possible, but in particular the networks in Latin America and Africa. A Steering Committee comprising of the Regional SUSG Chairs should guide the SUSG.
- The activities of the SUSG should form the basis of activities and products of the SUI. The thrust of these activities should be on refining knowledge and understanding of sustainable natural resource management in both terrestrial and marine ecosystems.
- The SUI Secretariat Support, structured with both regional and global support teams, should focus on providing technical and financial support to regional SUSG networks, and enhancing communication of information about sustainable use to, from and between regional networks of the SUSG. The Secretariat Support should also support the functioning of the Advisory Group, coordinate the communication of lessons learned to wider audiences, and seek to incorporate such lessons in the global policies of the IUCN Council.
- Core support must be provided for key staff supporting the SUI.

Under the guidance of the Advisory Group, IUCN's Sustainable Use Initiative was formally launched in January 1995, with funding provided by IUCN and the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (See *Figure 1 below*)

³ The emphasis on regionalization and decentralization was consistent with the broader IUCN program direction given by IUCN members at the 19th General Assembly.

Figure 1: IUCN SUI - Organizational Evolution - The Initial Design



NOTES: Full lines indicate operational management and reporting relationships. Dotted lines indicate support functions provided in the direction indicated by the arrows.

The SUI Advisory Group met for a second time on 19 June 1995 in Harare, Zimbabwe. This meeting was immediately followed by the "First Meeting of the IUCN/SSC SUSG Steering Committee" (20-21 June 1995), and the Third Meeting of the SUI Advisory Group (22 June 1995). The following observations are drawn from the records of all three meetings.

- **Institutional Framework:** Further clarification was secured on the institutional framework for SUI. In particular, it was agreed that:
 - ➔ the SUSG Steering Committee serves as an agent for inter-regional coordination and collaboration, and as an agent for membership development,
 - ➔ the SUSG Chair will be responsible for SUSG membership, including the appointment of Regional Chairs. IUCN ROSA would serve as the focal point for SUSG membership matters, and allocate a staff person to assist the SUSG Chair.
 - ➔ the SUI Advisory Group would advise the IUCN Secretariat on matters pertaining to the SUI, and oversee development of the SUSG, and,
 - ➔ the Secretariat staff, referred to as the Global Support Team (GST), would continue to facilitate Regional SUSG development, provide back-up support and coordination for established regional groups, and assist with fundraising.
- **SUSG Membership, Structure and Work Plans:** Concerns were raised about the driving motivation of various Regional SUSG's - in particular whether they were more interested in advocating sustainable use than analyzing the factors influencing the sustainability of use in their regions. These concerns were raised by the initial emphasis of work in some regions, by the professional strengths of some Regional Chairs, and the narrow nature of some Regional SUSG memberships. It was agreed that emphasis must be placed on the scientific analysis of sustainable use in different regions and comparative analysis across regions. It was also recognized that the development of multi-disciplinary, technically oriented Regional SUSG networks would take time. Authority to develop each regional membership was delegated to the Regional Chairs, and guidelines were developed to assist the Regional Chairs in this task. Recommendations were made that the SUSG should establish linkages with other relevant regional and global scientific networks, and share information and ideas with them.
- **SUSG Regionalization:**
 - ➔ 5 Regional SUSG's were reported as having been established (Arctic, Central America, North America, Southern Africa, and West Africa),
 - ➔ 3 Regional SUSG's were reported as "nearly established" (East Africa, East Asia, and South America), and
 - ➔ 5 were reported to be in early stages of development (Central Africa, Central Asia, Europe, Oceania and West Asia).

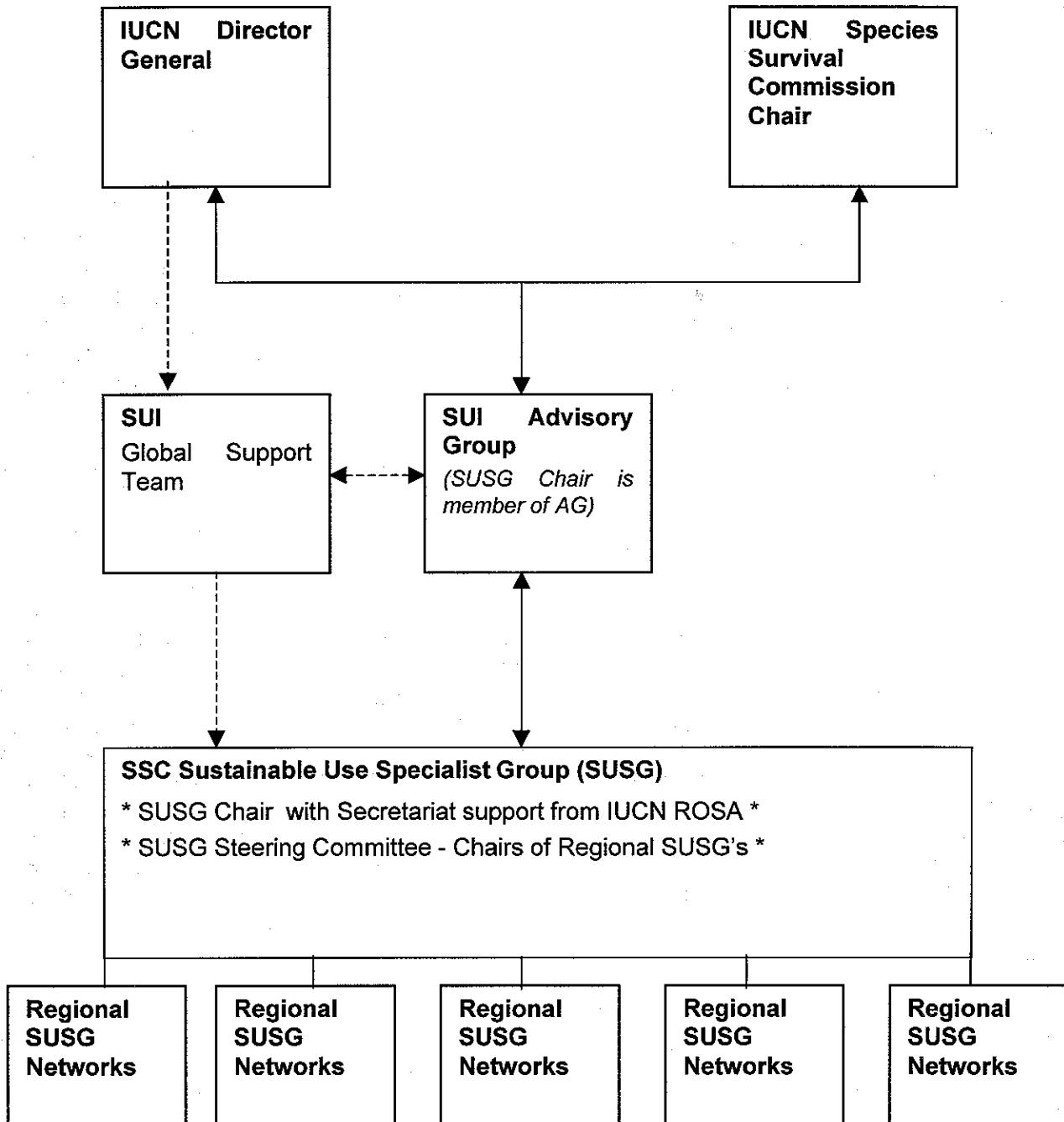
The degree of network development reported six months into the SUI greatly surpassed expectations and illustrates broad IUCN membership and secretariat interest in this initiative. Due to resource constraints and tight timelines for generating products for the next General Assembly in October 1996, priority for support was placed on the 8 groups that were established or nearly established.⁴

⁴Thus the initial priority set on Central Africa (initially combined with West Africa) was downgraded, and the initial resource focus on 6 regions was expanded to 8.

- **Fundraising:** The GST would pursue fundraising in parallel with regional efforts by Regional SUSG Chairs. IUCN regional and country office staff should support fundraising by Regional SUSG Chairs.
- **Communication:** The GST would draft and circulate monthly SUI status reports to all regional chairs and to counterpart secretariat staff. Regional chairs and IUCN RCO staff were encouraged to provide copies of any reports, minutes of meetings, etc. to the GST. Monthly teleconferences amongst the Advisory Group would continue, and Regional Chairs were invited to recommend items for their agendas.

Furthermore, the record of the SUSG Steering Committee notes that the leadership of the SUI believed their initiative embodied the principles of regionalization and decentralization called for at the 19th General Assembly. They believed that, in many respects, the SUI was pioneering decentralization within IUCN. They anticipated that they had much to learn about managing a decentralized technical program involving regional members, secretariat staff and commissions, and that such lessons would be useful to IUCN's broader efforts of decentralization. (See *Figure 2 below.*)

Figure2: IUCN SUI - Organizational Evolution - June 95



NOTES: Full lines indicate operational management and reporting relationships. Dotted lines indicate support functions provided in the direction indicated by the arrows.

Progress through the First WCC

The record of SUI's development and progress since January 1995 is captured in the reports of the Advisory Group and SUSG Steering Committee Meetings. This record has been supplemented by the personal comments of various members of the SUI management structure.

Over its first year of operation, the SUI was focused on the development of Regional Sustainable Use Specialist Groups (SUSG) and the institutional management systems necessary to coordinate the work of the various Regional SUSG's under a common analytical agenda. This management system also needed to develop mechanisms to integrate the work of the SUSG's with the broader technical program of IUCN, and with various national, regional and international natural resource management policy initiatives. The development of the desired multi-disciplinary, multi-national Regional SUSG's proved to be time-consuming and complex. The lack of initial financing available to most of the Regional SUSG's precluded most regions from dedicating full time staff to their development, and delayed the convening of the initial planning and development meetings and subsequent members' meetings. Furthermore, the varying status of IUCN's institutional profile and capacity in any given region, as well as the varying characteristics of the early leaders of SUSG development in each region, influenced the success of membership recruitment.

Nevertheless, the early planning results reported after the first six months were commendable:

- Agreement was secured to focus effort and available resources on analyzing the factors and conditions governing the sustainability of use (Role 1) as opposed to promoting regional and global understanding about sustainable use (Role 2). A preliminary analytical framework consisting of six streams of analysis (i.) fundamental concepts, ii.) institutional factors, iii.) regimes of resource use, iv.) economic factors, v.) methodological approaches to sustainable use, and vi.) relationships between human populations and their natural resources) was developed as a guide for work in the regions, and for the global synthesis planned for the First World Conservation Congress.
- Commitments were made to organize two related workshops - Synthesis Workshop (April, 1996) and a Sustainable Use Workshop at the WCC (October 1996) - and to focus regional efforts and resources on generating contributions to each of these.
- Clarification developed that the Global Support Team would pursue fundraising in parallel with efforts by Regional SUSG Chairs. IUCN regional and country office staff were considered important partners in supporting fundraising by Regional SUSG Chairs.

These early planning achievements resulted in a considerable technical success in 1996, the first full calendar year of the SUI. The two defining moments were the Analytical Workshop convened in the UK in April 1996, and the SUI's contribution to the World Conservation Congress in Canada in October 1996 (15 months after the initiative was launched).

Representatives associated with 13 Regional SUSG's participated in the Analytical Workshop, and 11 different Regional SUSG's were credited with written contributions. The record of these contributions suggests that at least 8 regions offered analysis of specific examples of renewable resource use. The exact nature of the contributions of the other three could not be determined from the records at hand. The product of this workshop ("Factors Influencing Sustainability" - see below) appears significant in terms of its analytical framework, and its demonstration of the potential of a decentralized network to contribute to the core business of the Union.

By all accounts, SUI's performance at the World Conservation Congress (WCC) was significant - with considerable success coming in terms of the second objective of promoting an understanding of sustainable use. Through the report back to members in response to Recommendation 19.54 entitled "Factors Influencing Sustainability", the Sustainable Use Workshop and the performance of "Guardians of Eden" at the WCC, the SUI was credited with generating substantial intellectual and emotional support for the paradigm of sustainable use. This support was aptly demonstrated in Resolution WCC 1.39 which provided membership endorsement of and continued support for the SUI, postponed further investment in testing the Guidelines produced for the 19th G.A., and requested the SUI to prepare a Policy on Sustainable Use for the next World Conservation Congress.

Despite this success, a number of underlying fault points were beginning to reveal themselves at the Third Meeting of the SUSG Steering Committee which took place immediately prior to the WCC (October 1996). These tensions are highlighted with the following examples.

- Many Regional SUSG's demonstrated through their work and reports to the Steering Committee a bias to engagement in policy debates rather than a commitment to the analytical agenda.
- Members of the GST, Advisory Group, and Steering Committee apparently perceived the need to support an expansion of the SUSG regional structures worldwide to maintain IUCN's strategic niche in the sustainable use arena. This aim conflicted dramatically with previous management decisions aimed at consolidating the limited availability of financial resources to ensure success amongst the initial pool of regional groups. It also conflicted with the actual dedication of support staff time within the IUCN regional and country offices to the SUI.
- The increasing insistence by the SUSG Steering Committee that it provide technical leadership for the SUI challenged the realities of SUI's fundraising efforts. Insufficient funding was being generated by the Regional SUSG's, which therefore maintained a high dependence on the Global Support Team for funding. The GST's own fundraising efforts required the GST, in consultation with the Advisory Group, to commit the SUI (and its Regional SUSG's) to certain products and milestones within defined time-frames.
- Perhaps, most strikingly, the need to integrate the membership, work program and products of the SUI more effectively with the rest of IUCN's Global Program and Policy work became obvious. There appeared to be increasing clarity amongst the SUI leadership of the need to elevate the SUI's institutional status from being one of many specialist groups of the SSC to something integral to the Union as a whole. Records of subsequent meetings with IUCN HQ reveal that this has still not been adequately considered and resolved.
- Finally, increasing competition in pursuit of the sustainable use knowledge emerged from numerous other regional and international organizations.

Notwithstanding these issues, the tight deadline faced by the SUSG in producing a product for the WCC and the performance criteria linked to fund disbursement from the IUCN Secretariat - principally through the Global Support Team - contributed to the success in this first phase. The prevailing product focus prevented significant questioning of the structure and the broader linkages of the SUI to the Union by the parties involved, in particular the RSUSG's. The funding provided by the Ford Foundation for the sustainable use workshop at the WCC, and by NORAD in support of the RSUSG's, were critical to the SUI's achievements.

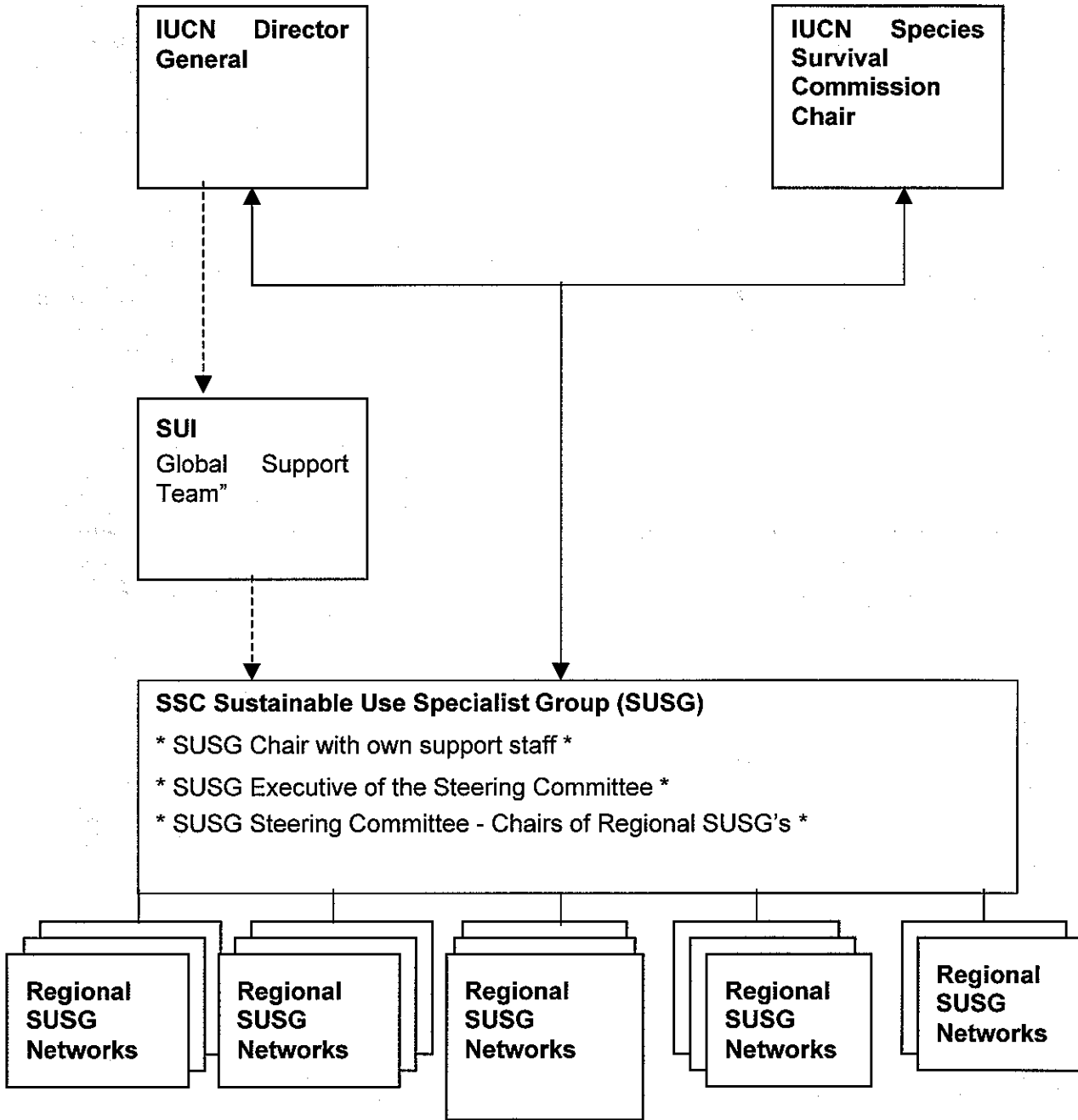
Organizational Developments after the 1st WCC

Following the first phase, a number of new factors influenced the SUI. First (no doubt generated by the previous success), the number of RSUSG's expanded rapidly to 14 groups by July 1998. With increased numbers, and without pressing production targets, the SUSG Steering Committee demanded increased decision-making power for itself - in line with the original decentralized vision emanating from the 19th General Assembly. In order to clarify the leadership of the SUSG Steering Committee for the SUSG, and thereby the SUI, the Advisory Group of the IUCN DG and SSC Chair were co-opted to become the Executive Committee of the Steering Committee in April 1997. The Chair of the SUSG was appointed the Chair of the Executive. The SUSG Steering Committee also amplified demands that the Global Support Team service the SUSG and its constituent regional groups as primary clients, and greatly diminish the level of time and resources devoted to servicing the IUCN DG and the broader IUCN Secretariat (See Figure 3).

While consistent with the direction provided by the IUCN DG following Buenos Aires, these demands created uncertainty about roles, responsibilities and relationships. In seizing leadership of the SUI, the voluntary, part-time, RSUSG Chairs failed to clarify practical and necessary operational guidelines for their Executive, and more importantly the Global Support Team, to manage the fast-paced evolution of the SUI between their annual meetings. The control, and relative distribution, of funds between the GST and the RSUSG's influenced the attitudes within the RSUSG in defining these relationships. For a variety of reasons, the SUSG Steering Committee was slow in securing unanimous consent on their central agenda and target groups at different levels. They also appear to have failed to devote sufficient attention to the coordination and implementation of individual work plans necessary to synthesize global products through 1998. In addition, the continued existence of the Advisory Group, a body appointed by the IUCN DG and SSC Chair and delegated operational oversight for the SUI, became unclear. This shift in power also complicated the Secretariat's and Advisory Group's ability to strengthen and diversify the RSUSG membership - results that were believe to be critical to the long-term success of the SUI.

During this period, conflicts emerged between the RSUSG's and individual Regional and Country Offices due to the vacuum of central directives (and enforcement) concerning such relationships under the SUI. Individual RCO's, claiming their share of leadership in pursuing IUCN's regionalization process, asserted independent views about the significance, or lack thereof, of the SUI in their particular region. Amongst those supportive of the SUI as a Union wide initiative, several sought to assert their own interpretations of the critical sustainable use issues facing their members. Not all RCO's wanted to limit SUI to wild living resources, many wanted to discuss broader macro-economic issues, pollution, industrial agriculture, or atmospheric challenges. As a result of these divergent attitudes from RCO's, less regional Secretariat support was provided to the RSUSG's. Interaction between the SUI and the Secretariat's Technical Program, was less forthcoming in several regions than originally envisaged by the Task Force.

Figure 3: IUCN SUI - Organizational Evolution - April 97



NOTES: The Advisory Group was co-opted by the SUSG Steering Committee to become its Executive.
 Lines indicate operational management and reporting relationships. Dotted lines indicate support functions provided in the direction indicated by the arrows.

Technical Evolution after the 1st WCC

Two critical planning meetings took place in the first four months of 1997, which sought to redefine the path and course of the SUI after its success at the WCC. A Strategic Planning Meeting of the Advisory Group was convened in February 1997 in the USA as a lead into the Fourth SUSG Steering Committee Meeting in April 1997 in Malaysia. The agenda of the Fourth Steering Committee focused on the development of the triennium work program leading up to the Second WCC in October 2000.

These two planning meetings considered SUI's role in contributing to global conservation policy debates, its linkage with other sustainable use research and policy initiatives inside and outside of IUCN, and the importance of achieving equity in performance amongst the Regional SUSG's. In discussing these questions. At the February 1997 meeting, the Advisory Group and a few external resource persons recognized the institutional and financial limitations influencing the SUI's further development. Emphasis was placed on contributing to contemporaneous and influential global policy debates under various international conventions and agreements - in particular the CBD.

Consensus amidst the expanded regional membership in the Steering Committee on the mission, goal, and objectives of the SUI, its principal operational targets, and the institutional structures and processes governing its operation was re-affirmed in a "vision statement" agreed to at the Fourth SUSG Steering Committee Meeting (April 1997). While a detailed, unifying work program that would stimulate regional analytical work and the subsequent global synthesis was not secured, steps were laid to contribute lessons learned from various regions to important global policy fora and to develop the Policy Statement on Sustainable Use.

The Fifth Steering Committee Meeting in Guatemala (June, 1998) was marked by the advancement of the Sustainable Use Policy Statement, and the inception of three sub-committees (policy advisory, technical advisory, and communications). This meeting also brought to a head underlying tensions between the Steering Committee and the IUCN Secretariat. The meeting did not secure much further progress on the global analytical agenda although a "Supply-Control-Demand" model had been suggested for further consideration. There was agreement that the eventual analytical agenda needed to develop organically within the regions.

The Sixth Steering Committee Meeting in Florida (July 1999) appears to have achieved success in many critical areas for the SUI. The Constitution of the Sustainable Use Specialist Group was completed and adopted. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) presented a draft "Analytical Framework for Understanding the Factors that Affect the Sustainable Use of Living Natural Resources" which drew from many different scholarly contributions. The TAC also reported on its technical review of a paper commissioned by the SUI linking principles of sustainable use to an ecosystem approach to conservation. The paper had been commissioned as a contribution to the 4th SBSTTA meeting. The Communications Committee presented its recommendations for short and longer term communications strategies, and the Policy Advisory Committee finalized the Sustainable Use Policy Statement. The GST provided a detailed report on existing and proposed SUI publication products, as well as SUI contributions to various international fora. 14 RSUSG Chairs attended this meeting, and the potential addition of three new RSUSG's was discussed.

Since the First WCC, progress has been made in channeling case study material and analyses from the regions to international fora including the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the

Global Environment Facility, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Global Biodiversity Forums convened by IUCN in collaboration with the CBD Secretariat and other partners. Two volumes of the SUI Technical Series have been published, and the Sustainable Use Policy Statement has been developed for presentation to the Second World Conservation Congress. Following the creation of sub-committees of the SUSG Steering Committee in 1998, there appears to be greater leadership and investment in developing the common analytical agenda for sustainable use research and synthesis, as well as in generating policy contributions and in communicating lessons learned to various audiences.

Inter-Union Relationships

Over the second half of 1998 and into 1999, the IUCN Executive Committee and the GST Director met several times with the IUCN Secretariat in Gland to resolve the various points of conflict between the SUI and the Secretariat. These meetings culminated in a Workshop to "Manifest the Union's Commitment to Sustainable Use" in March 1999. A number of steps were subsequently taken to improve communications between the GST and IUCN Secretariat, and requests have been sent to all relevant regional secretariat offices and RSUSG's to work collaboratively. The new Director General is in the process of making institutional changes that will affect the governance of IUCN's Secretariat but the exact nature of these changes is not known. One such change involves the appointment of a restructured Sustainable Use Advisory Group to advise on the application of sustainable use in the broader IUCN programme. The relationship of this new group to the SUSG Steering Committee is not clear, but its creation reflects the extensive interest in sustainable use amongst all IUCN programmes. Whether or not the SUI has been "successful" in its analytic agenda, SUI appears to have contributed to changing the climate for sustainable use in IUCN's global conservation programme.

More recently, the SUSG Steering Committee completed and approved its Constitution at the Sixth Steering Committee Meeting in Florida (July 1999). The Constitution of the Sustainable Use Specialist Group, articulates the group's goals, objectives, structure and operational relationships, terms of office and election processes for various officers, and obligations of members, etc. While this achievement helped to clarify the internal workings and relationships of the SUI, the Steering Committee voiced its continuing concerns about the lack of clarity on the relationship with the IUCN Secretariat and various IUCN Programmes. The draft report from this meeting also marks an improvement in capturing the scale and nature of SUSG activities at the regional and global levels.

The Sixth Steering Committee Meeting was followed by an SUI Staff Retreat (Global and Regional Support Team Staff) at the end of July 1999. The retreat sketched out an SUI programme logic that would bring greater coherency to individual plans and activities, and secured agreement on critical planning, reporting and monitoring requirements. Significant time was devoted to the organizational relationship between various components of the SUI, and between the SUI and other components of the Union. The internal agreement on these issues paved the way for more coherent dialogue with the IUCN Secretariat to resolve outstanding concerns. Finally, the retreat spelled out a plan for a strategic planning process that would guide the development of triennium work plans.

This concludes the narrative history of the technical evolution and organizational development of the Sustainable Use Initiative, Part I of the IUCN SUI Review. Part II of the IUCN SUI Review will summarize the response from the survey of participants in the SUI and of other interested IUCN parties.

Appendix 1: Summary of the process and underlying assumptions for the IUCN SUI Review

The Process

Information for the first two descriptive elements will be gathered through a review of the existing documentation provided by the IUCN SUI Global Support Team, and by direct interviews with some members of the IUCN SUI Executive and some representatives of both the Regional Sustainable Use Specialist Groups and the relevant IUCN Secretariat structures.

Once these elements are completed, a survey will be developed for broad distribution across the SUI networks and IUCN Secretariat (including the leadership of the SSC). The development of the survey, and the identification of priority target audiences, will be determined by a careful review and analysis of the information gained in compiling the descriptive information. The survey will initially be distributed electronically, but should this fail to generate the desired and necessary sample of response, interviews will be conducted by telephone (individually and in groups).

The completion of the evaluative elements of the Review will be dependent on the timing and investment required to secure an acceptable / purposeful sample of data.

The Underlying Assumptions

Based on the documentation provided by the IUCN SUI Global Support Team, and reviewed to date in the planning stages of this Review, the following underlying assumptions appear to be relevant to this Review.

- IUCN has a global comparative advantage amongst other organizations, institutions and agencies in seeking to distinguish the factors or conditions that enhance the likelihood of sustainability in uses of wild living natural resources due to its global membership and the ability to coordinate robust scientific research based on field analysis and experience from around the world.
- IUCN can effectively harness the assets which generate this comparative advantage to influence human behavior at local, national and international levels such that the use of renewable natural resources benefits both ecosystems and people.
- The scale of the SUI's objectives, the complexity of the issues and the limited existing knowledge of the human and ecological factors affecting sustainability demand that the SUI process is iterative - as new understanding is achieved it will be tested and the ideas and knowledge generated and disseminated by the SUI will be further refined.
- The members of the IUCN (including its Commissions) are prepared to participate voluntarily in this exercise over the long-term and respond locally to a global analytical framework so long as tangible benefits are forthcoming, with the principal benefits being empowerment through knowledge and influential access to forums of local, national or international policy through their association with IUCN and its SUI.
- The financial supporters of the IUCN Global Program, generally, and the SUI specifically, and those persons within IUCN HQ responsible for financial allocation decisions are

prepared to finance the SUI over the long-term so long as the SUI maintains its global comparative advantage and demonstrates its operational effectiveness.

- The optimal strategy for implementing the SUI in order to maintain its comparative advantage and demonstrate its effectiveness is through a decentralized approach based on numerous "Regional Sustainable Use Specialist Groups" in sum constituting the "Sustainable Use Specialist Group" of the Species Survival Commission wherein i.) the RSUSG's collectively develop a global analytical framework which allows for comparative analysis of regional field situations and the emergence of global truths, ii.) the RSUSG's (and others) individually use (with some central technical and financial support) the knowledge gained to influence human behavior within their regions, and, iii) the SUSG Steering Committee, its Executive, and the Global Support Team use the knowledge gained to influence policies and other processes at international levels.
- A decentralized, regionally organized SUI is consistent with the vision developed and elaborated by the members of the IUCN in Recommendations at each of their last three General Assemblies (18,19 and 20 - with the 20th being renamed as the First World Conservation Congress), and is consistent with the broader Global Program management decisions from the Director-General's Office and the IUCN Council. Furthermore, this approach is desired by the majority of IUCN's major financial contributors.
- Regional SUSG's can be constituted in an appropriate manner, with sufficient resources, and with an appropriate membership such that they command respect, generate meaningful regional field research and analysis, and are positioned to influence behavior (including policies) in their own regions.
- A central SUI unit, the Global Support Team, is essential to providing operational support to the SUSG and its constituent RSUSG's, and to integrating the work of the SUSG and its individual members with the broader body of technical activities undertaken by IUCN.
- Sufficient funding can be secured to support the effective operation of both the RSUSG's and the GST.
- IUCN's Global Program (including the work of the Commissions) is sufficiently organized, centrally coordinated, locally managed and individually motivated to allow for effective integration of the work of the SUI.

IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative Review

Part II: Survey of IUCN Staff, Members and other Stakeholders

As part of the review of the IUCN SUI, a survey was distributed to the IUCN Sustainable Use Specialist Group Steering Committee (SUI Executive Committee - 4; RSUSG Chairs - 15), all heads of IUCN Cost Centers (41), key staff involved in SUI at IUCN Regional and County Offices (26), RSUSG Secretariat Staff (5), and all the staff on the SUI Global and Regional Support Team (10).

Discussion on the Survey Response:

The survey was sent electronically to approximately 81 different recipients¹ on 22 November 1999 using the electronic mailing lists of the IUCN SUI Global Support Team. 17 recipients (21%) responded to the survey by 3 January 2000.

The recipients identified themselves according to the categories listed below in Table 1. Double categorization was allowed, and three different IUCN Secretariat respondents utilized this option to identify other levels of participation within the broader framework of the Sustainable Use Initiative.

Table 1: Summary of Respondents to IUCN SUI Review Survey (November-December 1999)

Survey Respondents	Regional SUSG Member	Regional SUSG Chair	SUSG Executive Committee	SUI Global Support Team	Regional Support Team	IUCN HQ	IUCN RCO	IUCN Commission	Other	TOTAL
1		X								1
2						X				1
3				X						1
4		X								1
5	X						X			2
6							X			1
7			X	X						2
8		X								1
9	X									1
10								X		1
11							X			1
12					X					1
13						X				1
14	X			X						2
15						X				1
16						X				1
17				X						1
TOTAL	3	3	1	4	1	4	3	1	0	20

¹ The electronic mailing lists contain some overlap.

12 of the 17 respondents (71%) were staff of the IUCN Secretariat, including four staff from IUCN HQ, three from IUCN RCO's, and five from the staff of the IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative Global and Regional Support Teams. The remaining five respondents (29%) were non-staff participants in the Sustainable Use Initiative, including three Regional Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SUSG) Chairs, one Regional SUSG Member, and one member of the IUCN Species Survival Commission². This distribution provides an interesting balance of perspectives with seven respondents coming from the central IUCN Secretariat, five from the staff of the Sustainable Use Program (i.e. the Global / Regional Support Team), and five from regional volunteers in IUCN's work. Geographically, responses came from all IUCN regions except Africa, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe.

One of the 17 respondents commented in a cover note that the survey appeared to be fishing for complements. Another respondent opted to provide comments on the SUI in narrative form rather than in direct response to the questions posed. Three respondents did not respond fully to individual questions within the survey because they believed fundamental organizational change relevant to work on "sustainable use" within the Union was necessary, and if such change was taken the questions were irrelevant.

Question 1

The IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative (SUI) has three fundamental objectives:

- *to improve understanding of the human and ecological factors that contribute to the sustainability of uses of wild species and ecosystems,*
- *to promote that understanding to IUCN members, decision-makers, and others, and,*
- *to assist in the application of that understanding.*

Which of the three has the SUI been most effective in addressing in the regions, and at the international level? (Insert an X in one box at each level)

<i>Regionally:</i>	<i>Improve Understanding</i>	<i>Promote Understanding</i>	<i>Apply Understanding</i>
<i>Internationally:</i>	<i>Improve Understanding</i>	<i>Promote Understanding</i>	<i>Apply Understanding</i>

Briefly describe or list in the table below your perception of the major accomplishments of the SUI against the different objectives.

² The member of the Species Survival Commission did not consider him/her self to be a participant in the SUI and described the SUI in his/her region as non-inclusive - open only to like-minded individuals.

Table 2: Area of Greatest Achievement - SUI's Three Goals

Respondent	Regional Level			International Level		
	Improve Understanding	Promote Understanding	Apply Understanding	Improve Understanding	Promote Understanding	Apply Understanding
1	X			X		
2	X			X		
3	X			X		
4	X			X		
5			X		X	
6		X	X	X		
7	X			X		
8						
9	X				X	
10				X		
11	X			X		
12		X	X	X	X	
13						
14	X				X	
15		X			X	
16			X			X
17		X		X		
TOTALS	8	4	4	10	5	1

Discussion on Achievement Assessment:

Most respondents indicated that the Sustainable Use Initiative has achieved greatest impact in its efforts to improve the understanding of factors that contribute to the sustainability of uses of wild species and ecosystems. This was identified as the area of greatest achievement at both a regional and international level.

Two respondents did not answer the question at all. One chose to respond to the entire survey in narrative form, and the second indicated lack of familiarity with the achievements of SUI. One respondent did not believe any achievements had been secured in his/her region, but recognized some success by the SUI in improving understanding on sustainable use at the international level.

Table 3: List of significant accomplishments

Improve Understanding	Promote Understanding	Apply Understanding
("Enhancing Sustainability") Principles of Sustainable Use presented to the First World Conservation Congress	Policy contributions to the Convention on Biological Diversity	Provision of advice and guidance on projects and policies at the regional and national level by members of the SUSG's.
Policy on Sustainable Use (To be presented to the Second World Conservation Congress)	Policy contributions to the Global Environment Facility through the STAP	Assistance with discussions and decisions before and after CITES COPs.
SUSG Workshop at the Godollo Wildlife Management Congress	Presentations and contributions to the World Conservation Congress	
Raised profile of work on Sustainable Use and catalyzed increased analysis - including case studies	Publication of SUI Technical Series (Vols. 1 & 2)	
	Tour of the play "Guardians of Eden" developed by the Southern African SUSG	
	Input in the review of national and regional legislation (e.g. Niger, Pakistan and the EU)	

A number of respondents provided elaboration on the achievements of the SUI to date. These comments are summarized below.

Positive comments:

- ◆ The creation of the diverse network of Regional Sustainable Use Specialist Groups (SUSG) has contributed to advancements in the understanding of sustainable use, and the promotion and application of this understanding, at the national and regional level.
- ◆ The Draft IUCN Policy Statement is a critical intellectual, and impressive organizational, accomplishment that should assist in the SUI in providing guidance and leadership at local, regional and international levels.
- ◆ SUI played a "John the Baptist" role from the old testament religion of conservation to the new testament religion of conservation, sustainable use and benefit sharing.
- ◆ SUI assisted in reaffirming within IUCN the importance of sustainable use in the conservation of biodiversity.
- ◆ SUI contributed to an improved understanding of specific issues such as tenure and adaptive management.

Negative comments:

- ◆ The accomplishments of SUI have been disappointingly modest, though some useful field projects have been implemented, SUI has not improved or promoted understanding at the international level, and in fact has made the achievement of sustainable use even more difficult by sidelining it from major IUCN concerns.
- ◆ Very little progress has been made in assisting in the application of understanding on sustainable use - other SSC Specialist Groups such as the Crocodillian Specialist Group have gone much further in this area.
- ◆ The communication of SUI achievements has been poor.

Process comments:

- ◆ The initial years of the Sustainable Use Initiative have focussed on establishing and building the Regional Sustainable Use Specialist Groups.
- ◆ The achievements in improving the understanding of critical factors related to sustainable use were by strategic design whereas achievements in promoting and applying this understanding have been more ad hoc.

Question 2

Of the three objectives, which is the most critical to the future work of the SUI in the regions, and at the international level? (Mark one box at each level)

Regionally: Improve Understanding Promote Understanding Apply Understanding

Internationally: Improve Understanding Promote Understanding Apply Understanding

Briefly describe the most significant accomplishment which the SUI should seek to achieve within the next 3 years in your region, and/or internationally.

Table 4: Emphasis for Future Work

Respondent	Regional Level			International Level		
	Improve Understanding	Promote Understanding	Apply Understanding	Improve Understanding	Promote Understanding	Apply Understanding
1		X			X	
2		X			X	
3		X			X	
4		X	X	X	X	
5		X	X	X	X	
6			X		X	
7			X		X	
8						
9			X		X	
10			X		X	
11			X			X
12		X		X		
13			X			X
14			X			X
15						
16	X			X		
17			X			X
TOTALS	1	6	10	4	9	4

Specific Guidance

A majority of the respondents offered comments consistent with the following three statements -

- ◆ An effective SUI requires the coordination and management of resources at all levels within the Union to ensure a forceful and consistent promotion and application of understanding on sustainable use in national and regional projects and policies.
- ◆ SUI must manage the networks to deliver the multi-disciplinary knowledge and experience of its members to potential users, including decision-makers. This includes sharing ongoing work and experience but also synthesizing these and drawing lessons in a form that would be used by decision-makers. This requires the development and implementation of a comprehensive communications strategy.
- ◆ SUI should develop an operational system to capture and analyze lessons from the field, both successes and failures, disseminate this knowledge through the Union, and seek to

ensure rigorous application of emerging principles of sustainable use in IUCN's programs and policies.

Individual respondents offered the following additional comments -

- ◆ SUI should broaden the analytical framework beyond wild species to include non-wild biodiversity, and pursue work at the ecosystem, species and genetic levels.
- ◆ SUI should become a key advisor to the Convention on Biological Diversity and its SBSTTA working with other IUCN elements (Global and Regional Programs and Commissions).
- ◆ SUI should start to coordinate with other programs and seek to understand the wide variety of viewpoints held by stakeholders without creating discord.
- ◆ SUI should develop a compendium of "good examples" of sustainable use, provide secretariat support to SUSG's and help them fund-raise; produce thematic papers on sustainable use issues, and convene regional and global workshops to promote sustainable use.
- ◆ SUI should promote and support the development and implementation of sustainable use projects around the world - many of these projects should aim to contribute to the restoration of critical ecosystems. (*Note: Combination of two different responses*)
- ◆ SUI should create concrete tools for the application of the analytical framework, and promote them aggressively. SUI should also prove the active and strategic evolution of the approach to sustainability which goes broader than the use of wild species and includes sectors, sustainable societies, etc.
- ◆ SUI should phase out over the next 24 months and integrate its activities and networks into the Commission on Environmental Economics and Social Policy. (*Note: A second respondent agreed that SUI should phase out and stated more generally that it should be incorporated into the mainstream of the IUCN Program.*)

Question 3

Which of the following are the key STRENGTHS of the SUI which will contribute to the achievement of the accomplishment described in Question 2 above? (Please mark between 1-4 boxes only)

- SUSG Membership (Experience, Expertise, and Influence) SUSG Management
- SUSG Funding SUSG Membership Commitment
- SUI Global Support Team SSC Support IUCN HQ Support
- IUCN RCO Support IUCN Commission Support Other

Feel free to elaborate below, and/or clarify what other strengths might be relevant.

Table 5: Key Strengths of the SUI

Survey Respondents	SUSG Membership	SUSG Management	SUSG Funding	SUSG Membership Commitment	SUI Global Support Team	SSC Support	IUCN HQ Support	IUCN RCO Support	IUCN Commission Support	Other	TOTAL
1	X										1
2	X										1
3	X			X						X	3
4	X				X		X	X			4
5			X	X		X		X			4
6			X			X	X	X			4
7	X	X			X						3
8											0
9	X			X			X		X		4
10						X				X	2
11	X		X	X							3
12	X	X	X		X		X	X			6
13	X				X	X		X			4
14	X		X	X			X				4
15				X			X		X		3
16											0
17				X	X		X				3
TOTAL	10	2	5	7	5	4	7	5	2	2	49

“SUSG Membership” and “SUSG Membership Commitment” were identified by the broadest range of respondents (IUCN Staff, SUI Global and Regional Support Team, SUSG Members) as the key strengths.

The following additional comments were provided -

- ◆ The strength of the SUI comes from the wide range of people who volunteer some time to the SUI and give the SUI the right to use their often hard-earned credentials to help establish its own credibility...without its members it would be nothing...the gaping hole lies in

the many skilled people with SU [knowledge and experience] in its varied forms that lie outside the SUI umbrella. The SUI has appreciably more to gain from getting these people "in", than the people themselves have from being "in".

- ◆ SUI's critical assets are the individual members operating in different regional and at the global level, the opportunities created for sharing information and experience, and the extensive network of contacts that each of these individuals hold.
- ◆ There is no doubt that the SUSG networks contain a high level of expertise and considerable commitment. However if this expertise is to be effectively mobilized, SUI must be seen as a partner and experts funded to write significant papers or engage in projects...this does not involve a lot of money and is cheaper than hiring consultants at market rates.
- ◆ SUI has locked out potential key players ("others") from the current process because SUI appears to welcome only like-minded persons into its regional network.
- ◆ SUI needs to strengthen the Regional Support Team and their backstopping by the Global Coordinator.
- ◆ People are the key strengths and there are many strong collaborators in both the SUI staff, IUCN (both global and regional) staff, and Commissions including but not limited to SSC. But there is considerable discrepancy in the contributions from various offices and programs within these broad categories.
- ◆ This question assumes strengths that may not exist. The SUI Global Support Team is perhaps the strongest of this group, and some of the people are excellent. But the fact that SUI has established a parallel network rather than improve the existing networks has been a distraction.
- ◆ Stronger leadership and broader vision is required from the volunteer members to achieve significant progress, as well as greater strategic alliances with partners and stronger commitment and vision from IUCN HQ and Council.

Question 4

Which of the following are the key WEAKNESSES of the SUI which might constrain achievement of the accomplishment described in question 2 above? (Please mark between 1-4 boxes only)

- SUSG Membership (Experience, Expertise, and Influence) SUSG Management
- SUSG Funding SUSG Membership Commitment
- SUI Global Support Team SSC Support IUCN HQ Support
- IUCN RCO Support IUCN Commission Support Other

Feel free to elaborate below, and/or clarify what other weaknesses might be relevant.

Table 6: Key Weaknesses of the SUI

Survey Respondents	SUSG Membership	SUSG Management	SUSG Funding	SUSG Membership Commitment	SUI Global Support Team	SSC Support	IUCN HQ Support	IUCN RCO Support	IUCN Commission Support	Other	TOTAL
1										X	1
2		X		X	X						3
3		X	X		X			X			4
4			X				X	X			3
5	X		X	X			X				4
6	X	X	X						X		4
7			X				X	X			3
8											0
9			X					X			2
10	X	X			X						3
11		X			X			X			3
12			X		X		X	X			4
13			X								1
14				1							1
15		X			X						2
16	X	X							X		3
17			X				X	X			3
TOTAL	4	7	9	3	6	0	5	7	2	1	44

“SUSG Funding”, “SUSG Management”, and “IUCN RCO Support” were identified by the broadest range of respondents (IUCN Staff, SUI Global and Regional Support Team, SUSG Members) as the key weaknesses.

The following additional comments were provided -

Management Comments:

- ♦ The central problem is an organizational one, which was originally born in a spirit of compromise and remains cumbersome. To resolve this, SUSG needs to have a very strong

chair, and one or two professional support staff that continually liaise and exchange information with the regional SUSG's. The regional SUSG's need to be supported to feed the Union, as a whole, lessons about sustainable use as a conservation strategy.

- ◆ The management of the initiative (both of the SUSG's and the Support Team) needs to be re-oriented to achieve further integration with the rest of the IUCN. When this integration happens, the real potential of SUI and the Union emerges.
- ◆ The SUI is limited by the overall management, the lack of strategic planning, and the lack of transparency and accountability. The adoption of a Constitution for the SUSG may change this situation on a regional level, but only if this is constantly monitored, evaluated and followed up on. Nothing like this is currently in place on the global level.
- ◆ Without sufficient staff and financial support (on both the RCO and global level), the voluntary SUSG's will not operate at full potential.
- ◆ The greatest weakness of SUI has been confusion in its management.
- ◆ The greatest weakness comes from the misinterpretation of the decentralization of the network. The Global Support Team has given up much needed leadership and guidance - so Chairs don't really know what to do and how to do it. They have been left free to act, without much guidance on global objectives, and little concrete action has resulted.
- ◆ SUSG Management and the Global Support Team are not well integrated.
- ◆ SUI management has adopted a "go it alone" approach that made it difficult to work with. As a result, relatively few of the IUCN Commissions have been able to do much with SUI.
- ◆ IUCN HQ needs to convert SUI into the Sustainable Use Program.
- ◆ SUI has been constrained by the lack of volunteer leadership, factionalism within the IUCN Secretariat, weak IUCN programming process and RCO collaboration, and lack of resources.

Membership Comments:

- ◆ SUSG Membership commitment is too inward and needs to be directed to the Union as a whole - this would facilitate further integration and delivery of SUSG knowledge and experience.
- ◆ The SUSG Membership has been selected in a very particular manner to reflect views of the SUI leadership rather than the view of the IUCN more broadly.

Question 5

(Question only for Regional SUSG Members and Regional RCO staff) Is there an effective operational relationship between your Regional SUSG and the local IUCN Secretariat Office in your region? Yes No If No, Please briefly describe the constraint or problem below.

Table 7: Operational Relationship - SUSGs and RCOs

Survey Respondents	Effective	Not Effective
1		X
4	X	
5	X	
6	X	
8		
9		X
11		X
12		X
14	X	
TOTAL	4	4

The balance in the assessment offered by the responding Regional SUSG Members and Regional RCO staff disguises differences of opinion between the two groups, with some of the differences related to regional variation in this relationship. In general IUCN staff found the relationship to be effective, while the volunteer SUSG members raised concerns about this relationship. The negative assessment of IUCN RCO support to the SUI in Question 4 above should be considered in assessing these results.

The following comments were provided -

- ◆ Local national IUCN offices are passionate preservationists who see sustainable use as something in direct conflict with the animal rights philosophies they hold dearly.
- ◆ In spite of the huge effort made by members of the Regional SUSG on a voluntary basis, and daily communications with the IUCN RCO, we still seem to be regarded as much a threat as a resource.
- ◆ The IUCN RCO has no interest in sustainable use.
- ◆ There is no funding allocated by the Global Support Team to cover time and other costs required to support the SUSG networks in the region, and the selection of the Global Support Team's regional coordinator did not include consultation with, nor endorsement by, the relevant Regional SUSG networks.
- ◆ The problem lies with the independent nature of commissions and their specialist groups - the relationship is no different (i.e. better) with other commissions.

Question 6

Is there an effective operational relationship between the SUI and the rest of IUCN's global programme? Yes No If No, Please briefly describe the constraint or problem below.

Table 8: Operational Relationship - SUI and IUCN Global Program

Survey Respondents	Effective	Not Effective
1		
2		
3		X
4		X
5		X
6		X
7		X
8		
9		
10		X
11		X
12		X
13		X
14		
15		X
16		X
17		X
TOTAL	0	12

The unanimity amongst those who chose to respond is striking given the wide range of responses to previous questions. However, the justification for this negative assessment varies considerably depending again on where respondents sit in the relationship (IUCN Secretariat or elsewhere). Regional variation in justification is present as well.

The following comments were provided -

- ◆ I cannot reply for the whole of IUCN's global program. We have related with SUI in our work on the CBD and this has been effective both in the provision of input and support to the inter-governmental process that we want to influence, and to provide SUI a channel to deliver their knowledge to a most influential audience.
- ◆ Problems in the relationship are due to the personalities involved, lack of transparency and accountability, and (financial) disincentives to collaborate in the overall management structure of the Union.
- ◆ Since IUCN HQ appeared to try to see off the SUI in the autumn of 1998, one can hardly answer this question in the affirmative. However, only those concerned can say where the problem lies. For a voluntary member to comment would be mere speculation.
- ◆ Problems in the relationship are due to lack of coordination, lack of buy-in from other programs, the perception that SUI is a concept in each program and thus need not stand-alone, and lack of clarity in the status of the SUSG within IUCN.

- ◆ Much confusion over the relationships and how they should function.
- ◆ Lack of advocacy in HQ isolates SUI. With prior administrations in HQ who were committed to SUI, we had much better working relations with both global programs and RCO's.
- ◆ Regional chair and support staff seem not to want to know about the interests of those other than a small "in" group.
- ◆ The only relationship we are aware of is with the Biodiversity Policy Division of HQ - with which the SUI has been involved in the CBD/SBSTTA process in a very effective manner.
- ◆ The problem lies with the lack of understanding or realization [within SUSG's] that sustainable use is a much more holistic approach than the narrow concept of sustainable harvest (e.g. logging).
- ◆ People are so busy working on the global program that there is no time for effective integration of programs, or time to even read and understand what SUI is doing. In particular, although the plants program has voiced a desire to work more closely on sustainable use initiatives, in practice the SUI is so heavily dominated by faunal issues that botanists in the network have very little interest in the SUI.
- ◆ We have certainly had some useful exchanges with SUI, so my assessment is not entirely negative. But our relationship would have been stronger if SUI had been part of SSC for example. We have found it very frustrating to contribute to the development of SUI policies, and were denied access to policies as they were being developed. We were told by SUI management that the policies could not be circulated, even to senior IUCN HQ staff, until they had been approved by the SUI Steering Committee.
- ◆ The IUCN global program is fragmented and not strategically organized. Stronger management is needed to promote the emergence of a coherent, integrated program and this much come from upper management.

Question 7

Is there an effective operational relationship between the SUI and other IUCN Commissions and Specialist Groups? Yes No Please clarify your answer below.

Table 9: Operational Relationship - SUI and IUCN Commissions

Survey Respondents	Effective	Not Effective
1		
2		
3		X
4		X
5		X
6		X
7		X
8		
9	X	
10		X
11		X
12		X
13		X
14		
15		X
16		X
17	X	
TOTAL	2	11

The two positive assessments cited relationships between the SUI and the SSC as being effective, and one of these also identified a developing relationship between the SUI and the CEM. Several of the negative assessments also used the SSC as an example of a problematic relationship between the SUI and IUCN's Commissions.

The following comments were provided -

- ◆ I question whether the messages of SUI get to those who are speaking globally in the name of IUCN from their Commission and Specialist Group positions. Some Specialist Groups have endorsed policies in direct contradiction to the policies of SUI.
- ◆ It is very difficult for voluntary groups to communicate with each other. Only executives or secretariats can organize this and it takes a lot of effort.
- ◆ In theory, SUI is related to all the Commissions and Specialist Groups. In practice, there has been little evidence.
- ◆ Approaches have been generally shunned by the SUI, with a few isolated exceptions, and there have been too many damaging statements by SUI regional members involving other sectors of IUCN.
- ◆ SUI is still in a formative stage and has not had time to interface effectively with other Commissions and Specialist Groups.
- ◆ Information on SUI projects are not filtering down to the Commissions members who might be interested in collaborating, and in the rare cases where collaboration is expected, this

often cannot be provided due to the already heavy pressure on the volunteer network....it is critical that SUI brings more scientists engaged in active research in various Specialist Groups into the process.

- ◆ SSC and SUI have seemed to be on rather different tracks, and SUI has gone out of its way to avoid becoming part of SSC.

Question 8

What is the most appropriate way to organize sustainable use activities within IUCN?

Continue as a specialist group of the SSC, with global programmatic support

Continue as a specialist group of the SSC, without global programmatic support

As its own Commission

Cease to exist on its own, and integrate into another Commission or Specialist Group, if so - which one: _____.

Integrate into other regional / global Secretariat programmes without any distinct sustainable use programme or group

Table 10: SUI Organizational Options

Respondent	SSC specialist group with global support	SSC specialist group without global support	Own Commission	Integrate into other Commissions	Integrate into Secretariat programs
1		X			
2	X				X
3	X				
4	X				
5				X	
6	X				
7			X		
8					
9			X		
10				X	
11	X				
12	X				
13	X				
14	X				
15				X	
16					X
17			X		
TOTALS	8	1	3	3	2

The majority of the respondents believed that the SUI should continue in its current form - as a specialist group of the SSC with specific global program support. Two of the three votes for a new, independent Commission came from staff of the Global/Regional Support Team who are potentially among the few people who still remember the original Task Force suggestion of this option. The votes for merger / integration of the SUI with other parts of the Union came from IUCN Secretariat staff and other Commission members. One of the IUCN HQ staff members qualified this response stating that better integration with the IUCN regional and global programs should be pursued as a top priority, and then an assessment should be taken on the need to deal with sustainable use as a separate component.

The following additional comments were provided -

- ◆ The global program support service to the SUSG compromised the SUI's ability to move to the cutting edge by its emphasis on compromise, consensus and process. However, some strong organizational link to IUCN HQ is required for the findings of the SUI to gain influence within the Union.
- ◆ This is a key question, but none of the options are very good because we start from the completely unbalanced and anachronistic structure of Commissions in IUCN and their part in Governance. If the Council were smaller and less of a political platform, the number of Commissions or Groups within them would not matter and the voluntary expertise could be organized to respond to the needs of 2000, not 1950.

Question 9

What is the most critical role for Secretariat Support (HQ, GST, Commission Secretariat) to the Sustainable Use Specialist Groups and the overall effectiveness of the Sustainable Use Initiative

- Exchange of lessons learned, within IUCN and between IUCN and other parties*
- Access to national, regional and international policy influence*
- Fundraising, financial and administrative support*
- Other (please elaborate below)*

Feel free to elaborate below, and/or clarify your answer.

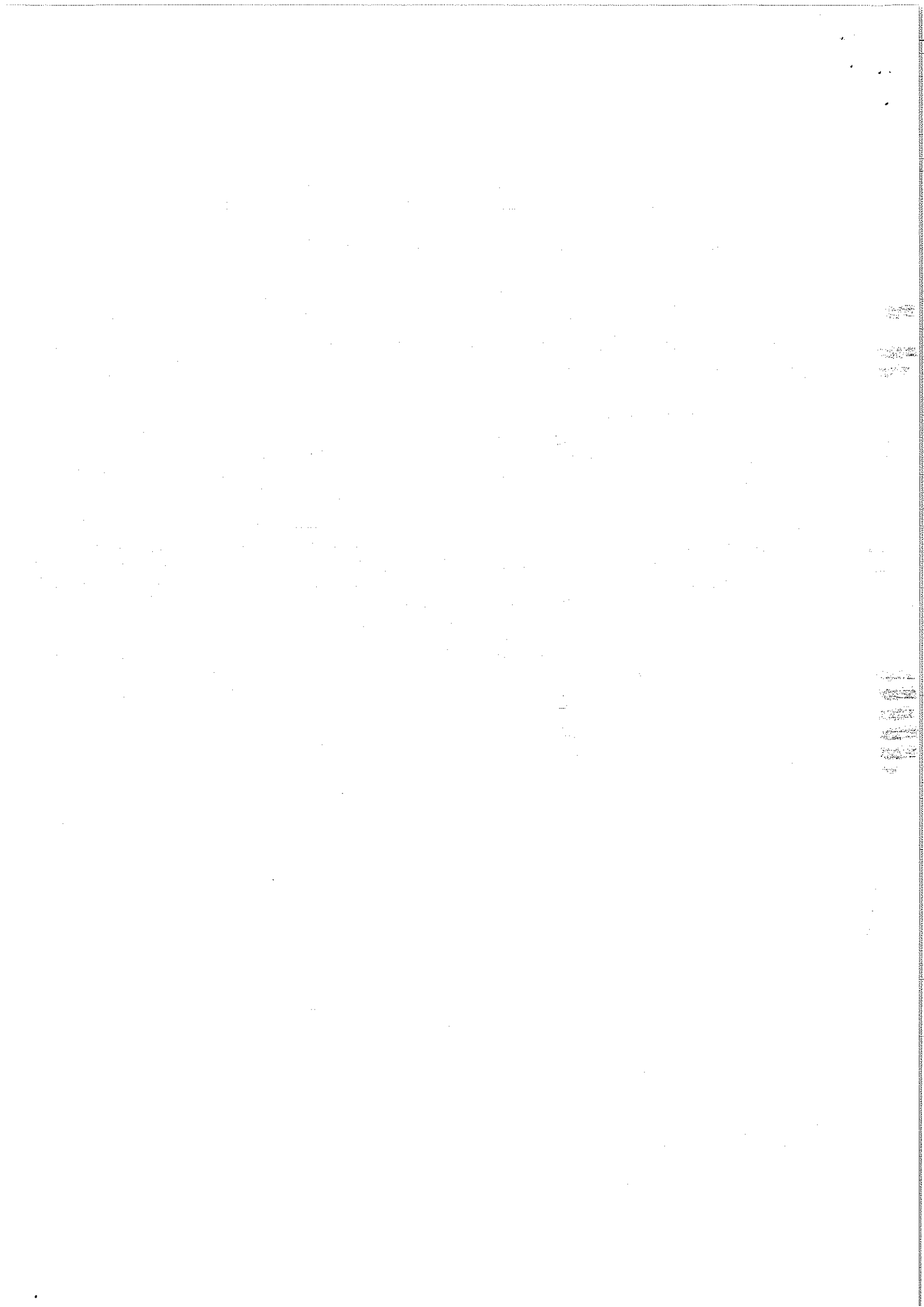
Table 11: Critical Role for Secretariat Support to SUI

Respondent	Exchange of lessons learned	Access to policy influence	Fundraising, financial and admin support	Other	Explanation of "Other"
1					
2	X	X			
3			X		
4				X	Need a focus on integration between IUCN staff and Commissions
5	X	X			
6		X	X		Synthesize information from SUSG's for delivery to policy arenas; and create space / secure resources for constituents to pursue their objectives.
7		X		X	
8					
9	X	X	X		Facilitate access to a network of scientists, policy makers, projects and funding sources.
10			X		
11			X		
12			X		
13				X	
14		X	X		
15	X	X	X		
16	X				Strategic development of integrated SU program within IUCN
17				X	
TOTALS	5	7	8	4	

The following comments were provided -

- ◆ In my opinion, the strength of the SUI and its future potential has little to do with "projects" or even initiatives conceived and undertaken by the "top". It is in providing a forum within which SUSG members (Chairs at least) can get together and start to work on global policy documents which have the potential to affect major change at all levels.
- ◆ Fundraising, financial and administrative support is critical, but if this is not supplemented by leadership that guides the Chairs into action towards achievement of the global objectives, they will be very lost and little will be achieved.
- ◆ Most SUSG's will not survive long if secretariat support is withdrawn.

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IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative Review

Part III: Future Implications and Concluding Observations

Introduction

This review of the IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative (SUI) consist of the following three elements:

Part I: Narrative history of the SUI covering its i.) rationale, mandate and objective; ii), the work plans and products of the SUI over the period January 1995 to June 1999; and, iii), the organizational development of the SUI across the constituent elements of the IUCN (Commissions, Members and Secretariat).

Part II: Survey of SUI participants and other interested IUCN parties on the performance of the SUI to date, and key recommendations for the future.

Part III: Assessment of the future implications for the SUI of these lessons.

The first two elements of the Review are descriptive. This final evaluative elements of the Review follows from the proceedings parts. The recommendations are those of the author. Elements of them have been discussed with a cross-section of the SUI participants.

Observations and Recommendations

In its initial conception in 1994, the IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative captured a new way of doing business within IUCN: an approach to integrate and fully utilize the three components of the Union - its Secretariat (including Headquarters, Regional and County Offices, and Project Offices); its Commissions and their Specialist Groups, and the full breadth of IUCN's Membership. This endeavor was, and is, significant in its organizational ambition. Furthermore, the Sustainable Use Initiative is important in its primary technical relevance to the mission of the Union.

The management and implementation of the IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative faced a number of significant challenges, including:

- the innovation in approach;
- the scope, scale, and complexity of the issues; and,
- the global political environment relevant to the "sustainable use of natural resources".

These challenges appear to have combined to create management demands for which IUCN was unprepared.

The global debate and real-life challenges relevant to sustainable use created a climate where many supporters (including financial supporters) were looking for quick guidance relevant to local, national and international policy-making; whilst others established a position of keen, critical observation and suspicion of the Initiative.

The launch of the initiative coincided with a new Director-General's whole-scale attempt to decentralize and regionalize the IUCN's program - a decision reflecting both broad consensus

amongst the membership for a more service-oriented Union, as well as a push by the principal financial supporters to increase the field level impact of their contributions. Twelve months after the launch, the Union faced consecutive reductions in the global program budget, linked in part to shifts in donor agency relationships and to a decline in the value of the Swiss Franc. During this period, several regional and country offices increased local fundraising, and asserted greater independence in program decision-making.

As a result, the Initiative appears to have suffered in a number of ways. Support for the Initiative varies considerably across different global programs, as well as throughout the network of regional and country offices. There is great disparity in appreciation for, and understanding of, the technical focus on the sustainable use of *wild species*. With the concurrent emphasis on decentralization and regionalization, several offices / programs decided that it is their right not to support nor participate in an initiative outside the central concerns of their particular program. In some regions, the political tensions related to sustainable use drove membership recruitment and programmatic management to exclude interested parties. Together, these chaotic forces polarized various components of the Union and prevented the intended integration.

Despite these strategic management set-backs, the SUI has been remarkably effective in generating analytical products and broad constituent support within the Union for its efforts and direction. The products being readied for the Second World Conservation Congress, and the technical support program linked to the Convention on Biological Diversity, are likely to generate continued support from the majority of the membership for the continuation of the SUI.

It is critical that the management issues are addressed immediately, to ensure continued and expanded financial support for the Initiative.

Recommendations

1. Executive Support for the Initiative

The initial vision of an integrated Union, utilizing the varied assets of its Membership, Commissions and Secretariat, to tackle an issue of central importance to the conservation of biological diversity, remains valid. The critical dilemma is the translation of this vision into a coherent, viable, operational plan with clearly designated and enforced roles and responsibilities.

The IUCN Director General and the IUCN Council need to provide consistent and aggressive support for the Sustainable Use Initiative.

The new IUCN DG, in consultation with the Council, needs to move quickly to confirm her vision of the role of the SUI in the broader global programme of the Union, and the relationship of the SUSG to various components of the Secretariat. In defining this role and the corresponding relationships, careful consideration needs to be given to the continued relevance of the motivations which spawned the regional, decentralized approach. Attention also needs to be given to assessing this experimental hybrid integration of IUCN Commission and IUCN Programme with the aim of resolving institutional relationship constraints between the constituent parts of the Union. The DG's decisions need to be backed up by devoted secretariat support and communication channels.

A clear statement of objectives and methods should be developed, followed by appropriate allocations of resources (existing and new targets), and the establishment of efficient management systems for implementation.

2. SUI Coordinator

Success will require the continuous attention of the Director General to the management needs of the initiative. A single individual reporting directly to the Director General should be designated responsibility for the coordination of the Sustainable Use Initiative with the global program, regional and county offices, and the Commissions.

3. SUI Management Committee

This individual should chair an SUI Management Committee with representation from the SUSG Steering Committee, Global Program Coordination, regional and county offices, and the Commissions. The committee's terms of reference should emphasize the identification and pursuit of organizational integration strategies, and become an experiment towards this end. The recommendations and results should affect the rest of the Union's program development, financing, implementation, monitoring and reporting systems.

The SUSG Management Committee should generate a framework of global SUI priorities - and experiment with different methods to secure integration of effort on these priorities. The global SUI priorities should be relevant to existing analytical needs relevant to the Convention on Biological Diversity and other international fora. While all Regional SUSG's should contribute to the global priorities, they should be encouraged to address regionally specific priorities as well.

The integration effort must extend beyond the realm of technical programs and ensure coherent and consistent policy statements relevant to the sustainable use of wild species at national, regional and international levels. This will require a watchful Director General, and undoubtedly occasional intervention from this office.

To be successful, this experiment needs buy in from all components of the Union in every region the Initiative intends to operate. Where such buy-in is not forthcoming, the Director General will need to back decisions to either scale back the Initiative's geographic coverage or use the power of the office to draw the required support.

4. SUSG Steering Committee

The SUSG Steering Committee on its own is not well positioned to achieve the desired Union integration. It should focus on the management of the regional SUSG's, including their funding, coordination, analytical programs and membership issues.

The SUSG Steering Committee needs to recognize its own strengths and weaknesses in advancing the SUI programme under its largely volunteer structure and between its annual meetings. With increasing confidence in its leadership position, it must move decisively to delegate programmatic responsibilities and actions to full time SUI staff (i.e. the Global Support Team or possibly other components of the IUCN Secretariat) - whilst maintaining effective means for supervision, guidance and strategic management.

5. SUI Membership

The inclusion of IUCN's membership in the Initiative should take place through the Sustainable Use Specialist Groups, and through membership participation in local, national, regional and international programs coordinated by the Secretariat. While the SUSG Steering Committee should have lead responsibility for establishing, implementing and monitoring membership policies in the SUSG networks - they should do so under guidance from the recommended SUI Management Committee and be accountable on membership issues to this committee.

6. SUI Analytical Agenda

The process for developing the analytical agenda appears to have evolved nicely after some early confusion. A strong SUSG membership based agenda, supplemented by guidance from the broader Union and relevant international policy fora, is appropriate. Outside of a few well defined SUI wide analytical foci; individual regional SUSG's should be encouraged to pursue locally relevant issues and share the results with the Union.

With reference to its three original technical objectives, the SUI has targeted the first in its analytical and technical work program, greatly influenced by the SUI Advisory Group / Executive. However the focus of programmatic activity in the regions appears to have been devoted more to the second objective. Little attention at any level within the SUI appears to have been given to the third objective. This balance may need to be reassessed in terms of Union wide needs and expectations from the Initiative.

Globally, individual scholars from various Regional SUSG's have made substantive contributions to international understanding of sustainable use around the world. Critics contest that the contributions from the SUI are neither sufficiently definitive nor authoritative. The leadership of the SUI recognizes that more time is needed to complete the regionalization and decentralization process that is a pre-requisite for significant advances in the analytical agenda. Furthermore, the SUI does not envisage itself as the pinnacle of authority on sustainable use, but as a mechanism to provide focus for debate and further research. The products, including regional case studies, global syntheses, and various commissioned papers, contribute admirably to this end.

The impact of the SUI at regional levels can not be ascertained adequately from the written record. The SUSG Chair suggested that the SUI has contributed to an "intellectual sharpening" in some regions, and it has provided a channel for sustainable use's voices and views to be heard in national, regional and international debates. There is no doubt that the promotional objective of SUI has been successfully pursued in some regions. Increasing attention needs to be given to the development of additional regional case studies.

7. SUI Fundraising

The DG needs to ensure sufficient funding is allocated to the Initiative to allow for the critical experiment in integration. The SUSG Management Committee should generate the necessary framework for targeted fundraising to global SUI priorities - and experiment with different means of allocation to secure integration of effort on these priorities.

New processes and mechanisms for fundraising need to be developed which reflect the importance of individual Regional SUSG's and the collective leadership of the SUSG Steering Committee for the realization of an integrated SUI at the regional level.

Individual Regional SUSG's also need to improve their own local fundraising efforts. These local efforts need to be coordinated with, and should received support from, relevant regional and country offices.

End Note:

None of the alternative solutions - from maintenance of the status quo, to shifting the SUI to a new Secretariat global program, to creating a Commission on Sustainable Use - have all the necessary factors to achieve the intended integration.

The experiment suggested above is timely in that it not only addresses immediate management needs for an effective Sustainable Use Initiative but will also generate guidance on long-standing challenges of global program development, financing, implementation and monitoring which constrain the Union from realizing its full potential.

The recommendations developed above have not informed, nor been informed by, the newly constituted IUCN Sustainable Use Advisory Group which is scheduled to meet in Gland on 11-12 February 2000. These recommendations hopefully

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