



IUCN



**Shell Global
Solutions
International BV**

**Evaluation of the IUCN – Shell collaborative partnership,
2014 -2017**

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9 October 2017.

Preface

This is the report of an evaluation of the collaborative partnership between Shell Global Solutions International and IUCN, 2014 – 2017, commissioned by the Director-General of IUCN and the Vice President, Environment, of Shell.

I wish to thank IUCN and Shell for this interesting assignment, and especially to thank all those informants who generously took the time to provide information and opinions about the progress of the partnership. I hope that the report will prove useful in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the partnership and helping the partners to achieve their joint objectives.

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Abbreviations

BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BBP	Business and Biodiversity Programme
BV	besloten vennootschap (private limited company)
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEM	Commission on Ecosystem Management
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSBI	Cross Sector Biodiversity Initiative
DDG	Deputy Director General
EBI	Energy and Biodiversity Initiative
FTE	full time equivalent
IFAW	International Fund for Animal Welfare
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IPIECA	International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association
ISTAP	Independent Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JV	joint venture
NA	not applicable
NBS	nature-based solutions
nd	not dated
NDP	Niger Delta Panel
NPI	net positive impact
OGCI	Oil and Gas Climate Initiative
PSTF	Private Sector Task Force
RM	Relationship Manager
ROWA	Regional Office for West Asia
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
SEIC	Sakhalin Energy Investment Company
SIPD	Shell Iraq Petroleum Development
SPDC	Shell Petroleum Development Company
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TOR	terms of reference
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
VFM	value for money
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WGWAP	Western Grey Whale Advisory Panel
WI	Wetlands International
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

Summary and recommendations

Introduction

IUCN and Shell conclude the latest phase of their partnership in December 2017, and have already agreed in principle to pursue a further phase from January 2018. This evaluation of the current phase (from January 2014) is meant to assess the performance of the partnership in conventional evaluation terms (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and potential impact) and to make recommendations to contribute to IUCN's strategy for engaging the energy sector and to inform the design of the planned subsequent phase of the IUCN – Shell partnership starting in 2018. The evaluation is based on review of available documentation, interviews with 23 key informants and remote participation in the biannual partnership meeting held in July 2017.

The evaluation identified four broad **categories of work** done through the partnership during the review period.

1. Two IUCN **Independent Scientific and Technical Advisory Panels** (ISTAPs) had a high profile: the Western Grey Whale Advisory Panel (WGWAP), which works with the Sakhalin Energy Investment Company (in which Shell is a minority shareholder); and the Niger Delta Panel (NDP).
2. Joint efforts to develop **broad concepts and strategies** include exploration of nature-based solutions (NBS), which emerged as a key initiative for both organisations; the concept of net positive impact (NPI), around which progress was more difficult; more limited work on the concept of natural capital; and stimulating but so far inconclusive discussions on transformational change.
3. On a smaller scale, there were efforts to **develop or amend technical approaches** in some areas, including decommissioning of oil and gas installations at sea and marine protected areas mapping, neither of which led to any joint activity.
4. **Capacity development** was also undertaken on a small scale, notably in association with the Majnoon operation in Iraq.

The evaluation also identified three broad **modalities** through which partnership activities take place:

1. **focused technical collaboration on specific projects** – operational or conceptual;
2. **informal technical consultation** – the 'sounding board' function – in which environmental and other managers in Shell may explore ideas and issues with their counterparts in IUCN, and vice versa, through phone calls and meetings.
3. **interaction at leadership level**, where occasional calls or face to face meetings between senior executives may give direction to the partnership, address urgent issues, or determine how particular concepts or themes should be developed together.

Spanning this matrix of activities and modalities were the three '**value drivers**' or overall objectives of this phase of the partnership, worded in the current (December 2013) agreement as:

1. **bring science to bear**: use science better in contributing to meaningful decision making processes to provide better conservation outcomes for nature and business;
2. **bring new players to the table**: encourage a wider participation of other businesses and organisations in the various initiatives in order to enlarge the area of influence;
3. **bring biodiversity to the attention of Shell's leadership**: encourage discussion and assessment of the topic of biodiversity by the Executive Committee.

Findings

Both Shell and IUCN continue to see the partnership as **relevant** to their objectives. Informants in the two organisations agree that the three ‘value drivers’ remain relevant to the achievement of ‘conservation results’, and to transforming practices in Shell and in the oil and gas industry. However, it is also agreed that relevance must be combined with realism. These objectives are appropriate. But such a partnership is not by itself sufficient to transform practice in Shell and the sector – even if the objective of bringing new players to the table is accomplished. However well the IUCN-Shell partnership performs – and it can make an important contribution - it can only be one of the influences on the attitudes and performance of multinational extractive industries.

The **effectiveness** of the partnership is assessed in terms of the three ‘value drivers’.

With their focused and visible activities and practical outputs, the GWAP and NDP ISTAPs have been effective in **‘bringing science to bear’**. The partnership faces a more complex challenge in ‘bringing science to bear’ on the broader conceptual issues that it has been approaching, such as NBS and NPI. Working at this conceptual scale is not a short-term task. Nevertheless, valuable work was done in bringing the concept of nature-based solutions (NBS) to the centre of the partners’ interest and likely commitment over the coming years. It was harder to make progress with the idea of net positive impact (NPI). The protracted development of the training programme for Iraq associated with the Majnoon operation also demonstrates that ‘bringing science to bear’ involves much more than science. In this case, the political and cultural dimensions of the process were probably more important, demonstrating the locally-specific resources that IUCN can bring to some joint tasks.

There has been less tangible success in **‘bringing new players to the table’**. But many of those players have certainly been looking through the window, and occasionally put their heads around the door. The International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA) remained a useful forum for this purpose. As in IUCN’s general private sector experience over the last decade, other companies have been reluctant to commit formally to the type of collaboration that Shell undertakes with it. Indirectly, however, the work that IUCN and Shell do can be said to have broader conservation benefits, in that other industry players watch, learn and sometimes apply the approaches that the partnership explores. The partnership has influenced regulators, too, notably through ISTAPs. Another indirect way in which the Shell-IUCN partnership has ‘brought other players to the table’ is the new Rio Doce Panel, established by IUCN in consultation with BHP, which owns 50% of the Samarco mine in Brazil and received encouragement about the ISTAP model from Shell.

Although it is hard to prove, informants are confident that almost two decades of collaboration between the organisations have indeed helped to **bring biodiversity to the attention of Shell’s leadership**. This third mode of interaction is irregular but significant. Both sides could make more of it.

Overall, informants consider the partnership to have been effective through all three of the modalities outlined above, and to have made useful progress in respect of all three ‘value drivers’. They consider a degree of experimentation and failure to be acceptable, especially at the smaller end of the spectrum, and to some extent the ‘project funnel’ approach has helped to sift stronger from weaker project ideas. While open preliminary discussion about numerous concepts and project possibilities is valuable, it is also important to recognise IUCN’s trend towards tighter targeting and stronger co-ordination of Secretariat activities across the global, regional and country office levels. Doing less better has emerged as the management emphasis. This is not irreconcilable with the sometimes exploratory and wide-ranging nature of IUCN-Shell discussions. But for both parties the first of the three modes of collaboration – focused technical projects – remains a vital ingredient of effectiveness for the partnership.

Stakeholder engagement has internal and external dimensions for IUCN and for Shell. Both organisations could do better in ensuring that all relevant parts of their structures engage beneficially in the opportunities and tasks of the partnership. This links to the challenge of incomplete internal

communications about it. The external communications of the partnership are governed by a mix of conservatism and economy. It is difficult to know how effective these rather limited external communications are, as monitoring of website hits, for example, is incomplete. The WGAP and its story of Flex the whale was the most prominent communications success in the review period. Overall, it must be concluded that the contribution of public communications to the effectiveness of the partnership has been limited.

The **governance** of the partnership has been broadly satisfactory. Links with the IUCN Council’s Private Sector Task Force will need to be revived when that body is reconvened.

Overall, **management and co-ordination** arrangements over the review period have facilitated efficient administration and implementation of the IUCN-Shell partnership. The experience and attitudes of the individuals involved have been more significant in this than the formal systems and procedures in use.

During the latter part of the review period, IUCN personnel were much absorbed in the (still ongoing) process of reforming the **IUCN Programme**. In planning the structure and contents of the next phase of the partnership, IUCN and Shell should seek to optimise the accountability, communication, management and reporting benefits that IUCN’s changes should offer – in particular, exploring ways to build conceptual and operational links across IUCN’s new ‘business lines’ from the work that the Business and Biodiversity Programme (BBP) co-ordinates with Shell.

The **‘project funnel’** is a key element in the co-ordination of the partnership. Informants broadly see it as useful and efficient. This again reflects the trusting, confident character of the relationship after nearly two decades. A degree of informality in allowing ideas to take shape, over varying and sometimes lengthy periods, characterises their use of the ‘funnel’.

At working level, IUCN and Shell display an organic approach to the management of their partnership, rather than a fully systematic and structured one. This means that **written records of partnership performance and results** are scattered and inconsistent. It should be possible, without undue effort, to develop a simple system for documenting each item in the ‘project funnel’, from preliminary concepts to practical projects.

In qualitative terms, it is easy to confirm that the Shell-IUCN partnership delivers **value for money (VFM)**. Objective measurement of VFM is much more challenging. Considering the complexity of the assumptions and calculations that would be involved, it does not seem worth the effort. Both organisations can and should recognise that qualitative judgement about what is worth doing can be legitimate and appropriate in some circumstances.

Conclusions and recommendations

Recommendations in the narrative below are summarised in the table on page x.

Eighteen years after formal engagements between IUCN and Shell began, the partnership is now characterised by technical and organisational trust. The highest priority for the next phase of the partnership must be to maintain this trust and the multiple ways in which it is expressed.

At the same time, there is consensus that ‘business as usual’ would not be the best way to frame the next phase of collaboration. **This should not become a comfortable relationship.** It can become stronger and more effective through disagreements as well as converging views.

While IUCN’s ‘sounding board’ function for Shell is an appropriate and useful part of the partnership, IUCN’s roles are much broader and more meaningful, and towards the end of the period it was increasingly

proactive in its development of themes on which to work with Shell. (Shell was thus a ‘sounding board’ for IUCN, too.) NBS was the prime example of this. It should continue this trend.

The partners have learned the value of strategic and conceptual discussions, exploring ideas and paradigms. This is an acceptable and legitimate part of their relationship, although it requires management vigilance to ensure that it does not become too shapeless or open-ended. A related lesson is that failure is an acceptable part of the relationship, as long as the relevant lessons are extracted from it.

Another lesson has been that a mix of focused projects and conceptual or strategic work is appropriate. **For both types of activity, the partners should strive to formulate the work and its objectives clearly; to be modest in their ambitions; to keep the activities simple (without restricting the conceptual scope of strategic explorations); and to specify as far as possible what the indicators of successful performance should be.** It will be important in the next phase to intensify efforts to identify and launch new joint projects. Broad conceptual discussions are valuable, but the focused projects are more visible inside and outside the two organisations.

The partners should **be proactive about stimulating top level interactions between Shell and IUCN management.** At that level, such meetings or conversations are hard to plan or predict, but they should not be left entirely to chance at occasions like Davos where the relevant individuals are likely to coincide.

Based on the lessons of the last four years, a number of opportunities arise for IUCN in structuring its contributions to the next phase of the partnership.

- **IUCN should strive to engage its Regional and Country Offices more in the design and implementation of partnership activities.**
- **IUCN should seek to engage its Global Programmes, Commissions and State Members more fully in the design and implementation of partnership activities.**
- **IUCN should align the next phase of the Shell partnership closely with its restructured Programme,** linking activities explicitly to the three ‘business lines’ of the BBP and possibly to one or more ‘business lines’ of other Global Programmes.

Work during the review period demonstrated that the partnership can function effectively with a limited budget – although the partners remained painfully aware that they could achieve more with more money. In the next phase, **IUCN and Shell should seek and explore additional funding for partnership activities, or for work derived from the partnership.** This could be built on IUCN access to global opportunities like the Green Climate Fund, and/or to other funding streams within Shell, linked to specific business opportunities or projects.

The partners should revise ‘value driver’ 3: ‘bring biodiversity to the attention of Shell’s leadership’. A better way of phrasing the ambition might be in terms of supporting Shell’s strategic decision-making as it tackles the environmental impacts of hydrocarbon extraction and use, and works for a lower carbon future.

The concept of NBS has found genuine traction in IUCN and Shell, although the partners’ interpretations of the concept are not exactly the same. **The partners should retain and develop NBS as a central theme in the next phase, building from conceptual discussions to practical pilots.**

Important lessons were learned during the review period about the concept of NPI and its application. **Without necessarily waiting for a new Shell project through which to pilot it, the partners should keep NPI in the ‘project funnel’ and explore other ways of elaborating and applying the concept.**

The partners have tended to assume that significant innovations like NPI can only be attempted when Shell launches a new project – which it has not recently done. **They should re-examine this assumption and consider whether some enhanced concepts and practices can be applied to existing operations too.**

One of the lessons from the technical collaborations of the review period was that IUCN’s regional and country level resources – including their local networks and cultural insights – were not always optimally exploited. **The partners should now explore the possibility of bringing one or more IUCN Regional or Country Offices into support for one or more of Shell’s ten country-specific energy transition planning processes.**

IUCN and Shell should consider broader possibilities during the next phase for ‘bringing new players to the table’:

- **continued efforts to engage new (probably large-scale) players formally**, for example through links with IPIECA – which should be maintained and strengthened - as well as specific contacts with individual companies;
- building on the types of work that IUCN and Shell have done together, **reach out to other players with the offer of joint informal discussions on concepts, scenarios and strategy**, emphasising what IUCN has to offer in this regard (in addition to narrower technical issues like oil spills and endangered species);
- **pilot efforts at country level, possibly involving IUCN country offices, and building on existing IUCN-Shell experience, to engage smaller-scale operators;**
- again working with IUCN country or regional offices, and possibly linked to Shell’s country-specific energy transition planning, **efforts to engage the entire oil and gas sector in a country**: one possibility could be Iraq, building on the successful outreach by the current Majnoon project.

Another opportunity in this area of partnership endeavour is the next **Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**, to be held in Egypt in November 2018. This will focus on biodiversity, energy and mining, and offers clear opportunities for IUCN and Shell to profile their partnership and to explore new linkages.

While recognising that opportunities for this modality are not common, **Shell and IUCN should be alert to new situations for which development of an ISTAP would be appropriate.**

Less progress was made with the decommissioning of maritime infrastructure than had been hoped. **IUCN and Shell should continue to see decommissioning as a real opportunity for joint action, and plan accordingly at suitable sites worldwide.**

The partners’ work together over the review period has endorsed the value of the ‘project funnel’ as a way of filtering ideas and determining whether to carry them forward into focused projects. But **they should remain vigilant in ensuring tight and timely management of the ‘funnel’, ensuring that they are always clear about which ideas are where in it, and why.**

Shell and IUCN should develop a simple system for documenting each item in and beyond the ‘project funnel’, from preliminary concepts to practical projects. This should summarise the nature of the idea or activity, and periodically record significant activities and results. It could serve as the basis for a simple monitoring system that goes beyond the current notes presented to partnership meetings.

Given the central role that advocacy plays in IUCN’s mission, and the reputational benefits that can accrue to Shell from its partnership with IUCN, **the two organisations should commit to a higher and more active communications profile in the next phase of the partnership.** This will, inevitably, need increased resources.

Taking into account the partners’ reasons for caution in this area, **IUCN and Shell should reappraise their policies on communication and debate around partnership activities, and consider the limited use of social media as an additional communications medium in the next phase.**

The report concludes with application of a subjective summary partnership assessment tool that was also used in the 2010 evaluation of the partnership. This qualitative assessment confirms that the partnership has made substantial progress since 2010. Much remains to be done, and new challenges have become clearer during the review period. But IUCN and Shell stand on firm foundations as they consider a further phase of collaboration.

By way of summary, the table below provides a consolidated list of the recommendations made by this review, with explanatory comments where appropriate.

Report section	No.	Recommendation	Comment
6.2	The character, strategies and funding of the partnership		
	1	For both focused projects and conceptual or strategic work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formulate the work and its objectives clearly; • set objectives modestly; • keep activities simple; • specify performance indicators. 	
	2	Intensify efforts to identify and launch new projects.	Broad conceptual discussions are valuable, but the focused projects are more visible inside and outside the two organisations.
	3	Be proactive about stimulating top level interactions between Shell and IUCN management.	At that level, such meetings or conversations are hard to plan or predict, but they should not be left entirely to chance at occasions like Davos where the relevant individuals are likely to coincide.
	4	IUCN should strive to engage its Regional and Country Offices more in the design and implementation of partnership activities.	
	5	IUCN should seek to engage its Global Programmes, Commissions and State Members more fully in the design and implementation of partnership activities.	
	6	IUCN should align the next phase of the Shell partnership closely with its restructured Programme.	
	7	IUCN and Shell should seek and explore additional funding for partnership activities, or for work derived from the partnership.	This could be built on IUCN access to global opportunities like the Green Climate Fund, and/or to other funding streams within Shell, linked to specific business opportunities or projects.
6.3	Areas of technical collaboration		
	8	Revise 'value driver' 3: 'bring biodiversity to the attention of Shell's leadership'.	A better way of phrasing the ambition might be in terms of supporting Shell's strategic decision-making as it tackles the environmental impacts of hydrocarbon extraction and use, and works for a lower carbon future.
	9	Retain and develop NBS as a central theme in the next phase, building from conceptual discussions to practical pilots.	This should take the concept beyond simple carbon offsetting to the direct linkage of hydrocarbons consumption and proactive, landscape-wide approaches to compensating

Report section	No.	Recommendation	Comment
			for that consumption.
	10	Without necessarily waiting for a new Shell project through which to pilot it, the partners should keep NPI in the 'project funnel' and explore other ways of elaborating and applying the concept.	
	11	Re-examine the assumption that significant innovations like NPI can only be attempted when Shell launches a new project. Consider whether some enhanced concepts and practices can be applied to existing operations too.	
	12	Explore the possibility of bringing one or more IUCN Regional or Country Offices into support for one or more of Shell's ten country-specific energy transition planning processes.	
	13	With regard to 'bringing new players to the table': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue efforts to bring new (probably large-scale) players to the table; • reach out to other players with the offer of joint informal discussions on concepts, scenarios and strategy; • pilot efforts at country level, possibly involving IUCN country offices, and building on existing IUCN-Shell experience, to engage smaller-scale operators; • try to engage the entire oil and gas sector in a country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for example through links with IPIECA – links with that body should be maintained and strengthened - as well as specific contacts with individual companies; • this could be tried in Iraq, building on the successful outreach by the Majnoon project.
	14	Starting with the December 2017 meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) in Montreal, plan ways to advance the purpose of the partnership through the next CBD COP.	These could include the IUCN BBP convening a Business Week on the COP theme in early 2018.
	15	Be alert to new situations for which development of an ISTAP would be appropriate.	
	16	Continue to see decommissioning of marine infrastructure as a real opportunity for joint action, and plan accordingly at suitable sites worldwide.	
6.4	Governance and management		
	17	As soon as its Council's Private Sector Task Force is operational again, IUCN should expedite a briefing on the Shell partnership. It should then ensure regular liaison with the PSTF in order to facilitate understanding and support from the Council for the partnership.	
	18	Remain vigilant in ensuring tight and timely	

Report section	No.	Recommendation	Comment
		management of the 'project funnel', ensuring it is always clear which ideas are where in it, and why.	
	19	Develop a simple system for documenting each item in and beyond the 'project funnel', from preliminary concepts to practical projects.	This should summarise the nature of the idea or activity, and periodically record significant activities and results.
6.5	Communication		
	20	Commit to a higher and more active communications profile in the next phase of the partnership.	This will, inevitably, mean increased resources.
	21	Renew the joint communications plan for 2018 and work systematically to implement and report on it.	
	22	For each partnership activity, the relevant technical and communications staff should produce periodic one-page summaries for public communication.	This should help address the obvious fact that effective communications require useable material to communicate – and provide the necessary linkage between communications and learning.
	23	IUCN and Shell should reappraise their policies on communication and debate around partnership activities, and consider the limited use of social media as an additional communications medium in the next phase.	Action in this regard should of course take into account the partners' reasons for caution in this area.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Shell Global Solutions International BV (referred to hereafter as 'Shell') and IUCN (the International Union for Conservation of Nature) agreed the latest phase of their long-running collaboration on 18 December 2013, to be effective from January 2014 to December 2017. This followed an earlier agreement signed in 2007, and a history of collaboration dating back to 1999, when Shell brought a number of NGOs together to discuss potential joint approaches to biodiversity conservation (Quaile *et al.*, 2012: 3). The report just cited summarised the work done through the partnership over the originally planned five years from 2007¹, as well as activities over the earlier period from 1999. In 2010, a mid-term review of the agreement was undertaken (Turner, 2010).

As the current phase of the agreement nears its end, IUCN and Shell have agreed in principle to launch a further phase from January 2018. This evaluation is intended to support the planning of activities in the new phase, based on lessons learned since 2014.

1.2 Objectives and scope of the partnership

A concept note annexed to the 2013 partnership agreement stated that

In 2012, IUCN developed a new business engagement strategy, endorsed by the IUCN Council, responding to the request from IUCN Members to streamline and clarify private sector engagement and create closer links to the Programmes and vision of IUCN. Shell meanwhile wants to ensure optimum use of the science and convening power of IUCN, better leverage the work of IUCN Commissions, involve other partners and extend the new initiatives beyond the traditional business portfolio boundaries of Shell. In addition, the mid-term and final reviews of the 2007-2012 IUCN-Shell collaboration also highlighted the need for better coordination, increased communication and enhanced stakeholder engagement.

Consequently, future collaborations between Shell and IUCN need to be purposeful and targeted. A shared level of ambition to drive change in both organizations was identified and a set of common value drivers were defined. These value drivers fit well with the IUCN business engagement strategy and the IUCN Programme for 2013-2016. They are to:

- **Bring science to bear:** *Use science better in contributing to meaningful decision making processes to provide better conservation outcomes for nature and business.*
- **Bring new players to the table:** *Encourage a wider participation of other businesses and organizations in the various initiatives in order to enlarge the area of influence.*
- **Bring biodiversity to the attention of Shell's Leadership:** *Encourage discussion and assessment of the topic of biodiversity by the Executive Committee.*

IUCN & Shell, 2013: 15.

1.3 Activities during the review period

Unlike its predecessor, the 2013 agreement did not identify four categories of joint activity that Shell and IUCN might pursue together. In practice, the work done since 2014 has spanned several modes of collaboration, reported in updates presented to the roughly biennial 'collaboration meetings' (effectively

¹ In fact, the subsequent agreement, as noted, was signed a year later.

steering committee meetings) that the partners hold. The most comprehensive summary of activities was that presented to the July 2017 collaboration meeting (IUCN & Shell, 2017). It included the following.

- Two major IUCN **Independent Scientific and Technical Advisory Panels** (ISTAPs; see IUCN, 2014). The **Western Grey Whale Advisory Panel** (WGWAP; see Martin-Mehers, 2016) advises the Sakhalin Energy Investment Company (in which Shell has a minority holding). It was established in 2006. The **Niger Delta Panel** (NDP) worked with the Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) in Nigeria from 2012 to 2017 (NDP, 2013);
- Joint efforts to develop **broad concepts and strategies** include exploration of **nature-based solutions** (NBS), which have emerged as a key initiative for both organisations. IUCN defines them as “actions to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems, which address societal challenges (e.g. climate change, food and water security or natural disasters) effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits (Cohen-Shacham et al. (eds.), 2016: xii). Shell focuses on them as a means of capturing and storing CO₂ emissions through natural carbon sinks, such as forests and peatlands. IUCN and Shell have also worked on the concept of **net positive impact** (NPI), notably through an NPI Alliance with Rio Tinto, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). This grouping disbanded in 2015 (section 3.2.2 below). The two organisations also collaborated on the concept of **natural capital**, piloting a Natural Capital Protocol in the Philippines in 2016. At a workshop in 2016, Shell and IUCN explored the concept of **transformational change** in biodiversity management, and whether the two organisation’s concepts and approaches in this area could contribute to each other (IUCN, 2017a). This was a constructive discussion, but it has not yet led to specific joint actions – discussions continue on how best to apply a potentially valuable concept (section 5.2).
- On a smaller scale, there were joint efforts to **develop or amend technical approaches** in some areas. There have been various contacts on **decommissioning of oil and gas installations at sea**, but no practical joint action – although some stakeholders continue to see this as an important opportunity (section 5.2 below). Exploration of a project on **marine protected areas mapping** did not lead to any joint activity. During the review period, the partnership supported a **review of the Speaking A Common Language project**, which was funded earlier by Shell, and was an assessment of IUCN’s management categories for protected areas (Stolton *et al.*, 2015). There was no action to follow up the review. Early in the period, Shell supported IUCN work on development of **key biodiversity area** standards.
- There were two activities to **build capacity**. An ambitious project for this purpose to **strengthen Iraqi capacity** in biodiversity conservation, protected areas management and related fields, in association with Shell’s Majnoon operations, was reduced to a simpler set of training courses, the first of which was given in August 2017. A longer-running collaboration between IUCN, Shell and Earth Watch on the **Earth Skills Network** continued, with IUCN in an advisory role. This provided training for protected areas managers and exposure for Shell personnel on biodiversity conservation challenges.

Behind the scenes of the specific activities summarised above, Shell and IUCN maintained frequent informal contacts at technical and managerial levels, exploring issues and ideas. In these informal discussions, IUCN often served as a sounding board for ideas that Shell wished to explore, and vice versa. But there were also contacts to discuss specific sensitive issues and for consultations on potential areas of collaboration.

The concept note annexed to the 2013 agreement proposed two strategic initiatives based on the three ‘value drivers’. The first of these was a business alliance on landscape/seascape stewardship for extractives. It did not proceed in that form, although its central theme remained highly relevant to the joint work that was done. The second was on sustainable biofuels, but by the time the current phase of the partnership

began, Shell and IUCN had decided that this was not a productive issue for the partnership to focus on, with some remaining funds previously earmarked for it used for NPI work.

1.4 Terms of reference

The terms of reference (TOR) for this review are shown at Annex 1. They state that “the objective of the evaluation is both to assess achievement towards its stated objectives..., and to learn from the experience of running the IUCN-Shell partnership between 2014 and mid-2017. This evaluation is expected to be formative in nature, with an emphasis on learning.” They require assessment of the partnership in terms of the standard evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and potential impact, and call for recommendations “to a) contribute to IUCN’s strategy for engaging the energy sector, and b) to inform the design of the planned subsequent phase of the IUCN – Shell partnership starting in 2018.”

1.5 Methods used

The review is based mainly on review of the relevant documentation (as supplied by IUCN and Shell and supplemented by literature obtained elsewhere) and on interviews with key informants: mainly, but not entirely, within the two organisations. Annex 3 shows a list of the 23 persons interviewed.

At the start of the exercise, the consultant submitted a brief inception report that set out the proposed approach and methods and developed the draft evaluation matrix shown in the TOR to the version that, following approval of the inception report, is now shown at Annex 2 below. The matrix expands on questions posed by the TOR and sets out series of sub-questions, indicating how they will be answered. This report follows the structure of the evaluation matrix.

As emphasised in the inception report, this is an evidence-based evaluation that strives for impartiality and objectivity and to triangulate the (potentially differing) information and opinions received from various quarters about the performance of the IUCN-Shell relationship.

The report includes a partnership assessment tool that was first used in the 2010 evaluation of the partnership, and makes a second assessment to score the relationship on the criteria used by that tool. While this is only a subjective assessment and should not be seen as authoritative, it may be interesting for readers to consider whether they agree with the scores given and with the way they compare with the 2010 scores on the same criteria.

Due to ill health, the consultant was unable to travel to Gland for the 7 July partnership meeting between IUCN and Shell. However, he was able to participate remotely.

2 Relevance

2.1 Introduction

The key question posed about relevance by the TOR and the evaluation Matrix (Annexes 1 and 2) is “to assess the relevance and appropriateness of the scope and ambition of the IUCN-Shell partnership agreement”. The corresponding sub-questions are shown in the box.

- Does the relationship continue to align to the strategic priorities of Shell and IUCN?
- Are the objectives relevant and adequate to achieve conservation results?
- Are they relevant and adequate to transform practices for Shell and for the oil and gas industry?

2.2 Alignment with the partners’ strategic priorities

Shell continues to see its relationship with IUCN as relevant and well aligned with its strategic priorities. The review period saw a downturn in Shell revenues and in the launch of new operations by the company. Despite tighter budgets, the relationship with IUCN (unlike some other environmental partnerships) was maintained – and, as noted above, there is already commitment in principle to renew it. Speaking in general about its four environmental partners, Shell says that “by working together [with us], these organisations can bring specific expertise to our projects in areas such as biodiversity, while advancing their scientific or conservation knowledge” (Shell, 2017).

As a Union of diverse Members, IUCN comprises a range of views on the relevance of private sector partnerships to its vision and mission. During the review period, earlier opposition to the Shell partnership in some parts of the Union declined, although it did not disappear. There was a more positive aggregate view on the relevance of working with Shell, and a stronger consensus that such collaboration could help to achieve IUCN’s strategic priorities.

2.3 Achievement of conservation results

The current agreement between IUCN and Shell does not explicitly specify objectives. Instead, it identifies three ‘value drivers’, as quoted in section 1.2 above, against the background of “a shared level of ambition to drive change in both organisations” (IUCN & Shell, 2013: 15).

The term ‘conservation results’ is a useful shorthand, but does not appear to have been clearly defined by IUCN or Shell. Most of the partners’ work can be seen as relevant, but not directly achieving tangible ‘conservation results’, for example, biodiversity conservation, net positive impact of Shell activities, or the maintenance or enhancement of ecosystem functions. If private sector understanding of conservation challenges and potential ability to address them effectively is considered a ‘conservation result’ – for example, if Shell gains a clear idea of and commitment to nature-based solutions – then the work under review has achieved indirect conservation results.

Informants agree that the three ‘value drivers’ remain relevant to the achievement of ‘conservation results’. Whether they are adequate depends on how comprehensively, vigorously and effectively they are pursued. Later sections of this report consider these aspects of performance.

2.4 Transforming practices in Shell and the oil and gas industry

Informants also agree that the objectives of the partnership – i.e. the ‘value drivers’ – are relevant to transforming practices in Shell and in the oil and gas industry. Some in Shell believe that there has already been significant change in the company’s understanding of environmental challenges and its commitment to responsible, proactive environmental performance. However, it is also agreed that, realistically, these objectives and this partnership are not, of themselves, sufficient to transform practice in Shell and the sector – even if the objective of bringing new players to the table is accomplished. However well the IUCN-

Shell partnership performs – and it can make an important contribution - it can only be one factor among the many that influence the attitudes and performance of multinational extractive industries. While IUCN’s intentions in engaging with the sector are endorsed, there is realism about the extent to which IUCN can ‘transform’ the sector’s practice.

3 Effectiveness

3.1 Introduction

According to the TOR (Annex 1), a key question is “to assess the effectiveness of the partnership in achieving its intended results and explore the current factors that support and hinder the fulfilment of the Collaborative Partnership Agreement”. The following sections of this chapter address the main topics that the TOR set out under this key question, with section 3.2 addressing both “delivery against intended results” and “delivery of conservation results”. The sub-questions on effectiveness shown in the evaluation matrix (Annex 2) are reproduced in the box.

- What evidence is there of improvement in the ‘value drivers’ described in the agreement?
- To what extent have intended results been reached?
- What examples of conservation results (technical, policy and advocacy) have been observed across the portfolio of initiatives?
- To what extent has intended stakeholder engagement contributed to the effectiveness of the Partnership?
- Is there a shared understanding of the partnership objectives? Are they clearly worded?
- How have public communications contributed to the effectiveness of the partnership?
- What is the perception of the relationship by key stakeholders identified by recent reviews? Has it changed over time?

3.2 Delivery of intended results

The delivery of results is assessed in terms of the three ‘value drivers’ identified for the partnership. Complete empirical assessment of delivery against intended results is not possible because not all the joint activities were planned or reported against specific performance indicators.

3.2.1 Bringing science to bear

Strong results were achieved in terms of ‘bringing science to bear’ through the work of the two ISTAPs active during the review period. The NDP’s main report included a series of recommendations on the internal environmental management procedures of the Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria (SPDC); on oil spill response procedures; on bio remediation and rehabilitation procedures; and on socio-environmental strategy (IUCN Niger Delta Panel, 2013). These were elaborated in a series of technical annexes, in further publications on the management and adaptive monitoring of mangrove habitats, and in a recent scientific paper on landfarming methods for the bioremediation of Niger Delta soils affected by oil spills (Brown *et al.*, 2017). Overall, it is too soon to assess how effectively the NDP’s work has achieved practical conservation results. But science was certainly ‘brought to bear’. The WGWP has a longer history in this regard, continued constructively during most of the review period after some difficulties leading up to the 2014 evaluation (Turner, 2014). Although Shell is a minority shareholder in the Sakhalin Energy Investment Company (SEIC), which is the WGWP’s principal point of technical contact, some key environmental personnel at SEIC are Shell staff. During the period covered by this review, the WGWP has reportedly become more agile in its operations: better able to hold meetings and give advice at short notice. The recent publication on its work was one of the highlights of the IUCN-Shell partnership’s public relations (Martin-Mehers, 2016), with some of the Panel’s important contributions on seismic and noise issues summarised in Nowacek & Southall, 2016.

In this partnership, ‘bringing science to bear’ is the easy part of the task. Linking this to tangible results depends heavily on personal skills in the inevitable mediation between sponsors, producers and consumers of the science. Local operating companies such as SEIC and SPDC have to be willing and interested. This interest has to be facilitated and cultivated by diplomatic individuals who develop the required credibility with those companies’ technical staff and with ISTAP scientists. In the background, Shell and IUCN, as sponsors of the process, must encourage and influence all parties so that a constructive and trusting relationship develops. For both the NDP and the WGWP, these criteria were successfully met in recent years. As one informant commented on the NDP, the central ‘push’ from Shell corporate for the application

of IUCN science has now been replaced by a local ‘pull’ from the operating company: a substantial achievement.

The partnership faces a more complex challenge in ‘bringing science to bear’ on the broader conceptual issues that it has been approaching, such as NBS and NPI. These are less amenable to the focused scientific inputs that ISTAPs have tended to provide, and in which IUCN itself has mostly specialised. ‘Bringing science to bear’ at this conceptual scale is not a short-term task. With regard to NBS, new progress was made by the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), which has established a thematic group on Business and Ecosystem Management and has engaged with NBS as a key scientific responsibility. The Commission is considering the development of an IUCN NBS standard, with Shell as a possible consultative partner to help ensure that the criteria developed are meaningful and practical. As in the narrower tasks of the ISTAPs, however, the challenge is not purely scientific. Much depends on the strategic insights and skills of senior staff in Shell and IUCN who are willing and able to engage with concepts like NBS and convene the right configuration of specialities, skills and internal advocacy to take them towards practical application. That in turn depends on a mature and trusting relationship between the organisations, which has now been achieved after nearly two decades of interaction.

The protracted development of the training programme for Iraq associated with the Majnoon operation also demonstrates that ‘bringing science to bear’ involves much more than science. In this case, the political and cultural dimensions of the process were probably more important: facilitating the necessary understanding and agreements at multiple official levels, building the required credibility and trust with technical staff in Shell Iraq Petroleum Development (SIPD) and, above all, demonstrating that the process was not a top-down knowledge transfer from the west to Iraq, but a transfer of experience from fellow specialists in the region. The use of Arabic-speaking trainers from Egypt and Lebanon was reportedly a major asset in this regard.

3.2.2 Bringing new players to the table

There has been less tangible success in ‘bringing new players to the table’, i.e. stimulating open engagement around environmental issues between IUCN, Shell and other major operators in the energy industry. But many of those players have certainly been looking through the window, and occasionally put their heads around the door.

The main formal platform for such interaction has been the International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA, currently chaired by Shell). While this is a consultative, consensual, technical body that lacks the authority of the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM, on which companies are represented by senior managers or chief executives and take decisions by voting), it is an important forum where Shell has been able to refer to its activities with IUCN in various working groups. IPIECA, together with ICMM and the Equator Principles Association, participates in the Cross Sector Biodiversity Initiative “to develop and share good practices related to biodiversity and ecosystem services in the extractive industries” (CSBI, 2017). Through Shell, IUCN has been able to engage with the CSBI.

At IPIECA and elsewhere, Shell representatives have sensed strong industry interest in what their firm does with IUCN, and even a degree of envy of Shell’s access to IUCN’s environmental expertise and influence. After two decades of trying to bring the private sector to various environmental tables, however, it was not surprising to IUCN that other players held back – still wary of commitments that they sensed might bring obligations. Indirectly, however, the work that IUCN and Shell do can be said to have broader conservation benefits, in that other industry players watch, learn and sometimes apply the approaches that the partnership explores.

The NPI Alliance was an important experience in the efforts to ‘bring new players to the table’. Shell, IUCN, Rio Tinto, TNC and the IFC had four main objectives in this effort to make NPI the ‘global norm’ for project development by the extractive industries: science and demonstration to promote the development,

adoption and implementation of the NPI concept; policy work to institutionalise NPI as the benchmark for environmental performance by these industries; building broader awareness and understanding of NPI; and operationalising NPI in business practices (IUCN, 2015a). Although substantive work was done to elaborate the NPI concept and the ways in which it might be applied, the NPI Alliance did not achieve these ambitious goals. Alliance participants, and others, recognised that NPI was an appropriate objective, but it was most feasibly tackled in new projects – of which there were fewer during the review period, for global economic reasons – and it proved hard to establish an unambiguous business case for it, despite its environmental merits (and a working paper on the business case: IUCN, 2015b). There were also criticisms in some private sector quarters that IUCN was adopting too prescriptive an attitude, and that industry is unlikely to welcome what appear to be instructions from NGOs. An internal review of the NPI alliance found that

The “why” was clear, but there were basic challenges in what the Alliance was trying to do. The theory of change and the long term goal were not clear. The NPI alliance tried different tools, e.g. papers, databases, advocacy, projects on the ground. The group was not always completely aligned on what the products were.

It was also more difficult to share learning than expected. For example, the aim was to bring together lots of practical experience through the database but in reality, there were fewer experiences than expected. And even with those cases that were identified, these were challenged in how to talk about applying NPI in a consistent manner, how to document it and present it in a useful way.

The business case and conservation case papers are unique and still-relevant outputs. However, they took a long time to deliver, including comment processes, to make sure that they were scientifically credible. It could be said that “perfection became the enemy of the good”.

IUCN, 2015a: 3.

Echoing other instances in which IUCN’s private sector partners have wished for a more level playing field after adopting significant environmental measures (such as the WGWAP), Rio Tinto began to feel exposed in its NPI commitment. Shell, with its lack of new projects in which to pilot NPI, could not engage beyond the conceptual level. Ultimately, the partners decided not to continue with the Alliance, despite their belief in NPI as an appropriate and potentially viable concept. At the end of the review period, Shell continues to endorse the NPI concept, with the intention of applying it when a new project emerges for development; and there is potential for further IPIECA discussions of NPI to draw on the experience that Shell and IUCN have had in this area.

The December 2016 workshop on transformational change included country mapping work in which biodiversity conservation issues and opportunities were identified: not all of them directly linked to Shell operations. This created new potential for IUCN and Shell to reach out to other operators and encourage them to join them, formally or informally, in conservation efforts. But the opportunity created by the workshop has not yet been exploited. The partners continue to discuss the concept, which is potentially central to their commitment and strategy for change in the extractive industries. But by the time of this review, further steps to crystallise thinking had not yet occurred. With the limited time and resources available (in this case, IUCN is seen as responsible for the next move), delays in such conceptual development work are not unusual.

Through its ISTAPs (notably in Nigeria and Russia), the partnership has also had an influence on regulators, who have been engaged by these panels and responded, sometimes constructively, to their concerns. The Majnoon training programme also involves these officials and has been well received by them so far. Another indirect way in which the Shell-IUCN partnership has ‘brought other players to the table’ is the new Rio Doce Panel, established by IUCN in consultation with BHP, which owns 50% of the Samarco mine in Brazil. Failure of a tailings dam at the mine in 2015 killed 19 people and caused extensive environmental damage (IUCN, 2017b). High-level contacts between Shell and BHP helped to assure the latter that an IUCN

ISTAP was a constructive way to address the Rio Doce issues. A chair has been selected for the new panel, and selection of members is currently under way. This ISTAP will report to a foundation set up by BHP and the other owners of Samarco to tackle the results of the dam collapse.

3.2.3 Bringing biodiversity to the attention of Shell's leadership

It is difficult to prove the extent to which Shell and IUCN have achieved this third 'value driver'. But informants are confident that almost two decades of collaboration between the organisations have indeed helped to bring biodiversity to the attention of Shell's leadership. This is the third of three modes of interaction between IUCN and Shell. The first is focused technical collaboration on specific projects – operational or conceptual. The second is informal technical consultation – the 'sounding board' function that was mentioned above – in which environmental and other managers in Shell may explore ideas and issues with their counterparts in IUCN, and IUCN can similarly seek inputs from Shell, through phone calls and meetings. Consultation like this may lead to ideas entering the 'project funnel' that the partners have developed for moulding and filtering themes that may, in some cases, become funded joint activities. The third mode of interaction is at leadership level, where occasional calls or face to face meetings between senior executives may give direction to the partnership, address urgent issues, or determine how particular concepts or themes should be developed together. The Oil and Gas Climate Initiative of the ten major oil and gas producers is another forum for interaction at this level (OGCI, 2017).

This third mode of interaction is irregular but significant. Both sides could probably make more of it, although it would be unrealistic to think of scheduling regular calls or meetings. But it is one of the two ways in which the partnership has helped to bring biodiversity to the attention of Shell's leadership. The other, of course, is through the company's internal management and reporting structures.

There is no doubt that Shell's leadership is well aware of the biodiversity issues with which the IUCN partnership is concerned. But these are only part of a broader set of concerns that will shape the whole future of the company: climate change and the partly consequent process of 'energy transition' that the global economy will undergo during the 21st century. IUCN has taken clear decisions about not trying to become a leading source of climate change expertise. It approaches the concept of 'energy transition' with caution, recognising that private and public sector understanding of and commitment to the necessary scale of change remain uneven. As the world still mostly chooses not to leave hydrocarbons in the ground, and yet begins to recognise the need for a fundamental shift in energy strategy, IUCN continues to be a leading player in addressing the biodiversity and broader environmental implications of current and future choices. Notably by developing the NBS paradigm, and through its development of transformational change approaches, it also offers innovative thinking that will be relevant to Shell, the broader oil and gas sector and public authorities as they tackle current environmental impacts and try to move through the 'energy transition'.

These arguments imply that 'bringing biodiversity to the attention of Shell's leadership' is no longer the best way of phrasing the partnership's ambition to influence Shell's strategic choices. That goal is largely achieved. In the 21st century life of the company, leadership that was unaware of biodiversity would plainly not be fit for purpose. A better way of phrasing the ambition might be in terms of supporting Shell's strategic decision-making as it tackles the environmental impacts of hydrocarbon extraction and use, and works for a lower carbon future.

Bringing biodiversity to the attention of Shell's leadership is not the same as ensuring that the activities, outputs and value of Shell's partnership with IUCN are adequately known and exploited across the company. Shell has multiple interfaces with public policy and its environmental implications. There may be more ways in which these interactions could exploit what IUCN offers.

3.3 Effectiveness of the partnership

By assessing performance in terms of the three ‘value drivers’, this report has already discussed the effectiveness of the partnership. In this section, ‘effectiveness’ is discussed in deeper, broader terms: the character of the relationship, and what the partners think it is trying to achieve.

As explained in section 3.2.3 above, the Shell-IUCN partnership must be understood at three levels: focused, project-related activities; the informal ‘sounding board’ function, which may bring ideas into the ‘project funnel’ and eventually mould them into projects; and the senior, strategic level of conceptual debate and consultation. Participants judge the partnership to have been generally successful at all these levels, although there is some concern that the number of projects declined over the review period. This is ascribed partly to the business slowdown that affected Shell and the rest of the sector, as well as a trend away from establishing new operations in biodiversity-sensitive areas – itself a reflection, it can be argued, of the success of this partnership and other efforts to make the extractive industries more environmentally aware and cautious.

Not all the projects undertaken since 2014 have been as effective as hoped. Factors influencing the degree of project effectiveness include clarity of formulation (some were too ambitious, or not adequately thought through); the abilities of the individuals most directly responsible for driving them; the readiness of the relevant personnel in Shell and IUCN to understand and commit to the initiative; the rigour and validity of the technical and strategic concepts underlying the project, which implementation may have proved to be stronger or weaker; and unpredictable factors such as political, economic or environmental developments affecting the initiative.

Assessment of effectiveness should also recognise the widely differing scale of the projects undertaken. The ISTAPs, for example, have much bigger budgets (for their operation, their follow up, or both) than activities like the Earth Skills Network. Both scales are valid. Several small wins can be more meaningful than uncertain progress with a larger initiative. IUCN’s decision not to proceed with further work with Shell in the Arctic is seen in this light by some informants – stepping back from a major and contentious area in order to make smaller-scale progress elsewhere.

This was an example of the ongoing need for difficult political judgements by IUCN, against the background of its own Members’ varying views and in consideration of its own image in the international environmental community. It links to questions repeatedly posed by this evaluation, almost 20 years after collaboration began: whether the partnership is becoming too comfortable, and whether ‘business as usual’ is acceptable for the next phase – or some significant change of course or character is now necessary. Responses indicated that part of the partnership’s effectiveness is driven by familiarity and trust. There is now a deep, qualitative value in the relationship that cannot be measured in terms of objective indicators of effectiveness. At the same time, there is an aversion to comfort. Effectiveness is partly driven by difficult discussions on issues where Shell and IUCN do not at first, and may perhaps never, agree. To borrow one informant’s words, the two organisations should be critical friends. Part of that relationship, as argued above, should be to refrain from prescription. NGOs may be tempted to tell business what to do. That is rarely a successful strategy, and one that IUCN has largely moved beyond in its partnership with Shell.

Informants consider a degree of experimentation and failure to be acceptable, especially at the smaller end of the spectrum, and to some extent the ‘project funnel’ approach has helped to sift stronger from weaker project ideas. While open preliminary discussion about numerous concepts and project possibilities is seen as valuable, it is also important to recognise IUCN’s trend towards tighter targeting and stronger co-ordination of Secretariat activities across the global, regional and country office levels. Doing less better has emerged as the management emphasis. This is not irreconcilable with the sometimes exploratory and wide-ranging nature of IUCN-Shell discussions. But for both parties the first of the three modes of collaboration – focused technical projects – remains a vital ingredient of effectiveness for the partnership. Some informants emphasise that the main reason this partnership has proved valuable for Shell has been the way it has linked in to specific business-related, operational challenges.

It is significant, in this regard, that the current phase of the partnership should have been presented in 2013 as aiming at stronger focus. The agreement says that “future collaborations between Shell and IUCN need to be purposeful and targeted” (IUCN & Shell, 2013: 15), and internal communications (probably responding to Council concerns) referred to a revised relationship that would focus on specific issues where IUCN could make a practical difference. Four years later, IUCN and Shell informants confirm the importance of practical, targeted, operational activities, but also endorse the broader modes of interaction outlined above. A strict emphasis on focus, they have concluded, is too limiting. It would fail to deliver the full, sometimes intangible value that this now trusting relationship can offer.

Experience during the review period indicates that, for IUCN, effectiveness should be driven by a tension between modesty and ambition. On the one hand, as argued above, IUCN should not expect to transform Shell. On the other, work over the last four years has helped mainstream the concept of NBS in Shell, and IUCN can continue to make a major contribution to this and other extractive industries by working on it further through this partnership. That task does not lack ambition. However, there is also a sense in IUCN that it has been more reactive than proactive in its relations with Shell, and that this should change. Too often an idea or a problem is raised by Shell, IUCN responds and joint activity may result. Informants suggest that there should be more scope for IUCN to bring ideas to Shell. Without expecting to transform Shell, IUCN should strengthen its ambition to help Shell achieve meaningful change – not only through building NBS, but also through more proactive introduction of other strategic and technical ideas. Some of these may already have been aired in the partnership without major steps forward – such as decommissioning of maritime infrastructure, where IUCN may be able to help achieve environmentally appropriate solutions in other areas than just the North Sea.

As has often been the case, part of the challenge for IUCN in this regard is to exploit all the resources that its triple structure can offer: not just the Secretariat, but also the Commissions and Members. While CEM exemplifies a stronger recent Commission engagement in the relationship with Shell and there was engagement with the Species Survival Commission on the Red List of Threatened Species and on Key Biodiversity Areas, other Commissions might also play stronger roles in the next phase. IUCN’s Members have certainly been vocal at some points about relations with Shell; but more might be done, some informants suggest, to exploit the Union’s links with its State Members. This is particularly relevant as Shell develops more specific planning for the energy transition, focusing on ten countries. Spanning the governmental and non-governmental spheres as it does, IUCN should be well qualified to engage with this country-specific process, for example in renewed attention to (bio)fuel options and their environmental implications: Shell plans new discussions with the World Bank and other stakeholders about methane strategy in the near future.

A related asset of IUCN has enhanced the effectiveness of some activities in its partnership with Shell. This is its ability to blend scientific capacity with locally-rooted social and cultural expertise. Shell, too, is deeply rooted in the countries where it operates. From the non-governmental perspective, however, IUCN can add value through its linkages with local interests and sensitivities. For example, while it took longer than planned to launch the Majnoon capacity development activity, IUCN’s ability to reach out to local stakeholders, and to provide a culturally effective mode of training in Arabic, was much appreciated. The consensus is that it should make more of its local assets, through regional and country offices, than it has done to date in the Shell partnership.

3.4 Effectiveness of stakeholder engagement

This section pulls together the comments on stakeholder engagement already offered above. For both IUCN and Shell, there are internal and external stakeholders to consider.

Within the IUCN Secretariat, two questions arise. First, whether enough of the Global Programmes have been sufficiently engaged. The answer is that more could have been done to add or sustain the involvement of Global Programmes that could contribute to activities under the partnership. Secondly,

whether regional and country offices have played enough of a part. Again, it has been argued above that there is potential for stronger engagement at these levels, playing to IUCN's local strengths.

Section 3.3 above also argued that there is more scope for IUCN Commissions to contribute to the effectiveness of the partnership, with CEM currently the most prominent participant – although its engagement on NBS issues is still at an early stage. It has also been argued that IUCN could do more to draw its Members, particularly its State Membership, into work through the Shell partnership. The reconstituted Private Sector Task Force of IUCN's new (2016) Council should be an important instrument in that regard.

In the diverse global family of Shell, almost two decades of work with IUCN have strengthened the engagement of senior management in biodiversity concerns. But informants suggest that there is still scope to raise the visibility of the IUCN partnership across the company's corporate structures, so that maximum value can be gained from the shared thinking and activities. Two informants cited cases in which Shell stakeholders were unaware of partnership activities and would clearly have found it useful to know. While there is an obvious argument in large corporations that not everybody can or should know everything and that internal information flows should be appropriately targeted, those directly responsible for the IUCN relationship should consider whether all the right parts of Shell are being optimally informed – or could engage more strongly in the joint opportunities.

The conventional concern in environmental advocacy to the extractive industries is whether those at operational level can be convinced to take the issues seriously and adjust their behaviour accordingly. Achieving change at that level may be a bigger challenge than persuading senior management about the importance of biodiversity. After almost two decades, Shell has made useful progress with this mode of internal stakeholder engagement, although the task is not complete. The challenge is to move beyond compliance to genuine engagement. A combination of internal and external regulation has strengthened compliance with appropriate environmental standards in many cases: at the operational level, a clear and fairly enforced regulatory framework is vitally important. The next step is to build proactive local partnerships between the company, civil society and local authorities to address environmental concerns. The ISTAPs and the Majnoon training are cases where IUCN and Shell have made progress in this regard. It is not simple to find focused project-based opportunities for this type of effort, but doing so remains a priority for effective stakeholder engagement.

Section 3.2.2 above addressed the other major dimension of external stakeholder engagement: building stronger participation by other operators in the oil and gas sector. It argued that, although formal, funded participation by other companies has remained elusive, useful work was done through IPIECA. Furthermore, some companies engage informally in IUCN's efforts to work with the sector, through contacts with IUCN and with Shell. Moreover, there is an important element of covert engagement, in which other companies watch closely what IUCN and Shell are doing together, learn from it and sometimes apply elements of that practice to their own operations.

3.5 Effectiveness of communications

Two questions in the review matrix (Annex 2) are whether there is a shared understanding of the partnership objectives, and whether they are clearly worded. Those objectives are stated as 'value drivers' (section 1.2) – terminology that may not be clear to all stakeholders outside the private sector. Their wording serves as a shorthand for broad and challenging intentions: the uninitiated might well ask what 'bring science to bear', or 'bring new players to the table' really mean, even after reading the amplifying words that follow those headlines. 'Bring biodiversity to the attention of Shell's leadership' is more intuitively obvious.

Within IUCN, internal communication about the purpose and progress of the Shell partnership is vitally important, given the potential for criticism and concern about working with a major oil and gas operator. In late 2013, during and after negotiation of the agreement for the current phase, the Secretariat did make

careful efforts to brief Members, preparing a set of answers to ‘frequently asked questions’ for use as required. These and subsequent internal communication efforts appear to have been effective, judged by the increasingly acquiescent (if not enthusiastic) attitude of IUCN’s membership to the Shell partnership reported by informants for this review.

The external communications of the partnership are governed by a mix of conservatism and economy. IUCN’s communications budget is limited and, despite the central importance of advocacy to its mission, its communications profile is limited. Shell is instinctively cautious about its communications. It is interesting, for example, to compare the partners’ website statements about the relationship: IUCN says considerably more than Shell². Shell communications staff must go through lengthy internal procedures to get content checked before it is made public, in addition to the standard processes of interaction with their IUCN counterpart. Caution also governs IUCN’s communications, in the sense that the Secretariat, which has operational responsibility for them, must consider the multiple sensitivities of Members as it considers what to tell the world.

It is difficult to know how effective these rather limited external communications are. IUCN lacks the resources for systematic monitoring of hits on its web pages, although Shell does do this. The partners agree that visibility was better in 2016, largely because of publicity for the WGWAP around the time of IUCN’s World Conservation Congress in Hawaii and the related story of Flex the whale, which was widely read around the world, becoming the second most read page in the Sustainability section of Shell’s website (Shell, 2016). IUCN did have funding to track web hits relating to the Congress, and found that its WGWAP story was the sixth most popular item in its Congress coverage. The Flex story was unusual in offering content about a charismatic species that would be interesting to a wide audience; whereas much of the work done under the partnership is more technical and specialised, and less likely to have mass appeal. Although not a fully public gathering, the meeting on the Niger Delta Panel’s findings and recommendations convened in London in December 2016 was another significant instance of communicating the work of the partnership to a broader group of stakeholders.

Within IUCN, it would appear that communications about the partnership itself could be stronger, with some informants saying that it is difficult to find what they want to know about its purpose and activities.

Given the limitations outlined above, it is not surprising that neither partner is making much use of social media to communicate the work of their partnership – although IUCN increasingly recognises the potential of this largely free platform. But it has only one staff member to operate its global social media presence. Its web pages do not offer space for reader comments – which would again imply costs, since these would have to be moderated.

This is not the place to attempt a detailed discussion of how to make communication of the IUCN-Shell partnership more effective, or of how to assess that effectiveness. For both organisations, there are three basic issues, although Shell and IUCN are affected differently by them. The first is the constant need to decide the relationship between communications and advocacy (perhaps the latter is better described as advertising, for a commercial entity like Shell). How proactively does each organisation choose to use traditional and 21st century communications channels to advocate its policies and strategies and seek to accomplish its objectives? The second issue is cost. Decisions on the first issue must be weighed against their budgetary implications – a constant constraint for IUCN, and not insignificant for Shell. The third issue, already discussed, is that members of a partnership like this must consider each other’s stance and sensitivities if they strive for more proactive communications and advocacy.

Cost is also a key factor in the otherwise more straightforward question of how to assess the effectiveness of communications: a task that needs to be carried out at two levels. First, there are many tools available –

² <https://www.iucn.org/theme/business-and-biodiversity/our-work/business-partnerships/shell> ; <http://www.shell.com/sustainability/our-approach/environmental-and-community-partners.html> [accessed 9 September 2017]

for a price – to measure the frequency with which different communication channels and products are accessed – from website hits to viewings of a documentary, references to a publication or awareness of an advertisement, for example. Secondly, focused surveys or evaluations can research the extent to which policy and practice have changed in the desired directions, and how much stakeholders attribute any such shift to the communications in question.

Overall, it must be concluded that the contribution of public communications to the effectiveness of the partnership has been limited. This is partly because, for the reasons outlined above, those communications have been limited; and partly because the subject matter has not been readily attractive to mass audiences. That implies that communications could be more effective if more specifically targeted – which, however, would cost more. Given what is at stake for both IUCN and Shell in terms of advocacy, profile and reputation, there is clearly scope for more intensive and effective external communications in the next phase of the partnership.

A related question is whether Shell and IUCN have drawn an appropriate line between communications and debate. In many 21st century arenas, communications and debate have merged – for better or for worse. As one informant commented, these two partners have remained conservative and have stayed away from debate and interaction with the users of their communications. They stay safely with the science. A key question for the next phase of the relationship is how conservative they wish to remain.

4 Efficiency

4.1 Governance

The formal agreement between IUCN and Shell, as signed by the two parties in December 2013, is a statement of “general terms and conditions for new and ongoing projects... for the supply of strategic environmental services for conservation”. Within this 75-page document is a “concept note for a way forward for collaboration between IUCN and Shell”, prepared by IUCN’s Business and Biodiversity Programme (BBP). It stated that

The new collaboration model calls for a leaner oversight structure... There would be no formal steering committee. If specific issues arise, the accountable executives of the respective organisations or the coordinators may call for strategic review meetings. It should also be ensured that on a regular basis discussion takes place at the executive level on possible new areas of collaboration.

IUCN & Shell, 2013: 17.

In practice, a body resembling a steering committee has functioned as a steering committee might, meeting about twice a year and comprising the responsible senior managers in Shell and IUCN, together with the operational staff who manage the joint activities at working level. Informally described as ‘partnership meetings’, these gatherings have reviewed the performance of joint activities and the prospects for developing new ones: the progress of ideas through the ‘project funnel’ has thus been a standard theme.

This and related governance arrangements have generally functioned smoothly, reflecting the degree of understanding and trust that have developed over the years between management on the two sides. However, at the start of the review period IUCN signature of the agreement with Shell had to be postponed because the IUCN Council required further review of the contents. This reflected more on the complexities of IUCN governance - specifically, relations between the Secretariat and the Council - than on the governance of this particular initiative. That is an ongoing issue for this and many other IUCN activities. On the Shell side, there have been suggestions that the company’s engagement would be more effective if a senior manager from outside the environment sector could join the meetings – as a sort of ‘ambassador’ from the business side of the company. This, it has been argued, could help strengthen communications and understanding about the IUCN partnership across Shell management.

4.2 Management and co-ordination

Overall, management and co-ordination arrangements over the review period have facilitated efficient administration, communication and implementation of the IUCN-Shell partnership. The experience and attitudes of the individuals involved have been more significant in this than the formal systems and procedures in use. There has been staff continuity on the IUCN side; while there has been more turnover in Shell, the personnel responsible for day-to-day co-ordination have all been well experienced in such environmental collaboration activities, including through previous links with IUCN. Having a second staff member in the Shell team, working alongside the Relationship Manager, has significantly enhanced the

- To what extent have co-ordination arrangements facilitated efficient administration, communication and implementation?
- To what extent has the management of the relationship (planning, implementing, resourcing, monitoring, and engaging stakeholders) contributed to its effectiveness?
- To what extent is the project funnel approach strategic and delivering conservation gains? What are the enabling factors of this approach?
- What lessons have been learned about efficient co-ordination of the relationship?
- What mechanisms are in place to learn from partnership experience?
- What evidence is there of monitoring and evaluation leading to learning and adaptation?
- How efficient are internal and external communications?
- To what extent is the partnership considered transparent and accountable by IUCN Members, Council and other key stakeholders?
- To what extent is the partnership perceived by Shell and by IUCN as delivering value for money?

efficiency of Shell's engagement in this partnership. There is regular working contact between IUCN and Shell staff at this level. Their formal monthly meetings do not happen quite monthly, but communication between the two teams is efficient.

The concept of secondments between the partner organisations did not progress during the review period. Opinions at management level were not uniformly positive in Shell or in IUCN. At one point when there did seem to be an opportunity to fund a secondment in the environmental economics field in 2016, there were problems in finalising the TOR and position description, and in identifying a suitable candidate, within the available window; and the opportunity passed. Earlier IUCN secondments to Shell either did not return to IUCN afterwards, or did so only briefly – diminishing the value of the exercise.

Limited resources both stimulate and impede efficiency in this relationship. The lack of staff time across the IUCN Secretariat is one reason, but only one reason, why the organisation sometimes seems slow to Shell. Some activities, including work on biofuels, NPI and Majnoon capacity development, have developed more slowly than expected, and sometimes inconclusively. Other reasons for IUCN's slow performance include the complex constitution of the organisation, meaning that multiple constituencies and offices often have to be consulted and committed; and its organisational personality – a mix of NGO, science and governments, with a dash of business stirred in. That makes achieving administrative efficiency a challenge. Conversely, for both Shell and IUCN, the limited funding available for their work together does help to focus minds, and has some effect in encouraging both sides to stay on their toes and do the best they can with what they have.

In this connection, it can be asked whether either or both sides can identify alternative, potentially smarter funding strategies for what they want to do together. This is certainly a matter for more thought – although IUCN is constantly exploring such possibilities, and reported at the July 2017 partnership meeting about its hopes for work under the Green Climate Fund. Joint development of the NBS concept should also lead to new funding opportunities, although IUCN will be wary of any implication that NBS is reduced to a commercial carbon trading mechanism.

During the latter part of the review period, IUCN personnel were much absorbed in the (still ongoing) process of reforming the IUCN Programme. This is meant to combat fragmentation, strengthen accountability and achieve more disciplined, focused, effective performance across the Union, with each Global Programme working on three 'business lines'. For the BBP, these business lines conform to the existing Business Engagement Strategy. Aligning these restructured arrangements with the established modus operandi of the Shell partnership should not be a challenge. But, in planning the structure and contents of the next phase of the partnership, IUCN and Shell should seek to optimise the accountability, communication, management and reporting benefits that IUCN's changes should offer – in particular, exploring ways to build conceptual and operational links across IUCN's new 'business lines' from the work that the BBP co-ordinates with Shell.

Despite the challenges arising from IUCN's internal complexities, Shell informants express general satisfaction with the management performance of their IUCN counterparts. Financial and related administration are considered efficient. IUCN staff, too, feel that accountability and clarity in the administrative and financial co-ordination of partnership activities improved during the review period. Nevertheless, as explained in sections 3.4 and 3.5 above, management and communication arrangements could do more to stimulate the desired stakeholder engagement across IUCN and Shell. On IUCN's side, this is the perennial challenge of achieving consensus, commitment and joint action across more of the organisation's broad constituency and multiple sources of capacity and action. As just argued above, the new Programme structure should help in this regard.

The 'project funnel' is a key element in the co-ordination of the partnership. Informants broadly see it as useful and efficient. This again reflects the trusting, confident character of the relationship after nearly two decades. A degree of informality in allowing ideas to take shape, over varying and sometimes lengthy

periods, characterises their use of the ‘project funnel’. In other circumstances, this informality could signal inefficiency – a casual, uncertain approach to deciding what to do together. In this partnership, periodic discussions of the contents of the ‘project funnel’ remain focused and thoughtful, although there are remarks from time to time about needing to maintain the necessary discipline, making clear and timely decisions about what to keep in the ‘funnel’, what to drop and why. Informants also comment that the partners’ main emphasis must of course remain on the actual implementation of agreed joint activities, rather than the potentially vague contemplation of ideas in the ‘funnel’.

4.3 Modalities

From an efficiency perspective, it is useful to recall the three modes of interaction in the partnership that were identified in section 3.2.3 above: focused technical collaboration on specific projects (operational or conceptual); informal technical consultation – the ‘sounding board’ function; and strategic and conceptual interaction at leadership level. The first is the most systematic and structured, and it should be easier to assess performance against specified indicators for this work than is actually the case. The second and third are less formal; but, as was argued above, they have an important and meaningful place in the overall collaboration between Shell and IUCN. Conventional measures of efficiency only apply to the first, although lack of data means that they cannot actually be used. It is hardly feasible to apply even subjective assessment of efficiency to the second and third, although the fact that they continue and that they are generally appreciated suggests that they are achieving useful results. All three modalities are important and add value to the partnership.

An alternative way of identifying modalities is to consider the types of work done, as presented in section 1.3 above. Some of the activities within the four categories of work shown there were clearly formulated projects of one type or another – ranging from ISTAPs to training programmes. None of these projects could be characterised as efficient in conventional terms, despite the valuable results that many of them achieved or are achieving. Too many complexities typically intervene to slow, confuse or rearrange progress. Adaptive management is the key to whatever efficiency can be achieved. As the Majnoon experience, in particular, has shown – and as IUCN management is increasingly emphasising – efficiency and effectiveness are enhanced by keeping things simple and deliverable: doing less, better.

One further complicating factor arises on the Shell side when the asset or operation on which an activity focuses is not the sole responsibility of Shell, which may be a joint venture partner or minority shareholder. Innovations or improved practice that IUCN and Shell want to introduce must then be filtered through these more complex ownership and management arrangements.

A final consideration with regard to modalities concerns the reactive versus proactive stance that was discussed in section 3.3 above. Particularly as it moves into its restructured Programme, IUCN has the opportunity to become more proactive in its presentation of concepts and project ideas to Shell. On the Shell side, the proactive modality could be particularly interesting as the company develops its energy transition planning for ten selected countries (section 3.3): ways might be sought to exploit the IUCN partnership for strategic and technical inputs to this process.

4.4 Monitoring, evaluation, learning and adaptation

At working level, IUCN and Shell display an organic approach to the management of their partnership, rather than a fully systematic and structured one. This reflects shortages of staff time; the reasonably strong staff continuity and institutional memory, so that the key players carry a wealth of experience in their heads; the degree of trust that has developed between the partners over nearly two decades; and the informal, conceptual, strategic nature of some of the interaction – which can, nevertheless, be very valuable.

This organic approach means that written records of partnership performance and results are scattered and inconsistent. With the help of Shell and IUCN, it has been possible for this evaluation to assemble a

useful library of documentation across the activities. But the most structured summary, most comprehensively assembled for the July 2017 meeting, is the set of ‘pre-read’ notes assembled ahead of each partnership meeting. Not surprisingly, therefore, several informants pointed to monitoring, reporting and learning as inefficient aspects of the partnership.

It should be possible, without undue effort, to develop a simple system for documenting each item in the ‘project funnel’, from preliminary concepts to practical projects. A one-paragraph summary could be followed by periodic notes about what was discussed, decided or done, at which dates, with what results. Ultimately, each document could be filed according to its progress through or beyond the ‘funnel’, with, if relevant, a concluding note on whether the concept or activity is complete, rejected, to be returned to later, or merged into other ongoing work.

This would offer a more structured mechanism for learning from partnership experience than is currently available, as well as strengthening accountability, facilitating reporting and contributing to monitoring and evaluation. But the organic approach to management certainly does not preclude learning and adaptive management: on its own terms, it facilitates them. This is evidenced, for example, by the way Shell and IUCN learned from the initial challenges of the NDP process, overcame them and went on to achieve useful results. Experience with NPI is another case of learning from (in this case, partly unsuccessful) experience, as was the way in which the partners eventually (after too long) adapted to the realities of the Iraq concept and shifted to a simpler, more practical process there.

A prominent challenge now is to learn through the evolving NBS debate that IUCN is having with Shell and other partners, and to track what each stage of that process is telling them. They could consider a two-tier approach to this. Within the partnership, as suggested above, a simple but systematic reporting process could be initiated. Within IUCN, given the emerging importance of NBS, a periodic (annual?) process of reflection, reporting and consolidation of learning could be structured to align with key events in the organisation’s calendar, such as Council meetings or annual reports.

4.5 Communications

As with its other private sector partners, IUCN must be thorough and careful in checking with Shell about the content of all public output. The communications relationship was largely successful during the review period, with efficient working links between the relevant staff in the two organisations. Informants could recall only a couple of irregularities, in which one partner had communicated something that had not been completely checked by the other. A draft communications plan went through a protracted gestation in 2016 and ultimately set out a schedule of communications activities for 2017 – although it has reportedly not been used as intensively this year as was intended.

Findings about internal stakeholder engagement and communications in sections 3.3 and 3.4 above indicate that communications within IUCN and Shell are not as efficient as they might be – even though flooding all internal stakeholders with communications is certainly not an efficient management strategy. There are convincing arguments that more could be done with (the different categories of) IUCN Members to inform them about the partnership and about Shell’s evolving thinking on biodiversity and related issues – not for the purposes of Shell advocacy, but to stimulate constructive debate and interaction.

The joint communications system that the partnership has developed is efficient as far as it goes, with its checks and safeguards working significantly better than previously. The challenge now is to extend those communications more thoroughly within the two organisations, and to develop them more widely, and in selected cases with better targeting, to outside audiences. That is partly a matter of enhanced systems and procedures; and partly, inevitably, of money.

4.6 Value for money

Although they are very different organisations, Shell and IUCN are both committed to achieving value for money (VFM). The TOR's evaluation question on this point (shown in the matrix at Annex 2) asks to what extent the partnership is perceived by Shell and by IUCN as delivering VFM. That is easy to answer. Both parties recognise that the partnership is operated with very modest funding but has achieved, and continues to achieve, important results. Subjectively, this evaluation can affirm that view.

Objective measurement of VFM is much more challenging. In theory it would be feasible to measure the money being spent on each concept or activity. Recording expenditures on tangible costs like travel, meetings and consultancy fees would be straightforward. With considerable effort and discipline, all personnel could record hours spent working on each of the identified activities – which, in the case of the more preliminary or conceptual work, would be hours spent thinking, talking and possibly writing. Total costs could then be calculated, perhaps through templates linked to the monitoring and reporting format suggested in section 4.4 above. Measurement of benefits would be much more difficult, and would require impressive feats of (environmental) economics, for example in assigning values to enhanced ecosystem functions, calculating savings to Shell and/or to the societies with which it works, and potentially linking to carbon values. Probably contentious decisions would have to be taken about the weighting of commercial, social and environmental benefits.

The result, in theory, would be (potentially regular) data on the VFM of the IUCN-Shell partnership, in aggregate and for each component area of work. In practice, this does not seem worth the effort, if it can be done at all. At management level, the private sector is arguably better aware than the public sector (in which IUCN can be classed, with its predominantly public funding) that some decision-making is necessarily subjective – and that the value added by some expenditures cannot be accurately calculated. Expert judgement, based on experience rather than quantitative evidence, has a legitimate place. That expert judgement by the management of IUCN and Shell will continue to determine whether the partnership constitutes VFM.

5 Sustainability and potential for impact

5.1 Introduction

Section 1.3 of this review attempted a rough classification of the work done by the IUCN-Shell partnership into ISTAPs; the development of broad concepts and strategies; the development or amendment of technical approaches; and capacity development. That categorisation is used in this chapter for a (largely subjective) assessment of the sustainability and potential impact of the partnership's results.

- What examples of changes to Shell's policy, process or decisions have been observed that can be linked to the relationship?
- What examples of changes to IUCN's policy (including IUCN Resolutions and Recommendations), processes or decisions have been observed that can be linked to the relationship?
- Have any of these changes also been observed in other parts of the oil and gas sector and what was the process that led to that change?
- To what extent do any documented changes represent meaningful conservation results?

5.2 Shell

For Shell, the NDP offers the clearest example of changes to its policy, process and decisions arising from the IUCN partnership. These include changes in SPDC's approach to remediation and rehabilitation; the development of conceptual site models for Niger Delta ecozones (Truchon *et al.*, 2017); and improved practice in the management and adaptive monitoring of mangrove habitats in the delta (Truchon & Lewis, 2016). Although Shell is a minority shareholder in the SEIC, it has been actively involved in that company's improved practices off Sakhalin, notably in seismic survey timing and techniques. The sustainability prospects for enhanced approaches at both these assets appear good.

Impact is naturally more diffuse with regard to the second category of work, the development of broad concepts and strategies. But it is significant that Shell has taken the concept of NPI seriously, and will consider applying it in the development of new projects, when those emerge. The concept of NBS has clearly found traction with Shell, although they and IUCN may have differing interpretations of how to apply it, with the former understandably taking a more commercial approach to its links with carbon offsetting. Although the natural capital project made less headway within the company, Shell again took the concept seriously and has recently had an intern working on water valuation. The discussions on transformational change that took place in late 2016 have not yet had a direct impact on Shell, but again the concept was seen as significant food for thought, with its comparison of IUCN's transformational change model and the three elements of Shell's Environmental Strategy (IUCN, 2017a). In all these cases, assessment of sustainability can be subjective at best, but none of the concepts and approaches was dismissed as of no significant interest to Shell. All remain on the table and are at various stages of discussion and progress towards specific shifts in company guidelines and practice.

Work in the third category, developing or amending technical approaches, was on a smaller scale and in some cases took place some years ago. Only the discussions on decommissioning of maritime infrastructure can still be considered at all current. Initial consultations on this did not lead to direct results, but the idea of technical collaboration with IUCN is still under review and, as noted above, could be transferred to other marine areas beyond the North Sea where it was developed.

Capacity development work, the fourth category, took place on a small scale too. The joint involvement of Shell and IUCN in the Earth Skills Network has had a low profile but is reportedly beneficial for the Shell staff who take part. Capacity development associated with the Majnoon operation took most of the review period to develop, and it is premature to assess impact and sustainability – although initial signals are promising.

5.3 IUCN

For IUCN, the success of the WGWAP and NDP ISTAPs (despite many trials and tribulations) has had valuable and apparently sustainable results, proving that it is possible for the Union to work with extractive industries to enhance their performance in addressing specific environmental issues. So far the specific conservation results are more evident off Sakhalin than in the Niger Delta, where the challenges are broader, more diffuse and more entangled with political and social issues. But Shell's adoption of enhanced approaches is nevertheless a meaningful conservation result. A further beneficial impact, as noted in section 3.2.2 above, was acceptance by BHP (after contacts with Shell) that an ISTAP would be an appropriate way to help tackle the Rio Doce issue.

For IUCN, too, the development of broad concepts and strategies through the partnership has had more diffuse results. Work on NPI demonstrated potential but also difficulties, and cannot yet be said to have achieved significant or sustainable conservation results, although it has been endorsed as an important concept and is re-emerging in the BBP's 'business line' on 'delivering biodiversity net gain' in the reformed IUCN Programme. To some extent NPI offered negative lessons to IUCN about what is and is not feasible in the transfer of environmental and economic concepts to the private sector (IUCN, 2015a). The same is true of its work with Shell on natural capital (section 5.2 above), which also revealed – not for the first time – the challenges that IUCN faces in developing a productive interface between economics, the conservation sector and the private sector. More specifically, it has proved difficult to find additional sites at which further piloting of the approach could take place. However, following the earlier resolution at the Jeju World Conservation Congress that IUCN should work on a Human Dependence on Nature Index, the 2016 Hawaii Congress passed a resolution calling for the development of an IUCN policy on natural capital.

The joint thinking about NBS has emerged as the most centrally promising conceptual development. It is premature to assess the impact or sustainability of this theme, but it is already clear that it presents a new set of challenges and opportunities around an existing theme for IUCN: how to make an environmentally sound concept commercially attractive and viable for the private sector. There are signs of convergence between IUCN and Shell on this. Much remains to be done.

For IUCN as for Shell, work in the third activity category of developing or amending technical approaches had low-profile results, if any. The most promising area for further collaboration concerns decommissioning of marine oil and gas infrastructure, as noted above. Following the earlier decision by the Council that IUCN should not proceed with further collaboration with Shell in the Arctic, the choice not to proceed with joint work on marine protected areas mapping represented continuing caution in some parts of the Union about how closely to work with the private sector on some areas and issues.

Nevertheless, the overall trend in IUCN's governing body over the review period was towards somewhat more enthusiastic endorsement of the Secretariat's work with the private sector in general, and Shell in particular. (There was a hiatus during the last year of that period while the new 2016 Council found its feet and appointment of a new Council Private Sector Task Force was awaited.) The success of the two ISTAPs was probably the strongest factor in this trend, which informants anticipate will continue with the new Council and Task Force.

As for Shell, the capacity development work done under the partnership was on too small a scale for significant conservation or other results to be discernible. On that small scale, however, the Majnoon experience eventually became rewarding, affirming the ability of IUCN and especially its Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA) to develop locally appropriate approaches to environmental management in institutionally difficult settings.

5.4 The oil and gas sector

It is not possible to identify specific changes in environmental performance elsewhere in the oil and gas sector that can be ascribed specifically to the IUCN-Shell partnership. In qualitative terms, as explained in

section 3.2.2, other players have watched, listened and learned while not quite taking a seat at the table. Shell's role in IPIECA, and consequently IUCN's indirect influence there, are particularly valuable in this regard. Again indirectly, IUCN's work with Shell has probably been influential in its gradually closer links with Total.

The question is what to do next, or differently, in order to reach the rest of the oil and gas sector more effectively. One argument presented to this review is that, in current price conditions, the time is not right for any attempt to promote major innovation, and that a continuing incremental approach is probably appropriate. More broadly, informants point out that some of the gravest environmental challenges coming from the sector come from small players, not the big ones like Shell with which IUCN mainly deals. The question is how IUCN can engage with those more local operators. The answer, if there is one, is likely to link to the arguments presented above about using IUCN's country level resources more actively in the next phase of the Shell partnership (section 3.3). A further challenge, on which IUCN can already learn something from the Shell partnership, concerns joint ventures: it is obviously more complex to persuade all partners in a JV to adopt improved environmental practices.

6 Lessons and recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This final chapter responds to the last section of the evaluation matrix (Annex 2), combining the presentation of lessons learned during the review period with recommendations for Shell and IUCN to consider as they prepare their next phase of collaboration. Within the presentation of lessons, recommendations are shown in bold and embedded in the narrative. They are then presented in a summary list in Table 2 on page 30.

6.2 The character, strategy and funding of the partnership

Eighteen years after formal engagements between IUCN and Shell began, the partnership is now characterised by professional and organisational trust. The partners have learned that they can interact and contribute to each other's objectives through various modalities at several levels, spanning technical interactions on focused projects, and conceptual and strategic discussions at higher or top management levels. The highest priority for the next phase of the partnership must be to maintain this trust and the multiple ways in which it is expressed.

At the same time, there is consensus that 'business as usual' would not be the best way to frame the next phase of collaboration. **This should not become a comfortable relationship.** It can become stronger through disagreements as well as converging views. The thinking has often developed most productively when the discussions were difficult.

The partners have already learned that such a relationship cannot progress on the basis of prescription by environmentalists to the private sector. Instead, they base their collaboration on joint identification of issues that can usefully be explored – again, recognising their differences but seeking points of convergence. A related lesson for IUCN is that it should not expect to transform Shell through this partnership. It can help Shell to achieve real conservation results through meaningful enhancements of its environmental practice. But this partnership is only one element in the complex array of factors that govern how Shell develops and how it affects ecosystems and biodiversity.

There was a sense among some informants that IUCN was more reactive than proactive during the review period, creating the risk that it would be seen as a service provider to Shell, just responding to the issues that Shell might choose to raise. While IUCN's 'sounding board' function for Shell is an appropriate and useful part of the partnership, IUCN's roles are much broader and more meaningful, and towards the end of the period it was increasingly proactive in its development of themes on which to work with Shell. (Shell was thus a 'sounding board' for IUCN, too.) NBS was the prime example of this proactive stance.

The partners have learned the value of strategic and conceptual discussions, exploring ideas and paradigms. This is an acceptable and legitimate part of their relationship, although it requires management vigilance to ensure that it does not become too shapeless or open-ended. A related lesson is that failure is an acceptable part of the relationship, as long as the relevant lessons are extracted from it. The NPI Alliance was disbanded, for example, without accomplishing what was originally envisaged. But it taught the partners a lot about what the NPI concept might or might not mean in practice, and despite the setbacks NPI remains a live issue (section 6.3 below).

A related lesson has been that a mix of focused projects and conceptual or strategic work is appropriate. **For both types of activity, the partners should strive to formulate the work and its objectives clearly; to be modest in their ambitions; to keep the activities simple (without restricting the conceptual scope of strategic explorations); and to specify as far as possible what the indicators of successful performance should be.** They recognise the value of keeping their relationship going through low periods in the business cycle when new projects – often the easiest place to try new approaches – may be few. But **it will be important in the next phase to intensify efforts to identify and launch new joint projects.** Broad

conceptual discussions are valuable, but the focused projects are more visible inside and outside the two organisations.

However, the trust now established between these partners reinforces the argument that the qualitative, subjective aspects of their collaboration and decision-making are legitimate and can be productive. Detailed efforts to measure the value for money of each activity would not be rewarding. But these qualitative dimensions do help to confirm that the Shell-IUCN partnership is more than the sum of its parts.

The partners should therefore **be proactive about stimulating top level interactions between Shell and IUCN management**. At that level, such meetings or conversations are hard to plan or predict, but they should not be left entirely to chance at occasions like Davos where the relevant individuals are likely to coincide.

Based on the lessons of the last four years, a number of opportunities arise for IUCN in structuring its contributions to the next phase of the partnership.

- **IUCN should strive to engage its Regional and Country Offices more in the design and implementation of partnership activities.** Some specific ideas on this are proposed in section 6.3 below.
- **IUCN should seek to engage its Global Programmes, Commissions and State Members more fully in the design and implementation of partnership activities.** Again, ideas on technical content for this are proposed in section 6.3.
- **IUCN should align the next phase of the Shell partnership closely with its restructured Programme**, linking activities explicitly to the three ‘business lines’ of the BBP and possibly to one or more ‘business lines’ of other Global Programmes (section 4.2 above).

Work during the review period demonstrated that the partnership can function effectively with a limited budget – although the partners remained painfully aware that they could achieve more with more money. In the next phase, **IUCN and Shell should seek and explore additional funding for partnership activities, or for work derived from the partnership**. This could be built on IUCN access to global opportunities like the Green Climate Fund, and/or to other funding streams within Shell, linked to specific business opportunities or projects. With such a long and largely successful period of collaboration behind them, it is time for the partners to loosen the boundaries around what they do together, and seek to diversify both the funding and the participation of their joint programme.

6.3 Areas of technical collaboration

This review finds that all three of the ‘value drivers’ for the current phase of the partnership have proved meaningful and useful, with varying degrees of performance as discussed in section 3.2 above. But **the partners should revise ‘value driver’ 3: ‘bring biodiversity to the attention of Shell’s leadership’**. A better way of phrasing the ambition might be in terms of supporting Shell’s strategic decision-making as it tackles the environmental impacts of hydrocarbon extraction and use, and works for a lower carbon future. This would be further endorsement, as argued above, of the roles the partnership can play in helping both organisations explore concepts and scenarios for the energy transitions that the world inevitably faces in the coming decades.

The concept of NBS has found genuine traction in IUCN and Shell, although the partners’ interpretations of the concept are not exactly the same. **The partners should retain and develop NBS as a central theme in the next phase, building from conceptual discussions to practical pilots**. This should take the concept beyond simple carbon offsetting to the direct linkage of hydrocarbons consumption and proactive, landscape-wide approaches to compensating for that consumption. This should be part of an ongoing effort by the two organisations to identify joint opportunities in what one informant called the ‘transition space’ through which Shell and society are moving.

Important lessons were learned during the review period about the concept of NPI and its application. As argued above, apparently negative lessons can have positive directions, and although there were challenges around taking the NPI Alliance forward and building a business case that businesses found persuasive, the partners confirm that the concept remains on the table. **Without necessarily waiting for a new Shell project through which to pilot it, the partners should keep NPI in the ‘project funnel’ and explore other ways of elaborating and applying the concept.**

A related assumption that the partners have often made is that significant innovations like NPI can only be attempted when Shell launches a new project – which it has not recently done. **They should re-examine this assumption and consider whether some enhanced concepts and practices can be applied to existing operations too.**

One of the lessons from the technical collaborations of the review period was that IUCN’s regional and country level resources – including their local networks and cultural insights – were not always optimally exploited. **The partners should now explore the possibility of bringing one or more IUCN Regional or Country Offices into support for one or more of Shell’s ten country-specific energy transition planning processes.**

IUCN’s more local resources also have potential in another area of the partnership: bringing new players to the table. Through the WGWAP and elsewhere, IUCN and Shell now have at least a decade of experience in trying to get other major players to make formal commitments to initiatives that IUCN and one partner have launched. The formal results have been disappointing, however significant some of the indirect results may have been as other companies looked through the window or around the door. The lesson is that there are various modes of influence in addition to the first prize of a formal public commitment by a large player in the extractives sector. Consequently, **IUCN and Shell should consider four possibilities for this area of their joint efforts during the next phase:**

- **continued efforts to bring new (probably large-scale) players to the table**, for example through links with IPIECA – links with that body should be maintained and strengthened - as well as specific contacts with individual companies³;
- building on the types of work that IUCN and Shell have done together, **reach out to other players with the offer of joint informal discussions on concepts, scenarios and strategy**, emphasising what IUCN has to offer in this regard (in addition to narrower technical issues like oil spills and endangered species);
- pilot efforts at country level, possibly involving IUCN country offices, and building on existing IUCN-Shell experience, to **engage smaller-scale operators**;
- again working with IUCN country or regional offices, and possibly linked to Shell’s country-specific energy transition planning, **efforts to engage the entire oil and gas sector in a country**: one informant suggested that this could be done in Iraq, building on the successful outreach by the current Majnoon project.

Another opportunity in this area of partnership endeavour is the next Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), to be held in Egypt in November 2018. This will focus on biodiversity, energy and mining, and offers clear opportunities for IUCN and Shell to profile their partnership and to explore new linkages. **Starting with the December 2017 meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) in Montreal, they should plan ways to advance the purpose of the partnership through the next CBD COP.** These could include the IUCN BBP convening a Business Week on the COP theme in early 2018.

³ Since this report was drafted, arrangements have been made for the IUCN Director General to participate in a forthcoming meeting of the Oil and Gas Climate Initiative (section 3.2.3 above).

Experience during the review period consolidated what the partners already knew: that ISTAPs, despite their complexities and challenges, can be a high-profile success story that serves their joint purpose well. While recognising that opportunities for this modality are not common, **Shell and IUCN should be alert to new situations for which development of an ISTAP would be appropriate.**

Less progress was made with the decommissioning of maritime infrastructure than had been hoped. **IUCN and Shell should continue to see decommissioning as a real opportunity for joint action, and plan accordingly at suitable sites worldwide.**

6.4 Governance and management

IUCN and Shell found that the governance and management arrangements for their partnership during the review period were broadly fit for purpose. The experience demonstrated the obvious fact that staff continuity (assuming they are the right sort of staff!) is highly beneficial. The partnership also benefited from growing continuity and experience of the joint effort at management level, in and outside the biannual partnership meetings.

As noted in section 5.3, there has been a hiatus in the partnership's interface with the IUCN Council since that body was renewed at the World Conservation Congress in 2016. At the time of this review, the Council's Private Sector Task Force (PSTF) had not yet been reconvened. **As soon as the PSTF is operational again, IUCN should expedite a briefing on the Shell partnership. It should then ensure regular liaison with the PSTF in order to facilitate understanding and support from the Council for the partnership.**

The partners' work together over the review period has endorsed the value of the 'project funnel' as a way of filtering ideas and determining whether to carry them forward into focused projects. But **they should remain vigilant in ensuring tight and timely management of the 'funnel', ensuring that they are always clear about which ideas are where in it, and why.**

As argued in section 4.4, **Shell and IUCN should develop a simple system for documenting each item in and beyond the 'project funnel', from preliminary concepts to practical projects:** this should summarise the nature of the idea or activity, and periodically record significant activities and results. This could serve as the basis for a simple monitoring system that goes beyond the current notes presented to partnership meetings. The system could also be the basis for regular checks at partnership meetings (and/or other occasions) on what has been learned from each idea or activity, and/or what conservation results have been achieved. If nothing more has been learned, and (if applicable) no further conservation results are anticipated, it will be time to draw a line under that component of the partnership. That would not necessarily mean archiving it, since new angles or opportunities could justify reviving it later.

6.5 Communication

Since 2014, Shell and IUCN have demonstrated that, even with limited funding, they can co-ordinate their communications about the partnership efficiently, and without major mishaps about the public release of content that has not been checked and approved by the other party. They have also continued to demonstrate the instinctive caution that, for different reasons, both organisations feel about external communication of their work together. Internally, they have continued to find that not all the parts of their respective structures that would benefit from knowledge of the partnership actually know enough – or anything – about it.

Given the central role that advocacy plays in IUCN's mission, and the reputational benefits that can accrue to Shell from its partnership with IUCN, **the two organisations should commit to a higher and more active communications profile in the next phase of the partnership.** This will, inevitably, mean increased resources.

The respective communications staff learned that a structured annual communications plan can be beneficial. In 2017, however, they were less diligent in working to this plan than they were in 2016. **Shell**

and IUCN should renew their joint communications plan for 2018 and work systematically to implement and report on it.

Experience during the review period has helped to identify two areas in which communications merge into other areas of the partnership effort. The first is monitoring and reporting of activities. Building on the more systematic but still simple monitoring and tracking process recommended above for each partnership activity, **the relevant technical and communications staff should produce periodic one-page summaries for public communication.** This should help address the obvious fact that effective communications require useable material to communicate – and provide the necessary linkage between communications and learning.

The second area concerns the interface between communications and debate. The partners' website communications do not allow for reader commentary – which would be a foundation for public debate. As pointed out in section 3.5, doing this would cost money because of the need for moderating user posts. Nor do the partners currently use social media much for communicating their work together. Doing so would automatically open up public debate on whatever is posted. Taking into account the partners' reasons for caution in this area, it is recommended that **IUCN and Shell reappraise their policies on communication and debate around partnership activities, and consider the limited use of social media as an additional communications medium in the next phase.**

6.6 Summary partnership assessment

The 2010 review of the IUCN-Shell partnership suggested that a summary partnership assessment tool might usefully be applied. It said

Various methods have been developed for the structured assessment of partnerships. Review of the literature did not identify one that could appropriately serve as the central instrument for this review. However, a partnership assessment tool developed for the United Kingdom government does offer a useful way of summarising the status of the IUCN-Shell partnership (Hardy et al., 2003). It was designed for use, much like the survey questionnaires used for this study, as a series of statements that participants would score on the basis of agreement or disagreement. These statements are grouped under six 'partnership principles'. Rather than offering a score on an agreement/disagreement scale, Table 1 below shows each of the normative statements presented by the UK government tool, and offers a summary statement about the IUCN-Shell partnership. Not all the statements are directly applicable to this partnership, of course, as they were developed for partnerships involving public sector agencies. As a possible stimulus to critical reading of the table, the reviewer's summary judgment is shown in colour in the right hand column.

Turner, 2010: 29.

For the purposes of comparison, a second, equally subjective attempt has been made to use the same assessment tool. Table 1 below shows the results from this 2017 assessment, with those from the 2010 exercise also shown for comparison. Comments refer to the 2017 assessment. The darker green represents a stronger positive assessment than the mildly positive assessment of the lighter green. Orange suggests that the criterion in question is not fully met. It has not seemed necessary to use the completely negative red colour at all in 2017. Overall, use of this tool suggests a more fully positive assessment of the Shell-IUCN partnership than seemed appropriate in 2010.

Table 1. Summary partnership assessment

Principle 1: recognise and accept the need for partnership		2017	2010
<i>There have been substantial past achievements within the partnership.</i>	Yes – although some of these have been conceptual rather than leading to direct conservation results.		
<i>The factors associated with successful working are known and understood.</i>	Yes – although these factors are not always successfully combined in actual joint activities.		
<i>The principal barriers to successful partnership working are known and understood.</i>	Yes – although they are not always fully overcome.		
<i>The extent to which partners engage in partnership working voluntarily or under pressure/mandation [sic] is recognised and understood.</i>	Both partners recognise that joint activities are voluntary but that, having committed to a formal partnership, they have some obligation to deliver.		
<i>There is a clear understanding of partners' interdependence in achieving some of their goals.</i>	Yes – improved since 2010, although still some caution or reluctance among some in IUCN about any dependence on the private sector.		
<i>There is mutual understanding of those areas of activity where partners can achieve some goals by working independently of each other.</i>	Yes.		
Principle 2: develop clarity and realism of purpose			
<i>The partnership has a clear vision, shared values and agreed service principles</i>	The 'value drivers' constitute a shared vision. IUCN and Shell still do not fully share values, and are unlikely to. Service principles: not applicable (NA).		
<i>The partners have clearly defined joint aims and objectives.</i>	Objectives stated in broad, ambitious terms: performance difficult to measure objectively		
<i>These joint aims and objectives are realistic.</i>	Realistic but ambitious.		
<i>The partnership has defined clear service outcomes.</i>	Not applicable (NA)		
<i>The reason why each partner is engaged in the partnership is understood and accepted.</i>	Understood and largely accepted – not yet fully in all parts of IUCN's constituency.		
<i>The partners have identified where early partnership success is most likely.</i>	Exploration of possibilities continues, but scope for success is well known and understood.		
Principle 3: ensure commitment and ownership			
<i>There is a clear commitment to partnership working from the most senior levels of each partnership organisation.</i>	Yes.		
<i>There is widespread ownership of the partnership across and within all partners.</i>	There is ownership where it counts most, but inappropriate to expect it to be universal in each organisation.		
<i>Commitment to partnership working is sufficiently robust to withstand most threats to its working.</i>	Yes. Both organisations believe in the partnership.		
<i>The partnership recognises and encourages networking skills.</i>	Such skills recognised as essential in IUCN, but not specifically for this partnership. Not so relevant in the company structures of Shell.		
<i>The partnership is not dependent for its success solely upon individuals with these skills.</i>	True.		
<i>Not working in partnership is discouraged and dealt with.</i>	NA. Staff in both organisations have other duties not related to this partnership.		
Principle 4: develop and maintain trust			
<i>The way the partnership is structured recognises and values each partner's contribution.</i>	True.		
<i>The way the partnership's work is conducted appropriately recognises each partner's contribution.</i>	True.		
<i>Benefits derived from the partnership are fairly distributed among all partners.</i>	True, although many of the benefits are intangible.		[Not yet]
<i>There is sufficient trust within the partnership to survive any mistrust that arises elsewhere.</i>	True. Some mistrust does still arise, but the partnership has become stronger.		
<i>Levels of trust within the partnership are sufficient to encourage significant risk-taking</i>	True – with so much exploratory and pilot activity, risk-taking is part of this partnership's funeral. A strict focus on VFM is therefore inappropriate.		

<i>The partnership has succeeded in having the right people in the right place at the right time to promote partnership working.</i>	True. Key staff on both sides drove the partnership well during the review period.		
Principle 5: create clear and robust partnership agreements		2017	2010
<i>It is clear what financial resources each partner brings to the partnership.</i>	True.		
<i>The resources, other than finance, that each partner brings to the partnership are understood and appreciated.</i>	True.		
<i>Each partner's areas of responsibility are clear and understood.</i>	True.		
<i>There are clear lines of accountability for the performance of the partnership as a whole.</i>	True.		
<i>Operational partnership arrangements are simple, time-limited and task-oriented.</i>	Projects range from those that satisfy these criteria to those that are complex, open-ended and involve multiple tasks at different levels of definition and operation.		
<i>The partnership's principal focus is on process, outcomes and innovation.</i>	Largely true, although efficient process did not always receive adequate attention.		
Principle 6: monitor, measure and learn			
<i>The partnership has clear success criteria in terms of both service goals and the partnership itself.</i>	'Value drivers' clearly worded, but broad and general. Individual activities lack clear performance indicators.		
<i>The partnership has clear arrangements effectively to monitor and review how successfully its service aims and objectives are being met.</i>	There is scope for improving monitoring and reporting. This review makes suggestions.		
<i>There are clear arrangements effectively to monitor and review how the partnership itself is working.</i>	'Partnership meetings' undertake periodic qualitative reviews. This external review is the first for seven years.		
<i>There are clear arrangements to ensure that monitoring and review findings are, or will be, widely shared and disseminated among the partners.</i>	There is scope for improving monitoring and reporting. This review makes suggestions.		
<i>Partnership successes are well communicated outside of the partnership.</i>	External communications good as far as they go, but could be stepped up – subject to resourcing.		
<i>There are clear arrangements to ensure that partnership aims, objectives and working arrangements are reconsidered and, where necessary, revised in the light of monitoring and review findings.</i>	Implicitly understood that renegotiation of agreement for next phase, taking this review into account, constitutes such arrangements.		

Table criteria and format based on Hardy *et al.*, 2003.

6.7 Summary of recommendations

By way of summary, Table 2 below lists the recommendations made in sections 6.2 - 6.5 above. The recommendations are amplified, where appropriate, with comments in the right-hand column.

Table 2. Summary of recommendations

Report section	No.	Recommendation	Comment
6.2	The character, strategies and funding of the partnership		
	1	For both focused projects and conceptual or strategic work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formulate the work and its objectives clearly; • set objectives modestly; • keep activities simple; • specify performance indicators. 	
	2	Intensify efforts to identify and launch new projects.	Broad conceptual discussions are valuable, but the focused projects are more visible inside and outside the two organisations.
	3	Be proactive about stimulating top level interactions between Shell and IUCN management.	At that level, such meetings or conversations are hard to plan or predict, but they should not be left entirely to chance at occasions like Davos where the relevant individuals are likely to coincide.
	4	IUCN should strive to engage its Regional and Country Offices more in the design and implementation of partnership activities.	
	5	IUCN should seek to engage its Global Programmes, Commissions and State Members more fully in the design and implementation of partnership activities.	
	6	IUCN should align the next phase of the Shell partnership closely with its restructured Programme.	
	7	IUCN and Shell should seek and explore additional funding for partnership activities, or for work derived from the partnership.	This could be built on IUCN access to global opportunities like the Green Climate Fund, and/or to other funding streams within Shell, linked to specific business opportunities or projects.
6.3	Areas of technical collaboration		
	8	Revise 'value driver' 3: 'bring biodiversity to the attention of Shell's leadership'.	A better way of phrasing the ambition might be in terms of supporting Shell's strategic decision-making as it tackles the environmental impacts of hydrocarbon extraction and use, and works for a lower carbon future.
	9	Retain and develop NBS as a central theme in the next phase, building from conceptual discussions to practical pilots.	This should take the concept beyond simple carbon offsetting to the direct linkage of hydrocarbons consumption and proactive, landscape-wide approaches to compensating for that consumption.
	10	Without necessarily waiting for a new Shell project through which to pilot it, the partners	

Report section	No.	Recommendation	Comment
		should keep NPI in the 'project funnel' and explore other ways of elaborating and applying the concept.	
	11	Re-examine the assumption that significant innovations like NPI can only be attempted when Shell launches a new project. Consider whether some enhanced concepts and practices can be applied to existing operations too.	
	12	Explore the possibility of bringing one or more IUCN Regional or Country Offices into support for one or more of Shell's ten country-specific energy transition planning processes.	
	13	With regard to 'bringing new players to the table': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue efforts to bring new (probably large-scale) players to the table; • reach out to other players with the offer of joint informal discussions on concepts, scenarios and strategy; • pilot efforts at country level, possibly involving IUCN country offices, and building on existing IUCN-Shell experience, to engage smaller-scale operators; • try to engage the entire oil and gas sector in a country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for example through links with IPIECA – links with that body should be maintained and strengthened - as well as specific contacts with individual companies; • this could be tried in Iraq, building on the successful outreach by the Majnoon project.
	14	Starting with the December 2017 meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) in Montreal, plan ways to advance the purpose of the partnership through the next CBD COP.	These could include the IUCN BBP convening a Business Week on the COP theme in early 2018.
	15	Be alert to new situations for which development of an ISTAP would be appropriate.	
	16	Continue to see decommissioning of marine infrastructure as a real opportunity for joint action, and plan accordingly at suitable sites worldwide.	
6.4	Governance and management		
	17	As soon as its Council's Private Sector Task Force is operational again, IUCN should expedite a briefing on the Shell partnership. It should then ensure regular liaison with the PSTF in order to facilitate understanding and support from the Council for the partnership.	
	18	Remain vigilant in ensuring tight and timely management of the 'project funnel', ensuring it is always clear which ideas are where in it, and why.	

Report section	No.	Recommendation	Comment
	19	Develop a simple system for documenting each item in and beyond the 'project funnel', from preliminary concepts to practical projects.	This should summarise the nature of the idea or activity, and periodically record significant activities and results.
6.5	Communication		
	20	Commit to a higher and more active communications profile in the next phase of the partnership.	This will, inevitably, mean increased resources.
	21	Renew the joint communications plan for 2018 and work systematically to implement and report on it.	
	22	For each partnership activity, the relevant technical and communications staff should produce periodic one-page summaries for public communication.	This should help address the obvious fact that effective communications require useable material to communicate – and provide the necessary linkage between communications and learning.
	23	IUCN and Shell should reappraise their policies on communication and debate around partnership activities, and consider the limited use of social media as an additional communications medium in the next phase.	Action in this regard should of course take into account the partners' reasons for caution in this area.

Annex 1. Terms of reference

Purpose of the review

The Collaborative Partnership Agreement between Shell and IUCN is nearing completion and the Steering Committee has requested an external review to assess achievement towards objectives and to make recommendations for future collaboration from 2018 onwards.

The review is being commissioned by Ms Inger Andersen, Director-General of IUCN, and Rupert Thomas, Vice President, Environment, of Shell.

Background to the IUCN – Shell partnership agreement 2014 – 2017

IUCN and Shell have jointly engaged in partnership for biodiversity conservation since the early 2000s, most recently in the form of consecutive multi-year agreements.

The objectives of the current partnership agreement are in the form of value drivers that guide a number of strategic initiatives under the IUCN – Shell agreement. The value drivers set out in the collaborative document “A Way Forward for further Collaboration between IUCN and Shell” are to:

- **Bring science to bear:** Use science better in contributing to meaningful decision making processes to provide better conservation outcomes for nature and business.
- **Bring new players to the table:** Encourage a wider participation of other businesses and organizations in the various initiatives in order to enlarge the area of influence.
- **Bring biodiversity to the attention of Shell’s Leadership:** Encourage discussion and assessment of the topic of biodiversity by the Executive Committee.

The current agreement names several strategic initiatives with specific goals and objectives and outlines a “project funnel approach” to enable IUCN and Shell to jointly develop new initiatives throughout the period of the agreement. The strategic initiatives in the scope of this review are the two that were listed in Annex 1 (Net Positive Impact Alliance, Sustainable Biofuels), additional “existing projects” that were listed in Annex 2 of the current agreement (Niger Delta Panel (NDP), Iraq, LiNSI, IUCN Knowledge Products), and projects and collaborations that were explored and developed / rejected as part of the project funnel approach. This final group includes (but is not limited to) Natural Capital, Marine Protected Areas Mapping, Nature-based Carbon solutions, Transformational Change in Business Practices, etc.

Furthermore, during this current agreement, the Western Gray Whale Advisory Panel (WGWAP) was increasingly considered as part of the IUCN – Shell portfolio of collaboration. Several of these collaborations have been evaluated relatively recently (NDP, WGWAP) and the purpose of considering all of the strategic initiatives / existing projects is not to evaluate each in detail, but rather to understand them as part of a broader portfolio of collaboration.

Objectives of the evaluation

The objective of the evaluation is both to assess achievement towards its stated objectives (value drivers listed above), and to learn from the experience of running the IUCN-Shell partnership between 2014 and mid-2017. This evaluation is expected to be formative in nature, with an emphasis on learning. It also fulfils the requirement under the IUCN Monitoring and Evaluation Policy to evaluate any project with a value over CHF 500K.

The partners have begun to design a new agreement to commence in 2018 and will use this evaluation to inform the new agreement. What is learned from this evaluation will also be of interest more broadly for IUCN's strategy for engaging with the private sector, particularly the energy sector.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are outlined in the evaluation matrix at the end of this document.

1. To assess the **relevance** and **appropriateness** of the scope and ambition of the IUCN-Shell Partnership Agreement.
2. To assess the **effectiveness** of the partnership in achieving its intended results and explore the current factors that support and hinder the fulfilment of the Collaborative Partnership Agreement. Main topics should be:
 - Delivery against intended results
 - Delivery of conservation results
 - Effectiveness of partnership
 - Effectiveness of stakeholder engagement and role of SE in delivering results and conservation results
 - Effectiveness of communications
3. To assess factors contributing to the **efficiency** and effectiveness of the partnership including leadership, management, governance and communication.
4. To assess the **sustainability** of results and potential **impact** of these on conservation and climate change.
5. To make **recommendations** based on these findings and lessons learned to a) contribute to IUCN's strategy for engaging the energy sector, and b) to inform the design of the planned subsequent phase of the IUCN – Shell partnership starting in 2018.

Scope of the review

The scope of the Review includes the strategic dimension of the Shell - IUCN Partnership as a flexible mechanism for adding value to Shell and IUCN and facilitating delivery of results; the effectiveness of the Partnership for delivery of results through the portfolio of strategic initiatives; and its management and governance. This review will not evaluate the strategic initiatives but will take a light touch review to identify results emerging from these. The Review will cover the period from December 2013 until June 2017.

Main audiences and intended use

This evaluation has been commissioned by the Director General of IUCN and the Vice President, Environment of Shell at the request of the relationship managers of the IUCN-Shell partnership.

The intended users and uses of the recommendations of this review are expected to be:

- The Director General of IUCN for the purpose of taking decisions on the scope, set-up and operations of the next agreement;

- The Director of the IUCN Global Business and Biodiversity Programme (GBBP) for the purpose of managing the Secretariat’s engagement with Shell;
- The relationship managers from IUCN and Shell for the purpose of enhancing the effectiveness of the partnership;
- The relevant Shell managers for the purpose of better designing and managing partnership activities with IUCN;
- The steering committee for the purpose of improving the governance of the relationship.

More broadly, audiences include:

- Programme Directors and Senior Management Teams of IUCN
- IUCN Council members
- IUCN regional heads of office
- Leadership team members in Shell’s businesses including Integrated Gas and New Energies and Projects & Technology
- Shell subject matter experts on biofuels, biodiversity, and environment and other interested staff
- IUCN Membership, as they may also find this review useful in expressing their views on the value of this Agreement.

Methodology

This evaluation will be carried out in conformance with the IUCN Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (2015)⁴. This policy sets out IUCN’s institutional commitment to evaluation, and the criteria and standards for the evaluation of its projects, programmes and organizational units. IUCN’s evaluation standards and criteria are based on the widely accepted OECD DAC Evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

The draft evaluation matrix (see Annex) with suggested key issues and questions relating to each objective has been developed by the evaluation manager with the IUCN-Shell relationship managers and will be finalized and included in the inception report (the first deliverable of the evaluation). The evaluation matrix provides a framework for the key issues to be addressed and the data sources that will be used in the evaluation. Following any required revisions, the approved inception report will guide the evaluation. Adequately addressing the key questions in the matrix included in the approved inception report will be the basis for IUCN to sign off on the completeness of the evaluation report.

All data collection tools are to be included as annexes to the final evaluation report. The link between evaluation questions, data collection, analysis, findings and conclusions must be clearly made and set out in a transparent manner in the presentation of the evaluation findings.

The evaluation will seek the views of the range of stakeholders who have been engaged in the process to date, including managers and staff of IUCN, Shell, and potentially other relevant and essential stakeholders that may be identified during the process of the evaluation.

⁴ <https://www.iucn.org/resources/monitoring-and-evaluation>

The evaluation is expected to use mixed methods, including:

- Review of relevant documentation from the past four years (including but not limited to the recent evaluations of the WGWAP and other initiatives between IUCN and Shell);
- Interviews of key stakeholders from Shell (including but not limited to Executive Directors, Vice Presidents, Environmentally Sensitive Areas Team), IUCN (including but not limited to the Secretariat, Council, Commissions and Members), and any other relevant stakeholder groups.
- Other methods, as deemed necessary by the evaluator, such as a survey.

The Shell - IUCN Steering Committee will convene a meeting after the review to discuss the results and next steps.

Deliverables

The following deliverables are expected of the review team:

1. An inception report that includes: Final methodology, including proposed approach to the evaluation, refined Evaluation Matrix, proposed methods, indicators, list of stakeholders to be consulted, set of data collection tools, and outline of final report.
2. Draft report.
3. Final report with annexes with all data collection tools.

The Review findings and recommendations will be presented, by the evaluator, to a joint meeting of the Steering Committee and the Relationship managers of the Shell - IUCN Partnership.

Management of the evaluation

The evaluation will be supervised independently by the IUCN Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, who will oversee the design, hiring of the evaluator, quality of the evaluation process, and dissemination and use of results to ensure compliance with the IUCN Monitoring and Evaluation Policy.

Travel required

The evaluator will be required to travel to IUCN Headquarters in Switzerland and Shell offices in London or The Hague, NL for data collection and interviews. Attendance at a 7 July 2017 meeting of IUCN and Shell in Gland, Switzerland is likely to be required and will be an opportunity to share early preliminary findings. Sharing the final report in a presentation with the IUCN and Shell managers together is also highly desirable and a meeting for this is likely to be planned in the Fall. No travel to field sites is anticipated, as the data required from users in the field can be collected by telephone interviews and through document review.

Reporting, sharing and using the results

The evaluation findings and recommendations will be presented by the evaluator to the relationship managers, Director of the Global Business and Biodiversity Programme and the relationship Steering Committee at the meetings mentioned above.

The IUCN relationship manager will present and discuss the results of the evaluation with other stakeholders following acceptance of the final report by IUCN.

The IUCN relationship manager will develop a Management Response and Action Plan, seeking input from the Shell relationship manager for improvements until the end of the current period.

Timeframe

The evaluation will take place from late June to early September 2017.

Milestone	Indicative completion date
Finalization of Terms of Reference	April 2017
Recruitment and appointment of Evaluation consultant	May 2017
Finalise evaluation matrix of key issues and questions, and data collection tools, work plan and schedule	End June 2017
Data collection and analysis	July-August 2017
Draft report	Late August 2017
Final Report	Early September 2017
IUCN Management response	October 2017

Annex 2. Review matrix

Performance areas	Key questions	Sub-questions	Indicators	Sources of data
Relevance	To assess the relevance and appropriateness of the scope and ambition of the IUCN-Shell Partnership Agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the relationship continue to align to the strategic priorities of Shell and IUCN? Are the objectives relevant and adequate to achieve conservation results? Are they relevant and adequate to transform practices for Shell and for the oil and gas industry? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of key participant opinion Summary of other key informant opinion Score on partnership assessment tool principle 1 	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Document review</p>
Effectiveness	To assess the effectiveness of the partnership in achieving its intended results ⁵ and explore the current factors that support and hinder the fulfilment of the Collaborative Partnership Agreement. Main topics should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery against intended results Delivery of conservation results Effectiveness of partnership Effectiveness of stakeholder engagement and role of SE in delivering results and conservation results Effectiveness of communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What evidence is there of improvement in the “value drivers” described in the agreement? To what extent have intended results been reached? What examples of conservation results (technical, policy and advocacy) have been observed across the portfolio of initiatives? To what extent has intended stakeholder engagement contributed to the effectiveness of the Partnership? Is there a shared understanding of the partnership objectives? Are they clearly worded? How have public communications contributed to the effectiveness of the partnership? What is the perception of the relationship by key stakeholders identified by recent reviews? Has it changed over time? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Data on value drivers Data on achievement of results, including conservation results Summary of key participant opinion Summary of other key informant opinion Comparative scores on partnership assessment tool, 2010 and 2017 	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Document review, including partnership progress reports and reports on discussion of partnership at major meetings such as World Conservation Congress and IUCN Council</p> <p>Review of public communications, including websites</p>
Efficiency	To assess factors contributing to the organisational efficiency of the partnership including leadership, management, governance and communication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have coordination arrangements facilitated efficient administration, communication and implementation? To what extent has the management of the relationship (planning, implementing, resourcing, monitoring, and engaging stakeholders) contributed to its effectiveness? To what extent is the project funnel approach strategic and delivering conservation gains? What are the enabling factors of this approach? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Punctuality of planning, management and reporting processes (plans, meetings, reports) Summary of key participant opinion Summary of other key informant opinion Summary of responses and action arising from 2010 evaluation and subsequent 	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Document review</p>

⁵ This includes the technical, policy and advocacy results in three spheres: Shell, IUCN and the wider oil and gas sector.

Evaluation of the IUCN – Shell collaborative partnership, 2014 - 2017

Performance areas	Key questions	Sub-questions	Indicators	Sources of data
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What lessons have been learned about efficient coordination of the relationship? • What mechanisms are in place to learn from partnership experience? • What evidence is there of monitoring and evaluation leading to learning and adaptation? • How efficient are internal and external communications? • To what extent is the partnership considered transparent and accountable by IUCN Members, Council and other key stakeholders? • To what extent is the partnership perceived by Shell and by IUCN as delivering value for money? 	monitoring and reporting 5. Scores on partnership assessment tool	
Sustainability and potential for impact	To assess the sustainability of results and potential impact of these on conservation and climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What examples of changes to Shell's policy, process or decisions have been observed that can be linked to the relationship? • What examples of changes to IUCN's policy (including IUCN Resolutions and Recommendations), processes or decisions have been observed that can be linked to the relationship? • Have any of these changes also been observed in other parts of the oil and gas sector and what was the process that led to that change? • To what extent do any documented changes represent meaningful conservation results? 	1. Documentary evidence of tangible examples of altered Shell, IUCN and other oil and gas sector actions, policy, decisions etc. 2. Summary of key participant opinion 3. Summary of other key informant opinion	Interviews Document review
Lessons learned	To make recommendations based on these findings and lessons learned to a) contribute to IUCN's strategy for engaging the energy sector, and b) to inform the design of the planned subsequent phase of the IUCN – Shell partnership starting in 2018.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What changes are required to enhance the design of the subsequent agreement, with regards to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of technical collaboration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should IUCN be looking at opportunities to work with Shell on other parts of their business (renewables)? • What new areas of opportunity can be identified? Is there scope for higher aspiration? • Governance and management of the partnership: What aspects of the current set-up could be improved? • Communication: What recommendations can be made to improve external communication to 	1. Summary of key participant opinion 2. Summary of other key informant opinion 3. Findings of other evaluations of Shell and IUCN partnerships	Interviews Document review

Evaluation of the IUCN – Shell collaborative partnership, 2014 - 2017

Performance areas	Key questions	Sub-questions	Indicators	Sources of data
		the partners' broader constituencies?		

Annex 3. Persons interviewed

D. Aiama	Community Manager, IUCN Green List, Global Protected Areas Programme
I. Andersen	Director General, IUCN
A. Andrade	Chair, IUCN Commission on Ecosystems Management
R. Asante-Owusu	IUCN BBP
M. Bateson	Global Practice Leader, Energy, Environment and Climate Change, Rio Tinto
G. Bos	Director, IUCN BBP
K. Bye Bruun	SE Special Projects Manager, SPDC
S. Edwards	Relationship Manager, IUCN BBP
H. El Shaer	Regional Programme Co-ordinator a.i., IUCN ROWA
A. Grigg	Head, Business and Biodiversity Programme, UNEP-WCMC
J. Hughes	Member, IUCN Council
L.A. Hurt	Communications and Knowledge Manager, IUCN BBP
S. Kapila	Vice-President, Government Relations, Shell
C. G. Lundin	Head, Global Marine Programme, IUCN
E. McKenzie	Majnoon Environmental Lead, SIPD
S. Maginnis	Global Director, IUCN NBS Group
N. Olsen	Head, IUCN Economics and Finance Unit
D. Quaille	Former Relationship Manager, Shell
P. Rosabal	Deputy Director, IUCN Global Protected Areas Programme
G. Roseboom	Relationship Manager, Shell
R. Thomas	Vice-President for Environment, Shell
J. Touron	Environmental Adviser, Projects and Technology – Safety and Environment, Shell
M. Visser	External Relations Adviser, Safety, Environment and Social Performance, Shell

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