



# WCPA Terms of Reference for Specialist Group and Task Force Leaders

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Specialist Group (SG) and Task Force (TF) leaders are the driving force of all SGs and TFs. They provide leadership for key strategic areas of WCPA's work, guide the activities of their group and have responsibility for the overall governance, conduct, administration, activities and reporting of their group. SG and TF Chairs play a vital role in achieving a smooth working relationship between IUCN and WCPA members.

As per IUCN Regulation VII-79, Specialist Group and Task Force Chairs are appointed (and removed) by the WCPA Chair in consultation with the WCPA Steering Committee. SG Chairs are normally appointed for a fixed term between IUCN World Conservation Congresses (usually 4 years) but, at the discretion of the WCPA Chair, their tenure can be changed.

Specialist Group and Task Force Chairs are responsible for meeting the requirements and deliverables as outlined below.

Ninety days after each IUCN World Conservation Congress, the SG Chairs and SG member appointments end. Following the Congress, the newly elected WCPA Chair will reappoint/appoint SG Chairs at his/her discretion (IUCN Regulation VII-72). The role of SG and TF Chairs and minimum deliverables for which they are responsible are outlined in below.

## **1. Contributing to WCPA's Mandate**

Specialist Groups and Task Forces are essential for ensuring that the work of the GPAP and WCPA is based on cutting-edge science, knowledge and best practices. To enhance their input to the continuing growth of WCPA's leadership in protected area conservation and management, SG and TF Chairs are encouraged on their own prerogative and resources, and in consultation with their members, to:

- Identify emerging conservation issues and opportunities
- Provide innovative solutions to broad issues in protected area conservation and management
- Suggest improvements to WCPA
- Consult regularly and closely with the WCPA Chair, other SG Chairs and/or GPAP staff on matters of mutual concern
- Contribute to enhancement of products and operations which cut across SGs and TFs
- Engage, through the WCPA and the GPAP, in higher-level analyses of protected areas through the integration of knowledge from various SGs and TFs within the WCPA and from other IUCN Commissions

## 1.1 Technical Input

- Develop and contribute specialist knowledge and products (guidelines, policy statements and proposals) relevant to advancement of protected areas
- Contribute technical information and policy recommendations for IUCN or WCPA's contributions to international conventions (e.g. World Heritage, Ramsar, CBD, and regional agreements)
- Contribute expert knowledge of the topic within their remit as part of WCPA's wider work with regard to knowledge on planning and management of protected area systems and sites

## 1.2 Alignment with the IUCN-WCPA Mandate and Joint Work Programme

Specialist Group and Task Force Chairs should work in support of the WCPA Mandate and contribute to the implementation of the GPAP Joint Work Programme. In accordance with IUCN's Statutes and Regulations, SG and TF objectives and policies must be consistent with those of IUCN and in particular with the IUCN Programme (IUCN Regulation VII-79).

SG and TF Chairs are therefore responsible to:

- Acquaint themselves with the WCPA Mandate
- Develop and implement a series of priority activities for the SG or TF based on IUCN Joint WCPA Programme, where necessary with the support of GPAP staff
- Any major project e.g. Best Practice Guidelines or event such as a workshop will require the approval of ExCo.
- Report on SG and TF activities to relevant GPAP staff and/or the WCPA Chair when requested.

## 2. Specialist Group Leadership and Functioning

### 2.1 Governance

- A TF or SG can only be established with the agreement of the SC/ExCo.
- All WCPA TFs and SGs must have TORs approved and the agreement of ExCo.
- SG and TF leaders should develop a governance structure for their group for ExCo approval and seek the Chair's approval to allocate any additional title or representative role to individuals.
- SGs and TFs should require anyone designated as a 'member of the group' to actually be a WCPA member. Any person who takes any representative role or 'title' must be a full WCPA member.
- SGs and TFs may have informal networks for information exchange and communication purposes involving people who are not members of WCPA, but such associates must be clearly informed that they cannot claim or cite 'membership' of WCPA.

SG and TF Chairs are therefore responsible to:

- Ensure all sub appointments in the group act in support of IUCN and GPAP/WCPA policies and procedures (e.g., policies on financing, record keeping, publications, communications, reporting and gender) and consult with the GPAP staff and the WCPA Chair's office for guidance on such matters when necessary
- Ensure all members of the group who are given a specific office are full members of WCPA
- Inform non-members who receive the group communications that should not claim membership

of WCPA.

- Manage internal SG and TF members' interactions to maintain cohesion, cooperation and effectiveness.

## 2.2 Appointment of Members

- In 2016 WCPA SC decided that Task Forces and Specialist groups are to be made up of full WCPA members.
- There will no longer be multiple 'membership' processes – only one online process.
- If TF or SG Chairs identify someone they wish to include they should provide an endorsement for the applicant to include in their general WCPA online application.
- In identifying suitable new individuals as members of their Group, Chairs should seek appropriate technical knowledge and relevant geographic expertise and base, while promoting an equitable gender balance. Special Group and Task Force Chairs are strongly encouraged to give priority to identify, and support, young professionals
- Ensure that any inter-commission SG or TF is approved by the respective Chairs of the Commissions involved and that key members of the inter-commission SC or TF are identified as members of both commissions
- Inform members of their responsibilities, especially so they understand and comply with constraints on issues such publication speaking on behalf of WCPA and financial management.
- Make frequent reminders to members to keep their contact information up to date.
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## 2.3 Oversight

The implementation of routine functions may be delegated to SG and TF members, although all activities of the group are ultimately the responsibility of the SG or TF Chair

SG and TFs Chairs are therefore responsible to:

- Manage the Group's finances, according to the IUCN financial guidelines.
- Ensure that funds raised in the name of the IUCN WCPA Specialist Group or Task Force are regularly accounted for against contractual obligations and that no over-expenditure occurs. **Please note that neither the WCPA nor IUCN will accept liability for the financial commitments or cost over-runs of a SG or TF.**
- For projects undertaken by the SG or TF, ensure proper and efficient implementation reporting.
- Maintain good working relations with other institutions who offer in-kind assistance.

## 2.4 Conduct of the Group

Specialist Groups and Task Forces are often called upon to address complex and controversial conservation issues. They carry a powerful role, able to influence the policies of IUCN and others through the provision of sound, knowledge-based arguments. Many SGs and TFs are passionate in their support of the issue within their remits. Specialist Group and Task Force Chairs need to work in conformity with IUCN policy and should assume responsibility for the overall conduct of their Group with respect to such issues. All members of WCPA are required to acknowledge the Code of Conduct for the Commissions, and Specialist Group and Task Force Chairs should familiarize themselves with this Code of Conduct and any other relevant policies of IUCN and the WCPA.

To this end, SG and TF Chairs are therefore responsible to:

- Seek opportunities to provide input to relevant conservation debates and for a;
- Make interventions on technical issues in the name of the Group, and ensure adequate consultation within the Group prior to making such interventions;
- Ensure that interventions on national and international policy events are cleared with the GPAP and WCPA-Chair before making any such statements;
- Maintain professional standards of conduct that enhance the Group's professional profile, standing, contribution and effectiveness;
- Recognise their members' contributions;
- Where such issues bear on the work of another WCPA Specialist Group and/or Task Force, the SG or TF Chairs should consult and coordinate their activities. Where such issues are potentially controversial, wide consultation and review within Groups, as well as consultation with GPAP staff and the Office of the WCPA Chair is expected.

## 2.5 Communication

Communication and networking are crucial roles of SG and TF Chairs. This includes communicating outputs to relevant stakeholders and target audiences and creating mechanisms for responding to requests for information and expertise. Specialist Group and Task Force Chairs should consult the WCPA Chair or GPAP staff before communicating to external audiences on potentially controversial issues and notify the Chair if an intervention may be construed as a major criticism of an IUCN member.

SG and TF Chairs are responsible for effective and frequent communication on the Group's priorities and activities in the following six areas:

- To the WCPA Chair on matters of vital and strategic importance to the Group or issues in their remit;
- To and amongst their members (through direct contact, correspondence, newsletters, list serves, web sites or other available media);
- To relevant GPAP staff as appropriate;
- To relevant staff at IUCN Headquarters and in Regional and Country Offices, IUCN Members, IUCN National Committees and WCPA Steering Committee Members in promoting the Group's work;
- To the Group's external constituency, providing advice on issues in their remit;
- To the WCPA Chair's Office and GPAP staff for use in the WCPA Newsletter and other IUCN and WCPA communication products, fundraising proposals, etc.

Specialist Group and Task Force Chairs are also asked to recognise their affiliation with the WCPA and IUCN in their Specialist Group and Task Force's logos, letterheads and signatures.

**Note: Only the SG or TF Chair is authorised to speak on behalf of the SG or TF, directly and using his/her own signature and SG or TF letterhead.**

Deliverables:

- Regular reports on the SG or TF's other activities, as requested by GPAP and the WCPA Chair, including one annual report for the year ending 31 December each year;
- Responsiveness to requests to meet communication needs from GPAP staff and the WCPA Chair's Office;
- At least one brief article or news story suitable for inclusion on the GPAP website or in the Protecting the Planet newsletter annually.

## 2.6 Financing and Fundraising

**Please note in early 2017 IUCN is finalising Finance Guidelines which may alter these requirements. Members will be notified when they are available on line and their implications for Leaders of SGs and TFs.**

Specialist Group and Task Force Chairs are responsible for working with their members and with GPAP staff as required to secure resources needed to support the activities of their Group. Task Forces and Specialist Groups should be self-financed. For certain projects, financial support can be offered to the SG or TF on request to the Chair. All requests need to be done in writing and submitted to the WCPA Chair for discussion and approval during an EXCO Meeting.

When fundraising in the name of their Group, SG or TF Chairs are expected to notify and work closely with relevant GPAP staff and the WCPA Chair's Office to:

- Formulate and implement a fundraising strategy, where appropriate;
- For projects over USD 100,000, coordinate on approaches to prospective donors by notifying relevant GPAP staff and/or the WCPA Chair's Office of intended fundraising approaches;
- Promote projects and ensure that funding proposals are widely reviewed by recognised technical experts, GPAP staff and/or the WCPA Chair's Office, as appropriate ;
- Maintain good donor relations and fulfil technical and financial reporting requirements in a timely and adequate manner;
- Ensure that, in formulation of funding proposals, all IUCN guidelines and codes of conduct are followed.

## 2.7 Succession

While there are no set rules on the tenure of SG Chairs, all SG Chairs should be looking for ways to effectively plan successions and seamless transitions. This means identifying potential successors and working with them in a direct and intentional fashion. In this way, the WCPA will continue to have a healthy flow of new energy, new ideas and new leaders to ensure a positive and proactive future.

### **3. Working with the IUCN Global Protected Areas Programme**

One of the objectives of GPAP is to support the WCPA in its activities to deliver the IUCN Programme. In practice the relationship of GPAP and WCPA is delivered as a partnership between secretariat staff and the WCPA network. The WCPA Chair is a member of the IUCN Council and reports to it with support from GPAP as required.

Support is delivered to WCPA Task Forces from the GPAP in the form of network support (covering administrative support, such as registration of commission members and communications). Specialist Groups should be organized well, and operate by their own capacity and resources with limited support from GPAP.

#### **4. Terms of Reference for Individual Specialist Groups and Task Forces**

**Terms of Reference for individual Task Forces** will be established at their time of formation and should reflect the task-specific and time-bound characteristics of their designation as a Task Force. Normally, these TOR should cover the full term of operation of the TF (although they should be updated and re-approved by the WCPA Chair after the Commission is reconstituted following a World Conservation Congress). In addition to the elements outlined above on composition and operation of the TF, The TOR should include specific deliverables in terms of products or other outputs from the operation of the group.

**Terms of Reference for Specialist Groups** should be more enduring, reflecting the longer life expectancy of SGs compared to TFs. Nevertheless, the TOR should include specific deliverables, for the current term (immediate 12 months and the period up until the next World Conservation Congress). Updated annual programs should be submitted to the WCPA Chair by 31 January each year. These are compiled into an overall report and work plan for the Commission.

For both TFs and SGs, if their proposed products include any publications (including editions in the IUCN/WCPA Best Practice Series), these proposals should be discussed with the WCPA Vice-Chair for Publications and GPAP in advance of the submission of the draft TOR to the WCPA Chair.