



PRESS RELEASE

IUCN-led independent Panel highlights the need for multi-stakeholder governance for restoration of the Rio Doce.

The Rio Doce Panel advocates building a common vision for the long-term governance of the watershed after the Fundão dam failure

Brasília, August 11th, 2021 - A report published by the Rio Doce Panel points out that the restoration process has to consider the long-term governance of the Rio Doce Watershed. The report states that the studies, data, information systems and especially the capacity developed under the restoration programmes are at risk of being lost if they are not integrated into the permanent structures of governance that can guarantee their continuity.

The thematic report, [*From restoration to responsive governance: Rio Doce after the Fundão Dam failure*](#), offers a summary overview of the current system of governance implemented for the restoration efforts and recommends ways to take advantage of the investments in this process to enhance the long-term governance of the region with a source-to-sea perspective.

Since the region was already degraded before the disaster, the restoration of Rio Doce should be grounded on a scientific analysis of the situation and engagement with the affected communities and other key stakeholders to agree on a shared vision and a road map for the future of the watershed, according to the report.

Christianne Maroun, a sustainability expert and lead author of the study, says: *“The investments required for restoration, while temporary, are so voluminous that they provide a window to empower the long-term organization needed for a more effective and responsive governance of the watershed and related coastal and marine areas.”*

The Panel also recommends that communication goes beyond the dissemination of information and should ensure that the affected people and other relevant parties understand the critical issues that they will continue to face in the region.

Jonathan Renshaw, specialist in sustainable development and member of the Rio Doce Panel emphasized the importance of addressing communication in the long-term governance. *“Communication and transparency are essential to improve stakeholder participation and credibility to the process. This requires defining clear objectives and ensuring decisions are taken on the basis of informed discussion that understand the real needs of communities and territories”*.

The report acknowledges that the Rio Doce Watershed Committee is a key institution that could play a greater role in restoring the watershed, applying a source-to-sea approach that considers the impacts on the coastal and marine zones in the Rio Doce’s area of influence.



Building a common vision for the future of the Rio Doce requires commitment and coordination from the federal and state governments, the local authorities, the Rio Doce Watershed Committee (CBH-Doce), the judiciary, public prosecutors, the private sector, universities and research institutions and local community organisations. The stakeholders must work together to identify priorities and ensure their continuity, as well as consider long-term alternatives to guarantee adequate financial resources once Renova has completed its programmes. Therefore, the report recommends engaging communities in monitoring the outcomes of the restoration process.

The report also identifies the need for a broader strategy to systematise, maintain and update the data, information and related studies that the restoration efforts have generated; working with CBH-Doce to align the Integrated Water Resources Plan for the Rio Doce Watershed with the current efforts; supporting the resumption of the CBH-Doce water quality bulletins; and the integration of coastal area management into the planned activities.

Yolanda Kakabadse, Ecuadorian environmentalist and chair of Rio Doce Panel, explained that the aim of the Panel is to advise on the rehabilitation of the Rio Doce in the long-term. *“The continuity of a multi-stakeholder governance system that responds to the needs of the interested parties, especially the most affected ones, is fundamental to guarantee that the efforts undertaken so far have continuity and that, in the long-term, the communities see the positive outcomes of the restoration of the Rio Doce watershed”.*

About the Rio Doce Panel

Convened and managed by IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature), the Rio Doce Panel comprises national and international experts who bring together diverse technical knowledge, academic qualifications, and local expertise to provide the Renova Foundation with objective recommendations for the recovery of the Rio Doce watershed. Among them is the Panel's chair, **Yolanda Kakabadse**, former Minister of the Environment of Ecuador and former President of IUCN. The lead author is **Christianne Maroun**, sustainability expert with solid experience in the development of complex projects for different institutions, such as the World Bank and the United Nations.

Notes to the editor

For more information about the Rio Doce Panel, please visit:
<https://www.iucn.org/riodocepanel>

To read the full report, please download the links:

English: <https://doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.CH.2021.14.en>

Portuguese: <https://doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.CH.2021.14.pt>

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