

### How is IUCN Policy Made?

IUCN members are entitled to submit motions on issues that are consistent with the objectives of IUCN, for consideration and debate at the WCC.

Motions are drafts in writing of any decision which the Congress is requested to take. They must have at least three sponsors and be submitted to the Director General within the required period prior to the WCC.

Motions are reviewed and consolidated by a Resolutions Working Group established by Council, to ensure consistency with IUCN objectives and to avoid any duplications. Motions can be otherwise submitted to the WCC Resolutions Committee at the Congress.

Motions are debated and revised/amended at the WCC. Only an accredited representative of a delegation has the right to speak and vote on behalf of a member. Successful motions become Resolutions and Recommendations, and are recorded in the Proceedings of the WCC.

### What is the Difference between a Resolution and a Recommendation?

Resolutions are directed to IUCN itself, whereas recommendations are directed to third parties such as governments, international and national organizations.

### What is the Relationship between IUCN's Policy and Programme?

The programme is an integrated set of activities that enable IUCN to pursue its objectives, and to *implement* policy as established by the WCC at different levels.

The approval of the IUCN programme by the WCC does not define IUCN general policy. However, in setting work priorities, the programme does play a role in interpreting IUCN general policy.

### Summary: Role of IUCN Bodies in Defining and Implementing Policy

#### *The World Conservation Congress (WCC)*

- Defines IUCN general policy;
- Makes recommendations to third parties on matters related to IUCN objectives;
- Approves the IUCN programme.

#### *The Council*

- Gives rulings on policy and determines policy guidelines;
- Adopts and publicizes statements on issues concerning IUCN objectives;
- Approves the annual work plan and budget of IUCN's programme.

#### *The Director General*

- Implements IUCN policy and programme as approved by WCC and Council;
- Issues policy statements in the name of IUCN;
- Seeks policy rulings and guidelines from Council where policy is unclear.

#### *The Commissions*

- Extend scientific knowledge through research, analysis and action;
- Undertake tasks assigned to them by the WCC, Council and programme;
- Commission Chairs, as members of Council, can present motions to Council for submission to WCC.

#### *The National and Regional Committees and Regional Fora*

- Pursue their own policies where consistent with those of IUCN, but do not make general policy;
- Issue policy statements on behalf of committees where these do not obligate IUCN;
- Collaborate with Secretariat and Commissions on the IUCN programme within their region.

#### *IUCN Members*

- Support the objectives, activities and governance of IUCN;
- Participate in the WCC, submit motions and vote;
- Participate in National and Regional Committees or Regional Fora.

## ROLES AND RESPONSABILITIES OF IUCN BODIES

**This leaflet clarifies the roles and responsibilities of different IUCN components in defining, interpreting and implementing IUCN policy, as stated in the Revised Policy System approved by Council in 2002. It does not address IUCN's policy system in detail, nor the particulars of policy development and delivery.**

### What is a "Policy"?

A policy may be defined as a definite course or principle of action selected from among alternatives to guide present and future decisions and actions.

### What is IUCN Policy?

IUCN general policy is developed through Resolutions or Recommendations adopted by the World Conservation Congress (WCC).

IUCN policy must conform to the IUCN Objectives to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.

IUCN general policy includes texts such as *Caring for the Earth: A Strategy for Sustainable Living* (1991). This was recognised by IUCN's 18th General Assembly in 1990 (Resolution 18.13), and by Council the following year (Decision C/31/27).

# The IUCN Policy System

## Who Defines IUCN's Policy?

The *only* body entitled to define IUCN general policy is the WCC. This is the highest organ of IUCN, consisting of accredited delegates from governmental and non-governmental IUCN members. The WCC also approves the IUCN programme and financial plan.

## What is the Council's Role with regard to Policy?

The IUCN Council gives rulings on policy and determines policy guidelines once general policy has been established by the WCC. It also helps develop IUCN general policy, by appointing a Resolutions Working Group (RWG), and proposing motions for consideration by the WCC. The Council also approves the annual work plans of the IUCN programme.

## Can the IUCN Commissions make Policy?

The Commissions are not entitled to make IUCN policy. They provide scientific and technical advice to help advance IUCN's objectives. However, if a Commission sees the need to develop an IUCN policy, its Chair, as a member of Council, can present a motion for consideration by the Council and submission to the WCC.

## Can the National and Regional Committees make Policy?

Having independent legal status, the National and Regional Committees are entitled to develop their own policies consistent with those of IUCN, but not to make IUCN general policy. They are also allowed to issue statements on behalf of their Committees as long as these do not commit IUCN to any financial, legal or policy obligations.

## Where can I find IUCN Policy?

A list of IUCN Resolutions and Recommendations can be found at [www.iucn.org/Resolutions/index.html](http://www.iucn.org/Resolutions/index.html). A searchable database on resolutions and recommendations will be available on-line.

## EXAMPLE

### IUCN Sustainable Use Policy Role of Different Bodies

In 1996 the first WCC adopted Resolution 1.39 *Sustainable Use Initiative*, recognising that sustainable use was central to the major multilateral environmental agreements (CBD, Ramsar, and CITES); that most Component Programmes of IUCN worked on sustainable use, and needed guidance on how to mainstream the principles into their activities.

The WCC requested the Species Survival Commission (SSC) Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SUSG) to prepare a draft policy paper on sustainable use for presentation at the next WCC. A draft was prepared through an extensive consultation process throughout the Union involving regional SUSGs, other Commissions, the Secretariat and IUCN members.

The draft Policy Statement was reviewed in 2000 by the Council who endorsed the submission of the draft statement to the 2nd WCC in the form of a Council resolution by the members (Decision C/51/36).

In 2000 the 2nd WCC adopted Resolution 2.29 *The Policy Statement on Sustainable Use of Wild Living Resources*, and commended it to IUCN's members, Commissions and Secretariat for implementation.

The IUCN Secretariat subsequently uses the Sustainable Use Policy to issue statements to influence policy processes such as the:

- IWC (International Whaling Commission) in 2001: *IUCN Policy Statement to the 53rd Meeting of the IWC*
- CBD (COP6) in 2002: *Sustainable Use: Progress on Development of Practical Principles, Operational Guidance and Associated Instruments*
- CITES (COP12) in 2002: *IUCN Recommendations to the Parties*

## What are the Members' Roles with regard to Policy?

IUCN members are obliged to support and facilitate the objectives, activities and governance of IUCN. They have the right to submit motions and vote on IUCN policy at the WCC. They have the right to participate in national and regional committees and circulate their views to other IUCN bodies.

## What is the Role of the Secretariat with regard to Policy?

The Director General, as the Chief Executive of IUCN and the Head of the Secretariat, is responsible for implementing IUCN general policy as established by the WCC, and Council rulings and guidelines.

Only the Director General, or his/her delegate, is authorized to issue 'Policy Statements' as part of the implementation of IUCN's policy. 'Policy Statements' do not constitute the making of policy, they are part of its implementation.

Where the interpretation of IUCN general policy is unclear, the Director General (or any member of Council) may seek from Council a policy ruling and complementary policy guidelines on particular topics.

## More information:

The leaflet is based on the Revised Policy System approved by Council in 2002, available at [www.iucn.org/themes/pbia](http://www.iucn.org/themes/pbia)

### IUCN-PBIA

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