



## Little Sydney Conference - Themes and Workshop Sessions

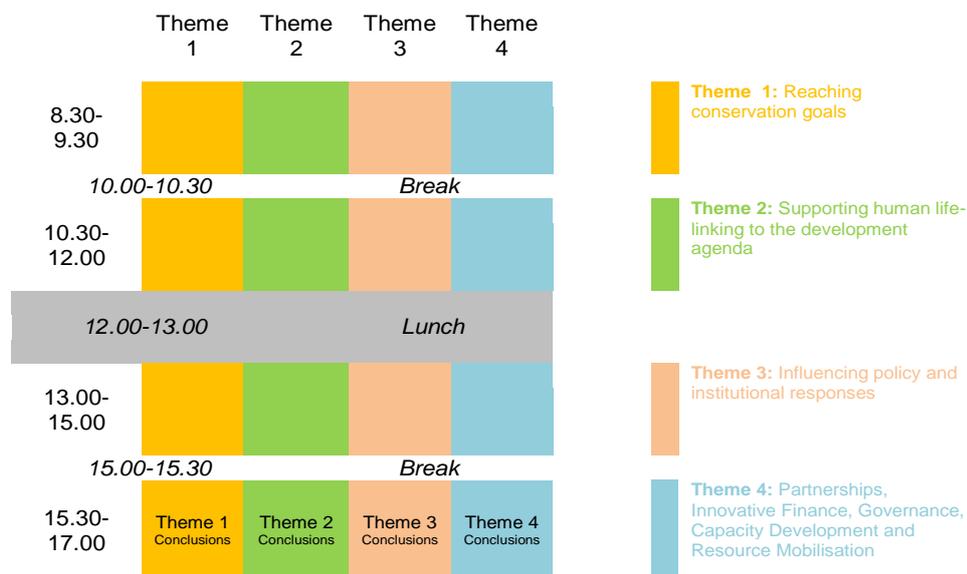
### Conceptual framework for the preparation of workshops and invitation to express interest for organising Workshop session(s)

#### Conceptual framework

The IUCN World Parks Congress 2014 (WPC) was held in Sydney in November 2014 with a programme encompassing eight streams and four cross-cutting themes. More than 6000 participants attended the congress, ranging from parks staff and other conservation professionals to Indigenous Peoples, donor agencies and the private sector. The Sydney discussions culminated in a suite of recommendations and commitments, The Promise of Sydney - <http://worldparkscongress.org/> designed to guide the priorities for protected areas over the next decades. As part of the European follow up, a Little Sydney conference is being organised from 28-31 May 2015, in Hainburg/Donau-Auen National Park, Austria.

The Little Sydney meeting will build on the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014 and further explore those aspects of the Streams and Cross-Cutting Themes that are especially relevant to Europe, as agreed during the WCPA Europe meeting at the WPC. Workshops will be organised around four themes (see below), run in parallel, and designed to maximize the quality of Conference outputs.

#### Conference Day 2





There will be four consecutive sessions under each theme (three topic workshop sessions + final one aimed at summarising session outcomes) followed by a final plenary session on Day 4 of the Conference (31 May) devoted to summarising key messages and recommendations from the earlier discussions. The workshop sessions will take place on Day 2 of the Conference (29 May) and help compile its conclusions. Each topic workshop session, twelve in total, will have a lead organization. Invited institutions/organisations should indicate their preferred topics from the list below, but are free to identify topics that they would consider relevant to form a workshop session for each of the (four) workshop themes, based on the preliminary list of questions and issues set out below.

### Theme 1: Reaching conservation goals

The WPC emphasised that protected areas are a proven effective and sustainable means to conserve biodiversity and ecosystem services that underpin human welfare and livelihoods. The latest Protected Planet report 2014 estimates the extent of areas protected including terrestrial and inland waters at 15.4% and global ocean protection at 3.4% (8.4% of oceans within national jurisdiction), which is a promising achievement towards reaching CBD Aichi Target 11, but the report emphasises that there is still much to do to achieve ecological representativeness, especially in marine and freshwater ecosystems, and to achieve effective and equitable management. Questions remain on whether all sites of importance for nature conservation are included in the protected area network? How can we apply the concept of Key Biodiversity Areas or large-scale conservation approaches in the urbanised environment in which we live in Europe? Are protected areas governed and managed in the most appropriate and effective way to achieve their conservation objectives? The Aichi Targets specifically mention “protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures”. Favourable conservation status for all European species and ecosystems will not be achieved without addressing a wider range of governance options and managing areas both as cultural landscapes and wilderness areas. How can we achieve standards of conservation in those protected areas where only limited or no human intervention is allowed to safeguard threatened species? How can we improve the management effectiveness of protected areas, Natura2000 and Emerald sites to strengthen conservation outcomes and improve complementarity between the different management approaches and networks applied in Europe?

Invitations are extended to develop three sessions (each in the duration of approx. 1,5 h) from the following topics for **Theme 1: Reaching conservation goals**.

#### Possible session titles:

- **Other effective area-based conservation measures – a European response**
- **Strengthening management effectiveness**
- **Expanding and connecting the PA networks in Europe**
- **Strengthening marine / inland waters conservation in Europe**

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## Theme 2: Supporting human life - linking to the development agenda

Sustainable development is about improving human well-being without undermining environmental processes, degrading natural ecosystems or compromising our future. Can the intrinsic values of nature and principles of ecological ethics withstand the challenge of making protected areas part of our economies and development scenarios? How can natural resources be managed to maintain ecosystem services and benefits without risking conservation objectives? Biodiversity is threatened both from outside protected areas and from unsustainable practices within. Not every use or extraction of natural resources, even if based on sustainability principles or traditional methods, can be allowed in every protected area. How can we address increasing demands for natural resources from an expanding human population together with effective conservation of biodiversity? How can biodiversity and development goals be reconciled? Are there good examples of how to mainstream conservation into other sectoral policies, including agriculture, forestry, water management, fishing, energy, tourism, industry, mining, and regional development? Protected areas can provide nature-based solutions to some of the key challenges we are facing today, including climate change, by delivering significant environmental, social and economic benefits to society. How can we better realize and understand the full range of benefits delivered by protected areas and incorporate natural capital into national accounting systems and financial management? What arguments and incentives do we need to maintain healthy ecosystems or invest in large-scale restoration projects? How best can we address conflicts between ever-increasing demands for renewable energy and protected areas, utilising both as part of our “green infrastructure” strategies? What role should the private sector play in these considerations?

Titles for three workshop sessions (each in the duration of approx. 1,5 h) for **Theme 2: Supporting human life – linking to the development agenda** should be selected from the outlines above.

Possible session titles:

- **PAs as natural solutions to global challenges**
- **Reconciling and mitigating development needs**
- **Valuing the economic and social contribution of PAs**
- **Understanding and valuing natural capital**

## Theme 3: Influencing policy and institutional responses

International agreements such as UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD, EU Biodiversity Strategy and national strategies have already recognised the role of protected areas and natural ecosystems in reaching conservation goals and for ecosystem-based adaptation and mitigation to climate change. But international policy agreements still lack implementation at the national, regional and local level. How can we “harmonize” these commitments to effectively protect Europe’s natural heritage and what is the role of different actors? What examples of good practice can Europe provide? How can we better integrate protected areas into national strategies, spatial planning and development plans

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and programmes, and what new institutional arrangements or capacity would be needed to make this happen? How can protected areas contribute in delivering objectives of these international, European and national commitments? To which extent does the European policy on protected areas correspond with and contribute to global policy? How do/can large-scale initiatives such as the Alpine, Carpathian, Dinaric PA networks, or the European Green Belt contribute to more effective conservation in Europe?

Titles for three workshop sessions (each in the duration of approx. 1,5 h) for **Theme 3: Influencing policy and institutional responses** should be selected from the outlines above.

**Possible session titles:**

- **From policy to reality: institutionalising the role of PAs in addressing climate change**
- **PAs and landscape restoration**
- **Nature-based solutions in disaster risk reduction**
- **Institutional responses to policy challenges**

**Theme 4: Partnerships, innovative finance, governance, capacity development and resource mobilisation**

Are business-as-usual approaches sufficient if we want to meet targets in protected area designation and management? Diversity, quality and vitality of governance and management are crucial to consolidating, expanding and delivering effective protected area systems. How can we better mobilise local knowledge under changing social patterns in the European landscapes and support traditional land-use practices to conserve biodiversity under the common agricultural approaches and markets? Is there a need to revise national protected area systems in Europe to clarify definition, legal status and encourage new governance models, such as shared governance, privately conserved areas, indigenous and community-conserved areas and territories, and transboundary conservation areas? What are the “pros and cons” of public-private partnerships in the management of European protected areas? Effective protected area management in a rapidly changing world requires a complex set of knowledge, competences and skills at the institutional and individual levels, involving a diversity of disciplines working together. What are emerging capacity development needs for protected area professionals, institutions and government decision-makers in Europe? How can we raise the profile of PAs and build a stronger conservation constituency among the wider public? By the mid-21<sup>st</sup> century almost 75% of the world’s population will live in urban areas. How can we reconnect people to nature and inspire a new generation of young conservation professionals? Are urban PAs a way to raise awareness of nature conservation and the role of healthy ecosystems in human health and wellbeing? How can we ensure that investment finance is compatible with conservation objectives, and how do we mainstream protected area considerations into the investment decisions of the public and private sectors, including development finance institutions?

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How do we meet the optimum levels of financing for protected areas and protected area agencies? What financial mechanisms and approaches are there for increasing protected area revenues that are compatible with conservation objectives, and what financial instruments, including trust funds and other grant-making mechanisms are the appropriate vehicles for channelling these funds?

Titles for three workshop sessions (each in the duration of approx. 1,5 h) for **Theme 4: Partnerships, innovative finance, governance, capacity development and resource mobilisation** should be selected from the outlines above.

**Possible session titles:**

- **Capacity development**
- **Governance – public-private partnerships, privately protected areas (PPAs)**
- **Inspiring a new generation**
- **Conservation finance**

## Invitation – expression of interest for organizing a workshop session

The Little Sydney Conference organisers are calling for expressions of interest from agencies and organizations to organise workshop sessions under the 4 themes detailed above. Each theme will consist of three sessions, followed by a final session per theme, which will draw together the main conclusions and recommendations to be presented at the overall plenary session on 31 May. Each session is 90 minutes long.

Workshop sessions are not meant to promote the work of individual organisations/institutions or projects but should rather promote debate about “inspiring solutions” for European protected areas.

Each session should be comprised of one keynote presentation, followed by shorter inputs, and should be followed by facilitated discussion, orientated to constructive conclusions, action points and contributions to the “Promise of Sydney”.

Outputs from each of the sessions will be presented and discussed at the joint (fourth) session of the theme (last afternoon session on Friday) and joint and final outputs will be presented at the plenary session of the “Little Sydney” conference on the last day, Sunday morning, 31 May.

The tasks of the workshop session organiser(s) are to:

- identify/propose the topic(s) for the workshop session, in line with the workshop theme;
- design a 1.5 hour workshop session (introduction, identification of presentations and speakers, appointment of the workshop session moderator(s) to guide the discussion and conclusions/outputs);
- involve other organisations/institutions.

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It is expected that each thematic area and session will accommodate approx. 70 participants. If needed, sessions will be convened in two parallel smaller groups of up to 35 participants. It is highly desirable that the contents of the workshop session follow the orientations/outputs of the WPC and stimulate commitments to the Promise of Sydney.

Expressions of interest, along with proposed titles and draft concepts of the working sessions should be submitted to the e-mail address below **no later than 25 February 2015**.

The “Little Sydney” Organising Committee will advise successful applicants by **10 March 2015**. Further guidance on the preparation of workshop sessions will be made available shortly afterwards.

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**11 February 2015**

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