

# World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) Report 2021–2025

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## 1. Mission

To develop and provide scientific, technical and policy advice and advocate for a global system of marine, freshwater and terrestrial protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) that result in successful outcomes for the conservation of biodiversity, based on principles of sound design, good management and equitable governance.

## 2. Vision

Protected and Conserved Areas are effective in conserving nature and, as such, are recognised and valued both as cornerstones for conserving biodiversity and as natural solutions to global challenges, providing benefits to human health, livelihoods and well-being.

## 3. Objectives

The objectives of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas for 2021–2024, aligned with the IUCN Programme 2021-2024 and the Strategic Plan (the *Promise of Sydney*) adopted at the World Parks Congress 2014, are to:

1. Catalyse and support global efforts to expand systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) that result in successful conservation outcomes and are a critical solution to halting biodiversity loss by 2030;
2. Promote and guide the design and management of protected areas and OECMs to deliver as natural solutions to global challenges, such as climate change, land degradation, food and water security, health and well-being;
3. Advocate for management of all lands, freshwater and seas that support the conservation of biodiversity and the role of protected areas in contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDGs: 3 Good Health and Wellbeing; 13 Climate Action; 14 Life Below Water; and 15 Life on Land;
4. Make the case for institutional, public and private investment in ecologically connected protected area systems, supported by public policy, incentives, capacity development and a mainstreamed role;
5. Inspire a new generation of conservation leaders, across geography and cultures, to experience and value the wonder of nature through protected areas so that they support and promote the conservation of nature; and
6. Use our acknowledged role as a key global knowledge-broker and standard-setter for protected areas to support efforts to improve governance equity, sound management and good ecological design.

4. Structure and Governance

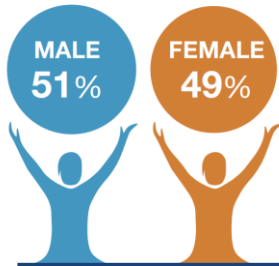


5. Membership Demographics

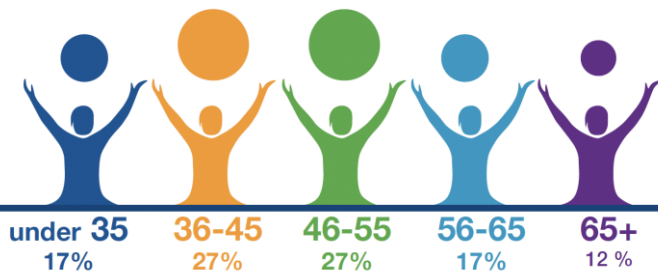


The Commission has experienced a remarkable 102% growth in membership between 2022 and 2025, welcoming 1,624 new members and reaching a total of 3,210 members. WCPA has a balanced leadership in terms of gender and a strong mix of ages across its membership. Most members are between 36 and 55 years old, with good representation from both younger and older age groups.

WCPA Leadership gender



WCPA member age categories



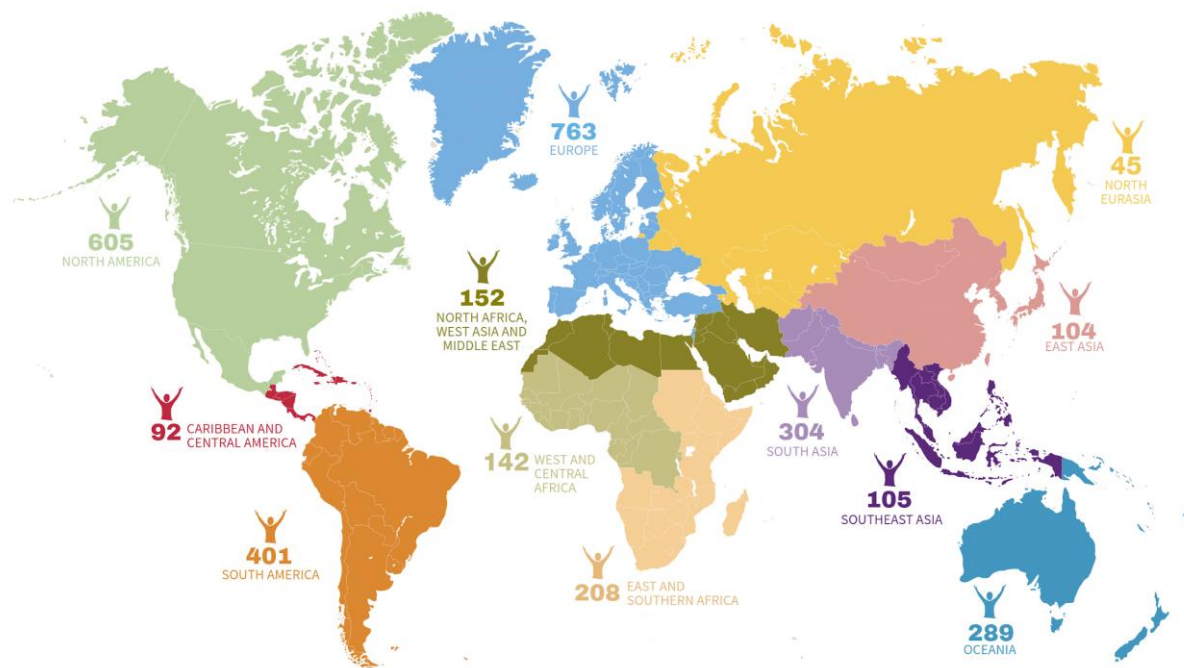


Figure 2. Geographic distribution of WCPA members across 12 operational regions

## 6. Priorities and achievements

### Advancing effective area-based conservation within global biodiversity policy

WCPA has been particularly focused on Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) which aims for effective and equitable protection and conservation of at least 30 percent of the planet by 2030 (the 30x30 target). WCPA has provided critical support to countries to implement Target 3, including a comprehensive [Target 3 Guide](#), released in 2023, that explains how to plan and implement the target, delves into each of the target's elements, and explores overarching concepts that should guide implementation. WCPA also helped develop a detailed, online [30x30 Solutions toolkit](#), a curated web-resource providing guidance and information to support implementation of Target 3.

In partnership with the Secretariat of the CBD, WCPA supported sub-regional implementation of Target 3. The Commission participated in implementation support workshops in 32 countries of Central, Eastern and Southern Africa as well Pacific, Caribbean, and Latin American countries. WCPA is also a key partner with UNEP-WCMC in developing the [Protected Planet Report 2024](#), the first official review of global progress towards Target 3.

#### *Strategic Partnerships for 30x30*

WCPA has a cooperation agreement with the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, a voluntary association of 120 countries to implement the 30x30 target. The Commission also collaborated frequently with the Biodiversity Science, Policy and Governance Unit of the CBD Secretariat. WCPA complements the work of these organisations by providing technical expertise.

### Conservation at scale: spatial planning, connectivity and large-scale conservation areas

WCPA's [Spatial Planning Task Force](#) provided guidance for conducting [biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning](#) under the GBF (Target 1). The Task Force developed definitions and best practices for bringing the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance and ecosystems of high integrity close to zero by 2030, while respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities.

Leadership and members of the WCPA [Connectivity Conservation Specialist Group](#) participated in the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, to promote and mainstream ecological connectivity as a central focus of the convention and its activities.

WCPA entered into a new partnership with the aim of strengthening and facilitating key priorities among institutions and organisations focused on migratory species. The [Global Partnership on Ecological Connectivity](#) will help implement key recommendations of the State of the World's Migratory Species — the flagship report of the Convention — which calls for increased actions to identify, protect, connect and effectively manage important sites for migratory species. As migratory species may also cross international borders, WCPA's [Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group](#) provides expertise to promote and encourage transboundary conservation for the conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values while promoting peace and cooperation among nations.

The need for connected landscapes is also a core interest of the new [Large-Scale Conservation Areas Task Force](#), which examines how mosaics of formally protected areas, conserved areas, and corridors can contribute to reaching Target 3 by scaling conservation while potentially advancing other targets as well. The group's work is informed by the recognition of the need to include not just protected areas but also other forms of area-based conservation and to elevate co-existence within and beyond conserved areas.

### **Recognising diverse governance and management regimes achieving conservation outcomes**

WCPA recognises seven management categories and four governance types for protected areas, the majority of which are the responsibility of government agencies. Achieving Target 3 requires urgently recognising diverse governance and management regimes, such as governance shared by diverse rights holders and stakeholders together, by private entities, or by Indigenous peoples and/or local communities.

#### *Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs)*

The commitment to the 30x30 objective of Target 3 has sparked significant interest in OECMs. As implementation unfolds, there has been huge demand for conceptual clarity and knowledge regarding how to recognise and report on OECMs. WCPA has been deeply involved in exploring the role of OECMs through [OECM Specialist Group](#), which published a clear, criteria-based tool that governments, private entities, NGOs and Indigenous and community groups can use to identify site-level OECMs. WCPA subsequently released new [good practice guidelines](#), updated with case studies intended for use by a wide range of rightsholders and stakeholders to promote understanding of whether a site meets the CBD criteria for identifying an OECM, how to report OECM data at the national and global levels, and how to monitor and strengthen OECMs. The [site-level tool for identifying other effective area-based conservation measures](#), released in 2023, is now available in ten languages.

WCPA also established regional expert groups for Latin America, Europe, and Africa and thematic groups for marine and freshwater ecosystems. The OECM Specialist Group has engaged in extensive outreach to support the interpretation of the OECMs criteria, recognition of potential OECMs, and advancing knowledge sharing and exchange of experiences on OECMs globally.

### **Governance, Equity, and Rights**

In 2024, WCPA co-convened an international workshop in Nanyuki, Kenya, to develop guidelines for the delivery of more equitable governance and respect for rights in area-based conservation. The workshop resulted in a new global [Roadmap for Advancing Rights and Equity](#), detailing 11 priority areas with 32 actions. The intended audience of the Roadmap is any actor interested in advancing the achievement of the target in diverse ways, such as Indigenous peoples and local community

organisations, governments and other supportive actors such as donors, NGOs and large global organisations.

WCPA and the Commission on Environmental, Economic, and Social Policy have established a joint [Task Force](#) to advance equitable governance of protected and conserved areas. The Task Force, which will operate until the World Parks Congress in 2027, will help identify the barriers Indigenous peoples and local communities face in gaining more authority to manage, sustainably use, and conserve protected and conserved areas and territories, and will develop recommendations for lowering these barriers.

### *Protected Areas and ICCAs*

Many protected areas worldwide overlap with territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities (ICCAs). This is both a major challenge and an opportunity for realising rights-based conservation. In 2024, WCPA published new guidelines on Indigenous peoples, local communities and protected areas, that provide much-needed clarity on appropriately recognising, respecting and supporting ICCAs as effective area-based conservation measures, and in situations in which they are overlapped by protected areas. Overlapped ICCAs include traditional territories, lands and waters; collectively managed commons such as community forests, rangelands, marine areas and inland waters; sacred places; and Indigenous and community protected areas.

The new [guidelines](#) identify six key approaches and 20 good practices for recognising and respecting overlapped ICCAs. Much of the guidance also applies to ICCAs overlapped by OECMs governed by governments and private entities that do not represent or include Indigenous peoples and local communities.

### **Guiding the protection of the right places for biodiversity**

WCPA has been working on tools and data to help countries ensure that effective area-based conservation measures will be located in the terrestrial areas, inland waters, and marine areas that have the best chance of halting and reversing biodiversity loss, such as [Key Biodiversity Areas](#). Effectively conserving and managing these areas through ecologically representative, well-connected, and equitably governed systems will help meet the broad intention of Target 3.

To ensure PCAs are placed in areas of importance for biodiversity, WCPA has broken down the components of Target 3 into 12 related biodiversity elements, such as rare or threatened species and habitats, and threatened and/or collapsing ecosystems. These elements can be made into clear objectives for spatial planning, targets can be set against these objectives, and the targets can be incorporated into conservation plans.

### *Marine Spatial Priorities*

WCPA produced a [summary of the standardised approaches](#) currently being used for identifying areas of particular importance for biodiversity in the marine realm, such as Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas, Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs), and Important Shark and Ray Areas. WCPA, in collaboration with the Species Survival Commission, has published a [summary](#) of these approaches that highlights the biodiversity considered, identification process, and outputs, and showcases how they can be used to inform conservation planning.

WCPA's Marine Mammal Protected Area Task Force published [The IMMA Handbook](#) with selection criteria and practical guidance on their use for the identification of IMMAs. In 2024, the Task Force helped [identify](#) 43 new IMMAs in the North West Atlantic Ocean and Wider Caribbean. Worldwide, 323 IMMAs have now been identified.

### *Inland Waters*

The loss of inland waters – such as rivers, lakes, and other wetlands – has cascading effects on human livelihoods, cultures and our overall well-being. While protected and conserved areas can play

an important role in bending the curve of inland water biodiversity and ecosystem loss, they have rarely been designed, designated and managed for that purpose. WCPA's [Freshwater Specialist Group](#) helped produce a new [report](#) that provides guidance in employing effective area-based conservation measures to benefit these ecosystems and the biodiversity they support. Group members also participated in development and implementation of the [Freshwater Challenge](#), a country-led initiative aims to substantiate, integrate and accelerate targeted interventions for rivers and wetlands, connecting these with national plans and strategies.

### *Mountains*

WCPA's [Mountains Specialist Group](#) developed a [strategic decision-support tool](#) for identifying and prioritising which candidate mountain areas most urgently require protection. The six-step algorithm harnesses multiple datasets, including mountain Key Biodiversity Areas, World Terrestrial Ecosystems, Biodiversity Hotspots, and Red List species and ecosystems. The algorithm makes use of other key attributes including opportunities for disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, developing mountain tourism, maintaining elevational gradients and natural ecological corridors, and conserving flagship species. This rapid-assessment tool enables regional teams with sufficient local knowledge and country-specific values to finalise lists of priority mountain areas for protection and ensures a repeatable, unbiased and scientifically credible method for allocating resources and priorities to safeguard the world's most biodiverse mountain areas facing myriad threats.

### *Geoheritage*

Together with biodiversity, geodiversity—the variety of the geological physical elements of nature—constitutes the natural diversity of planet Earth. WCPA's [Geoheritage Specialist Group](#) facilitates the conservation and effective management of geoheritage sites in protected areas and provides specialist advice on all aspects of geodiversity in relation to protected areas and their management. The Specialist Group provides input to WCPA and IUCN on global issues regarding geoheritage and geoconservation, such as the [Guidelines for Cave and Karst Protection](#), which has now been translated into nine languages, and [The Meaning of Nature](#), which examines the abiotic component of nature and its importance.

### *Transboundary*

The IUCN WCPA [Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group](#) began efforts to increase the visibility and participation of transboundary conservation initiatives in the American continent, including [pioneering work](#) in the Maya Forest that encompasses seven protected areas across Mexico, Belize, and Guatemala. The Specialist Group facilitated a [study tour](#) to Slovenia for a Lao and Vietnamese delegation that visited Triglav National Park and Škocjan Caves World Heritage Site to exchange knowledge and strengthen transboundary conservation cooperation. The study tour fostered valuable insights into joint action planning, sustainable tourism strategies, and governance of transboundary protected areas.

### *Wilderness*

In 2024, WCPA's [Wilderness Specialist Group](#) helped organise the 12th World Wilderness Congress, held in the He Sápa (the Black Hills) of South Dakota, USA, the sacred territory of the Oceti Sakowin Oyate (Lakota Nation). The outcomes of WILD12 included a set of [Resolutions](#) which will be incorporated into the global environmental agenda and adopted by individual organisations.

### *WCPA and World Heritage*

WCPA has created a new World Heritage Specialist group and supports IUCN in its role as the technical advisory body on nature to the World Heritage Convention. In 2024, IUCN prepared [over 40 State of Conservation Reports](#) on natural and mixed World Heritage sites, presented seven evaluations of sites nominated under natural criteria, and contributed to the evaluation of five cultural landscapes. WCPA is also supporting the fourth edition of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook, the most comprehensive assessment of the conservation prospects of World Heritage sites inscribed for their natural values.

## **Working towards a global framework for effectiveness**

Monitoring progress towards Target 3 requires a robust methodology for assessing both the quantity and quality of lands and waters under conservation management. Unfortunately, *effectiveness* is an easy concept to understand intuitively but difficult to define and measure in a standard manner, especially in the complex ecological and social systems in which protected and conserved areas are implemented.

To help meet this challenge, the WCPA [Defining and Measuring Conservation Effectiveness and Outcomes Task Force](#) continues its efforts to establish a Global Framework to Assess Protected Area and OECM Effectiveness to help managers of protected and conserved areas improve their work over time and give broader society confidence that efforts to reach the ambitious 30x30 targets are progressing. The Task Force identified critical gaps in existing frameworks, primarily relating to assessing outcomes and understanding whether the strategies implemented by managers are leading to desired outcomes. The Task Force developed a draft framework designed to overcome these gaps and, in 2024, tested the framework in collaboration with CONAF (National Forest Corporation), Chile, and began preparations for further testing in Croatia.

The Task Force is working with the IUCN Secretariat to improve the Green List Self-Assessment Tool. The Task Force participates in the Green List standards Committee, with the goal of improving its Theory of Change and the assessment of conservation outcomes. Additionally, the Task Force supported the IUCN Protected Area team in facilitating a workshop to integrate lessons learned into the Green List Self-Assessment Tool.

Conflicts over resources between human communities and wildlife can have immediate and lasting impacts on the effectiveness of PCAs for conservation. WCPA's Human-wildlife conflict and PCA Standards Task Force is integrating human-wildlife coexistence considerations into PCA design, management, and evaluation. The Task Force, for example, is evaluating the existing IUCN Green List Criteria, and other relevant standards, to determine whether they are adequate for dealing with the challenges of achieving sustainable Human-Wildlife Coexistence. Where there are gaps in the existing criteria, indicators, means of verification, and guidance notes, the task force will develop additional indicators and criteria for human-wildlife coexistence projects.

## **Advancing marine conservation: coasts to the high seas**

WCPA's [Marine Thematic Group](#), which includes the [Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force](#), the [High Seas Specialist Group](#), as well as working groups dedicated to other marine issues such as connectivity, management effectiveness and financing, spatial planning, and climate change, promotes the establishment of a global, representative system of effectively managed and lasting networks of marine protected areas (MPAs) and OECMs within National Economic Exclusion Zone areas, as well as in the High Seas and Areas Beyond National Jurisdictions. In 2024, WCPA created the [Fisheries and MPA task force](#), which will update and consolidate [WCPA's guidance on the management of fisheries within MPAs](#) and OECMs, and will further develop a risk-based approach that considers 'likely' fishing impacts applicable to a variety of fisheries.

### *Antarctic and Southern Oceans*

WCPA has: created a new working group on Antarctic and Southern Oceans; reviewed and updated the strategy for IUCN's Programme and Policy on Antarctica Issues for action now and that can act as an input to the 2025-2029 intersessional Programme; and developed a plan that outlines a sustainable means of implementation, including options for fundraising and capacity development, aiming to elevate IUCN's engagement with and influence of relevant policy fora. WCPA members were active participants in the annual Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings, which constitute the most important decision-making forum for Antarctica.

### *Marine Protected Area Effectiveness*

WCPA members helped develop the tools necessary to assess the effectiveness of MPAs and marine

OECMs and organised sessions at the 5<sup>th</sup> [International Marine Protected Areas Congress](#) on this topic. WCPA Marine experts also launched two climate change resilience assessment tools for MPAs – one with the WCPA Climate Change Specialist group, one with the EU Ocean Governance project – as part of more general WCPA marine protected area management effectiveness activities.

### *MPAs in the High Seas*

WCPA members were deeply engaged in the decades-long process to conclude the international agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (called the BBNJ Agreement), which was formally adopted in September 2023. Members of the High Seas Specialist Group are now working on how to quickly implement the agreement, to foster high seas MPAs, and to help envision sustainable futures for the high seas.

### **Building capacity for conservation**

Ensuring that both new and existing PCAs have a properly trained and equipped workforce to manage them effectively and fairly will be critical to reaching Target 3. WCPA was a founding member of the Universal Ranger Support Alliance and continues to advocate for rangers and to strengthen the ranger agenda. In 2024, WCPA contributed extensively to the 10th International Ranger Federation [World Ranger Congress](#) and signed a new partnership Memorandum of Understanding with the International Ranger Federation.

A milestone in 2022 was the publication in [Nature Sustainability](#) of the first survey of global protected area personnel numbers since 1999 and the first ever survey specifically to include ranger numbers. The survey revealed that there are only 550,000 personnel worldwide, including 285,000 rangers, only about a third of the numbers thought to be required.

WCPA helped define a ‘Rangers for 30x30 Framework’ that highlights four essential elements of capacity for managing 30 percent of the planet. Publications based on this framework include a global code of conduct, an international labour standard for working conditions, and a set of competencies required of all rangers. WCPA and its partners are asking all those engaged in supporting PCAs to place a far greater emphasis on workforce issues. A landmark meeting in Brussels in September 2023, attended by WCPA members, orientated the European Commission and major conservation donors about the new framework.

### *New State of the Ranger Report*

The International Ranger Federation published the first [State of the Ranger Report](#) and presented it at the Congress. The objective of the report, supported by WCPA, is to establish global indicators on the status of the ranger profession, to track progress, guide decisions and investments, and catalyse change to enhance rangers’ roles as essential planetary stewards. It presents results from ranger and employer surveys and represents the first global baseline of the ranger profession, including the assimilation of the best available, internationally comparable data on the ranger workforce.

### *Building trust with communities and rangers*

WCPA has released the first volume in its Good Practice Guidelines that is predominantly by rangers, for rangers. [Building Trust with Communities and Rangers](#) collects good practices and stories from rangers worldwide, reflecting global experience and lessons learned. The guidelines focus on actions that rangers, and to a lesser extent managers, can do themselves. While institutional changes are often necessary, they require intervention at government level and hence are out of the hands of individual rangers.

### *Sustainable tourism in protected areas*

[WCPA's Tourism and Protected Areas Specialist Group](#) (TAPAS) supports the oversight of sustainable tourism in protected area systems and helps develop innovative approaches that recognise the fundamental role of nature in the travel and tourism industry. The Specialist Group



made significant contributions to advancing sustainable tourism and biodiversity conservation in 2024. A key milestone was TAPAS's advocacy for the adoption of WCC 2020 Resolution 130, which underscores the critical role of sustainable tourism in biodiversity conservation and strengthening community resilience.

#### *Sustainable financing for protected and conserved areas*

WCPA's [Sustainable Finance Specialist Group](#) supports the development of new, innovative, and resilient sources of finance that are critical if PCAs, OECMs, and Indigenous and Traditional Territories are to reach their full potential and deliver cross-cutting benefits to people and the planet. The Specialist Group seeks to develop and share knowledge, such as sustainable financing guidelines to be published in 2025, build awareness and capacity, and promote innovation in sustainable finance solutions through a strategic and collaborative approach to identify, share and pioneer finance solutions.

#### **Positioning protection at the biodiversity and climate nexus**

Protected and Conserved Areas are the most effective tools to address biodiversity loss and climate change with the required urgency and WCPA worked on a number of fronts to highlight the role of PCAs. WCPA supported the development of the IUCN Inter-Commission Task Force on Biodiversity and Climate to promote greater and more visible positioning of IUCN in the biodiversity-climate space, building on the ongoing work of the Commissions, and highlighting existing knowledge products and guidance. WCPA also collaborated with the IUCN Climate Crisis Commission on the production of a technical brief, [Connecting the Dots: Achieving synergistic action for global biodiversity and climate goals utilising the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) to support COP28 decisions on protected areas and climate change.

#### *Climate Change and PCAs*

WCPA's [Protected Areas Climate Change Specialist Group](#) is finalising Good Practice Guidelines for Climate Change Mitigation in Protected Areas, to be released at the World Conservation Congress in 2025. The Guidelines highlight methodologies for accounting for climate change and biodiversity, accounting for the biodiversity/climate change nexus, supporting policies, most valued-ecosystems, role of restoration, and finance. Further, the group will release a new Technical Report on Establishing MPAs in a changing climate.

In 2023, 125 participants in two workshops analysed case studies from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe, North America and Australia, in which climate change mitigation had been incorporated into management of protected areas. The workshops explored topics such as improving ecosystems services in the context of climate change mitigation, and technologies to overlay carbon maps with other map layers, such as biodiversity and connectivity to determine priority areas for protection.

WCPA published extensive guidance related to climate change and protected areas in 2024. [WCPA Technical Note 15](#) focuses on the development and management of protected and conserved areas in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and in Nationally Determined Contributions (climate-related strategies), and offers cost-effective, win-win options for governments. [Technical Note 20](#) explains what natural ecosystems provide to climate control strategies, why protected and conserved areas are important, and how to maximise their benefits. WCPA and the Climate Crisis Commission developed an [IUCN Technical Brief](#) to highlight the need for a joint work programme between CBD, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and possibly the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, to coordinate and synergise efforts for both climate change and biodiversity loss. WCPA Marine experts also launched climate/resilience assessment tools for MPAs with the WCPA [Climate Change Specialist Group](#) and the [EU Ocean Governance project](#).

WCPA and the Shan Shui Conservation Center (IUCN Member) hosted a side event at CBD CoP that connected experts with renewable energy backgrounds and conservationists worldwide to share knowledge and experience in promoting best practices in Renewable Energy Development toward a

nature-positive outcome. WCPA's [Technical Note](#) on renewable energy, and an [information brief](#) on calling for a work programme to establish priorities for synergistic climate and biodiversity action, were included as part of [IUCN's publications list](#) for UNFCCC COP29.

## **Expanding and supporting constituencies for nature**

### [#NatureForAll](#)

WCPA's [#NatureForAll](#) helps raise awareness of nature and its important values and benefits while deepening understanding of the relationships between nature conservation and climate resilience. In February 2023, [#NatureForAll](#) hosted its first ever Love Fest, a two-week-long celebration of love and action for nature. This online global event shared inspiring stories, featured 50 live interviews with WCPA leaders and other conservationists, and showcased 18 partner events. In 2024, [#NatureForAll](#) held the second Love Fest and helped deliver a [#NatureForAll Youth Oasis](#) (pavilion) at the World Wilderness Congress.

### *Health*

WCPA launched a new two-year Task Force on Protected Areas and One Health in 2024, that published an [overview in Parks](#) that describes how PCAs can be a nature-based solution for reducing pathogen spread, with emphasis on the relevance, challenges, and opportunities for integrating PCAs with One Health. WCPA's Health and Wellbeing Specialist Group is finalising a [Technical Note](#) on the benefits to human health and well-being of visiting protected areas and coming into direct contact with nature.

### *Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas*

WCPA's [Specialist Group on Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas](#) is concerned with those cultural and spiritual values that support, foster and respect the interrelated character of nature and culture in protected areas. The Specialist Group developed Best Practice Guidelines on the [Cultural and Spiritual Significance of Nature](#) in the Management and Governance of Protected and Conserved Areas and has translated those guidelines into Spanish. Specialist Group members facilitated workshops on the cultural and spiritual significance of nature in managing diverse landscapes and participated in key global and regional policy events.

### *Urban Conservation Strategies*

WCPA's [Urban Conservation Strategies Specialist Group](#) worked, for example, to control [light pollution](#) as a form of urbanisation that affects the circadian rhythm of plants and animals in natural ecosystems, and on the Working Group on Trails and Conservation, which promotes a vision of trails not only as recreational infrastructure but as conservation tools that offer opportunities for trailside interpretation, education of PCA visitors, including on effects of climate change, and by serving as connectors between urban, rural, and wild places, including by forming ecological corridors along trails between PCAs.

### *WCPA regional mentorship programmes*

WCPA fosters the development of young professionals through mentorship programmes. The Latin America and Caribbean virtual mentorship programme, which concluded in 2024, engaged 18 pairs of mentors and mentees from the region, united by their dedication to protected and conserved areas. WCPA also launched the Europe Mentorship Programme, that brought conservationists together to engage emerging junior aspiring environmental leaders and senior conservation professionals to develop skills related to PCA challenges, help young people learn about the diverse realities of conservation, prepare them to face the global future challenges of sustainability, and to build up collaborative and cross-generational solutions for PCA challenges.

### *Young Professionals Network*

The IUCN WCPA Young Professionals (YP) Network brings together WCPA members under the age of 35. The YP Network supports YP engagement within broader Commission activities and encourages their integration into WCPA's Specialist Groups, Task Forces, Themes, and Regions. The network also works to facilitate and promote intergenerational collaboration and knowledge exchange between established and emerging protected area leaders and professionals.

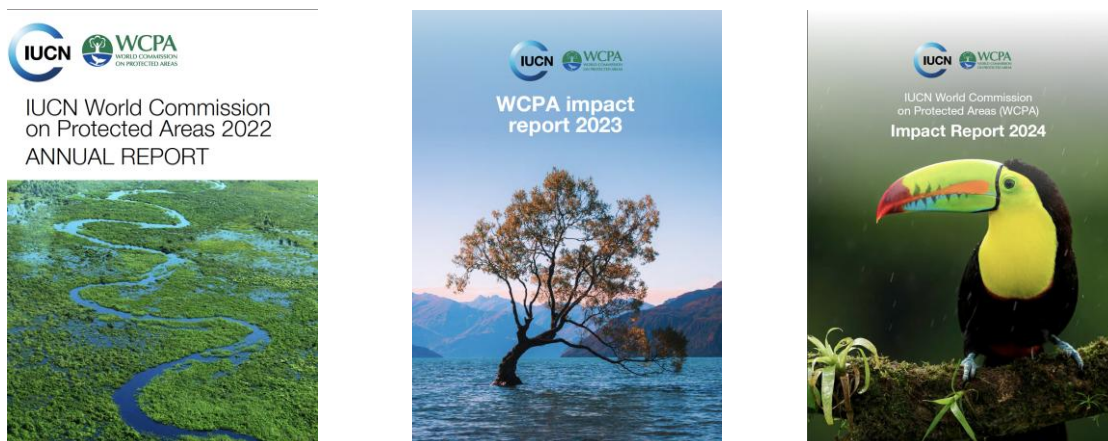
### **Influencing Conservation Efforts Around the World**

Working across its 12 geographic regions and associated Regional Vice chairs, WCPA engaged in extensive policy advocacy, outreach, and capacity development that reached all seven continents.

WCPA's regional and thematic leaders and members played pivotal roles in advancing the Global Biodiversity Framework, advocated for effective protected and conserved areas in local, national and international fora, and provided science-based expertise and guidance on nature conservation.

Through strategic and targeted events, WCPA contributed to shaping the policies and commitments of governments and key decision-makers across the globe.

A summary of WCPA priorities and achievements during the 2021–2025 period can also be found in the following three WCPA Annual Reports.



### **Resolutions**

Resolutions represent the main body of IUCN's general policy and are derived from the motions process, the mechanism by which IUCN members influence third parties and guide the policy and programme of IUCN.

Recommendations from over **66 resolutions**, from the 2021 IUCN Congress in Marseille and the 2016 IUCN Congress in Jeju, are relevant to the mandate and vast Programme of Work of the WCPA.

Resolutions calling for specific action from WCPA are prioritised through the work of the Commission's Themes, Specialist Groups and Task Forces. The development of technical guidance and engagement in policy advocacy is a core mandate of the WCPA. The Commission engaged in the development and dissemination of technical guidance and in policy advocacy that related to 19 Resolutions.

The WCPA supported the planning and/or creation of 10 new Task Forces whose Terms of Reference address specific recommendations within 11 resolutions. See Appendix II for a summary of WCPA resolution activities (2022–2025).

**Appendix I. Overview of technical guidance and reports produced by IUCN WCPA (2022–2025)**

<b>WCPA Publications</b>	
<b>IUCN WCPA Good Practice Guidelines Series (2021–2025)</b>	
<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>
36	<a href="#">Guidance on other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) (2024)</a>
35	<a href="#">Building trust between rangers and communities (2024)</a>
34	<a href="#">Recognising territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities (ICCAs) overlapped by protected areas (2024)</a>
33	<a href="#">The World at Night (2024)</a>
32	<a href="#">Cultural and spiritual significance of nature: guidance for protected and conserved area governance and management (2021)</a>
<b>IUCN WCPA Technical Report Series (2021–2025)</b>	
<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>
8	<a href="#">Designing and managing protected and conserved areas to support inland water ecosystems and biodiversity (2024)</a>
7	<a href="#">A framework for monitoring biodiversity in protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (2024)</a>
6	<a href="#">Site-level tool for identifying other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) : first edition (2023)</a>
5	<a href="#">Addressing ecological connectivity in the development of roads, railways and canals (2023)</a>
<b>IUCN WCPA Issues Paper Series (launched in 2024)</b>	
<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>
5	<a href="#">Issue Paper No.5 - The Meaning of Nature (2025)</a>
4	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Issues Paper No. 4 - An overview of Participatory, Integrated, and Biodiversity-Inclusive Spatial Planning and Target 1 under the Convention on Biological Diversity Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (2024)</a>
3	<a href="#">Issues Paper Series No. 3 - Advancing equitable governance in area-based conservation (2024)</a>
2	<a href="#">Issues Paper Series No.2 - Climate and protected areas (2024)</a>
1	<a href="#">Issues Paper Series No.1 - OECMS in Europe (2024)</a>
<b>IUCN WCPA Technical Notes Series (2021–2025)</b>	
<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>
20	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note No.20 Protected and conserved areas are critical natural climate solutions (2024)</a>
19	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note No.19 Renewable energy and implications for protected and conserved area downgrading, downsizing, degazettement, and</a>

	<a href="#">delisting: guidance to address climate change and biodiversity loss synergistically (2024)</a>
18	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note No. 18 Identifying and avoiding environmentally and socially-damaging legal changes to protected areas to improve conservation outcomes (2024)</a>
17	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note No. 17: The role of OECMs for inland water biodiversity outcomes (2024)</a>
16	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note 16: Approaches for identifying areas of particular importance for marine biodiversity (2024)</a>
15	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note 15: Protected and conserved areas are irreplaceable tools for meeting linked targets on biodiversity and climate (2024)</a>
14	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note 14: Defining 'long-term' for protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) (2024)</a>
13	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note 13 : Assessing and reporting on the effectiveness element of Target 3 of the Global Biodiversity Framework (2024)</a>
12	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note 12 : FAQs on Establishing Marine OECMs under the CBD (2024)</a>
11	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note 11: Protected and Conserved Areas: Vital Solutions for Biodiversity, Climate, and Human Health (2022)</a>
10	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note No. 10: Considerations of Remoteness to the Design and Protection of Wilderness Areas (2022)</a>
9	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note No. 9: The Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF): Target 3 and the term "Sustainable Development Areas": A technical brief (2022)</a>
8	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note 8: Role of Protected Areas in Climate Change Mitigation and Biodiversity Conservation (2022)</a>
7	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note 7: Equity in conservation – what, why and how? (2022)</a>
6	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note 6: Recognising and Reporting Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (2021)</a>
5	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note 5: Improving Protected and Conserved Area Management to Safeguard Ecological Integrity and Minimise Zoonotic Disease Risk (2021)</a>
4	<a href="#">IUCN WCPA Technical Note 4: Nature-Based COVID-19 Recovery: Investing in Protected and Conserved Areas for Planetary Health (2021)</a>
<b>PARKS Issues (2021–2025)</b>	
	<a href="#">PARKS Journal 30.2 (Nov 2024)</a>
	<a href="#">PARKS Journal 30.1 (May 2024)</a>
	<a href="#">PARKS Journal 29.2 (Nov 2023)</a>
	<a href="#">PARKS Journal 29.1 (May 2023)</a>
	<a href="#">PARKS Journal 28.2 (Nov 2022)</a>
	<a href="#">PARKS Journal 28.1 (May 2022)</a>
	<a href="#">PARKS Journal 27.2 (Nov 2021)</a>
	<a href="#">PARKS Journal 27.1 (May 2021)</a>
	<a href="#">PARKS Journal Issue 27 (Special Issue on COVID-19) (March 2021)</a>

**Appendix II. Summary of IUCN WCPA resolution activities (2022–2025)**

<i>Res/Rec #</i>	<i>English title</i>	<i>New WCPA publication released in 2024</i>	<i>Continued WCPA group engagement and advocacy in 2024</i>	<i>New Task Force created in 2024</i>
<i>WCC-2016-Res-030</i>	Recognising and respecting the territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities (ICCAs) overlapped by protected areas	yes	yes	yes
<i>WCC-2016-Res-032</i>	Achieving representative systems of protected areas in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean		yes	
<i>WCC-2016-Res-033</i>	Recognising cultural and spiritual significance of nature in protected and conserved areas	yes	yes	yes
<i>WCC-2016-Res-034</i>	Observing protected area norms in the Wild Heart of Europe			
<i>WCC-2016-Res-035</i>	Transboundary cooperation and protected areas		yes	
<i>WCC-2016-Res-036</i>	Supporting privately protected areas	yes	yes	
<i>WCC-2016-Res-039</i>	Protected areas as natural solutions to climate change	yes		
<i>WCC-2016-Res-041</i>	Key Biodiversity Areas	yes		
<i>WCC-2016-Res-050</i>	Increasing marine protected area coverage for effective marine biodiversity conservation	yes	yes	
<i>WCC-2016-Res-055</i>	Concerns about whaling under special permits			
<i>WCC-2016-Res-064</i>	Strengthening cross-sector partnerships to recognise the contributions of nature to health, well-being and quality of life	yes	yes	
<i>WCC-2020-Rec-024</i>	For an improved management of drifting fish aggregating devices (FADs) in purse seine fisheries			
<i>WCC-2020-Rec-052</i>	Dams in the Alto Paraguay River Basin, the Pantanal and the Paraguay-Paraná Wetland System			

WCC-2020-Res-034	Ecological Integrity in the Global Biodiversity Framework		yes	
WCC-2020-Res-035	Promoting IUCN leadership in the implementation of the UN Decade on Restoration 2021–2030	yes	yes	
WCC-2020-Res-002	Strengthened institutional inclusion concerning indigenous peoples	yes	yes	yes
WCC-2020-Res-008	Protecting rivers and their associated ecosystems as corridors in a changing climate	yes		
WCC-2020-Res-009	Protecting and restoring endangered grassland and savannah ecosystems			
WCC-2020-Res-013	Supporting the Lower Mekong Basin countries with the transboundary management of water resources, ecosystems and biodiversity			
WCC-2020-Res-014	The importance of a cross-border approach to prioritise biodiversity conservation, adaptation to climate change and risk management in the Río de la Plata Basin			
WCC-2020-Res-015	Cooperation on transboundary fresh waters to ensure ecosystem conservation, climate resilience and sustainable development		yes	
WCC-2020-Res-016	Conservation of spring ecosystems in the Mediterranean region			
WCC-2020-Res-017	Protection of natural flows of water for the conservation of wetlands	yes		
WCC-2020-Res-018	Valuing and protecting inland fisheries	yes	yes	

WCC-2020-Res-030	Enhancing the resilience of coastal areas in the face of climate change, biodiversity crisis and rapid coastal development			
WCC-2020-Res-032	Ocean impacts of climate change		yes	
WCC-2020-Res-036	Declaration of global priority for conservation in the Amazon Biome			
WCC-2020-Res-041	Ensuring funding to secure rights and secure ecologies			yes
WCC-2020-Res-049	Mainstreaming the Cerrado in international cooperation and global environmental funds			
WCC-2020-Res-055	Guidance to identify industrial fishing incompatible with protected areas		yes	
WCC-2020-Res-057	Accounting for biodiversity: encompassing ecosystems, species and genetic diversity			
WCC-2020-Res-060	Promotion of the IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions			
WCC-2020-Res-064	Promoting conservation through behaviour-centred solutions		yes	
WCC-2020-Res-065	Enhancing knowledge of natural resource conservation and alternative sustainable energy models through faith-based organisation networks			
WCC-2020-Res-067	Call for Nature in Cities agendas and Strengthening the IUCN Urban Alliance		yes	
WCC-2020-Res-068	Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area			
WCC-2020-Res-069	Eliminate plastic pollution in protected areas, with priority action on single-use plastic products			
WCC-2020-Res-071	Wildlife-friendly linear infrastructure		yes	

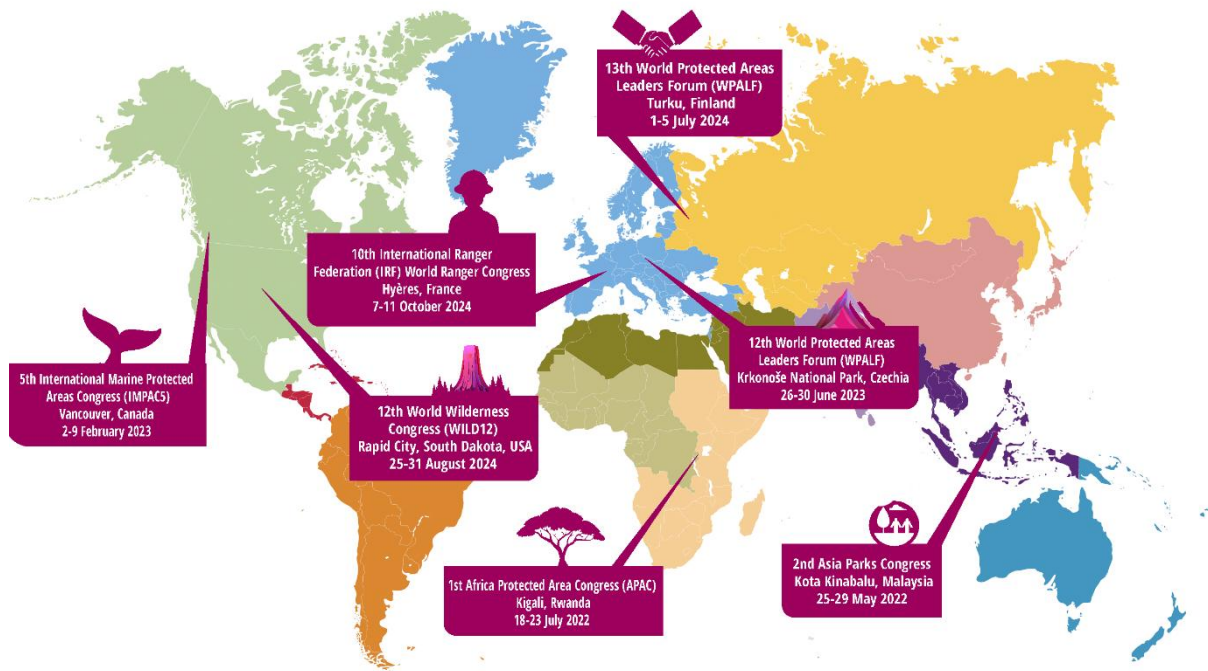


WCC-2020-Res-073	Ecological connectivity conservation in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework: from local to international levels	yes	yes	
WCC-2020-Res-074	Geoheritage and protected areas	yes	yes	
WCC-2020-Res-075	Transboundary cooperation for conservation of big cats in Northeast Asia			
WCC-2020-Res-076	Building and strengthening wildlife economies in Eastern and Southern Africa			
WCC-2020-Res-080	Recognising, reporting and supporting other effective area-based conservation measures	yes	yes	
WCC-2020-Res-081	Strengthening national spatial planning to ensure the global persistence of biodiversity	yes	yes	
WCC-2020-Res-083	Ensuring the compatibility of human activities with conservation objectives in protected areas			
WCC-2020-Res-084	Global response to protected area downgrading, downsizing and degazettement (PADDD)	yes		
WCC-2020-Res-085	Rewilding	yes	yes	
WCC-2020-Res-101	Addressing human-wildlife conflict: fostering a safe and beneficial coexistence of people and wildlife	yes		
WCC-2020-Res-104	Next IUCN World Parks Congress	yes		
WCC-2020-Res-105	Conserving and protecting coral reefs through the post-2020 global biodiversity framework			
WCC-2020-Res-106	Protection of Kakadu World Heritage site and rehabilitation of the Ranger uranium mine and Ranger Project Area			
WCC-2020-Res-107	Reducing the impact of fisheries on marine biodiversity		yes	

<i>WCC-2020-Res-111</i>	Protection of Andes-Amazon rivers of Peru: the Marañón, Ucayali, Huallaga and Amazonas, from large-scale infrastructure projects			
<i>WCC-2020-Res-112</i>	Planning of maritime areas and biodiversity and geodiversity conservation			
<i>WCC-2020-Res-113</i>	Restoring a peaceful and quiet ocean	yes		
<i>WCC-2020-Res-114</i>	Integrated solutions to the climate change and biodiversity crises	yes	yes	
<i>WCC-2020-Res-116</i>	Develop and implement a transformational and effective post-2020 global biodiversity framework			
<i>WCC-2020-Res-122</i>	Protection of deep-ocean ecosystems and biodiversity through a moratorium on seabed mining		yes	
<i>WCC-2020-Res-125</i>	Setting area-based conservation targets based on evidence of what nature and people need to thrive		yes	
<i>WCC-2020-Res-127</i>	Strengthening the protection of primary and old-growth forests in Europe and facilitating their restoration where possible			
<i>WCC-2020-Res-128</i>	Acting for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in the ocean beyond national jurisdiction		yes	
<i>WCC-2020-Res-129</i>	Avoiding the point of no return in the Amazon protecting 80% by 2025			
<i>WCC-2020-Res-130</i>	Strengthening sustainable tourism's role in biodiversity conservation and community resilience		yes	
<i>WCC-2020-Res-133</i>	Call to withdraw draft-permit mining of fossil fuels underneath UNESCO World Heritage Site Wadden Sea			

<i>WCC-2020-Res-134</i>	Protecting the Lower Congo River from large hydro-electric dam developments			yes
<i>WCC-2020-Res-135</i>	Promoting human, animal and environmental health, and preventing pandemics through the One Health approach and by addressing the drivers of biodiversity loss	yes	yes	
<i>WCC-2020-Res-118</i>	Recognising and supporting indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights and roles in conservation	yes	yes	yes
<i>WCC-2020-Res-115</i>	Protecting environmental human and peoples' rights defenders and whistleblowers			yes
<i>WCC-2016-Res-075</i>	Affirmation of the role of indigenous cultures in global conservation efforts			yes

**Appendix III. Geographical distribution of convenings convened/co-convened by IUCN WCPA (2022–2025)**



**Appendix IV. Summary of IUCN WCPA Award recipients (2022–2025)**

<b>Award</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Recipient</b>
Kenton Miller Award	2023	Maria Del Carmen Garcia Rivas
Fred Packard Award	2023	Eleanor Sterling
		Kristina Gjerde
	2024	Alan Watson
		Vance Martin
International Ranger Awards	2022	Orang National Park and Tiger Reserve Ranger Team (Orang National Park and Tiger Reserve, India)
		Masungi-Bayog Ranger Team (Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape, Philippines)
		Tiger Protection & Conservation Unit (Kerinci Seblat National Park, Indonesia)
		Jorge Banegas Franco (Parque Nacional y Área Natural de Manejo Integrado Pantanal de Otuquis, Bolivia)
		Hector Luis Espinoza Acevedo (Paso del Istmo Wildlife Corridor, La Flor Wildlife Refuge, Nicaragua)
		Felipe Otoniel León Angel (Parque Nacional Sierra de San Pedro Mártir, Mexico)
		Ben 'Yuddiy' Brown (Pila Nature Reserve, Australia)
		Anti-Poaching Tracking Specialists K9 Unit (Savé Valley Conservancy, Zimbabwe)
		Ali Hassan Ali (Bura East Community Conservancy, Kenya)
		Yyondji Community Eco-guards (Yyondji Community Bonobo Reserve, Democratic Republic of Congo)
		Popote Ole Sapulai (Kimana Sanctuary, Kenya)
Nyaradzo Auxillia Hoto (Wildlife Management Areas of the Lower Zambezi, Zimbabwe)		

	2023	Anton Mzimba, Timbavati Private Nature Reserve, South Africa
		Cristian Andrés Vásquez Bermúdez, Reserva Proaves El Dorado, Colombia
		Fetiya Ousman, Babile Elephant Sanctuary, Ethiopia
		Ismael Gálvez Gálvez, El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve, Mexico
		Maria Bernadete Silva Barbosa, Brazil
		Biological Corridor 3 Ranger Team (10 members), Bhutan
		Royal Belum State Park 'Menraq' Team (5 members), Malaysia
		Desniansko-Starohutskyi National Nature Park Ranger Team (9 members), Ukraine
		Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park Ranger Team (4 members), Philippines