



IUCN Response to Review of Youth Engagement and Intergenerational Partnerships in IUCN

This paper presents IUCN's response to a Review of Youth Engagement and Intergenerational Partnerships in IUCN ("the Review"), commissioned in 2020, and completed in February 2021. It is issued by the Director General of IUCN following consultation with all six chairs of the IUCN Commissions.

Three priorities regarding the immediate next steps will be taken, as follows:

1. Finalise a new **IUCN Youth Strategy by December 31, 2021** that builds on the Review, and the outcomes documents resulting from the IUCN Youth Summit 2021. It will also integrate and build on the work of all previous IUCN interventions on youth and the relevant resolutions of our members.
2. Constitute an **IUCN Youth Advisory Committee** (IUCN YAC) to support the implementation of the new IUCN Youth Strategy. The YAC will be drawn from the six IUCN Commissions, the IUCN Secretariat, IUCN members and key youth consistency organizations.
3. As part of the strengthening and reorganisation of IUCN's Secretariat, a **new Heritage, Culture and Youth team** is being established. This is the first time we have a team with a named mandate to support youth in IUCN. This team will ensure youth engagement moves forward purposefully within the Union, working with our partners.

The Review was undertaken by the Intergens, working in partnership with the Collective Leadership Institute. It presents three groups of Recommendations (A, B, C) below, and a total of twelve different recommendations. The full review is available online at [this link](#). This response provides below both specific responses to each recommendation of the Review, and it proposes ten outcomes that will be sought:

- i. A confirmed and realistic IUCN Youth Strategy is in place, based on a thorough understanding of youth across all components of the Union.
- ii. An effective and accountable organisational structure for the coordination and implementation of the IUCN Youth Strategy is agreed.
- iii. Agreed and robust means to track youth engagement across IUCN are put in place.
- iv. An adequate base of resources (including at least one significant multi-year youth focused project), to assure the successful launch of the IUCN Youth Strategy, with an agreed partnership development and fundraising plan.
- v. Agreed positioning of mentorship schemes within IUCN Youth Strategy, with clear and agreed fundraising plan for agreed work, across Union members, commissions and in the Secretariat.
- vi. Successful launch of IUCN Academy at WCC in Marseille, and effective implementation beyond.
- vii. IUCN has an increasingly diverse workforce, and can demonstrate it is investing in youth, and continually improving professional opportunities for young people.
- viii. An IUCN award for youth and conservation may be launched, provided there is a proven business case and successful fundraising.
- ix. IUCN major events globally and regionally include youth engagement and intergenerational dialogue as a standard practice, and event organisers are aware and skilled to ensure youth engagement is achieved in ways that are effective and impactful.
- x. The IUCN Youth Strategy includes effective outward and inward facing communication and advocacy on the need for meaningful empowerment of youth leadership in the conservation movement, and the direct conservation results being achieved by youth leadership across the planet.

Key principles that will need to be met to achieve these outcomes are as follows:

- a) A Youth Strategy for IUCN must be a **Union-wide effort**, including actions by IUCN members, IUCN Commissions and the IUCN Secretariat, and all other parts of the Union.

- b) A Strategy for Youth should be **co-designed with, and led by, youth and young professionals** - this requires demonstrable leadership mechanisms to be put in place within the Union, recognising youth and young professionals, as crucial to developing intergenerational partnerships.
- c) Consideration of Youth (which if defined as people under 35 is more than half of the human population) requires **a cross-cutting approach**, with youth professional development and intergenerational partnerships being **mainstreamed into IUCN's programme, projects and governance**. These should also be connected to actions that aim to address other and intersecting aspects of diversity and inclusion, such as those related to gender, indigenous peoples and regional/cultural and linguistic diversity.
- d) The Strategy needs to include specific, **realistic and measurable actions, linked to effective and additional resourced implementation**, and the means to demonstrate and track results. This would also include an essential fundraising element to ensure adequate additional resourcing that will be needed for implementation.

For further information about this response, and the work to develop the new IUCN Youth Strategy, please contact: tim.badman@iucn.org

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ANNEX 1: TABLE OF RESPONSES TO THE REVIEW OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND INTERGENERATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN IUCN, SEPTEMBER 2021

Review recommendation and proposed action	IUCN Response	Immediate Actions proposed	Outcomes sought through the new IUCN Youth Strategy
<p>A. Implement an IUCN-wide mandate/policy statement on youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships. This includes the following sub-recommendations for immediate action:</p>	<p>We agree with this overall recommendation. We note that the IUCN Global Youth Summit 2021 has confirmed that many organisations are looking to IUCN to take a leadership role on the place of youth in the conservation movement</p> <p>This would be best achieved through the establishment of an IUCN Youth Strategy to establish lines of action, and provide a trackable framework.</p>	<p>Launch work plan to scope and develop the IUCN Youth Strategy and to deliver the actions noted below.</p> <p>A survey across IUCN members and Commissions on youth priorities and activities will be undertaken to ensure the IUCN Youth Strategy builds on current activities and identified needs and priorities.</p>	<p>(i). A confirmed and realistic IUCN Youth Strategy is in place by January 2022, based on a thorough understanding of youth across all components of the Union.</p>
<p>A1. Establish a permanent Office/Unit on Youth with a Director for Youth and Intergenerational Partnerships that will:</p>	<p>We agree that visible leadership on youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships is needed. To enable this work to move forward the IUCN Secretariat has been restructured, and the coordinating unit for youth within the Secretariat will be located in a new team for Heritage, Culture and Youth.</p> <p>The precise means to establish this leadership needs to be considered further, including the need to ensure that this is not a single centralised team, but creates capacity across IUCN, including Commissions and Members to support youth engagement. We note, and agree with, the Review's emphasis on the need for a decentralised approach.</p>	<p>The responsibility for managing the two-year Youth Work Plan will require leadership through securing at least one full-time staff member (see outcomes iv).</p>	<p>(ii) An effective and accountable organisational structure for the coordination and implementation of the IUCN Youth Strategy is agreed.</p>
<p>a. Design an IUCN-wide youth engagement and intergenerational partnership strategy;</p> <p>establishing youth focal points across all IUCN bodies;</p>	<p>As noted above, we agree with the need for an IUCN Youth Strategy (including youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships).</p> <p>We agree on the need to establish a network of focal points for youth engagement across IUCN as a whole. We consider the work of these focal points should be brought together in a new consultative body, to be called the IUCN Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) to support the IUCN Youth Strategy.</p>	<p>See above.</p> <p>Confirm a network of youth focal points representing the IUCN Secretariat, with agreed terms of reference.</p> <p>Confirm with the newly elected Commission Chairs, focal points across the six IUCN Commissions, following the IUCN Congress.</p> <p>Establish Youth Advisory Committee.</p>	<p>See (i) and (ii) above</p>

<p>b. Coordinate existing youth engagement and intergenerational partnership activities across the IUCN to align to the new mandate and strategy;</p>	<p>Designing an efficient means of ensuring that youth is mainstreamed into IUCN's work in a coordinated way, made visible, and capable of being reported on, requires approaches that should focus on mainstreaming the consideration of youth into IUCN's work as a cross-cutting issue, and reporting on outcomes.</p>	<p>Coordinate the development of the Youth Strategy, through the team and coordination mechanism noted above.</p> <p>Working with the IUCN Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Unit, develop, and implement proposals to mainstream consideration of youth into project planning, and ensure data related to youth engagement can be collated and reported on across the project portfolio.</p> <p>Working with the Union Development Group, and the Commission Chairs, develop a means to monitor and report annually on the inclusion of youth within IUCN's membership and Commissions.</p> <p>Working with the Head of HRMG, develop an agreed means to report on the inclusion of youth within the staff of IUCN.</p>	<p>See (i) above.</p> <p>(iii) Agreed and robust means to track youth engagement across IUCN are put in place.</p> <p>-</p>
<p>c. Mobilise investments to drive the youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships agenda across IUCN.</p>	<p>We consider that mobilising resources and partnerships, including fundraising, to be crucial to any successful response to the Review. This is also challenging since there are many competing demands for resources to be allocated within IUCN. What is clear is (a) that in the immediate future there is no freely available unearmarked funding in IUCN's budgets for work on youth and (b) that even in the most optimistic of circumstances, the potential needs and expectations to engage youth in IUCN cannot be met unless new sources of financial support are found. IUCN will require support of existing and new partners if an effective and ambitious Youth Strategy is to be achieved.</p> <p>The joint efforts of IUCN Members, Commissions, Secretariat and partners will be needed to ensure that resources to support youth engagement are located and increased over time.</p>	<p>An efficient short-term fundraising and partnership building strategy to be agreed and acted upon, with IUCN Commissions, GYS partners, and Secretariat, and Strategic Partnerships Unit in particular.</p> <p>Targeted partnership building to be undertaken with partners in public and private sector focused on youth, with a focus on mobilising the first significant youth-focused multi-year project by December 2022.</p>	<p>(iv) An adequate base of resources (including at least one significant multi-year youth focused project), to assure the successful launch of the IUCN Youth Strategy, with an agreed partnership development and fundraising plan.</p>
<p>A2. Establish a Youth Endowment Fund in</p>	<p>We do not agree with this recommendation. Endowment funds are only one of a number for funding mechanisms, but</p>	<p>No immediate actions proposed. Maintain vigilance in case an opportunity arises.</p>	<p>See (iv)</p>

<p>partnership with relevant stakeholders to provide sustained financial backing for the implementation of the youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships mandate and strategy</p>	<p>imply a very significant initial fundraising goal, and for a particular type of donor base. Whilst not closed to this idea in the medium term, we doubt that an endowment fund represents the most realistic means to attract the resources necessary to support the IUCN Youth Strategy in its opening phase of work.</p> <p>We invite organisations who consider that they would be interested to support this sort of funding model to make contact with IUCN, and we will respond to this recommendation if an opportunity arises.</p>		
<p>B. Strengthen IUCN systems in support of youth mainstreaming and intergenerational partnership</p>	<p>We agree with this proposition, but note that the detailed actions are addressed below.</p>	<p>See below.</p>	<p>See below.</p>
<p>B1. Foster a “culture” for meaningful youth engagement through transparent, regular, and open communication within IUCN.</p>	<p>We fully agree with this recommendation, although consider that this is also an overarching aim, rather than necessarily one aspect of the improvement of IUCN systems. We consider that the actions noted above and below together will lead to the achievement of this goal.</p>	<p>Ensure that a clear expectation that policy, strategy, governance and actions to address youth engagement in IUCN should be seen as part of a shift of the culture of IUCN to recognise youth and intergenerational approaches as central to IUCN’s work.</p>	<p>See (i), (ii) and (iii)</p>
<p>B2. Establish a structured scheme for mentorship and intergenerational dialogue opportunities within the IUCN Secretariat, Council, Commissions and membership.</p>	<p>We agree on the importance of mentorship. However, in an IUCN context there are many aspects to this and they do not necessarily fall within the terms of a single scheme. Mentorship for staff, Commission members, or via IUCN members have different means of implementation. We thus consider that an initial focus on mentorship may be more effective if it is focused on the IUCN Commissions and Secretariat, however a survey of IUCN Member experience and expectations would also be appropriate.</p> <p>Regarding intergenerational dialogue, the developing work of the IUCN Academy (see point B2 below) provides an early opportunity, since the intention is that the Academy will mix generations in its programme, create intergenerational dialogue, propose programmes for participants across all stages of their career, and promote lifelong learning, cross-fertilisation of ideas across generations.</p>	<p>Survey IUCN membership regarding current and past approaches to mentorship schemes, and based on this feedback identify if there is a need and potential to propose a mentorship scheme project to potential partners/donors.</p> <p>Support intergenerational approaches within the development of the IUCN Academy.</p>	<p>(v) Agreed positioning of mentorship schemes within IUCN Youth Strategy, with clear and agreed fundraising plan for agreed work, across Union members, commissions and in the Secretariat.</p> <p>(vi) Successful launch of IUCN Academy at WCC in Marseille, and effective implementation beyond.</p>

<p>Ensure that at least one third and above of positions within IUCN are dedicated to youth.</p>	<p>We do not fully agree with this recommendation and consider it is somewhat limited in focus. IUCN Secretariat is committed to provide a work environment that values, respects, and includes people of diverse backgrounds and multiple identities. Youth, and the intersection of youth and gender, and of youth and race and ethnicity, are core to this effort to be and remain a diverse and inclusive organization that invests in the next generation of workers and in the leaders of tomorrow. We are committed to ensure that youth is well represented among IUCN Secretariat staff.</p>	<p>Continue to remain vigilant, to ensure that the number of youth among the secretariat workforce keeps increasing as we strengthen and further develop them.</p>	<p>(vii) IUCN has an increasingly diverse workforce, and can demonstrate it is investing in youth, and continually improving professional opportunities for young people.</p>
<p>B3. Enhance efforts in intergenerational partnerships in key IUCN programmes through joint-research and setting of standards for youth mainstreaming.</p>	<p>We agree with the need to enhance efforts regarding youth engagement and this implies a decentralised approach, including the mainstreaming of youth into the project portfolio, as the most effective way to set expectations and track results within different programmes and projects.</p> <p>We also agree on the need for continued research on youth engagement and intergenerational partnership in conservation practice, and take note of the specific examples suggested in the review (page 38). This implies the need to encourage IUCN programmes, Commissions and Members to consider youth engagement when appropriate in research activities. Scoping current youth linked research, and opportunities to promote new collaborative research will need to be considered in developing the youth strategy.</p>	<p>See actions under A1.b above regarding the mainstreaming of youth into the project portfolio.</p> <p>Ensure IUCN is connected to existing research networks focused on youth in the conservation movement.</p>	<p>See (iii) above.</p>
<p>B4. Develop educational programs and training opportunities that are targeted towards specific age groups.</p>	<p>We fully agree this is a key priority, and that approaches need to recognise the diversity of needs across the age range of youth (up to 35). We see two immediate priorities to focus on in relation to this recommendation:</p> <p>Firstly the new IUCN Academy, to be launched at the IUCN Congress in Marseille, is an ambitious initiative that will provide credentials to young professionals to help them enter the job market, as well as the place where IUCN will aim at training people with the right knowledge and skills to drive the green transition that we are all calling for. We intend that intergenerational approaches, mixing different age groups within training opportunities for conservation professionals will be a priority within the Programme for the Academy.</p>	<p>Launch and develop the IUCN Academy, including youth in the design of its activities.</p> <p>Survey of IUCN members work on youth to include question to identify members active in supporting school age educational activities.</p> <p>Engage with the cosponsors of new Resolution 076, to promote member-led action to ensure its implementation and the reporting on results achieved.</p> <p>Engage with IUCN IPO members regarding how IUCN should act to support</p>	<p>See outcome (vii) above on the IUCN Academy.</p>

	<p>Secondly, the IUCN Commissions are providing a significant lead on work focused on school-age children</p> <p>Beyond these immediate actions, IUCN Members have a key role to play in advancing environmental education, as requested in the newly approved IUCN Resolution 076 - Role of children and youth in nature conservation.</p> <p>Amongst the priorities, and notably emphasised across the IUCN Global Youth Summit events, is the critical importance of intergenerational transmission of traditional knowledge to indigenous peoples and local communities, and the need for culturally (and linguistically) appropriate education that supports this. IUCN will consider this issue with our IPO members, and the work needed to support this.</p>	<p>the advancement of culturally appropriate education that enables transmission of traditional knowledge.</p>	
<p>B5. Develop youth engagement models that cater for the heterogeneity of young people including school-going children and youth, Black, Indigenous and other People of Colour (BIPOC), and other groups of young people.</p>	<p>We fully agree with this recommendation, which resonates strongly with some of the main messages of the IUCN Global Youth Summit. Youth are more than half of the population of the planet, and are as diverse as humanity as a whole. It is therefore clear that IUCN's strategy will need to be decentralised and responsive to local needs.</p>	<p>Ensure the diversity of IUCN's youth constituency is included in the development of the youth strategy.</p>	<p>See above, and in particular (i) and (iii), and it will be essential that IUCN's Youth Strategy reflects diverse inputs, demonstrates diversity in its leadership and has a decentralised model of implementation through IUCN Regions, including members and Commissions.</p>
<p>B6. Encourage collaborations that ensure that youth leaders from Indigenous and equity-seeking communities, especially communities in the global south are included in IUCN conservation efforts.</p>	<p>We fully agree with this recommendation, which reflects IUCN's core commitment to the inclusion of all regions in our work, and our particular focus to work with our IPO members. Inclusion of youth leaders from indigenous peoples and the "global south" was a successfully achieved priority in the IUCN Global Youth Summit?, and we are committed to continue and build on that success.</p> <p>The IUCN Academy is also including a focus on outreach to IUCN IPO members, including how to design a virtual classroom environment to enable online capacity development that is accessible and responsive to needs.</p>	<p>Ensure young leaders in our IPO members are included in leading the development of the Strategy, and that there is effective engagement of IUCN IPO members in defining the Strategy.</p>	<p>See above, and in particular (i) and (iii), and it will be essential that IUCN IPO members are fully engaged in designing and implementing the IUCN Youth Strategy.</p>

<p>B7. Establish IUCN Young Champions Award for youth in conservation,</p> <p>and enhance skills development through a scaled Internships and Junior Professional Officers Programme across all IUCN offices.</p>	<p>We agree that incentives that recognise youth leadership are needed, however in launching a new award there would be a need to define a clear route to meaningful impact to ensure this would not be a token effort. We see that one potential area of focus taking account of the outcomes of the GYS would be to instigate a competitive initiative to recognise young innovators in the conservation movement, to incentivise start-ups by young professionals.</p> <p>IUCN secretariat offers three young professionals programmes, the Internship programme, the Junior Professional Officer programme, and the Junior Professionals programme at HQ. Those programmes aim at providing a mutually beneficial opportunity to young professionals and IUCN in advancing the cause of nature conservation.</p> <p>Over the past five years, over 250 young professionals went through one of these programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 239 interns – 54 are still with IUCN in a different assignment. 9 additional interns were given an assignment after their internship but have now left. • 2 Junior Professional Officers – Junior Professionals are usually seconded by a government or donor and return to their employer at the end of their time at IUCN. • 16 Junior Professionals – 8 took another assignment with IUCN. <p>IUCN Secretariat young professionals' programmes are delivering results, and we should continue investing in them.</p>	<p>Research and define a business case, and seek to raise funds to launch an impactful IUCN youth and conservation award.</p> <p>Review, in consultation with IUCN young staff, our young professionals' programmes, and put in place a plan to strengthen these programmes further.</p>	<p>(viii) An IUCN award for youth and conservation may be launched, provided there is a proven business case and successful fundraising.</p> <p>See also above, and in particular (ii) and (vii)</p>
<p>C. Enhance communication in support of youth mainstreaming and intergenerational partnerships</p>	<p>Fully agreed. The IUCN Youth Strategy will need to include a significant component on delivering effective communication.</p>		
<p>C1. Include Forums for intergenerational partnerships across all IUCN important events such as the Congresses.</p>	<p>We fully agree with this recommendation. The success of the IUCN Global Youth Summit in 2021 has taken our level of engagement to a higher level of ambition, and we will have further inputs flowing from the Global Youth Summit and youth mainstreaming at the IUCN Congress in Marseille. Ensuring a</p>	<p>Ensure that young leaders from diverse communities are included in meaningful roles in major IUCN events. Share lessons learned from the Global Youth Summit and IUCN Congress regarding how to deliver successful youth</p>	<p>(ix) IUCN major events globally and regionally include youth engagement and intergenerational dialogue as a standard practice, and event</p>

	<p>youth and intergenerational lens is a need, across all events and not only our largest events such as Congress.</p> <p>It is essential that events are connected to tangible results collaborative projects and strengthened intergenerational working.</p>	<p>engagement, in ways that move away from tokenism towards meaningful partnerships and tangible results and outputs.</p>	<p>organisers are aware and skilled to ensure youth engagement is achieved in ways that are effective and impactful.</p>
<p>2. Develop and deliver effective communication strategies that facilitate a clear understanding within the IUCN community about the importance of empowering younger generations and intergenerational partnerships.</p>	<p>We agree with this recommendation, which implies outward facing communication to our members, and the wider conservation movement. Priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Building the existing leadership on communication on youth within IUCN's Commissions, including the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication, and the Nature for All programme. b) How to join our efforts on advocacy and communication with international partners, including the CBD, UNESCO, UNDP and UNEP who are also advocating for a greater place for youth leadership in the conservation movement. 	<p>Include a focus on youth in IUCN's key communication products, to support the need for advocacy for youth leadership, and encourage all global and regional programmes to profile youth as a theme in their communications work.</p> <p>Work with CBD, UNESCO, UNDP and UNEP at senior level, and with their respective youth constituent counterparts, to develop a coordinated communication and advocacy on the implementation of youth inclusion within the conservation movement.</p>	<p>(x) The IUCN Youth Strategy includes effective outward and inward facing communication and advocacy on the need for meaningful empowerment of youth leadership in the conservation movement, and the direct conservation results being achieved by youth leadership across the planet.</p>
<p>3. Strengthen existing communication channels to facilitate streamlined sharing of information relating to IUCN structures, activities and opportunities that promote youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships.</p>	<p>We agree with this recommendation. IUCN has many communication platforms, and there is a need to ensure that youth is recognised as a theme for communication within them. There are opportunities to create thematic communities focused on sharing experience on conservation success based on youth engagement and youth leadership.</p>	<p>Youth to be included as a mainstreamed theme in internal communication, including channels aimed at members, within all Commissions, and for staff.</p>	<p>See (x)</p>

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