

IUCN UK EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING 60



Minutes of the 60th meeting held on 29th September 2009
Lloyd George Room, Wynnstay Hotel, Machynlleth, Wales
09:00-14:30hrs

Present: Chris Mahon (Chair), Stuart Brooks, Bryan Carroll, Joanna Robertson, Trevor Salmon, Mark Wright, Nigel Dudley (WCPA) Sue Stolton (WCPA)
In attendance: Alistair Gammell (Pew Charitable Trust), Bill Somerfield (Welsh Assembly)
Secretariat: Sarah Robinson (Royal Zoological Society of Scotland) Neil Burns (RZSS)

1. Chair's welcome

CM opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance, noting that it was pleasing to see the meeting so well attended and that the previous evening social had been worthwhile. JR was thanked for being instrumental in the arrangements of the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from the following members: Harriet Nimmo, Sally Cunningham and Mike Pienkowski.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

There were a large number of actions from ExCo 59 to report on:

Action 59.3.1 SC to follow up on action 58.6.1 and provide the International Event Calendar for inclusion on the website by the secretariat. **Status:** to carry forward.

Action 59.3.2 Secretariat to provide JR with details of the archives recently moved from JNCC to RZSS. **Status:** Continuing

Action 59.5.3 Secretariat to reformat the work programme and send on to ExCo for comment. **Status:** Send link to ExCo to page on website.

Action 59.5.4 Secretariat to upload the strategy document on the website and disseminate as appropriate via email/e-news **Status:** To carry forward

Action 59.5.5 CM to approach CB in relation to minute talking responsibilities. **Status:** To happen

Action 59.5.6 CM to approach Adrian Phillips about feeding back on the ICOMOS Landscape working group. **Status:** CM and AP in dialogue

Action 59.5.7 JR to feed back information on the implementation of landscape convention. **Status:** England is taking a strong lead. Little is happening in other nations.

Action 59.5.8 IUCN UK Committee to develop a formal working relationship with the Sibthorp Trust through the development of a Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement. **Status:** Paperwork is currently with the lawyers.

Action 59.5.9 Link the budget to the work programme. **Status:** Underway

Action 59.5.9 Draft budget to be completed in time for ExCo 60 (30/09/09) **Status:** Underway

Action 59.5.10 ExCo to suggest member organisations that would be willing and able to host an ExCo meeting to the Secretariat. **Status:** Please come forward with suggestions.

Action 59.6.11 SR to provide more specific detail as and when it arrives from Gland. **Status:** Nothing as yet from IUCN Gland.

Action 59.7.12 CB to provide the Secretariat with materials for the IUCN UK web site. **Status:** Completed

Action 59.7.14 MD to circulate a more detailed proposal for the consideration of the ExCo. **Status:** Diverted-looks like it will be help in 2010.

JR also noted that she was unable to view the photographs of the first edition of the committee's *Synergy* e-newsletter.

Strategy Objective 3: Practical Contribution to Global and European Strategies

4.1 The Dyfi Biosphere Reserve: What it means to the Welsh Assembly Government

Bill Somerfield gave a presentation on the Dyfi Biosphere, describing it as a major development in the conservation and scientific communities. Belonging to and administrated by a number of organisations, the reserve represents Wales' first UNESCO world-class biosphere reserve.

The Dyfi biosphere reserve is a place where conservation and sustainable development are able to develop hand in hand for the future happiness of all those people and businesses who inhabit the area.

He stressed that the success of the project lay in establishing partnerships between the many parties involved and communicating closely with local organisations in relation to the future development of the project. It is hoped that with increased exposure, further funding can be secured and that the project will continue to make a valuable contribution to the area's sustainable development.

4.2 Chagos Island Marine Protected Areas

Alistair Gammell gave a presentation outlining the ecological value of the Chagos islands which, as part of the UK's Overseas Territories, represents the most significant marine ecosystem under British responsibility. He stressed that the area boasts some of the most pristine seas in the world as well as the world's largest coral atoll.

It is felt that there is sufficient scientific information to make a case for designating the area as a Marine Protected Area in order to increase its conservation status. AG confirmed that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is taken with the idea and that further consultation will take place later in the year.

IUCN UK was asked by AG to provide support for the project. This would include informing all Members and Associates of IUCN UK about the opportunity to support this conservation initiative and supplying a written declaration of support. ExCo were happy to lend IUCN UK backing to this proposal and suggested that AG, CM and TS agree a form of words acceptable to all parties.

Action: AG, CM and TS agree a form of words suitable for a written declaration

4.3 The value of "Multi Designations" for Protected Areas

JR stressed that she was keen to stimulate national debate through IUCN UK about bringing nature conservation together with other land use strategies (multi designations). Questions to be considered should include: Who are designations for? How will such status be displayed to the public? Where is the UK BAP going with this idea?

SB reported that SNH held a Protected Areas Policy Review Workshop in August 2009. This workshop explored a range of associated issues including public perceptions of designations, discussions about a Scottish branding exercise and the roles of protected areas. In conclusion, SNH had asked whether higher policy decisions were needed to address these issues.

Action: SB to pass on relevant papers to ExCo

4.4 UK input to World Database of Protected Areas (WDPA)

ND and SS updated the group in relation to the WDPA. Currently the UK is not contributing data to the WDPA which is managed by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) through the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) in Cambridge. While some information appears for the UK Overseas Territories, information relating to PAs within the British Isles is currently unavailable due to ongoing legal disputes regarding its publication: The following currently appears on the WDPA website representing the UK position.

"Due to publishing restrictions on the UK protected areas data we are currently unable to include these sites in the WDPA. UNEP-WCMC are working with data partners and UK agencies to resolve this issue"

Legally the Ordnance Survey has difficulty in providing data for the WDPA as some information is sold on to fund the database. It is hoped that this can be resolved as the UK is the only country in this position, the rest of the world providing information for the database.

ExCo advised that IUCN UK be kept informed of the situation but avoid becoming embroiled in any politics surrounding it.

Action: CM/Secretariat to enable IUCN UK to be kept informed

4.5 Implications of changes to IUCN Protected Area Categories

ND spoke to the papers put forward previously by Adrian Phillips and circulated with the agenda. IUCN originally intended the protected area categories to be assigned to relevant areas once a country had its own system of designation/categorisation in place, however in the absence of any other designation or for planning purposes they have been used in some countries as a primary reference point. This can have political and legal implications which impact on the land management in some protected areas.

The new IUCN categories seem to be causing confusion in the UK particularly with regard to National Parks, as it is unclear whether all NP's would qualify to be listed under Category V (see paper 4.5).

4.6 Protected Areas Theme for IUCN UK

It was suggested that IUCN UK should initiate a programme of work on Protected Areas. Nigel Dudley and Sue Stolton, as the focal points for the WCPA, are happy to work with IUCN UK on re-categorising PA's in the UK.

Action: A Protected Areas Working Group is to be formed to develop this area of work, to meet before the end of the year and report back to ExCo on progress.

4.7 IUCN UK Peatland Project

SB updated the group with the progress of the IUCN UK Peatland Programme, announcing that the business strategy and budget had now been finalised for publication and that the IUCN UK Secretariat had created the relevant web pages within the IUCN UK website. Introductory meetings have been held or arranged with the statutory agencies, Defra and the Scottish Government, to explore opportunities for support and complimentary working. The post of Research Manager for the programme has also been advertised with interviews to be held on October 6th. It was also noted that it is hoped a large-scale event can be organised next year, possibly in Newcastle.

ExCo were impressed at the pace of developments but some were still unsure as to the nature and extent of IUCN UK involvement in the project and questioned its duplication with other work in this area. SB explained that the IUCN UK Peatland Project is an adopted 'arm's length' project of IUCN UK for which the IUCN brand was mutually beneficial. Management and funding responsibilities are entirely separate from IUCN UK but the project is conscious of its obligation to refer to ExCo on areas of potential sensitivity. It was still trying to communicate with Natural England on their peatland work and that there would be regular referencing back to ExCo on position statements.

Strategy Objective 4- Raising profile and improving communication

5.1 IUCN Pan-European reorganisation and feedback from Belgrade meeting

CM spoke to his paper 5.1 which detailed the background to the reorganisation of the Regional Office for Europe, it being essential for various legal and contractual reasons. He stated that IUCN is committed to maintaining a presence in Brussels, focused on influencing the EU and fundraising but that other functions would be removed to Gland with the possible exception of whatever replaces the Countdown 2010 initiative. Investment is planned for some of the programme and sub regional offices, with Moscow mentioned in particular. He noted the enthusiasm of the IUCN Director General for the proposal that the UK lead on some future thematic conferences and the possibility that some support might be available for this.

5.2 2010 International Year of Biodiversity and IUCN UK programme of work

CM referred to paper 5.2 and reported that IUCN UK has signed up to the IYB initiative. As a member of IYB, IUCN UK will be encouraging its members to sign up to the initiative as well. IYB is an excellent profile raising exercise and a potential opportunity for IUCN UK to contribute its skills

and improve its profile in return. Information on IYB progress and development will appear in the next *Synergy* newsletter.

5.3 Proposal for IUCN UK 2009 Annual Report

CM outlined his vision (paper 5.3) of an Annual document that could be produced to highlight and detail the work of IUCN UK members throughout the previous year. The IUCN UK Committee is obligated to produce an annual report to send to the headquarters in Gland and a template is being produced. It was envisioned that a physical document could be a valuable funding and profile-raising tool which would raise awareness of the value and work of the organisation, which in turn will prove crucial in future attempts at increasing membership and effectiveness.

ExCo, although supportive in principal to such an idea, did not believe that a physical document was necessary and that an electronic alternative, stored on the website as a pdf, would suffice for the purpose.

Strategy Objective 6- Membership matters

6- Membership Report

The Secretariat and the Chair presented their paper 6.1 which gave an overview of the current membership position and stressed that there is a clear need to clarify the procedures for gaining membership of IUCN UK. At present there is limited information available to the Secretariat regarding how people become members and how membership fees are calculated. It was thought that as a UK member of IUCN you automatically became a member of IUCN UK and any payments received were in kind contributions.

Action: Secretariat to put together a paper for consideration at ExCo 61 outlining suggestions for formalising membership of IUCN UK

Strategy Objective 1-Organisational Effectiveness

7.1 IUCN UK Secretariat Update

SR and NB updated the group on the challenges faced in relation to upgrading the IUCN UK website. It was explained that a lot of the material is out of date or of little relevance and that the creation of new content should be seen as a matter of priority if the website is to form the centrepiece of any future communication strategy.

7.2 Funding Strategy and update on IUCN UK strategy implementation

CM reported on the committee funding strategy (paper 7.2) and suggested we should be striving for a comparable strategy with that of other, more successful national committees in Europe.

It was felt by ExCo that the funding strategy was too ambitious and put forward unrealistic targets. CM agreed to look at it again and if necessary revise some of the figures ahead of the next meeting.

Action: CM to re-examine funding strategy

7.3 Reports from Co-opted members, Mike Pienkowski, CEC and WCPA Representatives

ExCo Members had received an update report from MP on the latest Overseas Territories of the UKOTCF

Action: TS will work with MP and FCO on comments regarding Turks and Caicos Islands.

ND and SS reported on the latest activities of the WCPA

Action: ND to send relevant papers from a meeting about moving forward Protected Areas in line with the Convention on Biological Diversity.

7.4 Financial Report

SB presented the budget for the year and a supporting commentary. The key areas of concern were the limited capital and the delay in securing payment from the country agencies. It was nevertheless

still hoped that the organisation would retain the approximately £16k of membership income generated in previous years. At present the balance in the account stood at approx £7k. It was reported that there were still issues regarding communication between the CoOp Bank and the Secretariat which was making financial reporting more difficult. It was expected that these would be resolved in the near future.

8. Any other business

MW and CM reported back on the IUCN UK Committee letter of support for the Darwin's Landscape Laboratory bid for World Heritage Site status, saying that the assessors (from ICOMOS and IUCN) were impressed by the quality and scope of the bid. The result of the assessment will be forthcoming later in 2010.

JR asked for clarification on the timings of elections to ExCo. Also what the procedures were for changing the in-country representative.

Action: Secretariat to provide information to ExCo via the website.

TS proposed a vote of thanks to JR and wished her well in her retirement. JR offered to help with tracing and consolidating the archives of the UK Committee as a project in her retirement. CM thanked JR on behalf of the IUCN UK Committee and looked forward to her continuing to work with IUCN UK in future.

9. Actions to be pursued

Actions arising from this meeting were as follows:

4.2: AG, CM and TS agree a form of words suitable for a written declaration

4.3: SB to pass on relevant papers to ExCo

4.4: CM/Secretariat to enable IUCN UK to be kept informed

4.6: A Protected Areas Working Group is to be formed to develop this area of work, to meet before the end of the year and report back to ExCo on progress.

6: Secretariat to put together a paper for consideration at ExCo 61 outlining suggestions for formalising membership of IUCN UK

7.2: Action: CM to re-examine funding strategy

7.3: Action: TS will work with MP and FCO on comments regarding Turks and Caicos Islands.

ND and SS reported on the latest activities of the WCPA

ND to send relevant papers from a meeting about moving forward Protected Areas in line with the Convention on Biological Diversity.

8: Secretariat to provide information to ExCo via the website

10. Date and Venue of next meeting

ExCo61 provisionally to be in Cambridge in January. MW suggested that WWF could also offer a room at their offices in Godalming which they are willing for IUCN UK to use for ExCo meetings. Therefore ExCo62 could potentially be in Surrey.

Action: Secretariat -dates for 4 ExCo meetings in 2010 to be set, consulted upon and circulated by end of 2009.

Ongoing Action: ExCo members to suggest possible venues for meetings – particularly any free venue options.

CM then declared the meeting closed and thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution. After the meeting several members of ExCo went on a site visit to the Dyfi Biosphere Reserve.

